

**THE
BIGGEST
BIRTHDAY PARTY
EVER.com**

SINGALONG WIZARD OF OZ



A PROJECT BY



INTRO

Watching a movie can be fun. Being part of the movie, singing along, booing the bad guys and cheering the good ones, in a movie themed room, dressed as the characters with lots of other people is even more fun!

IDEAL TARGET GROUP:

Everyone! (families will love it!)

IDEAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE:

30 - 200

AVERAGE COST FOR THE EVENT:

From £300 (highly dependent on audience size)

THE AIMS:

- To represent Christian themes through fun and celebration and through the characters in the film!
- To provide a high quality fun event where Christians can get to invite and then meet and socialise with people who come from their local community.
- To enable people from the local area to experience Christian community and have their perceptions of the Christian faith challenged.

WHO?

This event really is fun for all the family. Kids get to join in with all the bells and whistles, adults get to sing their hearts out and relive their childhood. Everyone has a great time!

WHERE?

Due to licensing laws this event may well be best held in a church hall. However, if there is a large enough community space that you can get the correct licences for this is also great! You could also hold the event in a local cinema if they are willing. They will have the necessary licences but you will have to talk to them about whether they are willing to hire their cinema to you and at what price.

WHEN?

This event can be run at a date that fits with your church's current rhythm of mission, taking into consideration how the event might compliment or clash with your existing church programme. Think about when is right for the people you are inviting. In order to maximise your appeal, choose a time that is not in competition with other events in the community. For this event a week night would be advisable as restaurants are less busy and more able to accommodate such an event. If many people in your community commute to work make sure you give them enough time to get back for the event.

MAKING IT HAPPEN!

STEP 1. CREATE A TEAM

You could run this event as a small group, a church or a group of churches. Your team will need to include:

- Someone who is happy to take overall responsibility for the organisation of the event
- Someone who knows how to run the technology.
- Someone to manage hospitality.
- Someone (possibly two – four people) who is/are confident enough to host the event, encourage audience participation and explain the programme and activities.
- Someone to organise front of house, welcoming people and seating.

You could have a few further members of the team to help with the organisation and possible liaison with venues. A recommended core team size is therefore between 3 and 5 people although you can still have lots more people involved!

STEP 2. DECIDE ON YOUR COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES

Clearly define who your event is aimed at. What geographical area will be the target of your advertising? Is it a street? A few streets? A postcode? Ideally, do not try to reach too large a geographical area as this increases costs in publicity and makes it more difficult to build lasting relationships through the event.

STEP 3. PLAN YOUR FOLLOW UP

Don't leave it until last minute to work out how this event will fit into the wider mission of the church. You need to have a plan in place for the following scenarios.

As this is a family event, it is crucial that you provide all age follow up. Some families will come with a real interest in church and becoming part of the church community. What does your church offer in the form of all age services or other events where families can come and learn about Jesus together? As a good way to follow up this event you could have a Wizard of Oz themed family service on Pentecost Sunday. Further ideas for this are laid out in Step 9.

Other families will enjoy the sense of community but not have any real interest in attending church. Think about whether there are toddler groups, kids clubs or other events that you can invite them to so that you can get to know them better and they can enjoy the sense of community they found at your event.

STEP 4. BUDGET AND FUNDRAISING

Assuming you opt to show this film in your own church venue, costs will be approximately

- £68 - £334 Film licence (dependent on size of church)
- £21.68 - £351.52 PRS licence (dependent on size of church)
- £21.68 - £351.52 PPL licence (dependent on size of church)
- £150 publicity
- £50 - £400 props
- £50 hospitality

All the licences above are annual and thus dependant on your average church attendance and not on the number of people who will attend this event. Of course this means that you have the licence for an entire year and can use it for other things. You may also already have some of the licences for your general church activities.

For more information and costs visit www.ccli.co.uk/fees/ and to acquire the correct licences visit www.ccli.co.uk/licences/apply-form.cfm

These licences do not permit you to advertise the name of the film outside of your church building. This does not have to be a problem. You simply need to produce advertisement that invites people to a sing-a-long movie and give a good indication as to the film through design and pictures. If people want to know what film it is they can call a number or visit the church building where you are allowed to put up posters or have flyers with the film name on them.

This budget assumes you have the ability to project the film and play sound already. If you need to hire this equipment this will increase costs.

Due to the licensing laws you cannot sell tickets to cover the costs of this event. However, you can charge for food, drinks or other items and you can ask for a contribution to cover costs.

Raising Finance

If your church or small group does not already have a mission fund that can help with some of the costs of this event you may have to look into some fundraising. This can be everything from cake sales and car washes, to council grants. Most local councils have small grant funds which faith groups can apply for and as your event will be benefitting local business there's a good chance of you being able to raise some funds through this. Visit your local council website for more details.

STEP 5. CHOOSE YOUR LOCATION

If you do have a local cinema it is worth approaching them first to find out

- If they are interested in such an event
- Whether they would charge you to host it in their cinema or if they would be willing to just charge for tickets as usual.

If they are interested and it seems financially viable, discuss possible dates and times, how they feel about having a host at the front and including all the activities you would like to incorporate and how they feel about you decorating the room.

If you are able to agree a satisfactory deal make sure you get a written contract with them.

If there is not a local cinema, for licensing reasons you will probably need to use a local church. If there are several churches involved and you have options as to which one you use think about the following things:

Location: Which church is most accessible to the people you are trying to reach?

Space: Which church has a good space for screening a film. Think about

- The screen and sound
- The comfort of the seating
- The number of people who can fit in
- Whether they allow food and drink
- How easy it will be to decorate the space

Timing: You will need a good few hours for set up so make sure you will have the space for long enough to make sure it looks great!

STEP 6. PLAN OUT THE EVENING

The team should watch the film and make notes of all the different ways you can invite audience participation. Think of a few inexpensive props you might like to use. Ideas include party poppers, party whistles, bubbles, glow sticks, sweets and shakers. You can give these out in party bags as people arrive. You can encourage participation using noises like hiss every time you see the witch, roar, when you see the lion etc.

The host(s) will need to get to know the film well so that they can anticipate the different activities and get the audience to join in.

Think about how to decorate the room according to the film. So you might have the different characters on the walls or make the room look like Oz.

The team should come in fancy dress to help build atmosphere. You should also think about lighting and making sure the room has a cinematic feel.

It would be good to have refreshments such as drinks, popcorn and sweets available. You could charge for these to help cover the costs of the event.

STEP 7. PUBLICISE

For an event of this size, publicity should probably be released between 3 and 4 weeks before the event. Allow time for designing and printing of at least 2 weeks. Make sure you get the flyer designed by someone who is able to produce a professional standard of work. The quality of the flyer will indicate to the recipient the quality of the event they are attending. Examples and help with flyers are available on our website.

Make sure the flyer clearly states the date, time, and location of the event. If you want people to come in fancy dress indicate this too, with a clear theme related to the film.

Remember that you cannot advertise the title of the film on flyers or posters to be distributed outside of the church but you can use graphics to indicate which film it is. For example, you can have a picture of a girl, a lion, a scarecrow and a tin man on a yellow brick road to indicate that the film you are showing is the Wizard of Oz. If there is a website or social media platform for the event make sure this is also included on the flyer. Be sure to communicate who is running the event and to include some contact details so people can find out more.

Make sure the flyer is a true representation of the content of the event and if you intend to include any talk or discussion beyond the sing-a-long movie that you make that clear. It's important to be honest with the public and let them know exactly what they are signing up for!

You may also want to produce flyers/posters which include the film title, to give out within your church and for people in your congregation to pass on to friends

Places to distribute flyers/posters:

- Door-to-door. Get a group from the church to post them in houses in the local area. Avoid doors that say "no junk mail". Even though I'm sure you do not consider it to be "junk", it's important to respect their right to disagree!
- Call local schools and ask if you can put flyers in children's book bags. You could even ask if people can come into school assemblies dressed as the characters to promote the event.
- Ask local shops if they are willing to put a poster in their window or to keep some flyers by the till.
- Put flyers/posters up on community notice boards
- Get local churches to put the event in their news bulletin and give out flyers. Encourage church members to bring friends to the event.

Other publicity (see Communications PDF for more details on making the best use of these mediums).

- Use the internet, it offers you free publicity! If you have access to any local/church websites make sure the event is listed there. Also upload the event to any online local community calendars you can find - your council probably hosts one and there may well be others too.
- Use social media, set up a Facebook group or get local tweeters tweeting about your event.
- Let the local press know. Write a short press release about what you will be doing. Send it to your local papers or local news websites. Within 24 hours of the event send another press release about how the event went and include pictures. This will help promote the positive work the church is doing in your community.
- Make sure you've registered your event properly so that it appears on *thebiggestbirthdaypartyever.com*. Don't forget to make use of the t-shirts and publicity, if you purchased a registration pack, to make a real visible presence on the day.

STEP 8. VOLUNTEERS

To help with the smooth running of the event it would be good to have two people who are not core team members there on the day to welcome people and make sure everyone is having a good time. You may also need people to serve drinks and help get people motivated and joining in.

Every church member who attends should expect to be involved in the event by networking, getting to know people and starting to build friendships. This is crucial and will need to be explained and encouraged in the lead up to the event so that people come prepared, not just to chat with friends but to get to know new people.

STEP 9. ON THE DAY

Here's a list of things to do on the day to ensure a smooth running event.

- Arrive at the venue early in the day to set up.
- Have a run through the tech to make sure it's all working.
- Decorate the venue with Wizard of Oz themed decorations and set up atmospheric lighting.
- Put up your Biggest Birthday Ever decorations.
- Set up refreshment stalls.
- Get the party bags ready (If registration pack was purchased)
- Risk assess the venue using the form on our website.
- Arrange where the hosts are going to stand. Make sure there is water on hand for the hosts.
- Make sure you clearly communicate the follow up opportunities you have planned.

How to share the meaning behind the party!

You'll want to make sure that people don't just go away having enjoyed the event but that they've also been challenged or intrigued about the Christian faith. However you choose to present the gospel, it must be short and informal and should not leave anyone feeling like they have been tricked into coming to be preached at! Here are four ways you can share the meaning behind the party on the night.

1. Get the host to introduce the party with a little bit about why the event is taking place

"Welcome to our sing-a-long movie, brought to you by <insert church name(s) here>. We're here tonight in celebration of The Biggest Birthday Party Ever – the birthday of the church. We thought we'd celebrate with some music, laughter and fun for all the family, because we believe God is a God who likes to celebrate! We hope you enjoy the evening!"

2. If you purchased a registration pack, you'll be giving out party bags as people come in with the props they need for the evening. Include in the party bag The Biggest Birthday Party Ever booklet telling them a little bit more about why we have so much to celebrate.

3. The Wizard of Oz looks at themes of courage (lion), love (tin man), wisdom (scarecrow) and going home (Dorothy) which you can explore. You could make bookmarks for the children to explore this theme. You could even plan a Wizard of Oz themed family service for the next Sunday. The team could come as the different characters again and host the service and everyone could be invited to come and spend a bit more time with their favourite characters.

4. Set up a prayer area based on the characters in the story. You could have an interactive area where everyone can come and engage in prayer activities based on the different characters in the story. For example

- Scarecrow - Make little cards with a prayer for wisdom where people can fill in the blanks and take it away with them to pray whenever they don't know what to do.
- Tin Man – As people come in give them a heart to write their name on. Make a wall of hearts with the heading "Jesus loves..."so that at the end of the evening everyone's name is underneath it,
- Lion – Have a place where people can write down their fears. When they have done this they can say a simple prayer, God please take away my fear of _____. Then rip up the paper and throw it away symbolising that they don't have to be afraid anymore.
- Dorothy – On a big sheet of paper write the words, "Home is...". Encourage people to write down the things that make them feel at home. You can then use these later in the evening or in your Sunday service to explore the idea of finding our home with Jesus.

Make this area obvious and welcoming but try not to make people feel they have to use it as part of their evening. Make sure they are aware it is a prayer area when they approach it.

STEP 10. WRAP UP AND IMPLEMENT FOLLOW UP

It's important that this event fits into a wider context of mission. Therefore, get feedback from everyone involved about how they thought the event went. You could ask them to respond to three simple questions:

1. What did you like about the event?
2. What did you think could have been done better?
3. If we were to run the event again what changes would you suggest?

Ask people to sign up if they want to hear about further events. Have a plan in place for your next event so that you can build on the good work you've begun.

WHAT IF....?

WE WANT TO CHARGE FOR TICKETS AND MAKE IT A FUNDRAISER

There is an organisation who run singalong events for which you can charge tickets at £13 - £15. They also bring along all the party bags, a host and a projectionist. There is an initial fee of £2000 though so you need to be sure you can get enough people in to cover the costs and make some money for charity. For more information on this visit www.singalonga.net/

WE WANT TO DO THIS JUST FOR OUR IMMEDIATE NEIGHBOURS.

If you just invite your neighbours and friends and host this event in your home then you don't have to pay any of the licensing costs. This could be a really fun way to do this event on a low budget.

I WANT TO SHOW ANOTHER FILM

The licence covers most, but not all films. To check whether your film is covered, find out who the film producer is and then check this list www.ccli.co.uk/pdfs/CVL-Producers-Uk-Eire.pdf to see if it's included.

Producers that are covered include 20th Century Fox, Disney, Pixar, Dreamworks, MGM, Paramount, Universal Pictures and many more. Warner Bros films are not covered under this licence.

A good sing-a-long movie involves lots of audience interaction. So think of a film that encourages that. For example, you might want to encourage the audience to hiss whenever a bad character comes on, make animal noises whenever you see a certain animal, pull a party popper at a certain point etc.

Think about the length of the film too as some musicals are quite long!



MORE ABOUT SHARE JESUS INTERNATIONAL



SJI is passionate about communicating the good news about Jesus in our ever-changing times.

SJI's work covers three main areas:

1. Missional Leaders – leadership development has long been a focus for SJI. Over the past ten years, our leadership development programmes have seen in excess of one thousand young people trained to serve God in their communities. Find more details on the FRESH programme [here](#)
2. Missional Festivals – in 2008 we hosted London's first Pentecost Festival with over one hundred events, many of them free, in the heart of London. Since then the Festival has grown by collaborating with a wide range of organisations and churches. Now we are also training churches to run local festivals in their communities
3. Missional Churches – planting missional expressions of church locally, SJI is working to equip churches across the UK to be missionally focussed

For more information please visit our website: www.sharejesusinternational.com

Share Jesus International
The Church, Tolverne Road, Raynes Park, London, SW20 8RA
The Biggest Birthday Party Ever is a SJI project - Registered charity number: 1089784

0208 944 5678
info@sharejesusinternational.com
www.sharejesusinternational.com/tbbpe

