

Serving as a Volunteer in a Typical Small Appalachian Church

(Key things to know and to do)

1. **Get to know before you go!** (What is the church's story?)
2. **Build relationships with key leaders.** (Let them help do the event.)
3. **Make the event a family celebration.** (Put the heart on the same level with the head.)
4. **Less is more—sometimes.** (Thrift is a staple element.)
5. **Know to whom you speak!** (Sell to the right person.)
6. **Appreciate the small or rural church.** (They are our roots.)
7. **Let the church know you.** (Who will they meet when you arrive?)
8. **Be practical with your knowledge.** (Share successful experiences that relate to them.)
9. **Integrate teaching and learning with their concerns.** (Listen—then teach.)
10. **Remember “small churches” carry a prejudice in our culture.** (No paternalism.)
11. **Create a hunger for your resources.** (Meet needs—then suggest resources.)
12. **Be passive-aggressive to get into the churches.** (Baptists like independence.)
13. **Watch the hatchets.** (Rivalries spill over into the church.)
14. **Family is more important than education.** (People; “who” is more important than “what.”)
15. **Resistance is very present.** (Oldest organization in the community.)
16. **Become part of Sunday School through adoption, not membership.** (Join a larger church; are adopted into a smaller church.)
17. **Must have options to pick and choose.** (Resistant to simply “you ought to.”)
18. **Limited resources perception.** (“We cannot afford it.”)

Adapted from information developed by Belvin Cox, Small Sunday School Consultant, Bible Teaching-Reaching Division, BSSB