

Musical - a project that draws

Not only "fun and action" are attractive for kids. A creative project needs a lot of effort - but the result is worth seeing!

Music has always had a privileged place in Christian communities. Music is a common good here - everyone can and may participate. This advantage in experience can be used. For a musical project, for example, many a child can be won over who would not feel comfortable in any other Christian group

This article is a Forum booklet article.

Musical as a local camp

There are different ways of organising a musical: weekly over a longer period of time, as a camp or as a local camp. The choice is always a question of objective

The local camp offers special possibilities: For example, as a holiday offer for children who stayed at home in the village. There are often special advertising channels for such offers (holiday pass) - which thus indirectly also serve as an advertising medium for existing children's groups.

A local camp means: during one week the children come to rehearse every day from morning (about 9.00 am) until evening (about 6.30 pm) including lunch and dinner. Through daily encounters, relationships can be built and deepened. On the other hand, spending the night in their own bed gives the children enough sleep. This also gives the leaders breaks for further preparations and to gather strength.

Creating traditions

If the offer is advertised every year, more and more children and their parents become aware of it. The whole thing gains in attractiveness at the location. For example, the singing week in Gossau takes place every year in the first week of the autumn holidays. It is becoming more and more popular. In the first year there were 23 participants, but last autumn - the fifth year - there were 85 participants, two thirds of whom had no other direct connection to the Jungschar.

Objective - daily routine

In the first place are the children with their wishes and needs. A relationship should develop with them that is characterized by love and respect. They should realize that they are valuable to the

leaders and that Jesus also knows them and loves them just as they are.

Another goal is clearly also to have a good performance at the end of the week. It should be a sense of achievement for the leaders and the children and make a positive impression in the village. The content of the musical should appeal to the audience and make them think.

We want to make a good impression on the village

We owe the audience a good performance.

It is not always easy to combine the two main objectives. It is a tightrope walk between the ambition of a perfect presentation and the courage to leave gaps in the interest of the children.

The elements

Choir rehearsal

It must be well considered whether the children should already receive a practice CD in advance of the singing week and thus already know the songs more or less at the choir rehearsals. In Gossau such a CD has been dispensed with up to now. This made the choir rehearsals all the more intensive. Hard to imagine for adults, but it is a fact that the children learn about 12 songs with an average of 2 verses during the week. Behind this is a lot of work, great concentration (especially for the younger ones) and a huge sense of pride when the goal is achieved.

Theatre rehearsal

Playing theatre is often highly sought after. It is worth expanding the theatre to the point where up to 50 children can take on a role. They are given their lines before the singing week begins, but they don't have to know them by heart yet. There is enough time for this during the week. In addition, they learn their role naturally in the play on stage.

During the theatre rehearsals, the actors are divided into groups to practice the scenes with a leader. The task now is to learn the text by heart with the correct intonation and volume. One scene is rehearsed right away on stage.

If the children need a change, there is room for a game during this time. If the lyrics are hanging out of their ears by the end of the week, there is an opportunity to work on the song lyrics instead

Framework design

Children who are not in the theatre create the frame during this time. Divided into small groups, they help with the design of the stage set or the production of props, make the room decorations, the decoration of the entrance or the collection cups, distribute invitations for the performance in the village or design the programme booklet on the PC.

Framework design

Breaks

...are very important. They are for general loosening up, be it playing outside, collecting chestnuts, playing board games, painting.... Here, for once, there is no need to perform. This time can be determined by the children according to their wishes. The leaders should absolutely play along and cultivate relationships.

Time-out

Small groups of no more than eight children, separated by age and gender, meet with their leader in a quiet place. Here they read the Bible together and talk about their impressions. Often, at the end of the singing week, the children describe this time as the most beautiful. Here peace returns. There is time to talk. The personal has its place here and all are asked.

The leader has time to respond to his children and explain God's message to them. This is not always easy, because the background knowledge of each child can vary greatly. By the way: the group leader is also during the breaks, when preparing, ... for his children. So it is guaranteed that none of the children gets lost in the crowd.

Excursion

An afternoon or evening should take place in a completely different setting. A forest game, outdoor decoction, an outing - something fun for the kids will provide the necessary diversion!

General / main rehearsal

On Thursday afternoon the general rehearsal will take place. For the first time the whole thing is played through in one go. The director can make the last changes, the conductor can repeat a verse if necessary, the technicians can adjust the lights and the sound. At the main rehearsal on the last day, everything has to be just right

Performances

The highlight of the whole week is clearly the performance in front of an audience. The closer the moment gets, the stronger the tingling. There's tension behind the curtains and sets - but with each performance, there's also a growing sense of joy and relief at a successful project. It would be a pity if the whole musical could only be performed once after such an intensive rehearsal period! It's worth looking for a second performance venue in good time.

Some of the songs from the musical can also be used to enrich a (family) service in the congregation.

What remains after such a joint project? Certainly more than a few beautiful memories. The most important gain is on a personal level. Trust grows out of intensive cooperation. What would the children be without their leaders, who support and cheer them on! But at the same time, the leaders would have nothing to do without children who use their gifts and give their best. Everyone is needed, everyone can count on each other - and that builds team spirit!

Important things in a nutshell

Leaders

The more kids, the more leaders are needed. Maybe the team is too small to pull off a project of that size. To do this, why not ask another church for support? Even if they "only" get involved by the hour, a lot is already helped.

Participants

In Gossau, children from 1st to 7th grade participate. For the youngest, it is a very rigorous week and a huge accomplishment. The large age range has the nice side effect that bigger kids take responsibility for the smaller ones and help them where needed.

Music

Instrumentalists are found in the community, among acquaintances, and among parents. At least one piano player must be present throughout the week, especially for choir rehearsals. The others meet in the evenings for their rehearsals, for example. At the dress rehearsal and the main rehearsal, it is essential that everyone be present.

If no instrumentalists can be found even with the best will in the world, playback CDs are available for some musicals.

Clothes

It is worth making identical T-shirts for all the singers. It gives the choir a clear sense of unity, both to the audience and to the participants. In addition, a T-shirt is an excellent advertising medium. The kinder can already wear it in advance.

Technics

The technical effort must not be underestimated. With a little experience, even simple means achieve a strong effect. Not every device has to be purchased by yourself. Many things can be rented for little money

Infrastructure

In the best case, rehearsals can take place right on the performance stage. To do this, there should be enough side rooms for the program. Where this is not possible, the infrastructure you are

looking for may be found in a neighbouring community hall or school building.

Finances

A musical project is not free. Rentals for performance space, technology, etc. add up. The communal meals that are provided for the children also cost. In addition, there are craft materials, props, scenery, sheet music, and much more.

The children are expected to pay part of the amount themselves. However, it does not have to cover the costs. Other sources of income are the collection (which in our experience turns out well), perhaps sponsors who advertise in the program booklet, or private donors.

Advertising

Good publicity definitely pays off. Let the public know about this project - it's worth a visit!

Depending on the situation, invitations can be distributed to households and posters can be displayed in a highly visible way. Posters in A0 format work particularly well, but are not quite cheap. It may be worthwhile to advertise certain quarters more intensively.

An advertisement, or a short article in the newspaper, before and after the performance, do not offer much effort.

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