

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans



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THRIVENT MEMBER ENGAGEMENT IDEAS



Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit Fortune 500 financial services organization that's been serving Lutherans and their families for more than a century.

But we are so much more than that. We are a faith-based membership organization that helps our approximately 2.6 million members with what they value most: protecting and providing for their families, achieving their financial goals and supporting their congregations and communities.

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How to use this booklet

This booklet contains ideas that were shared at all the chapter leader training events this year. We hope that you will learn some new ideas and make them unique to your own area.

Each page has a different topic; they include:

Engaging More Members
 Successful Benevolence Activities-Work Service Projects
 Successful Benevolence Activities-Fund Raiser Projects
 Hosting Social Events
 Educational Activities
 Thrivent Builds Events
 Involving Congregations
 Partnering with Financial Representatives



* There are several step-by-step guides in the back of this booklet. Those items that have an asterisk * next to them, have a step-by-step guide.

Battle of the Bands

The battle of the bands can be a lot of fun and entertaining. You could use this same concept with singers, talent type show etc. Some chapters have invited all the bands from the local area and had it at a local park in the afternoon. They charged to come in, some charge the groups to participate in it, and others do it just for fun!

1. Decide where and when the event will be held.
2. Will you charge at the door, presale tickets?
3. You could have youth groups sell food.
4. Put a Thrivent banner on the stage.
5. Each group is given a time period to show their talent.
6. Have an emcee to introduce groups.
7. Give prizes out to the best group!

Day at the Zoo

Most zoos are willing to work with groups for special events. This would make a great social event for members and their guests. Or you could use it as a fund raiser, selling the tickets. Great way to get families involved.

1. Meet with the group sales department about getting a group rate, and ask about special activities. Ask if they can lead a special class for the kids.
2. You might want to have lunch together and talk about Thrivent, or have a special meal package lined up for your guests.
3. One group had everyone gather at the end of the day for door prizes.

Have fun with it! Watch out for the lions, tigers and bears!

Palm Beach Chapter has held a successful day at the zoo!

Bake Offs– Chili , Soup, Desserts, etc.

Soup Cook Off, Chili Cook Off, etc. are a lot of fun and can be quite delicious. These can be held many different ways as a fund raiser. You can charge to attend to sample all the different items, or you can sell tickets (such as \$1.00 a ticket or 6 for \$5.00) to vote for your favorite soup, chili, etc.

1. Decide what type of food you will be featuring.
2. Will you purchase tickets to vote for the top item or charge admission or both?
3. Will you have an entry fee for those entering food?
4. Set your date and start advertising for those to enter food and for those to purchase tickets.
5. Have fun and bon appetite!

Themed Dinners

Being a little creative can bring more excitement to an event! Try hosting one of these dinners:

Medieval Times: Dress up in medieval times costumes. Eat food that does not require a fork, knife or spoon. Have games or entertainment from that time period.

Martin Luther Night: Dress up as Martin or Katie Luther, have contest for best dressed, most original, etc. Fun items can be purchased at www.oldlutherans.com

St. Patrick's, Oktoberfest or other holiday parties:

Ideas: Decorate to the theme, have entertainment, for St. Patrick's day serve only green food.

These type of events can be quite original. You can choose to charge admission or for food, games, etc.

Organize a food committee, theme committee and advertising committee for best results.

Engaging More Members

Our vision at Thrivent Financial is to serve more Lutherans- to be the financial service organization of choice for Lutherans and uniquely enable Lutherans to demonstrate their care for others. This means growth – by adding new members and deepening relationships with current members.

General Ideas:

- Communicate one-on-one
- Use Sunday church bulletins
- Produce chapter newsletters quarterly (at a minimum)
- Connect with pastors
- Get youth involved
- Recognize non-members who work on projects
- Promote recognition events
- Offer child care when appropriate
- Plan family-friendly events

Serve Food: (we all know Lutherans love food)!

- Breakfast
- Cook-offs
- Festivals
- Picnics
- Dinner shows (dinner theatre)
- Sports tailgate gatherings
- Dessert & coffee receptions

Successful Benevolence Activities

Hands-on service activity

Involves volunteer labor to assemble, develop or improve something for an identified recipient. Thrivent Financial provides financial assistance to purchase necessary materials used in an activity in which chapter service team members provide the volunteer support (labor) to help an individual, family, congregation or not-for-profit organization.

- Packages for troops overseas*
 - Assembling needed items for soldiers
- Holiday baskets
 - Providing food or holiday items to those in need
- Homeless shelter boxes (hygiene items)
 - Containing toothbrush, soap, brush, etc.
- Cleaning cemeteries
 - Check with local or national cemeteries, they generally have areas that need cleaning up
- Making backpacks for school children
 - Including folders, pens, markers, etc. for needy
- Crop Drops or Gleaning fields*
 - Working with Society of St. Andrew to bag food or glean fields (picking up unpicked fruit or vegetables)
- Shoe boxes (Christmas boxes for needy children)*
 - Small items such as socks, toothbrush, games, etc.



BASEBALL GAMES

Baseball games are a great All-American event! You can choose to go to a local minor or a major league game, or have a local game with different churches.

1. Contact your local major or minor league stadiums.
2. Speak with the events manager/group sales and explain what you would like to do (is it a fund raiser, social activity, etc.)
3. Arrange to purchase tickets all in one section.
4. Work with the events manager to get the "first pitch" and announce your Thrivent Financial for Lutherans group. Perhaps someone from your group could sing the National Anthem (individual or church choir).
5. Arrange to have team mascot come to your area.
6. You could arrange to provide some food (hot dog and drink) included in your ticket price.
7. You may decide to hand out baseball hats or bam bams (available at Thrivent's [THE STORE](#)).
8. Some chapters have handed out stickers that say "I'm a Thrivent Member," which helps identify your group.
9. Some of the smaller stadiums may allow you to put up a table of display items.

Baseball games are a lot of fun! They can attract a lot of people, especially families. Some chapters bring busses to ball games and have training on the bus. Some chapters have been hosting games for years!

Those chapters that have hosted successful baseball games include Martin-St. Lucie, Polk and Jacksonville-First Coast Chapters.

CHRISTMAS BOXES FOR CHILDREN

Many children in Florida do not receive Christmas gifts. Recipients may be migrant children or community not-for-profit groups. Cost is \$10.00 per box.

How to pack a shoe box:

1. Determine whether your gift will be for a boy or a girl, and the child's age category: 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14.
 2. Fill a plastic or cardboard shoebox with toys, school supplies, hygiene items, or other items such as hard candy and lollipops, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries)
 3. Label the box with the age and gender.
- **Do not include in the box:**
Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers.

These boxes could be made with different items such as:

Disaster Kits for kids: Fill with items to keep kids busy after a disaster when kids have nothing (books, games, candy, etc.).

Hygiene Kits: Filled with hygiene items that can be given to the homeless or after a disaster. Items could include things such as toothbrush, toothpaste, wash cloth, soap, razor, etc.

Nursing Home Kits: These kits could be filled for those in nursing homes. They could include items such as powder, socks, magazines, pad of paper, pen, etc.

Chapters that have completed this project successfully include: North Pinellas, Miami-Dade and Orange County.

Successful Benevolence Activities Fund Raiser

Involves raising funds by conducting an activity. Using Care dollars, the chapter or church can supplement the amount of funds raised (minus expenses).

- Bake Sales
 - Cookies, cakes, chocolates, etc.
- Sports tournaments
 - Baseball, bowling, golf tournaments
- Dinners– themed*
 - Oktoberfest, St. Patrick's day, Luther night
- Silent auction or live auction
 - Members offer time/talent and items of service
- Trash and Treasure Sale
 - Glorified garage sale
- Partnering with other organizations
 - Relay for Life
 - Crop Walk
 - Toys for Tots
 - March of Dimes
- Walk-a-thon
 - Obtaining pledges for each mile walked
- Baseball games*
 - Purchase tickets at cost and add a few dollars for fund raiser. Designate a recipient. Or conduct a food drive.
- Battle of the Bands
 - Church bands coming together for an afternoon of entertainment and fun
- Bake off, Chili cook off or Soup cook off*
- Pasta with Pastor
 - Pastor and key church staff work as waiters (for tips) as they serve congregational members at this fund-raising dinner.

Hosting Educational Events

Providing instructional/training to improve capabilities or knowledge about useful topics that benefit, are of interest to and will attract Thrivent Financial members and others.

- Thrivent-approved Workshops
 - See [CHIP](#) or contact your Financial Representative for listing
- Nutritious Meal Planning
 - Contact your local agricultural organization for help
- CPR
 - Red Cross provides instructors for classes
- Budgeting
 - Check with your local Financial Representative
- Self-defense
 - Check with your local police department
- Environmental
 - Many parks offer classes, power company, depending on your desired topic
- Basic Car Care
 - Talk with your local auto mechanic, car dealer
- Gardening
 - Horticultural centers generally offer instructors.
- Babysitting Classes for Teens
 - Check with local Red Cross or High Schools
- Crafts
 - Scrapbooking, cake decorating, ceramics
- Computer classes
 - Check with local Lutheran Schools
- Lutheran Heritage
 - Look to your pastor for guidance
- Thrivent Awareness Event
 - Ask your Financial Representative

CROP DROP OR GLEANING FIELDS

GLEANING FIELDS: Groups are sent to a field where a farmer has a crop that has good food but unsaleable. The crop is picked by the volunteers and taken to local setting to bag.

CROP DROP: Crops that have been picked are “dropped” at a site, and the volunteers bag up the crop. The bags of food are given to local food pantries. You do not have to do both activities, you can do one or the other or both.

The projects are overseen with the help of the Society of St. Andrew. They are based in Orlando, but serve the entire state. They organize the crops with the local farmers and arrange for food pantries to pick up food; your chapter promotes and organizes the volunteers!

This is a great project for just about anyone! It is a great visual for groups to see they are helping people. Times and crop depends on the season of the year.

Unfortunately, due to farmers, the weather, etc. all the events do not always get the crop or the amount of food they hoped for. The key here is flexibility!

For more information, go to the Society of St. Andrew website at www.endhunger.org

Please call the Florida office to talk about possible dates, crops, availability at 407-650-1956. The cost depends on where the crops are from, supplies needed, fees for driver, etc.

Chapters that have held great events include Lee, Jacksonville-First Coast and East Hillsborough.

PACKAGES FOR TROOPS OVERSEAS

This is a great project to do around the 4th of July, Flag Day or any patriotic event!

1. Ask local churches for names of soldiers overseas.
2. Pick a theme for boxes: fun night-games, cards, DVD, popcorn or general items-socks, hygiene items, food, etc.
3. Go to your local post office to obtain flat rate boxes you can fill up for a set price. You will also need a form for each box to show what items are in each box.
4. Make a list of items needed for boxes, have everyone bring items on list, purchase items that are still needed. Every box does not need to be the same.
5. Have each individual assembling the box write a note to the soldier thanking them, and let them know where they are from.
6. You might want to include a postcard addressed to the the person making the package asking the soldier to send it back, letting them know they received the box!
7. Seal boxes and address packages with labels from post office.
8. Make sure you calculate the cost of mailing in with your other expenses.

Soldiers love receiving these boxes that came from their local community! When you are far away from home, just the simple things really make a difference. Items soldiers love to get include local newspapers, sports magazines, popcorn, candy, batteries, current DVDs, board games, hand held games, etc.

Chapters that have made packages include Miami-Dade, Collier, Citrus and Orange County. For more ideas or suggestions, contact your Lutheran Engagement Associate.

Hosting Social Events

Bringing Thrivent Financial members and their personal guests together to strengthen relationships among members.

- Festivals
 - Oktoberfest, Christmas
- Dinners
 - Bring food in, local restaurants
- Beach parties
 - Grill out at the beach, poolside
- Dinner Theatre
 - Local dinner theatres
- Dinner Cruises
 - Local river cruises
- Concert
 - Local talent, schools, colleges
- Museum/Garden Tours
 - Art, science, butterfly gardens
- Speed Dating
 - Provide meeting places, games for singles
- Day trips
 - Local attractions, zoo*
- Water activities
 - Water parks, pool socials
- Dessert reception
 - Variety of desserts, coffees, ice creams, etc.
- Mystery day trip
 - Plan a trip but don't tell anyone where you are going!



Thrivent Builds Events

Work Days

- By Congregations
- Pastor work days
 - Gather local pastors to come together to work
- Group days
 - Women's work day, Men's groups, College groups

Fund Raisers

- Sign a board for a donation
 - Purchase a 2x4, sign it with names, Bible verse, etc
- Buy a foot
- Pound the Pastor (nailing contest against pastor)
 - Pastor and another individual each have nail and compete to hammer it the fastest
- Using Legos, have a competition on who can build the best or biggest house
- Collect change in construction hard hats or paint pail

Thrivent Builds Worldwide

- Recruit chapter and congregational members to participate on a Thrivent Builds Worldwide with Habitat for Humanity trip



Partnering with Financial Representatives

Involving Financial Representatives (FRs)

- Keep FRs informed of your chapter meetings
- Share how the FRs can get involved at chapter and congregational events
- Financial representatives meet with members each day and can help you to recruit new chapter leaders
- Partner with the FR to grow our Thrivent membership
- Involve FRs in check presentations
- Ask FRs to lead an educational or financial workshop
- Provide referrals to FRs of those individuals who need our services

Recruiting Financial Representatives (FRs)

As we grow Thrivent, we are continually looking for great candidates to serve as representatives. Here's how you can help:

- Ask your friends, congregational members
- Publicize in your chapter or church newsletter
- Announce at chapter events
- Ask for referrals
- Approach young people as a career path