

# 10 Low Cost Projects to Engage Your Community

## I. ESL Classes

English as Second Language classes are a great way to engage particularly with overseas students. Lesson Plans can be downloaded free from sites such as:

<http://www.ielanguages.com/lessonplan.html>

Read about NewHope Baptist:

<http://www.buv.com.au/witness/entry/responding-to-community-needs-esl-newhope>

Camberwell Baptist runs 'Let's Talk English' with a Bible study also.

Balwyn Baptist started a meal and English conversation classes for overseas students, they then offered a Bible study afterwards for any who wanted to stay on. Several students stayed and have found faith.

## II. Craft Sessions

All you need for this one is a few people willing to share some resources and a healthy imagination. Ideas are available on websites such as:

[http://www.ehow.com/about\\_5368800\\_cheap-craft-ideas-adults.html](http://www.ehow.com/about_5368800_cheap-craft-ideas-adults.html)

Check out some of the stories from the Brunswick Baptist sewing group:

<http://sewgroup.blogspot.com.au/>

Enes at Moreland Baptist is a qualified stained glass cutter – she started a class before Christmas and is now running 2 classes, each with waiting lists – full of people who have never been to church before!

## III. Street Parties

Everyone loves a party, so why not arrange to host a party for your neighbours? Norlane host "hope fest" where they have market stalls & face painting.

## IV. Clean Up Australia

You can register your church to participate in 'Clean up Australia Day':

<http://www.cleanup.org.au/au/>

## V. Backyard Blitz

Every fifth Sunday New Community Ringwood has a *Serve Sunday*. They have made many new friends by helping out in the local community – doing backyard blitzes, painting and decorating, and helping with shopping.

## VI. Community Garden

Many churches are using excess property to create community gardens. Read about Northcote's: <http://www.buv.com.au/witness/entry/sunnyfields-community-garden>

However, you don't need as much land as Northcote, it can be done with very little cost out the front of your church.

## VII. Art Display

All you need is a blank wall and some willing artists. You may even want to make a theme. Have a look at what Box Hill is doing:

<http://chapelonstationgallery.org.au/exhibitions/recent-photos/>

## VIII. Free Carwash

Perfect youth group activity. You'll be surprised at people's response when you tell them you want to wash their car for free! You can talk to your local shopping centre and set up in their carpark if your church doesn't have street frontage.

## IX. Election Forums

This is a good way to work with other churches in your electorate and ask local MPs to form a panel where the community can come together to ask questions of them related to policy issues. Geoff Pound from the Ashburton church helped facilitate a forum last federal election.

## X. Movie Nights/Grand Final Parties

Gracetree in Coburg run Open Air Movie nights in the yard behind their property and make them available to the local community as a way of making relationships and helping people to understand what Gracetree is all about.

Kew Baptist church put the AFL grand final on the big screen and have a BBQ.

**Whilst the ideas listed here cost nothing or very little money, there will always be a human resource costs. Volunteers to run programs are precious and make sure they are acknowledged well.**