Date Night Challenge

Experience Details

Experience Name: Date Night Challenge
Content Author: N/A
Ladder Rung: Ongoing Engagement
In-Person or Online: In-Person
Season: All Seasons
Experience Type: Marriage-Oriented
Experience Concept: Consistent, Repeatable Experience
Contact: N/A

Strategic Objective:

- Host a welcoming experience as a next step for Outreach Event attendees where couples can invest in their relationships, form new friendships, and deepen their involvement and trust in your church.
- Enrichment or skills exercises are woven into the experience and practiced by couples.
- Promote your Growth Journey experience with on-site registration and/or personal testimony.

Experience Description:

The Date Night Challenge is designed around one fundamental concept: intentional date nights are vital for a strong marriage. This experience incentives couples to go on dates (at least once per month) to break away from the daily grind and grow in connection and emotional intimacy. Couples who complete the most dates can be awarded a grand prize (weekend getaway, gift card to a fancy restaurant) or a series of prizes. Participating couples get access to simple date ideas and conversation starters. Couples are encouraged to share a photo on social media (or email directly to church staff) as proof of their date.
**How to Deploy It:**

**Logistics:** The Date Night Challenge is an easy-to-run but high impact experience for couples. There are four overarching steps your church needs to take to make it successful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepare</th>
<th>Launch</th>
<th>Manage</th>
<th>Incentivize</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer these three questions:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Create a Communio Pathways registration page to enroll participants and collect contact information.</strong> See templated page here.</td>
<td><strong>Email registrants monthly with the dates, questions, and encouragement. Remember to highlight your other events in these emails!</strong></td>
<td><strong>For ongoing Date Night Challenges, award prizes monthly.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. When will the Challenge be run?</td>
<td>Launching the Date Night Challenge at an Outreach Event is optimal, due to the presence of the external audience. Supplemeting the launch with internal promotion- email, social media, and text- to the whole church community is a great way to get people involved. See “Promotion &amp; Invitation Tips” below.</td>
<td>As evidence of completion, each couple should submit a photo of themselves on each date. The photos can sent to a designated email, posted to social media with a designated hashtag, or posted in a private Facebook group. <strong>View a Communio Pathways demonstration for managing the Date Night Challenge here.</strong></td>
<td><strong>For seasonal Challenges, consider hosting a Wrap-Up Party where participants get together for an onsite date night. This can be a unique experience, or can take place at a pre-existing Outreach or Ongoing Engagement. Feature a date night photos slideshow and a special drawing for couples who completed every date to be entered to win prizes. Consider hosting an “awards show” as part of the festivities.</strong></td>
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<td>2. What prizes or incentives will you offer?</td>
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<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> you can use dates from other seasons if they seem appropriate.</td>
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<td>3. Who will manage the Challenge?</td>
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<td><strong>For ongoing Date Night Challenges, award prizes monthly.</strong></td>
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<td>Once a time-frame, prizes, and a manager have been selected, the Date Night Challenge is ready to be launched. Select date concepts from page 5 to get started.</td>
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<td><strong>For seasonal Challenges, consider hosting a Wrap-Up Party where participants get together for an onsite date night.</strong></td>
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The Date Night Challenge can be run in one of two ways: **seasonally or ongoing.**

- **A Seasonal Date Night Challenge** is run over the course of one season (3-5 months). For example, you may choose to run a Summer Date Night Challenge due to the natural slowing down of the church calendar during the summer months. Prizes are offered to those who complete the most dates. Here’s how to deploy it:

  1. **Prepare:** Select a season to run your Date Night Challenge and task one person to manage it. Select an official start date and end date. Select prizes. Download the appropriate seasonal dates from page 6 of this guide. **NOTE:** you can use dates from other seasons if they seem appropriate.

  2. **Launch:** Start announcing the Date Night Challenge a few weeks prior to the start date. If there is an Outreach Event during this period, make sure enrollment in the Challenge is the primary call-to-action. If you are using Communio Pathways to manage the Challenge, customize the confirmation email that registrants receive upon registering. **See sample email copy and schedule here.** On the Challenge start date, send the first email to all registrants.
3. **Manage**: Email registrants monthly with dates and encouragement. Designate an email address for participants to send date night pictures to for tracking. You can also choose a social media hashtag for participants to use if they want to post pictures online. Each month, mark off the couples who submit a picture. See this Communio Pathways demonstration.

4. **Incentivize/Wrap Up**: If participation is high, consider hosting a wrap up party to celebrate the Date Night Challenge (this can be a stand-alone or incorporated into an existing Outreach or Ongoing Engagement). Consider including a slideshow with submitted photos and an awards ceremony (funniest photo, best caption, etc.). Prizes can be drawn at this experience.

- **An Ongoing Date Night Challenge** is run continuously without a definitive end date. Prizes are awarded on a monthly or periodical basis. Participants must join during a set registration period. Creating a Date Night Challenge Facebook group is easier to establish and grow. Here's how it works:

1. **Prepare**: Select someone from your Hospitality Team to manage the Challenge and plan out the first few months of dates and prizes. Download the appropriate seasonal dates from page 4 of this guide. NOTE: you can use dates from other seasons if they seem appropriate.

2. **Launch**: Start promoting the Date Night Challenge a few weeks prior to the first month through email, social media, public announcements, and word-of mouth. If you have an Outreach Event scheduled during this period, make sure you promote the challenge as a new step for all attendees with opportunities to register onsite. If you are using Communio Pathways to manage the Challenge, customize the confirmation email that registrants receive upon registering. See sample email copy and schedule here. On the Challenge start date, send the first email to all registrants.

3. **Manage**: Email registrants monthly with date ideas and encouragement. Designate an email address for couples to send a date night photo as “proof” they completed their date and for tracking purposes. You can also choose a social media hashtag for participants to use if they want to post photos online. Each month, mark off the couples who submit a picture. See this Communio Pathways demonstration. Consider creating a special private Facebook group for those who are participating in the Challenge. This can be a place for participants to post pictures and interact with each other. Be sure to have your leaders and volunteers post first to spur others on!

4. **Incentivize/Wrap Up**: At the end of each month, randomly select or choose the most committed couple who participated to win the monthly prize.
**Enrichment:** Communio has curated a strong assortment of date concepts and accompanying discussion questions for you to choose from below. Each date is hyperlinked to a downloadable PDF with a short date description and a few thought-provoking discussion questions for couples to talk through on their date. Use this list as a guide. Feel free to create your own date concepts and questions.

At the beginning of each month, email out 3-4 date options for your couples to choose from. Some date concepts can be used in multiple seasons, including Hiking Date, Biking Date, Time for Adventure, Picnic Date, Family Matters, and Farmer’s Market.

### Winter
- Ice-Skating
- Cooking Class
- Art Museum
- Progressive Dinner Party
- Sledding Date
- Carriage Ride
- Basketball Date
- Christmas Village
- Gingerbread House
- Paint and Sip
- Christmas Lights

### Spring
- Rooftop Drinks
- Paddle Boats
- Thrift Store Date
- Hammock Hang
- Gardening Date
- Tourist in your Own Town
- Ice Cream Date
- Botanical Garden
- Fill Their Tank
- Winery Date
- Pickleball Date

### Summer
- Farmer’s Market
- Fireworks Date
- Baseball Game
- Family Matters
- Outdoor Concert
- Hiking Date
- Biking Date
- Stargazing
- Time for Adventure
- Picnic Date
- Beach Date

### Fall
- Sunrise/Sunset
- Corn Maze
- Leaf Peeping
- Brewery Date
- Apple/Pumpkin Picking
- Baking Date
- Historical Site
- Football Game
- Coffee Shop Date
- New Cuisine
- Book Store Date
Once you have confirmed the timeline and details for your Date Night Challenge, you will need to promote it through all internal channels. Target couples who have been involved in the past and those who have been less engaged, but who may be looking for something fun to do on their own time.

**Email**

**Subject:** What would a commitment to regular date nights do for your marriage?

**Body:**

Friends,

You know that if you own a car, regular preventive maintenance is integral to keeping your vehicle on the road for a long time. Oil changes, tire rotations, and inspections are all part of proper car care and maintenance.

If your car is important enough to regularly invest in, then how much more important is regular investment into your marriage? In the hectic whirlwind of everyday life, intentional time with your spouse can unintentionally take the back-burner spot in your weekly and monthly schedules. However, research shows that couples who go on a monthly date are 14% less likely to split up than those who don’t.

There is no better time to invest intentional, quality time with your spouse than right now. This summer, join us in the DATE NIGHT CHALLENGE. This is a series of monthly date nights designed to bring more intentionality (and fun!) into your marriage or relationship. Click below to get started with the Date Night Challenge and enter into a chance to win some amazing prizes!

**Social Media Posts**

Attention <<Church Name>> members and friends! How often do you intentionally invest quality time into your most important relationship? How would your relationship be impacted if you committed to one date each month? Now is the time to invest in quality time with your spouse! This summer, join the DATE NIGHT CHALLENGE — monthly date nights designed to bring more intentionality (and fun!) into your marriage or relationship. Click below to enter and get a chance to win some amazing prizes!

**Texts**

Tired of Netflix and take-out counting as date night? Join us for our Summer Date Night Challenge and invest some quality time into your most important relationship! (link)

**Public Announcements**

Couples - you’re invited to participate in a Date Night Challenge! You may be wondering, “What is a Date Night Challenge?” Well, it’s simple! Just sign up and go on one date per month. At the beginning of each month, we’ll email you some date ideas and discussion questions. Simply snap a pic of yourselves on the date, submit it, and be entered into monthly drawings to win great prizes! See our website for details.