

How to Host a Successful Special Event

Hosting a guest musician for your Sunday Service and/or a concert is a perfect way to create an interfaith event, draw new folks to your church, and uplift and inspire your community. The guest artist is working in partnership with the host church to create a special service or event. Clear communication between the host and the artist is the best way to create a win-win experience for everyone.

Artist Relations

Guest presenters are usually independent artists who travel the country on their own money to share their gifts of music and ministry. Treat them as an honored guest.

Spell out all pertinent information in an agreement so that everything is clear to all involved parties. Determine ahead of time what the church and the artist expect in the way of gross revenues for the visit. Make sure that these expectations are realistic for both parties.

Be clear about the amount of honorarium to be given for the Sunday Service(s). This honorarium should be given to the artist directly after the service.

Decide on an equitable split of proceeds for concerts and workshops. The customary way to do this is by percentages. If the artist is covering all of their own expenses, the split could be 80/20. If the artist is covering their own travel, but the church is providing housing, the split could be 70/30. If the church is providing travel and housing, the split could be 60/40. But, discuss this in advance with the artist.

Be sure everyone is clear on any technical support needed and times for setup and soundcheck. Make sure the person running the audio/video actually knows how to do it.

Arrange host housing for the guest artist. This should be a non-smoking home, with a private room if possible. Check to make sure they are not allergic to pets. Be clear about what meals, if any, the host home will provide. If the guest artist is also doing a workshop or a concert after the church services, will the church provide lunch and a place to unwind and rest up before the event?

Promotion

Start advertising early. Some folks need time to plan to attend a special event. Advertise the events to your congregation and other interested parties. Hang flyers throughout the church. Put their picture on your web page. When speaking of the guest, speak with an air of anticipation, sound enthusiastic and pronounce their name correctly.

Consider pre-selling tickets. If you use the love offering system, give a suggested love offering guideline. This puts a value on the experience and helps folks who have no idea how much to give.

CD Sales

Have the artist's product table in a central location. Mention their CDs several times during the service announcements (with enthusiasm). Artists make much of their money in CD sales and many artists tithe back 10% of their CD sales to the host church.

Arrange for a music team member or volunteer to help with CD sales after services. This frees up the guest artist to mingle and speak with your congregation. Most artists will give the volunteer a free CD for their help.