

# “Illuminating the Way”

## In our Neighborhoods

By Esther Fetherlin

Each of us has an incredible opportunity for Illuminating the Way - reflecting the love of Jesus with those who are geographically the closest to us - our Neighbors. It is not an accident that we live in our present location. God has carefully orchestrated for each of us to be where we are and He intends for us to be a bright spiritual light in the darkness that surrounds us. He has placed us in our neighborhoods with great purpose.

**Below are some practical ideas to encourage you in your "illuminating"!**

### **PREPARE WITH PRAYER**

1. Ask God to burden your heart for your non-believing neighbors. (Ask for a renewed passion for people who are without Jesus and the reality of what that means.)
2. Pray for your neighbors by name or by house if you have not yet personally met them.
3. Ask God to show you creative ways to connect with your neighbors.
4. If there are other believers nearby, join together and pray for your neighborhood.
5. Prayer walk your neighborhood.

### **PLAN WITH PURPOSE and PURPOSE TO PLAN**

1. Don't just talk about "illuminating" - Put it on your calendar!
2. Be intentional. Most of us are too busy, and without intentionally planning to connect, we can go for months and not even see our neighbors. (Our too busy life-styles, along with automatic garage doors have not helped us connect often with our neighbors.)
3. Remember that purposeful planning to be a light in your neighborhood is not just another thing to check off your list - you're investing in eternal kingdom work!

### **PICK A POSSIBILITY**

1. Holidays - These are key times to be a light! The possibilities are endless. Don't miss the “already-there” opportunities.
2. Newcomers - A very natural opportunity to connect. Your plate of goodies and offer to help if needed, is a wonderful way to lay a great foundation for later relationships.
3. Block picnics - Initiate one of these if it's not already happening.
4. Kindness - Our family has discovered that random acts of kindness have opened doors to our neighbors' hearts that had appeared tightly shut. This takes time and energy and sometimes the opportunities don't come at an ideal time in our schedules, but the time invested brings great dividends! Be alert for these opportunities.
5. Ladies night out - An excellent and effective way to build relationships with other women in your neighborhood.
6. "Soup's On" - Invite your neighbors, one family at a time, for a simple meal and get to know them.

**....."God's kindness leads you toward repentance." Romans 2:4**

### **Excellent Resources for inspiring "illumination" in our neighborhoods:**

Christmas Gatherings, How to host evangelistic Christmas gatherings. Joyce Rademan

Conspiracy of Kindness, A refreshing new approach to sharing the love of Jesus with others. Steve Sjogren, Servant Publications, Ann Arbor, MI

Developing a Prayer-Care-Share Life-style, A Lighthouse Devotional Guide, www.HopeMinistries.org Grand Rapids, MI