



# NEIGHBORS

## **Neighbors & Halloween**

Carmel is committed to making disciples of those Nearest, our Neighbors, and the Nations. Because of our mission, we believe it is important to show the love of Christ to our neighbors every chance we get, even on Halloween. Halloween is obviously not a day that we celebrate at church, but it is a cultural tradition that brings many of our neighbors out of their homes to walk through our neighborhoods. We believe this makes it a great day for the Carmel Family to love and serve our neighbors! We encourage you to use this secular holiday to accomplish a spiritual purpose.

Halloween is a great opportunity to go next door or across the street to build relationships with your neighbors.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine..." (Matthew 5:16). Loving and serving our neighbors means that you approach all you meet as if you were a missionary (which you are). If you were a missionary in China at the time of the Chinese New Year Celebration (with all of its non-Christian roots), you would go to that celebration to socialize with neighbors in order to show them the love of Christ. We simply want you to be missionaries in your own neighborhoods.

## **Missional Halloween Ideas**

1. **Be Prayerful.** Ask the Spirit to open your eyes and ears to the needs around you and to help you listen for ways that you can serve your neighbors. Pray for open doors for new relationships and gospel conversations. Be sure to include your children in your prayer time so that they can participate as you carry out God's mission.
2. **Be Present.** Come to the door or hang out on the porch and try to get to know some people and where they live in the neighborhood.
3. **Be Social.** Set up a portable fire pit in your driveway and visit with neighbors as they pass by or gather around. Let your neighbors know that you will roast marshmallows, make s'mores, or serve warm cider and invite them to drop by.
4. **Build Relationships.** Get to know families and their stories. Ask people about themselves and pay attention to their needs. Look for opportunities to pray for them or to serve them at a later time.
5. **Connect with others.** If you decide to take your children out, join with other neighborhood families. Explain to your children that the family is on mission not to get tons of candy, but rather to meet and get to know new people so

you can eventually share Jesus with them. Consider what you wear (your costume) as a way to strike up a conversation.

6. **Have a Party.** You may want to throw a party! Send the dads out with the kids while the moms socialize with some hot apple cider, coffee or tea. Then, reconvene with the parents and kids together to examine all of the loot (kids love to show their parents and other kids the loot).
7. **Attend a Party.** If others are throwing parties, you may want to join them. If so, bring snacks or whatever is needed. Then, serve by helping clean up and strike up a conversation in the process.
8. **Get Involved.** If your community has a special event, join them and invite some neighbors to go with you. Get to know their stories along the way.
9. **Do a reverse Halloween.** Instead of hanging out at your home, bake and take some cookies to your neighbors and introduce yourself.
10. **Serve others.** As a family, dress up as positive characters and take treats to a nearby retirement community or nursing home. You will need to plan this in advance and ask permission.