

Media Fact Sheet

This fact sheet gives background and current information about Back to Church Sunday. For more info, contact echumbley@backtochurch.com.

Local Back to Church Sunday Campaign:

- A Sunday church service dedicated to welcoming people back to church.
- Relevant statistics:
 - Only 20 percent of Americans regularly attend church.
 - - *The Barna Group*
- **51 percent of U.S. adults say attending church is "not too" or "not at all" important.**
 - *The Barna Group*
- Each year, more than 4,000 churches are shuttered and nearly three million American churchgoers stop attending.
 - *New York Daily News*
- **A 2012 survey revealed the highest percentages ever recorded by The Pew Forum of religiously unaffiliated adults in the U.S. at one-fifth of the public.**
- **An estimated 73 million American adults are presently un-churched. When teens and children are added, the total swells to 100 million people. If the unchurched population of the United States were a nation of its own, that group would be the twelfth most populated nation on earth.**
 - *The Barna Group*
- **A 2012 study found that 73 percent of unchurched adults in the U.S. were never invited to church.**
 - *The Barna Group*
- 82 percent of the unchurched are likely to attend church if invited by a trusted friend or relative.
 - *Dr. Thom Rainer*
- Only 2 percent of church-going people invite someone to church in a given year.
 - *Dr. Thom Rainer*
- A study including more than 15,000 adults revealed that about two-thirds are willing to receive information about a local church from a family member, and 56 percent from a friend or neighbor. The message is clear that the unchurched are open to conversations about church."
- - Philip Nation, LifeWay Research and National Spokesperson for Back to Church Sunday

- 41 percent of the formerly churched said they would return to the local church if a friend or acquaintance invited them."
- **-Outreach Magazine, Jan 2007. Thom Rainer and Sam Rainer**

National Back to Church Sunday:

- Back to Church Sunday can be implemented year-round, but many churches choose to participate on National Back to Church Sunday, which is always the third Sunday in September. For 2017, it is September 17.
- Over 31,000 churches around the world from 120 denominations have participated since Back to Church Sunday began in 2009.
- An interactive website is available with many free resources to help a church plan their Back to Church Sunday service. Visit www.backtochurch.com for more information.
- There is a 2017 Church Kit with eight new videos and other digital resources to help churches plan their service and equip their members to be inviters. The kit is available at www.backtochurch.com.
- An estimated 11.8 million people have been invited back to church since the movement began eight years ago.
- This year's theme for Back to Church Sunday is "A Place to Belong;" to encourage people to seek out their local church as a place for fellowship, community, sanctuary, and respite. It also encourages churches to re-envision themselves as beacons of light in the community, and a place where friends and neighbors come together in times of joy, challenge, and struggle—a place for everyone to belong.
- A Facebook page (Facebook.com/BacktoChurch) encourages networking and engagement.
- A YouTube Channel is available for encouraging Back to Church Sunday videos that can be shared on social networks. (YouTube.com/BTCSunday)

Back to Church Sunday Statement of Intent:

- To help the Church reach the formerly churched and un-churched by inviting them to attend a service.
- To empower the Church to reach more people and grow by creating a lasting culture of outreach by equipping members to become inviters.

- Build and foster relationships between churches in communities.

Sponsors:

- Outreach, Inc., a church communications resource provider.
- LifeWay Research assists and equips church leaders with insight and advice that will lead to greater levels of church health and effectiveness.

Additional information can be found at www.backtochurch.com