

Get Your Can to Church! **How to Present the Project to Your Session**

Introducing the PW **Get Your Can to Church** project to your session, church, PW or any other group that might help you pull this project together is easy! Here is a script you can adapt for your own church.

Speaker: Get Your Can to Church! is a sincere attempt to fulfill God's agenda . . . and Presbyterian Women *want* to be part of God's agenda!

We hear and talk about an increasing need to feed a growing number of people who are hungry, and because we are followers of Christ, that has a special meaning for each of us around this table. *Matthew 25:35* speaks so clearly: “. . . for I was hungry and you gave me food. . . .”

PW is ready to act on it!

Right here in [*insert your city name*], right under our noses, we have a God-given opportunity to do just that!

Here is **the plan**.

From [*list beginning date through ending date*] during Lent [*or any time of year*] we will have the opportunity in this church to give and gather canned food for those who are hungry in our community.

The goal is to fill to *heaping* the back of a pick-up truck [*or whatever large container and/or vehicle you are filling*] with canned foods and deliver them to [*insert your local food bank/shelter name*].

The how is you and me!

(Hold up can logo.) This is the logo for the **Get Your Can to Church** drive; you'll see it in the bulletin, the newsletter and on cans around the church.

Our very own "Suzanne Can" will be visiting Sunday School classes and greeting people at the door on Sundays; we'll present the Minute for Mission twice and encourage people to get their cans together; you'll see cans all around, where people can leave their cans; there will even be a *giant* can in the parlor [*or other location, depending on your options*] to hold all the other cans collected! With God's agenda we *can* be a *can*-do church!

We believe it is God's agenda to feed those who are hungry. And we *can* do it—one *can* at a time!

**Get Your Can to Church
Minute for Mission #1**

Minute Maid: What are you doing?

Suzanne Can: (*Dressed in can costume*) Getting my can to church!

Minute Maid: What are you talking about?

Suzanne Can: (*Very animated*) Haven't you heard? There is an increasing need for food for those who are hungry in [*insert your city name*] and a decreasing supply on the shelves at [*insert your local food bank/shelter name*]. We need to *do* something about it!

Minute Maid: I agree. But what?

Suzanne Can: The best way is to get our "cans" involved!

(*Suzanne takes a very "society-page" tone with this next paragraph.*)

Starting today, [*your church*] is going to be *the* gathering place for *every* available can in [*your city*].

Cans will be gathering in special containers in the narthex, the parlor and [*list any specific rooms or locations in your facility where cans can be deposited*]. There will be cans from near and far stacking up until Sunday, [*list the date you will end the can drive*]. On that day, none other than the Reverend Campbell S. Soup [*list your pastor, your PW moderator, anyone whom you choose to initiate the blessing of the work during the worship service*] will bless us and we will deliver the cans to [*insert your local food bank/shelter name*].

Minute Maid: That's great. Is there anything we can do?

Suzanne Can: You certainly *can*! Clean out your pantry. Clean out your neighbor's pantry. Buy an extra can at the store and *get your cans to church!*

Minute Maid: (*Turning to the congregation*) Let's do it!

Get Your Can to Church

Minute for Mission # 2

Minister/PW Leader: How's the **Get Your Can to Church!** project coming along?

Minute Maid: We have certainly put a “dent” in it. But we need many more cans to fill the back of the pick-up truck [*or whatever container you are filling*]. People in the church have come up with some great ideas for gathering food for those who are hungry!

(Suzanne Can begins walking down center aisle, pushing a shopping cart.)

Minute Maid: Well, Suzanne Can! What *are* you doing in church with a shopping cart?!

Suzanne Can: Well, I figured there might be some people who don't have time to get their cans from the store, or maybe they can't get their cans to church. But they still might really like to help fill the shelves at [*insert your local food bank/shelter name*]. All they have to do is write a check to Presbyterian Women, and I will go shopping for them!

Minute Maid: (*Holding a decorated can that has a slot in the top*) Great! Let's put our check can in the church parlor!

(*Children begin walking down center aisle, pulling a little red wagon.*)

Minute Maid: Why, hello, children! What are you doing in church with a little red wagon?!

Child: We're visiting our neighbors, and helping them get their cans to church!

Minute Maid: Oh my! That is amazing! Well, folks, I guess if you need help starting a neighborhood food drive, you just need to contact the children!

Suzanne Can: There are many people in the world who are hungry. We might not be able to feed all of them, but we can feed some of them, especially those who are right here in our own community! If we get *our* cans to church, help our neighbors get *their* cans to church, and get our *checks* to church, we *can* make a difference!

Get Your Can to Church
How to Get *Your* Congregation to Get *Their* Cans to Church!

By Sandra Densmore

It's easy to take this project and make it your own. Here are some basic steps to follow:

1. **Pray** that God will reveal God's agenda, and ask for the wisdom to discern God's plan. This search is blessed with a remarkable amount of enthusiasm and excitement.
2. **Share** with another person your search to find God's agenda. Now the enthusiasm doubles!
3. **Listen** to what people are saying. God's agenda is often revealed through others! (When we heard the shelves were getting bare at the local food bank and then learned about the increasing number of people who needed food in our community, it became clear that God had a plan for us.)
4. **State** God's agenda; keep it simple and in proportion to the capabilities of your group, church and community. For us, "Feed my people" meant "fill a pick-up truck with cans for the local food bank."
5. **Brainstorm** a catchy slogan, or ask someone who has the gift for funny slogans. Now the enthusiasm is tripled!
6. **Develop** your plan of action in collaboration with others. They may include your Christian education director, youth leader and/or senior minister. Include someone who is well-organized. Write up a project timeline, including names of those who will do certain tasks and when they will do them. Share the enthusiasm!
7. **Get the word out** . . . all of it! Remember what your high school English teacher taught you about asking the questions *who, what, when, where, why* and *how*? Well, answer each and every

one in your Minutes for Mission, newsletters, signs and announcements. *We* were really having fun, so we included a presentation to the session, Minutes for Mission, a costumed **Suzanne Can** visit to the Sunday School classes, a **Suzanne Can** visit to the daycare center, a **Suzanne Can** greeter on Sunday mornings, **Get Your Can to Church** posters, large decorated containers in main areas of the church, a huge container in the church parlor and even neighborhood can pick-ups for those in the community who might not go to our church, but who might still want to contribute. The children in our church even got involved, which was a beautiful experience for everyone. Enthusiasm is contagious!

8. **A few details to remember:** Picture nearly a ton of cans, and decide where it is possible to collect that many cans. In our experience, it ended up that the church parlor was not the best place because, if there was a wedding or funeral, that area needed to be clean! Figure out how you are going to load and deliver nearly a ton of cans. (God blessed us with a 1989 Ford pick-up truck!)
9. **Be prepared** to have on hand twice as many collection containers as you planned. Unless you like to do a lot of cleaning, use separate containers for glass and cans. A decorated container for checks or cash donations makes it possible for those who cannot carry their cans to church to participate. When you thank everyone who donated, be sure to tell them how many pounds of cans and how much cash was collected. All people love being a part of God's agenda!
10. And that's how to get your congregation to **Get *their* cans to church!**

How to Make a Can Costume

Supplies

1¼ yards of cotton broadcloth, 45 inches wide*

*Depending on the girth of the person wearing the can costume, you may need a shorter or longer piece of fabric. Depending on the height of the person wearing the can costume, you may need a wider or narrower piece of fabric. If you use the recommended 1¼ yards of 45-inch wide fabric, the can will be 35 inches in circumference and 44 inches in height. If you need a can that is wider, buy a longer piece. If you need a can that is shorter, buy 36-inch wide fabric. If you need a can that is taller, buy fabric that is 60 inches wide.

PVC tubing—two pieces, each ¼" in diameter, 35" in length (if you buy a shorter or longer piece of fabric, decrease or increase the length of the PVC tubing accordingly)

Two yards of grosgrain ribbon—½" to ⅝" wide



Step 1: Cutting the fabric—Cut the fabric in two pieces—a ¼-yard piece (can top), and a one-yard piece for the can body (longer, if you bought a longer piece of fabric).

Step 2: Making the top—Take the ¼-yard piece, put the fabric right sides together and stitch a ½-inch seam along the finished edges. Turn right side out and press the seam open and flat. Turn the top edge under at least half an inch and stitch in place near the raw edge to form a casing for the ribbon. Leave an opening through which to thread the ribbon.

Step 3: Making the body—Take the larger piece of fabric, turn it inside out and stitch together the raw edges, making a ½-inch seam. Press the seam open and flat. Make a casing for the tubing at each end of the resulting cylinder—fold a half inch of fabric over at each end and stitch in place along the edge of the fabric. Leave an opening in each casing through which to insert the PVC tubing.

Step 4: Putting the top and body together—Turn the can body right side out. Place the can top over the body, right sides together, matching the remaining raw edge of the top with the top edge of the casing at the top of the can body. Stitch together with a narrow seam, so as not to take much of the casing. There may be extra length in the top, if you are using the 36-inch length for the can body, so gather slightly as you go. Flip the top towards the center and thread the top casing with the ribbon, letting the ribbon's ends dangle from the opening in the casing.

Step 5: Finishing the can—Thread the PVC tubing through the casings at the top and bottom of the can body. Try on the can, with the ¼-yard piece of fabric at the top. Tighten the ribbon around the neck. Mark arm holes. Cut slits for the arms to pass through, and finish the armhole edges. Decorate the body of the can in any way you choose.

Step 6: Have fun!

