

Planning a Seminar

LOCATE CHURCH where seminar can be held. Needs to be easy to find from major highways, have adequate parking, and be accessible by public transportation. Specific needs:

1. Room for teaching sessions, meals and coffee breaks, book and free lit tables, and registration. A large fellowship hall with room for all the above is ideal. If space permits, participants appreciate sitting at tables for the workshops. (Depending on the length of the table, we can sit 4-6 behind and on the ends of each table.) The same tables are used for meals. Attendance ranges from 20-50.
2. A blank wall for projecting my PowerPoint slides. I will bring my projector.
3. Sound system and wireless lapel mic and someone to show us how to operate. Depending on size of room and number attending possible to do without.
4. Help setting up book and free lit tables.
5. Volunteer (unless I bring someone with me) to handle book sales in exchange for a free book.
6. Someone from the church to let us in about two hours before the starting time and lock up about two hours after the close.
7. Janitorial help for set-up and tear down of tables and chairs and cleaning and restocking paper products in bathrooms if we have a large group. (Seminar pays an honorarium if there is no set fee.) In some churches the youth group has handled set-up and teardown as a fundraiser.
8. Enough tables available
 - My use while teaching - 2
 - Registration - 1
 - Freebies - 1
 - Books – 3 or 4
 - Lunch & coffee break serving table – 1 or 2
 - Participants - one for each 4-6 attendees if space to sit behind during workshops or one for each 8 attendees if use only for meals)
9. Lectern or a music stand.
10. Phone number we can give to attendees for emergency phone calls during seminar.
11. Number to reach janitor or church member during seminar should we have any needs like popping a circuit breaker or smoke detectors that have been known to go off for no reason.
12. Cost? Even when available free of charge, the seminar always makes a donation to the church.

Other Advance Arrangements

1. Contact motels close to church to secure rates and phone numbers for brochure. We do not guarantee rooms will be filled, sign any contracts, pay any fees, or book any reservations. We only secure info and print in the brochure.

2. Make arrangements for coffee breaks & meals. Need:

Regular and decaf coffee (adequate # of coffee pots available?)

Regular and decaf tea

Creamer, sugar & diet sugar

Stirrers

Something cold - water and/or juice (adequate # of pitchers?)

Baked goods for morning coffee break

Fruit, veggies/dip, or crackers/cheese for afternoon coffee break

Lunch - typically lunch meat/cheese, rolls, salad, chips, dessert

Options for lunch: purchase box lunches or brown bag

Paper products: cups, napkins, plates, silverware

For a two-day seminar we usually order pizza for Friday night. Attendees appreciate a tossed salad with it. Ice cream or cookies are great for a short break before the Friday evening critique session.

3. Kitchen help for coffee breaks and meals. Possibilities:

- Seminar participants on full or partial working scholarship.
- Church youth group or women's group as a fundraiser. Suggest that the seminar pay a \$75 honorarium for each meal and \$25 for each coffee break. In addition the seminar needs to cover the cost of food plus the cost of beverage and snacks at the coffee breaks. Option: Box lunches purchased by participants when they register.

4. Arrange for help with set-up. Volunteers appreciated but this is also a job those with financial need can do on working scholarship. It's also a good youth group fundraiser. Depending on number of helpers takes about 90 minutes to:

Set up free lit tables (optional)

Set up book tables

Hang signs (provided)

Set up lunch/coffee break area

Set up registration area

Set up tables and chairs for participants

5. Arrange for help with clean-up after seminar.

6. If free lit is desired, find someone willing to receive and store boxes. Ideally these should go to the church. Publishers/periodical editors are not as open to sending free lit as in the past.

7. Find someone willing to receive and store boxes of books if I'm not driving.
8. Do brochure mailing (labels provided by Write His Answer office). Brochure should be mailed 6-8 weeks prior to seminar.
9. Duplicate and collate packet of handouts (masters to be provided).

Publicity

- Explore possibilities of media interviews.
- Send news release to local papers and make follow-up calls.
- Distribute brochures to local churches and Christian bookstores.
- Contact other writers' groups in area (if any) to encourage them to participate.

Registrar (or registrations can be sent directly to me for online registration via PayPal)

- Acknowledge registrations.
- Receive phone calls and answer questions. (Should have at least one local number in brochure.)
- Secure one person to help at registration table.
- Prepare roster of conferees for distribution at conference (unless registrations sent to me).
- Prepare name tags.

At Seminar

Someone to open with prayer and share info about sponsoring group (if any).

One or two people to handle book sales. I usually bring someone with me when I drive. (I will secure a temporary sales tax license if I do not already have a license for the state where the seminar is held.)

Other

Provide a map and/or written directions to the church for the brochure.

Make plans for fellowship/prayer times before and after seminar and Saturday night dinner (if several people or a group become involved in preparations). We often order something for Saturday night and meet in a home so that we can pray over the commitments people make in close of seminar.

Most Important Responsibility - cover the seminar with prayer.

Seminar Check-off List

Marlene's Responsibilities

Preparation of brochure (unless group prefers to do themselves)

Mailing list (on labels) of writers in area

Facebook and Twitter posts, blog, and email to my Constant Contact list

Requesting freebie literature (optional)

Packet to hand out at seminar. (I can provide masters for group to duplicate or bring packets with me if I am driving. The cost of duplicating is paid from registration fees.)

Providing a book table of helpful titles at a discounted price

Support and encouragement to sponsoring group/coordinator

Suggested Budget

Registration fees cover all seminar expenses including:

Cost of printing and mailing brochure. (I get a very good price through PsPrint.)

Marlene's travel expenses

Cost of coffee breaks and meal(s)

Honorarium of \$50 to \$75 each for church, janitor or youth group, coordinator or sponsoring group.

Honorarium to Marlene for teaching. I'd like to be able to earn \$500 for a day-long seminar; \$800 for a Friday afternoon & evening and all day Saturday seminar. This is not a set fee nor do I require a minimum number of participants. God provides!

Suggest that any profits after the above is paid be split between the sponsoring group (or coordinator) and Write His Answer Ministries to help fund scholarships to the Colorado and Greater Philly Christian Writers Conference.

Suggest that partial and working scholarships be offered those with financial need.