

Leader's Retreat

Retreats are an essential part of the life of a church even though they can be time consuming. They can be a time for spiritual refreshment, a chance to consolidate good relationships with others and to set goals.

The length of time for a retreat will vary. For some retreats it will include one or two nights away, while for others, just a day together will do.

Be careful that your time together is not just spent in doing business. Have a good time of prayer, praise and worship and be sure to make room for plenty of laughs! Be open also, to change direction if the Holy Spirit leads in that direction. Do not be tied to keeping to the agenda if something more important comes up that needs to be discussed.

Retreats can be rather threatening, especially for the pastor. If it is to be a very meaningful time together, then meaty issues must be discussed in an open, frank environment. Look out for undercurrents and if they are there, deal with them.

The pastor is not always the best person to be the chair person, as he can become too emotionally involved and may at times respond in an inappropriate way, although obviously he must take a lead.

It is important to avoid one's home or work environment. Not only are we out of reach of the phone, but a change of environment may lead to refreshment and inspiration. It is particularly good to go where it is possible to have a walk along the ocean front, or along a riverbank during a meal break.

A variety of things to do, are helpful in a retreat. It helps to keep things fresh. For example, to just sit and listen to people talk one after another can be somewhat tiresome. Plan group discussion and let other leaders have significant input. Certain videos have proved educational and inspirational, if they do not go on for too long. Do not put them on after lunch when people feel sleepy.

I firmly believe that relationships, not giftings are the basis of ministry and so give good attention to listening to one another and really hearing what each person has to say.

If it is a staff or leadership retreat, I believe it is useful for the local church to cover the cost of the venue, to help show in a tangible way how much they are appreciated. Anyway, most people in leadership find that they have extra financial expenses already regarding the church, so if you have the chance to spoil them, do so.

Below is a typical example of the type of retreat I have been involved in running, in this case for general leadership of a church.

PROGRAMME – Typical Church Retreat Sample

A guideline for the day

9:30am Morning tea.

10:00am Worship and prayer

Individual work sheets (see attached paper -
to be filled out there.)

Discussions on strengths and weaknesses
of the Fellowship.

Lunch

1:00pm Goal setting discussion for this year.

- Staffing vacancy.
- Prayer seminar update.
- Other ideas e.g. Men's camp.
Evening services.
Knitting new people
into the Church.
Evangelism Seminar
Style & content of
Sunday Service.
- Missions.
- Sunday School.
- Home groups etc.

Business

Denominational paper
Finances

GOAL SHEET

A vision is something that we would like to see happen.

Goals are a series of measurable steps taken to see the vision come about.

What would you like to see happen in your personal ministry?
e.g. Small groups, Missions or whatever you lead.

Vision	Goals

What would you like to see happen in the church this year?

What would you like to see happening in the church in 3 years time?

After discussion and finalising goals close with a good prayer time.