



Organizing a House Party

House parties are great opportunities to introduce your circle of friends to issues that you care about and involve them in action to make change. They can also be a lot of fun! IJM can offer you a number of materials to help make your house party a success, including compelling videos, justice-oriented Bible studies for a small group, postcards and sample letters for your Members of Congress, and fundraising tips. This guide will lay out everything you need to know to plan a successful house party.

Before the Party

1. Let IJM know that you are planning on hosting a house party. We can let you know what our most pressing needs are at the time, inform you about advocacy opportunities on the horizon, pass along urgent prayer requests from our field offices, and mail you useful materials. We can talk about the most effective message or call to action for your gathering.
2. Set a goal, like generating 50 letters to your Member of Congress or raising \$1,000 for one of IJM's field offices.
3. Consider showing a film. Contact IJM to find out what is available and timely.
4. Create an invite list. House parties are a great way to introduce new people to IJM's work. Think about inviting people from your church, colleagues, and individuals affiliated with allied organizations who may not have heard about IJM before.
5. Get the invitations out early. You can create fun invitations or send an Evite (<http://www.evite.com/>) if you are looking for a cheap and easy way to get the word out about your event. Be sure to mention the purpose of the event in your invitation, and whatever goals you have set. Consider putting a notice in your church bulletin.
6. Remind people by phone or email a week or so before the event. See IJM's Recruitment Tips for ideas about how to guarantee that enough people actually show up.
7. Delegate! Ask friends to help by recruiting others, bringing food, taking photos, bringing letter-writing materials, and helping with clean-up.

What You'll Need

1. Food and drinks!
2. Pens, paper, envelopes, and stamps for letter writing, or Abolition Senator/Representative postcards
3. Nametags (if there will be new people coming)
4. IJM brochures

5. A working TV and DVD player (if you are planning to show a film), and enough chairs for everyone.
6. Assign a friend to take pictures of your event.
7. Sign-up Sheet/Contact Card

At the Party

Before everyone arrives, designate an area where people can fill out Join Cards, write letters, and leave donations. Once the event begins, try to stick to your agenda so you can be sure to get to the important information (the purpose of your event!) before people need to leave, but also be flexible. Leave some time for people to mingle and socialize before and after the presentation/film/letter-writing, etc. And make sure people fill out a Join Card before they leave.

When you're ready to get down to business, make time for introductions. This is a good opportunity to describe your own journey in getting involved with IJM, and what inspired you to bring people together to support IJM's mission. After viewing the film, take some time to discuss people's reactions. This is a good time to let people know what they can do that night to support IJM's work—such as donating, writing a letter, filling out the sign-up sheet/Contact Card, and becoming a prayer partner.

Don't forget to thank your guests for coming and participating.

After the Party

1. Let us know how it went! Send photos, sign-up sheet/Contact Cards, and any money raised to IJM.
2. Send a quick thank you note to your guests (even via email) and remind them about how to stay involved with IJM.