



M I C H I G A N
M I N I S T R Y
N E T W O R K

**SUNDAY SERVICE
PLAYBOOK**

As pastors, we are stewards of God's people and His church so it's important that we give God our best and steward His resources well.

For most churches, the Sunday morning gathering is the main service where people are together to worship, fellowship, and experience Jesus. It's also the service that is most likely to have guests.

A primary objective of meeting together as a church is to encounter the presence of God and see lives transformed by Him.

To be clear, we know that God is omnipresent, everywhere at all times and we understand that God's presence is always with us. When people of God show up to church, the presence of God is there.

But there is also the manifest, tangible presence of God that we desire. Sunday gatherings can be times of transformation when people encounter the manifest presence of God. They can be an opportunity for people to be healed, set free, called to ministry, and even born again.

As much as we may desire it, we CAN NOT create or manipulate the manifest presence of God in our churches. There is no formula or special song set to make it happen.

What we CAN do, though, is do our best to anticipate and eliminate hindrances and distractions that may hinder people from an encounter with God.

Distractions like starting late, not having someone at the door to greet people when they come in, being disorganized, not having the building neat and clean, being unfriendly, "dead" time during transitions, people not prepared for their part of the service, etc.

This playbook is designed to help you address these issues and make the most of your Sunday services from pre-planning through the closing of service.

PRAYER

It is ultimately God's church and exists for His Glory

It is vital to seek God's face before we seek His presence. As stewards, we pray and ask God what He would like to do in and through us and His church. Each week as you plan for the upcoming Sunday, start with prayer. Pray on your own and pray with your team. Ask Him in advance to show up in a powerful way and transform lives. Here are some specific areas for prayer throughout the week leading up to Sunday.

- **Pray that God will prepare the hearts of those that will serve.** Pray they serve with a great attitude, treat people well, and are a blessing to all they interact with.
- **Pray that God will prepare the hearts of those that will attend.** Pray they bring themselves as an offering to the Lord, ready to worship, and open to receive and respond to what God has for them.
- **Pray Holy Spirit will draw the lost to come and be born again.** Pray for and expect unbelievers to show up on Sunday. Ask God to move in their hearts long before Sunday and that the Holy Spirit prepares them to make a decision to repent and be born again.
- **Pray for Holy Spirit anointing in every aspect of ministry.** It is not by might nor power but by my Spirit, says the Lord. Pray that every area of ministry will have eternal impact by the power of the Holy Spirit.

PURPOSE

Knowing and understanding the purpose of Sunday morning service helps guide your planning and preparation to help get to the desired outcome

As you continue to pray, begin to ask God to reveal His purpose for each Sunday. And as you clarify the purpose, ask the following questions -

- **What does God want to accomplish this Sunday?** It's His church and His people, so ask the Lord what HE wants to accomplish. For example; healing, salvation, call to prayer, edification, testimonies, celebration, deeper discipleship, etc.
- **What do we want people to walk away with?** The impact should go beyond the service itself. Do you want people to walk away with a challenge, a new thought or idea, a goal, an assignment, etc.?
- **What outcomes will we look for that would indicate success?** With the purpose in mind, begin to think about how you can know that the purpose was accomplished. Maybe you won't know for weeks or months, but what can you look for? It's important that we learn to measure the right things when defining success.

PLANNING

The Holy Spirit can and will lead and inspire you in the planning as well as in the pulpit

Sometimes we think that spontaneity is the only way to be Spirit Led. The Holy Spirit is definitely spontaneous, and we need to be open and obedient to Him. That doesn't mean we should just show up on Sundays with no plan. Planning ahead is not quenching the Spirit or ignoring His sovereignty. Planning is good stewardship. We can be led by the Holy Spirit during the week while planning the practical aspects and logistics of the service as well as spontaneously during the service.

Here are some things to consider when planning a Sunday service -

- **What are the elements that will be included in the service?** Here are some basic elements included in many Sunday services.
 - Open and Welcome
 - Who will open the service?
 - What will they say?
 - Will there be a scripture reading?
 - Will there be any slides on the screen during this time? If so, what slides and when?
 - Should they do an opening prayer?
 - Worship
 - What songs?
 - Who is involved in worship and AV ministry?
 - Announcements
 - Who will make the announcements?
 - What will be announced?
 - Will there be slides to accompany announcements? If so, what slides and when?
 - Giving
 - Who will announce and pray?
 - How will offering be received?
 - Is there a greeting time?
 - Who will announce it?
 - How long will it last?
 - Will there be anything on the screen?
 - How will it wrap up?

- Message
 - Who's preaching?
 - What's the title and theme of the sermon?
 - What media will accompany the message?
 - If there is media, when should it be submitted and to who?
- Altar time
 - Will there be an altar call?
 - Who will pray with people at the altar? If so, how will they know when to come up? Where should they stand?
 - Will there be music?
 - Worship?
 - Instrumental?
 - Who's playing?
 - Will it be live or a recording?
 - How will the altar time wrap up?
 - Who will wrap up the altar time and when?
- Closing and dismissal
 - When will service close?
 - Who is closing?
 - What will they say?
 - Who will pray?
- Is there anything "special" or out of the ordinary happening?
- **Once it has been determined what will take place, create an order of service.** Look at each element and with the purpose in mind, create an order of service that flows smoothly, keeps people engaged, and helps lead people to a place of encounter and decision. Because poor transitions can be a distraction it's important to discuss and plan transitions to ensure that things go as smoothly as possible.

PREPARATION

Lack of preparation opens the door to unnecessary chaos and confusion

- **Determine who is serving and where.** Once responsibilities have been assigned, be sure to inform each person involved and what they are expected to do.
- **Communicate, communicate, Communicate.** Make sure everybody involved in the service gets an order of service before Sunday. Get them all the detailed information, supplies, and other resources they may need to serve well. Let them know what they need to have prepared and by when. Make it clear what time they need to arrive and be ready to go on Sunday.
- **Be on time Sunday morning.** Set the tone and start off well by being on time. Unnecessary stress can come from team members being late and people wondering if they are going to show up or not. If a team member is going to be late, they should let their leader know. Every team member should have their portion and responsibilities for service ready to go on time.
- **Have a preservice huddle with the whole team on Sunday.** This is an opportunity to do a quick walk through of service, review assignments and responsibilities, discuss transitions, and make sure everybody knows what to do and when. It's also the time to make any last-minute adjustments.

Now that you have prayed, determined the purpose of the service, planned and prepared, it's time to go and see what God does. Once service begins, be flexible and open to the spontaneous leading of Holy Spirit. Even though you have prayed and planned, be sensitive to what He wants to do whether it was part of the plan or not.

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