

Tips for Hosting a Screening Event



Planning the Event

- **Let us know!** We want to support you, thank you, and put you on the map. To get started, you can send details to ucs@nd.edu or send us a tweet [@CaesarsSword](https://twitter.com/CaesarsSword).
- **If you are a teacher**, you simply need to gather the supplies listed below and plan how to show the film.
- **If you are planning an event for a church or group**, you may wish to find 1-3 others who can help. Share your ideas with them, and ask for their support. Be specific about what you need: room space, a projector, involvement from their organizations, help promoting the event, or other help. Discuss:
 - **WHO:** What group(s) or audience(s) would you like to reach? How many people? _____
 - **HOW:** Is there an organization (parish, small group, class) that could help? _____
 - **WHEN:** At what time would you like to have the event? Think of your participants' schedules. ____
 - **WHEN:** When will you host the 90-minute event? Leave yourself time for planning. _____
 - **WHERE:** Where will you hold the event? Reserve the space, if needed. _____
 - **HOW:** How will people find out about the event and know it is "for them"? _____

Personal invitations are very effective. Also try email blasts, announcements, newspapers, social media, and/or printed bulletins. Communicate (1) the topic, (2) why your desired audience would want to participate, and (3) the details, such as location and start and end time. Send reminders!

Supplies Needed

- **Bible.** You may wish to bookmark Mark 4:37-41 for the opening and closing prayers.
- **Handouts and Pens.** Print one copy of the Handout for each person and two copies of Quotes and Questions for each table. Cut on the lines between the quotes and place in a pile on each table.
- **Chairs** for your audience, set up in "pods" or small groups.
- **Access to the Film Itself.** For best results, download the film in advance. You can find out how at ucs.nd.edu/film. If the Internet is reliable, you can show the film directly from that page.
- **Technology**
 - A way to display the film visually – A computer and a projector/screen
 - A way to project the film's sound – Speakers or a sound system with any needed cords
 - Compatibility (e.g., Mac vs. PC) among all these components and a power source
 - Before the event, test the equipment and "pause" at 0:00, so you will be ready to hit "play."

Tips for Encouraging Others to Attend

- **Partner.** Partner with an organization or institution that already hosts successful events. This will help you draw on an existing audience and help others trust that the event will be worth their time. You can also ask the leader(s) to promote the event during announcements or at public forums.
- **Personal Invitations.** Some people have no problem with this, while others find it is outside their comfort zone. Do it anyway! This is the most effective way to get people to attend.
- **Invite and Announce Widely.** Fill the "airwaves" with information, reminders, and logistical details about your event. Ideas: local newspapers (many have a "what's happening" section), a bulletin notice, a Facebook event, social media posts, and an email reminder.
- **"Sell" It.** You believe it will be important for people to attend. Tell them why!
- **Hospitality.** You may want to provide child care, snacks, or other forms of hospitality. This will not be *enough* to get people to attend, but it may provide encouragement or remove barriers for some people.

On the Day of the Event

- **Set up.** Have a few people arrive early with you to set up the room. Set up chairs at tables or in small groups of 4-6 (facing the screen as much as possible). This will encourage discussion later.
- **Test the equipment.** Test the projector right away to make sure everything is ready to go. Set and monitor your computer or projector so that it will not shut off automatically before or during the film.
- **(5-10 minutes) Welcome participants.** Within 3-5 minutes of your start time, gather people's attention, welcome them, thank them for taking time from their busy schedules, and begin with the opening prayer. Announce the film topic and mention some related themes from our faith (see script).
- **(30 minutes) Show the film.** Set up the film and pause at 0:00, so all you will have to do is hit "play." You may wish to turn off lights or close window coverings.
- **Facilitate the Discussion.** Initiate discussion using the short summaries (1-3 sentences) and questions provided. Most of the discussion time will be in small groups.
- **End on time.** Thank people for coming, and share with them how to learn more!

Tips for Facilitating Group Discussion

- **Give BRIEF summaries and supplemental information when you ask questions.** This helps jog people's memories about the film and frame the question you are about to ask. Examples are provided.
- **Start basic,** as the questions provided do, and gradually move to more reflective discussion topics.
- **Have people discuss the first question or two with their neighbor(s) first.** This will help people "warm up," putting initial words on their thoughts. Then, ask for volunteers to share with the larger group.
- **Ask each group to designate a question leader (to read the questions).** This will help them take ownership of moving themselves through the questions.
- **Don't be afraid of silence.** Sometimes it takes a little bit for a group to get talking. Avoid the temptation to immediately fill in the silence!
- **Balance the "script" and dialogue.** Let people talk to one another (on topic), but periodically add in the next discussion question. Keep the focus on the film's content and how that connects to our faith.
- **Give notice when it's time to wrap up.** You can say, "we have about 15 minutes left, and I'd like us to get to the last question. Is there a final thought or two on [current topic]?" Then, end on time.

***Note:** This film and discussion may bring to the fore some topics in global politics that are emotionally fraught – and on which reasonable people may disagree. Please anticipate whether there are some particular topics your audience may find contentious, and prepare to respond. Lively dialogue is welcome, but the focus should remain on fact-based reasoning and on efforts to develop a faith-filled and "hope-full" response to Christian persecution.*

Many of us experience justified anger and sadness in the face of injustices such as those presented in the film. If you find the conversation, for some, is struggling to move into a discussion of the participants' own thoughts, hopes, and practical responses, your first step may be to invite others in: "How do others in the room approach this question?" Then, if the topic continues to stray, you might share this quote: "Augustine said, "Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are." Say, "There is a kind of justified anger that we may experience in the face of injustice. How might we as Christians be called to hopeful and courageous responses in this situation?"