CHURCHES, GIVE YOUR SINGLES SPACE TO MINGLE

By Justin Megna, [Church Leaders](https://churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/352467-churches-give-your-singles-space-to-mingle.html/3)

Churches, please know that we’re discouraged. We’re frustrated. At times, we face deep emotional pain.

We’re the singles within your congregations who earnestly desire to marry but can’t seem to find a marital match.

You might not be aware of the difficulties and pain we experience in persistent singleness. That’s because we don’t talk about these things openly on Sunday mornings. Expressing deep pain of persistent singleness is reserved only for the closest of confidants. And the worst moments, when tears flow, are often only witnessed by God.

Another reason you might not be aware of these things is because those who occupy positions of church leadership tend to be married. This isn’t anyone’s fault. It’s a natural effect. The passing of time increases both the likelihood that a person will enter church leadership and the likelihood that a person will marry. The natural effect is that church leaders—especially [**senior leaders**](https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/350529-a-personal-warning-dont-be-the-senior-leader-unless.html)—tend to be married.

While there’s nothing wrong with being a married church leader, there is an issue inasmuch as married church leaders might not understand the distress of persistent [**singleness**](https://churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/344303-lottie-moon-didnt-waste-her-singleness.html), especially those that married young. This can result in married church leaders failing to address the needs of their single congregants—not because of neglect or malice—but because of the natural reality that insulates their awareness from the needs of single congregants.

However, there’s much attentive churches can do to serve their single congregants.

**Why Christian Singles Don’t Meet**

Many single Christian men and women wonder where all the good Christian bachelors and bachelorettes are. It might seem peculiar that these single groups have a hard time finding each other in spite of wanting to meet so greatly. There is, again, a natural reason.

The typical Christian adult spends most of his or her time in three places: home, work and church. Home offers no opportunity to meet a romantic partner. Work might offer opportunity, as office relationships are known to occur. But many vocations offer little or no opportunity to meet eligible Christian singles.

That leaves church. One might think church would be a place to recommend for a Christian to seek an eligible mate. However, churches, you need to understand two problems with this idea:

The first problem is that it’s easy to exhaust the pool of available singles at one’s home church. This is especially the case if one attends a small church. At one small church I attended years ago, there were no eligible bachelorettes my age at all. Another church I attended later had only one. After getting to know her through church functions, I knew we weren’t a good romantic match.

The second problem is that **Sunday morning worship services are terrible places to try to meet other Christian singles.**

This is because there’s precious little time for mingling. People tend to arrive minutes before the service starts. Once the service starts, everyone must turn their attention to worshipping, preventing further conversation. Once the service ends, it may again be only minutes before the congregants, including the singles, leave. This Sunday morning reality leaves only two minuscule windows of time for a bachelor or bachelorette to attempt to meet and start a conversation with someone who appears to be an eligible single.

So let’s imagine a person visits a new church in hopes of meeting eligible [**Christian singles**](https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/320364-is-sex-keeping-christian-singles-from-marrying-today-christian-dating.html). If he or she fails to connect with anyone new during those two narrow windows of time, he or she must wait an entire week to try again at a Sunday morning service. This is incredibly costly in terms of time. Moreover, every week a person spends visiting other churches in hopes of meeting singles is a week that person is absent from his or her home church.

People who are socially and romantically adept might be able to turn these narrow windows of time into dates, but, then again, people who are socially and romantically adept usually don’t remain single. Churches will need to provide better opportunities for those congregants who aren’t in the upper echelons of social and romantic skill.

Churches can provide better opportunities for their singles to mingle by way of single groups, but only if they’re done right.

### **Two Errors to Avoid in Singles Events**

There are two errors churches can make in addressing their singles.

The first error is to impress single congregants with the sense that there is [**something bad or wrong with being single**](https://churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/284354-singleness-not-problem-solved-desring-god-stacy-reaoch.html). This notion is unbiblical, but single Christians can feel the impression of this sentiment if church members express the expectation that they participate in efforts to find a mate.

Some Christian singles are perfectly [**content and happy with singleness**](https://churchleaders.com/podcast/350560-sam-allberry-you-dont-have-to-be-married-to-minister.html). In my personal experience, they’re few and far between, but they do exist. Content singles shouldn’t be expected or urged to find a mate.

Even for a single who wants to marry, being urged to make efforts to find a match can aggravate the already felt displeasure and frustration with singleness.

The second error—which is sometimes made in an effort to avoid the first—is to offer singles no help in finding a match at all. Perhaps the best way churches can help single Christians meet is by providing appropriate opportunities to mingle.

### **How to Help Christian Singles Mingle**

Out of all the Christian singles events I’ve experienced, the best one was provided by a church that was a 30-minute drive from my home. This church provided monthly single events on Saturday evenings, and these events were publicized on the church’s website.

The one I attended began with unstructured recreational time. It was early summer, so I and the other singles enjoyed playing outdoor yard games together. Several of us organized a game of ultimate Frisbee.

From recreation, the event transitioned to dinner, which the church had provided through a local restaurant. I happily ate and talked with several other singles around a table, which provided a chance to get to know them better. Never underestimate the power of shared meals  to form relational connection.

After dinner, everyone assembled for a brief time of musical worship followed by a biblical message.

After the message, everyone returned to an unstructured time of mingling and talking as the event wound down. That was when I got the phone number of a lovely young woman who was among those with whom I played ultimate Frisbee and ate dinner. Getting her number led to the two of us later meeting for coffee.

**The brilliance of this event was that it offered the opportunity for romantic connection between singles without requiring it.**

There was enough time for meeting and mingling for romantic connections to solidify. But the event never felt as though its sole purpose was matchmaking. Singles who didn’t want to form romantic connections could have participated in and enjoyed the fellowship without trouble.

**Events that offer opportunity for romantic connection without requiring it are the events that serve Christian singles best.**

They provide space for singles to meet and mingle without framing singleness as a bad thing. The possibilities for creating single groups with these characteristics are endless. Churches can adjust the type or frequency of events depending on what serves the local congregation best. Scavenger hunts, social dances, game nights, hiking outings, service events… There are many ways to help Christian singles meet, mingle and fellowship when the will and creativity to do so are present.

### **Interchurch Connections**

Another excellent way church leaders in particular can serve their singles is by leveraging their interchurch networks to provide interchurch singles events. Remember that one problem for many Christian singles is exhausting the pool of eligible singles in their home church. This problem can be alleviated by inviting multiple churches to participate in  interchurch singles events. Instead of singles trying to visit new churches on Sundays in hopes of snagging a conversation with another single, singles from many churches in an area can come together to meet and mingle for a sufficient length of time. Church leaders can make this happen by coordinating interchurch events with the leaders of other local churches.

Another benefit of multiple churches participating in singles events is that they might corporately be able to cover the cost of an event that might be too great for any one church to cover individually.

Why not invite a dozen area churches to participate in an annual singles charity gala? Invite singles from each church to volunteer to help put the event together. They’ll be happy to get to know each other while they work together. Charge a modest door fee from attendees and donate it to a good cause. This is just one idea out of countless as to how churches can work together to help their singles mingle and simultaneously [**serve their communities**](https://churchleaders.com/children/childrens-ministry-articles/330444-simple-ways-to-serve-your-local-community.html). Let the brainstorming begin!

Churches, the possible ways you can serve your singles by helping them meet and mingle are endless if you have the will and creativity to do so. Offer your singles the opportunity to find romantic connections without requiring them to do so. In this way, you will do them a priceless service. Give your singles space to mingle.