



Halloween Outreach Ideas

Halloween can offer a great opportunity to connect with our local communities. Over the years, Sammy Jordan, Director at Hope for Every Home has approached Halloween in a number of different ways. Here she shares eight outreach ideas for sharing Jesus this Halloween.

If you're uncomfortable at the thought of doing anything for Halloween, then stop reading here! It's ok. Halloween mission isn't for everyone. Personally, I have been on quite the journey in my approach to Halloween. As someone who loves evangelism and wants to use any opportunity to encourage people to explore faith, I've come to see Halloween as a unique opportunity.

Here are three different approaches I've taken to Halloween over the years and eight ideas for hosting a Halloween outreach in your community. However you choose to engage with Halloween this year, I hope these ideas inspire and encourage you.



Approach 1: Let's Do Something for Halloween (but Avoid Halloween!)

Raised in a Christian family, I grew up with the idea that Halloween was something to steer clear of. When my children were very little, I decided that would be my approach too. When I got a job as a Family Coordinator in a large local church, I could no longer avoid it in the same way - and started to embrace it (professionally at least!). I did what many churches do and offered an alternative to Halloween. Here's a few ideas I ran with over the years:



1. Light Party

Organise a celebration of light and offer a combination of games, craft activities, a short talk and food. Choose a theme e.g. Moses and the burning bush or Joseph's coat. My top tip is to include lots of sweets and an opportunity for children to dress up. Check out [Scripture Union's free light party pack](#), which is a great place to start.



2. Messy Church

If you already provide a format like Messy Church, adapt it for a light party by offering Halloween alternative activities. Crafts, food and a celebration together are the main ingredients of a great light party anyway!



3. Family Feast

[Download these autumn activity placements](#) to use during your next family or large group meal. They're a bit like an activity pack you might get at a restaurant - they offer discussion and activity ideas based on the theme of the church where everybody has a part to play. They're designed by Kitchen Table Project - an initiative from Care for the Family.



4. 'Saints and Superheroes' Disco

Hold a fancy dress 'Saints and Superheroes' disco. Incorporate a few games, a short talk and some food. Invite the children to describe who they are and what makes their character a saint or superhero. The advantage of booking a children's DJ is that you won't need to prepare lots of activities!





5. Film Evening

Screen a family-friendly film! I have used Prince of Egypt which worked well - we invited the kids to dress up in a 'coat of many colours' theme. Offer colouring or Lego for children who might struggle to watch a whole film. You can also include an interval for food! Don't forget to consider whether you need a license to show the film. See also - Showing Television or Films in Church.

Approach 2: Finding the Middle Ground

My journey with Halloween took a turn a few years into my role as Family Coordinator. Having gone to great lengths to provide an alternative to Halloween, I'd go home to find Facebook full of photos of the same kids we had just hosted, dressed up as witches and ghosts and out trick-or-treating. My children were also becoming more aware of what they might be missing, so one year I gave 'treating' a go.



6. Treating

As a family, we delivered little bags of sweets through letterboxes on our street with a note 'No tricks, only treats with love from xx'. When I introduced this to my church, we combined it with praying for streets and homes. We mapped out some routes and families delivered treat bags with their own little notes. We did this as part of a Light Party and it was always well-received by the community.

Approach 3: Reclaiming the Ground

My approach to Halloween changed again when, after hosting a Halloween alternative, I arrived at our church school the next day and was met by the desperate headteacher. Some of his pupils had, 'ran amuck' through local streets the night before. These were children I had developed a long-term relationship with and I decided this would be the last time something like this would happen on my watch. In future, I'd tackle Halloween head-on and throw the best Happy All Hallows party in the area! It wasn't easy, I had to persuade the church that there is nothing inherently evil about the colours orange and black. What was amazing was how many families would come - in the second year we had over 300 join in!





7. Happy All Hallows Party

I dressed up the venue to resemble a Halloween party with orange and black decorations, oodles of sweets, games, prizes and food, but with no witch, wizard or ghosts in sight. Some years we carved pumpkins together and I would use a pumpkin to tell the story of why God sent Jesus into the world. We would explore the origins of Halloween through a [quiz](#).



8. Supper Amongst the Sweets

In recent years, our church have hosted a supper trail on Halloween. We offer a savoury (hot dogs), sweet (toasted marshmallows) or drink (hot chocolate) option outside our homes. We make sure there are enough supper points across the estate. Inviting families changes the atmosphere as children are supervised and it has notably reduced anti-social behaviour in our area.

So, Can Halloween Be a Mission Opportunity?

Halloween can be a great seasonal opportunity to engage with people in our communities. There are many different approaches - the right one for you will depend on your community and how you feel about Halloween. My challenge would be to make the most of the opportunity, do something and don't be scared!

If you are looking for something to hand out to at Halloween, check out [Bags of Hope](#) from our friends at UCB radio. They have 70,000+ bags to give away free every year (you just pay postage). Each bag includes a children's Bible story and other hope-filled things. Many churches use them at Halloween and add their own sweets.



About the author

Sammy Jordan is Director for the Hope for Every Home branch of Hope Together's work. This is about being good news where we live; on our streets, with neighbours and in our communities. Mum to adult and teenage children, she lives with her family in Eastleigh. She is part of a church plant on a new housing estate.

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