

Portfolio Samples

Writing for Christian ministries, schools, non-profits, and churches

A collection of newsletters, articles, and relationship-centered communications that connect an organization's mission with the people who make its work possible.

Selected work

- 01 Ministry newsletter** A community supper update that gives supporters a clear next step.
- 02 School family newsletter** A practical weekly update with dates, classroom life and family participation.
- 03 School blog post** A thoughtful admissions article about what families can notice on a school visit.
- 04 Church blog post** An approachable reflection on practicing hospitality beyond the front door.
- 05 Donor appeal** A specific, dignified invitation to support a winter meal program.
- 06 Donor thank you** A personal acknowledgment that centers gratitude rather than another ask.
- 07 Donor impact update** A transparent account of how a campaign's funds were used.
- 08 Event invitation** A warm invitation to a ministry gathering with clear logistics.
- 09 Church welcome sequence** Two follow-up emails that offer connection without pressure.
- 10 Volunteer briefing** An actionable event message that supports a thoughtful guest experience.

About this collection

These are original concept samples for a prospective portfolio, not commissioned client work. All organizations, programs, people, events, dates, figures, and outcomes in the samples are fictional. Bracketed items represent personalization fields or links to be supplied before use.

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Harborlight Community Ministry • Fictional organization

Around the Table

Audience: supporters and volunteers. Purpose: connect a ministry update with participation.

Subject: There is a place for you at the table

Preview: A look inside community supper, plus two ways to take part this fall.

Dear Harborlight friends,

Before the first guest arrives for community supper, someone puts the kettle on. Another volunteer checks the table for a wobbly leg. In the kitchen, the team sets aside a clearly labeled meal for a guest who called about a food allergy.

These details are small, but they shape the welcome. We want our neighbors to find a meal they can enjoy, a chair they do not have to ask for and people who are glad they came.

An evening with room to stay

Our Thursday supper is open to neighbors of all ages. Some come with a friend; others arrive on their own. There is no program to sit through and no expectation to share a personal story. Guests can eat, talk, help clear a table or head home when they need to.

As a Christian ministry, we see hospitality as a practical expression of loving our neighbors. That begins with listening. This month, we are adding a quieter table away from the serving area after guests asked for an easier place to have a conversation.

A useful way to give your time

The cleanup team needs two additional volunteers for one Thursday each month. The shift runs from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., and a team lead will show you where everything belongs. You do not need kitchen experience; comfortable shoes and a willingness to pitch in are enough.

Interested? Reply with “cleanup team,” and we will help you find a date.

Join us for an evening at Harborlight

On October 22, we are inviting supporters to share a simple supper, meet the team and hear about our winter plans. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Harborlight Community Room. There is no cost to attend, and you are welcome to bring a friend.

Reserve your place by October 15: [RSVP link]

Thank you for helping make this a place where neighbors can come as they are.
The Harborlight team

You receive this newsletter because you signed up for Harborlight updates. [Manage preferences] • [Unsubscribe]

Cedar Grove Christian School • Fictional organization

The Cedar Grove Weekly

Audience: current school families. Purpose: combine a glimpse of school life with practical action.

Subject: This week at Cedar Grove: reading, conferences and a fall gathering

Preview: Choose your conference time by Friday and save the date for Family Reading Night.

Dear Cedar Grove families,

In our elementary classrooms this week, students are practicing a question that can open a whole conversation: “What makes you think that?” Whether they are discussing a character in a story or explaining a math solution, they are learning to listen closely and give reasons for their ideas.

At home, try asking that question during a shared story or a conversation at dinner. There is no worksheet to return. The goal is simply to enjoy hearing how your child thinks.

Choose your conference time

Parent-teacher conferences will take place October 20–21, from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. These conversations are a chance to compare what we notice at school and at home, celebrate growth, and name a useful next step together.

Please select a 20-minute appointment by Friday, October 9: [Conference signup]. If these times do not work for your family, contact the school office so we can arrange another option.

Bring a book and settle in

Family Reading Night is Thursday, October 15, from 6:00 to 7:15 p.m. in the school library. Teachers will read a few favorite stories, and families will have time to browse and read together. Children should attend with an adult. There is no admission charge or registration requirement.

A quiet reading space will be available beside the library. Please contact the office if there is anything we can do to help your family participate comfortably.

Serving our neighbors

Student council is collecting new socks for Harborlight’s winter clothing shelf through October 16. All sizes are welcome; donations can go in the collection basket outside the office. Participation is optional. Classes will also write encouragement cards as part of their service time.

Dates to keep handy

October 9 Conference signup closes

October 15 Family Reading Night, 6:00–7:15 p.m.

October 16 Last day for the sock collection

October 20–21 Parent-teacher conferences

Thank you for the many ways you partner with our teachers. We are grateful to share in the daily work of helping your children learn and grow.

The Cedar Grove team

Questions about any item above? Reply to this email or contact [School office email].

Cedar Grove Christian School • Fictional organization

What to Notice on a School Visit

Audience: prospective parents. Purpose: offer useful guidance while introducing a relational approach to Christian education.

A school visit can move quickly. You see classrooms, hear about the curriculum and leave with plenty to consider. How do you decide what matters most?

Start with one question: Can I picture my child learning, asking for help and becoming known here? A few ordinary moments can help you explore it.

Listen to how adults respond to questions

A student who gives an unexpected answer offers a useful window into a classroom. Does the teacher invite the student to explain? Is there room to make a mistake and try again? Notice how adults respond when learning becomes less tidy than a lesson plan.

You can also ask what happens when a student needs more support or a greater challenge. A clear answer should describe a process, including how teachers communicate with families. A welcoming tour matters; so does knowing what the next conversation would look like if your child were struggling.

Ask how faith shapes an ordinary day

In a Christian school, faith belongs in more than the chapel schedule. Ask how it informs the way students study, disagree, take responsibility and care for one another. Invite the person leading your tour to share a concrete classroom example.

A school might describe how students consider their responsibilities to neighbors when studying a community, or how a teacher helps children work toward reconciliation after a conflict. Examples help you understand what the school means by Christian formation and whether that approach aligns with your family's convictions.

Look for ways families are brought into the conversation

Parents and teachers see children in different settings. A healthy partnership makes room for both perspectives. Ask how you will hear about your child's progress, who to contact with a concern and how the school handles a disagreement.

Listen for practical details rather than a promise that problems never happen. Knowing whom to call and what to expect can be more reassuring than hearing that everyone always feels connected.

Leave room for your child's observations

If your child comes along, ask what they noticed before you share your impressions. Which room felt inviting? What seemed interesting? Was anything confusing? Their response does not have to settle the decision, but it deserves a place in it.

After the visit, note what encouraged you, what needs clarification and what your child said. Bring those notes to a follow-up conversation.

At Cedar Grove, we welcome your questions and the chance to get to know your family. Take your time; the conversation can continue after the tour.

Plan a visit: [\[School visit link\]](#)

Grace Table Church • Fictional organization

Hospitality After Hello

Audience: church members and volunteers. Purpose: translate a Christian value into thoughtful everyday practice.

The welcome at the door is often the most visible part of church hospitality. Someone smiles, offers a bulletin and points toward the sanctuary. Those moments matter. But for a person visiting alone, the more difficult moment may come after the service, when everyone else seems to know where to go.

Hospitality continues in that less organized space. It asks us to notice what another person might need without deciding their needs for them. Sometimes that means making an introduction. Sometimes it means giving someone room to leave quietly.

Offer a choice instead of an assumption

“Would you like me to walk with you?” is a different invitation from “Come with me.” The first leaves room for an answer. We can offer that same freedom when we invite someone to coffee, introduce them to a pastor or ask whether they would like information about a group.

A person may be new to the neighborhood, returning to church after a long absence or simply visiting family. We do not need their whole story to treat them with care. A clear invitation and an unhurried response are a good place to begin.

Make the ordinary things easier to find

Where is the restroom? Is coffee for everyone? Where should a parent go if a child needs a break? Familiar spaces can hide questions from the people who know them best.

One useful exercise is to walk through the building as if you have never been there. Look at the signs. Notice the language on a welcome card. Consider whether someone could find a quieter place without needing to explain why they want one. Small changes can make it easier for guests to participate on their own terms.

Let remembering become a habit

If someone tells you their name, use it. If you forget, it is fine to ask again. When you see them another week, a simple “It’s good to see you” can mean more than a polished welcome speech.

Remembering also calls for discretion. A conversation shared in confidence is not material for the next prayer-group update without permission. We can be a community that cares about people while respecting what they choose to share.

Keep the invitation open

Christian hospitality grows out of the welcome we have received in Christ. It is not a reward for becoming involved quickly or knowing the right words. We can offer friendship without turning every conversation into a request to join a team.

This Sunday, try one small practice: stay available for a few minutes after the service. Put your phone away. Look beyond your usual circle. Ask an open question, and listen long enough for an answer.

You do not have to meet everyone. You might simply help one person feel that there is room for them here.

**Interested in serving with our welcome team?
Contact [Welcome team email] to learn about an upcoming orientation.**

Harborlight Community Ministry • Fictional organization

Help Keep Thursday Supper Open

Audience: existing supporters. Purpose: make a specific seasonal funding invitation.

Subject: Help set the table this winter

Preview: Our \$12,000 goal will support twelve weeks of community supper.

Dear [First name],

On a cold Thursday evening, a warm meal is a practical kind of welcome. At Harborlight, it comes with a place to sit, familiar faces and time to enjoy supper without a bill at the end.

We are preparing for twelve weeks of winter community meals, and I am writing to invite your support. Our goal is to raise \$12,000 by November 30 to cover ingredients, meal supplies and part of the kitchen and community room's operating costs.

The winter plan includes \$7,200 for food, \$1,800 for meal and kitchen supplies, and \$3,000 toward utilities and cleaning. Together, those resources will help our volunteer team prepare and serve supper each Thursday throughout the season.

A meal offered with dignity

Neighbors do not need to explain their circumstances to join us. Some come because grocery money is tight; others are looking for company. We want each guest to be welcomed as a person, with the freedom to share as much or as little as they choose.

For us, this is one way to put our Christian faith into practice: caring for our neighbors through something useful, consistent and freely offered.

Would you consider a gift of \$50, \$100 or an amount that is meaningful to you? Your gift will join others in supporting the full winter supper program.

Give toward winter supper: [Donation link]

We will share a program update after the winter season, including how funds were used. If you would like to learn more before giving, reply to this message. I would be glad to talk with you.

Thank you for considering a place in this work.

With gratitude,

[Director name]

Executive Director, Harborlight Community Ministry

Prefer fewer fundraising emails? [Manage preferences] • [Unsubscribe]

Harborlight Community Ministry • Fictional organization

Thank You for Helping Set the Table

Audience: a recent winter campaign donor. Purpose: acknowledge the gift with warmth and specificity.

Subject: Thank you, [First name]

Preview: Your generosity will help support a welcoming winter supper.

Dear [First name],

Thank you for your gift of [Gift amount] to Harborlight's winter supper program. I am grateful that you chose to help make these Thursday evenings possible.

Your gift will support the food, supplies and welcoming space behind twelve weeks of community meals. That includes the less visible work: stocking the pantry, keeping the kitchen ready and making sure the room is clean and comfortable before the doors open.

We want our neighbors to be able to count on a meal and a warm welcome. Your generosity is part of the steady preparation that helps us offer both.

As the season unfolds, our team will pay attention to what guests tell us and what volunteers learn along the way. After the program ends, we will send you a brief update on the meals served, how funds were used and what we are carrying forward.

If you ever have a question about the program, you can reply directly to this email. You do not need to wait for the next update to hear from us.

Thank you again for your kindness and trust. We are grateful to share this work with you.

With appreciation,

[Director name]

Executive Director

Harborlight Community Ministry

Handwritten note variation

Dear [First name],

Thank you for helping make room at the table this winter. Your gift will support the practical work behind a welcoming supper, from groceries to a kitchen ready for the evening. I am grateful for your thoughtfulness and for your care for our neighbors.

Warmly,

[Director name]

Harborlight Community Ministry • Fictional organization

What You Helped Make Possible

Audience: winter campaign donors. Purpose: close the loop with transparent reporting.

Subject: Your winter supper update

Preview: Twelve evenings, 720 meals and a look at how your gifts were used.

Dear [First name],

You helped us begin the winter supper season with a clear plan and the resources to carry it out. Now that the season has ended, I want to share what happened and thank you for the part you played.

Together, supporters contributed \$12,000. Over twelve Thursday evenings, our volunteer team served 720 meals. That is a count of meals served, not individual people; many neighbors joined us more than once.

Where the funds went

\$7,450 Food and ingredients

\$1,550 Meal and kitchen supplies

\$3,000 Program share of utilities and cleaning

\$12,000 Total program expenses

Food expenses were \$250 above our original plan. Supply costs were \$250 lower because we used more reusable serving items, keeping total spending within the campaign budget.

What we learned

The room felt crowded during the first two suppers, especially near the serving area. We moved the beverage station and asked one volunteer each week to help guests find seating. The change made it easier to keep the entrance clear.

We also kept a quieter table available throughout the season. It was a simple adjustment, but it gave guests another option for how to enjoy the evening.

These meals cannot tell us everything about someone's experience or circumstances. They do tell us that supper was ready and available for twelve weeks, as promised. We are grateful for the conversations, practical feedback and volunteer care that helped us improve along the way.

Thank you for trusting Harborlight with your gift. There is no new request in this message—just our gratitude and an account of the work you supported.

With thanks,

[Director name]

Harborlight Community Ministry

Questions about this update? Reply to this email. [\[Manage preferences\]](#) • [\[Unsubscribe\]](#)

Harborlight Community Ministry • Fictional organization

An Evening at Harborlight

Audience: supporters and prospective partners. Purpose: encourage attendance with clear expectations.

Subject: Join us at the table on October 22

Preview: A simple supper, a look at our winter plans and time to connect.

Dear [First name],

We would love to welcome you to the place where community supper happens each week. Join us on October 22 for a relaxed evening with the Harborlight team and others who care about our neighbors.

We will share a simple meal, offer a short look at our plans for winter and leave plenty of time for conversation. You will also be able to walk through the kitchen and ask questions about the work behind a Thursday supper.

The details

When October 22 • 6:00–7:30 p.m. • Doors open at 5:45 p.m.

Where Harborlight Community Room • [Street address]

Cost No charge to attend

Dress Come as you are; casual clothing is welcome

There will be an opportunity to learn about supporting winter supper, but no gift is expected. This evening is a chance to get to know the ministry and the people who help make it happen.

Please reserve your place by October 15. You are welcome to bring a friend; include each guest in your reservation so we can plan the meal.

Reserve your place: [RSVP link]

Let us know about dietary or access needs when you register, and our team will follow up with you. Directions and arrival details will be sent before the event.

We hope to share an evening with you.

The Harborlight team

Social invitation

Pull up a chair. Join Harborlight on October 22 for a simple supper and a look at our winter plans. Meet the team, bring your questions and enjoy an evening together. There is no cost to attend. Reserve your place by October 15: [RSVP link]

Grace Table Church • Fictional organization

A Thoughtful Follow Up

Audience: visitors who requested contact. Purpose: provide a personal welcome and a low-pressure next step.

Email one after the visit

Subject: It was good to have you with us

Preview: A thank-you from Grace Table, and a person you can reach with questions.

Hi [First name],

Thank you for joining us at Grace Table on Sunday and for letting us know we could follow up. I hope you found a warm welcome, whether you were visiting for the first time or getting to know us a little better.

Walking into an unfamiliar church can bring plenty of questions. If you were wondering about something in the service, how to find a group or what Sunday mornings look like for children, you are welcome to reply. I would be glad to help.

If you would simply like to visit again, our Sunday service begins at 10:00 a.m. You can find directions and information about what to expect here: [Plan a visit link].

There is no rush to get involved or tell us your story. We are glad you came.

Warmly,

[Name]

Welcome Team, Grace Table Church

Email two one week later

Subject: If you would like to get to know Grace Table

Preview: An invitation to coffee after the service, whenever you are ready.

Hi [First name],

I wanted to pass along one easy way to learn a little more about Grace Table. On the first Sunday of each month, a few of us gather for coffee after the service in the room beside the lobby. It is a small, informal conversation about the church, with time for your questions.

You do not need to prepare anything or make a commitment. If that sounds helpful, reply and I will send the details for the next gathering. If a one-to-one conversation would feel more comfortable, let me know and we can arrange that instead.

You are also welcome to keep coming on Sundays and take your time.

Warmly,

[Name]

Welcome Team, Grace Table Church

For either email: To stop these welcome messages, reply “no follow-up.”

Harborlight Community Ministry • Fictional organization

Ready to Welcome Our Guests

Audience: event volunteers. Purpose: align logistics, responsibilities and guest care.

Subject: October 22 volunteer briefing: arrival, roles, and guest welcome

Preview: Please arrive at 5:00 p.m. for our team walkthrough.

Hi team,

Thank you for helping host An Evening at Harborlight. Our job is to make it easy for guests to arrive, enjoy supper and learn about the ministry. Here is the plan for October 22.

Before the doors open

Please arrive at the Harborlight Community Room at 5:00 p.m. and check in with [Volunteer lead]. We will walk through the space, confirm assignments, and review the meal and accessibility arrangements. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing suitable for serving a meal.

The evening at a glance

5:00 p.m. Volunteer check-in and briefing

5:45 p.m. Doors open; welcome and seating teams in place

6:00 p.m. Supper begins

6:40 p.m. Brief ministry update and winter plans

7:00 p.m. Conversation and optional kitchen walkthrough

7:30 p.m. Guest departure and cleanup; volunteer finish at 8:00 p.m.

A few details that matter

Welcome team: offer directions and help guests find a seat. Ask before providing physical assistance. If a guest is not on the registration list, bring them to [Volunteer lead] rather than turning them away.

Meal team: refer ingredient or allergy questions to [Kitchen lead]. Please do not guess. Keep labeled meals separate and follow the kitchen team's serving instructions.

All volunteers: let guests choose how much to share. Direct questions about giving to [Staff contact], and leave personal conversations off social media. Only the designated photographer should take event photos, following the event's consent process.

If someone needs help or a situation feels unsafe, contact [Volunteer lead] immediately. We will point out exits and review emergency procedures at the briefing.

If your availability changes, call or text [Volunteer lead phone]. Thank you for bringing both practical help and genuine care to the evening.

[Volunteer lead]

Harborlight Community Ministry