

# **A Report Summery of The Healthy Church Project 200 Webinar**

The first page lists the Challenges of today's Churches.

The rest are solutions to remove those obstacles and promote Healthy Churches that grow as a by product of their alignment with the Holy Scriptures and Gods Will.

By  
Douglas M. Clark  
Grove Street Christian Church Elder & VRP Administrator

July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011

## **The Problems Plaguing Churches in America Today**

### **The dynamic of churches has changed**

- Builders before 1946 51% (If I live I will go, WWII)
- Boomers 1947 to 1964 41%
- Busters 1965-1976 34%
- Bridgers 1997 1994 4% (96% don't know the Gospels)

### **The fabric of our nation has changed**

- 1 person is reached for every 85 Christians
- The number of Protestants has dropped from 63% to 52%
- Those with "No Religion" have risen from 9% to 14 %
- Most Americans will be non-Christians by 2050 if the current trend continues

### **Loss of biblical world view**

- 83% Claim to be Christian
- 61% Don't attend church regularly
- 18% Are born again
- 9% Have a Bible World View
- 91% Of evangelists believe Americans are more hostile towards Christianity

### **The Christian Church (Disciples Of Christ)**

- Membership down by 65% from 2 Million in 1958 to 698K today.
- Grove Street Christian Church down 90% from its peak enrollment

### **The Church is in decline**

- 200 Churches close every week in the USA
- 85% Of churches are declining or not growing at all
- All churches lose, on ave, 10% of there membership do to natural attrition, yearly
- 11% Are growing but only slightly
- 4% Of US Churches are growing very fast (They are all doing the same things)

### **13 Marks of a Healthy Fast Growing Church**

01. They all PRAY without ceasing
02. They have a Clear Mission & Vision (outward ministries)
03. They have Meaningful Corporate Worship (style not as important)
04. There is a Culture of Evangelism
05. They are Culturally Relevant & Biblically Sound
06. They Leverage Technology
07. They have a Process of Discipleship
08. They retain at least 35% of their visitors as members
09. They are Process oriented not Event oriented
10. They have a simple & effective Church Structure.
11. They continually Develop Leaders
12. They show Excellence in the Managing of Staff
13. They are Excellent at Recruiting & Managing Volunteers

## **The Solution - The Healthy Church Project Webinar**

### **Session 1** – (Church Evaluation)

#### **How Bad Is It?**

- Attending church
- Builders 51% (before 1946)
- Boomers 41% (1946 - 1964)
- Busters 34% (1965 - 1976)
- Only 4% of Bridgers (1977 - 1994) understand the gospel and have accepted Christ, even if churched. Less than 30% attend church.

Only 1 person is reached for Christ for every 85 churches members.

#### **Changing Demographics**

- Smaller family units
- Single parents
- Each car in the lot 50% fewer people than 50 years ago
- 70% of visitors not from your denomination

There are literally thousands of churches that do not have a burden for the lost.

#### **Who is Visiting Our Churches?**

- 39% from same denomination
- 30% switching denominations
- 23% returning to a religious life
- 9% un-churched

#### **5 Surprises from Thom Rainer's Research**

- #1 prefer Sunday morning if they attend
- #2 feel guilty about not attending church
- #3 96% at least somewhat likely to attend if invited (other studies 63% said yes)
- #4 very few un-churched have been invited
- #5 positive view of pastors and church

#### **Invitations?**

- 21% will invite *someone* to church in a year
- Only 2% will invite an un-churched person to church
- If only half of the un-churched that said they might attend if they were invited came, and we invited them, we could see over 80 million brought into church. Let's be ready to bring them in and knit them in!

#### **What is Your Mission?**

- To attract Christians from other churches (NO!)

- To attract the un-churched and disciple them to become fully engaged Christians in your church (Yes!)

### **Our Purpose**

- **The Great Commission** - Matthew 28:16-20 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup> Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- **The Great Commandment** - Leviticus 19:18

"Love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD."

### **Why do They Come?**

- Drawn by God
- Crisis in life
- Relationship in church
- Personal witness
- Holiday or special event
- Heard pastor's preaching on a CD or a tape

### **Session 2** – (Church Friendliness and Guest Information)

#### **How many visitors come to your church each week?**

- 3 visitors per 100 people - church in maintenance mode
- 5 visitors per 100 - church with steady growth
- 7-10 visitors per 100 - church with rapid growth

#### **What Does Research Tell Us?**

- Retain 16% for minimal growth
- Retain 25% - 30% for rapid growth
- Retain 5% - 8% a declining church
- Visitor retention percentages don't change from small to medium to mega-churches.
- Pray for more than 30% retention

#### **How Much Does Visitor Retention Affect Church Growth?**

• Church of 200. If you only retain 16% and you get 200 visitor in a year, you will add 32 new people, but your natural attrition will probably be about 20, so you will add 12 new people.

#### **How Much Does Visitor Retention Affect Church Growth?**

• If you retain 25% of your visitors and you get about 3 visitors per 100 people per week you will add 39 new people. Less about 10 people for natural attrition, and you will grow by 29 new people.

### **Maintain 25% visitor retention rate for 3 years starting with 100 regular attenders**

- End of year 1 = 129 (3 visitors per week)
- End of year 2 = 188 (4 visitors per week)
- End of year 3 = 241 (5.5 visitors per week)
- (figures take into consideration a 10% annual attrition rate and 3 visitors per 100 attenders per week)

### **Casting Vision**

- Stated in general terms - The vision comes before the details
- Communicate the vision with passion and inspiration
- Leader is confident
- Clear compelling picture to reach the lost

### **Why is Change So Difficult?**

- Many people resist change because it challenges their stability
- Some people feel out of control during change
- Be sensitive to the pain your people and teams are going through

### **How to Create Change**

- Pray
- Share ideas with key leaders and seek input
- Communicate the plan redundantly over a lengthy period of time if possible
- Implement the plan
- Evaluate the plan

### **Is your church friendly? Research and Church Friendliness**

- All the researchers noted that most churches consider themselves to be friendly churches (Only to each other, not to new visitors).
- Only 36% of people in US congregations have a sense of belonging in their church\*
- Most of the un-churched have a positive attitude toward church and pastors
- So, why aren't they coming?
- Not invited

Many people aren't coming to our churches because they had a negative experience with an unfriendly or unorganized church.

### **Research Continued**

- 75% of people are more anxious when entering a new building for the first time than any other time in their life.
- The Un-churched feel intimidated about coming to church
- Judgment of friendliness is made within 30 seconds of the front door.
- After 6 months - ave. of 7 friends, they stay - ave. of 2 friends, they are gone
- Friendly churches tend to be more evangelistic
- Friendly churches tend to invite more people
- Correlation between friendliness and growth potential

### **What does God say about Friendliness?**

- Lev. 19:33-34 welcome visitors - love them – welcome them as one of your own
- Lev. 16:29 celebrate feasts with visitors
- Num. 19:10 participate in religious observances
- 1 Chron 22:2 helped build the temple
- Luke 9:11 Jesus accepted sinners, welcomed them, spoke with them about the Kingdom, and healed them
- Luke 15:1,2 Pharisees criticized Jesus for welcoming tax collectors
- Acts 28:30 Paul welcomed all who came

### **The Power of First Impressions - and Friendliness**

- Many layers involved in first impressions, accumulated in the first visit
- Most first-time guests determined whether they will make a second visit within seven minutes from the time they enter the parking lot
- Friendliness is one of the influences on that first impression - 30 seconds from the front door.
- First contact (7 sec.) - impression generalized to the whole church - positive or negative they tend to last

### **Creating a Friendly Congregation**

- Friendly with each other doesn't count
- If your guests don't perceive your church to be friendly, you aren't friendly
- Eliminate uncomfortable times for your guests
- Keep the friendliness issue before the church
- Weekly reminders, from the pulpit, in newsletters, in conversations
- Use drama to make the point - an unfriendly home
- Teach your congregation to smile and engage the eyes

### **Creating a Friendly Congregation**

- Change your vocabulary from visitor to guest
- Train your congregation to introduce first-timers to at least three regular attenders
- One church divided regular attenders in fourths and assigned each a Sunday to seek out guests, welcome them, and introduce them to others. Letters 1st month, cards second month. Continued for 1 year.
- Train your congregation to make your guests the most important people of the day.
- Train for 10 ft. rule - within 10 ft. - don't know the person - "just say hi!", engage the eyes, and smile
- Five minute rule - the first five minutes after a service are to be spent talking only to guests.
- Train your congregation to notice guests, introduce themselves to them and then introduce the guests to at least three other people, preferably before the service begins
- Train your congregation to invite first-timers to sit with them
- Train your congregation to take first-timers to places they need to go, don't just give directions

### **First-Time Guest Follow-up**

Col. 4:5 “Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity.”

### **Communications Card**

- Make them comfortable to give you the information and 80% will give it to you
- 1/3 page, heavy stock
- Insert in program
- Greeter takes them to the welcome desk, fill out there
- Hand out pens
- Explain in membership class and in church communications why it is important that guests fill out a card
- Offer free gift for dropping communications card in offering plate or bucket

### **The Gift Pack**

- First post-service follow-up - goal is to turn them from a first-time guest to a second-time guest
- Make the gift pack part of your thank you for their attending today and for filling in the communications card
- Surprise them with something that will help them with their spiritual journey
- A letter thanking them for coming and inviting them to come back
- Tell them the benefits of attending your church
- A book
- A welcome CD or DVD
- Invite them to fill out the first time guest survey on the church website or in the gift pack

### Session 3

### **The Principles of Follow-Up** – (Guest Letters and Follow ups)

- Fast
- Friendly
- Functional
- Continual
- Personal
- Media matches culture - phone, email, text message, visit
- Exceed expectations
- Give them something unexpected
- 50% - 80% contacted will return for a second-visit

### **36 hour Follow-Up First-time guest**

- Home gift delivery only, don't turn it into a “visit”
- **Phone or email best - which suits your local culture?**
- Phone - doesn't have to be the pastor. Choose for friendly sounding voice. Elderly or shut-ins. Research has shown retention to be higher when visitors see excited lay-people.

- Thank the guest for attending
- Give an invitation to come back
- Best response time for emails - between 2:00 and 3:00 PM
- Best phone time - Monday evening
- Email or conversation similar to information in gift pack
- Phone - invitation to website and first-time guest survey. Email - direct link to survey
- Let's the guest know you are thinking about them the next day
- Invite the guest to explore your website or brochure
- Don't ask questions that require them to critique your church (Save for 2nd-time visit)
- Find out why they visited
- Find out their needs
- Ask "How can we best help you?"
- What did you enjoy most about your visit?
- End by thanking them for their visit again and inviting them to come back

### **96 Hour Follow-Up First-time guests**

- Send a letter and Brochure, to arrive by Thursday afternoon
- Could be a second email if this fits your local culture well
- Handwritten card or letter with a small gift
  - Postcard with current message series or other relevant messages
  - Handwritten envelope that doesn't look like a bill or advertisement
  - Gift card for Subway, gas card, or anything appropriate for your local area, Popcorn
  - Times of services
  - Further information about your church and the ministries
  - Signed by Senior Pastor
- If you don't have a website with a first-visit survey on it, send a questionnaire with a pre-stamped envelope.
- Don't announce your follow-up ahead of time. Works best if it is a surprise.
- Include church name, logo, and slogan
- In all communications make sure they know you really care

### **Completed Four Follow-Ups**

- Communications Card
- Gift Pack
- 36 hour follow-up
- 96 hour follow-up
- To turn them into a second-time guest

### **Suspects or Prospects?**

- Suspects - just visiting. Not serious about spiritual matters or even seeking actively
- Prospects - come back for a second visit. Seeking a relationship with Christ and the church
- Your church can keep up to 85% of second-time guests – if they come back the next Sunday!
- Don't spend much energy on suspects, concentrate on prospects



### **Suspects - One Month Follow-Up**

- Don't spend much time on suspects
- It is common that Guests don't start attending regularly right away
  - Use second-time follow-up if they return within a few months
  - Use regular church mailings for future contacts
  - One-month follow-up letter (in assignment for this session)

### **They're Back! - Second-Time Guest Follow-up 85% of the battle**

#### **Second visit follow-up**

- Re-create the pre-service welcome and friendliness they are expecting
- Encourage them to go deeper by filling in the appropriate "Next Steps."
- Formerly un-churched - greater impact on second visit
- What was the impact?
  - A sense that the church is on a mission from God
  - Understood the purpose clearly
  - Know where the church stands and where it is going
- They want to find out more
- Encourage them to check appropriate box for first or second time guest.
- Include "Next Steps" that a second-time guest might want to check
  - More information
  - Orientation class
  - Special event
  - Small group sign-up
  - New believers' class

#### **36-Hour Second visit Follow-Up**

- Email or phone call
  - Email between 2:00 PM and 3:00 PM
  - Phone call Monday evening
- Thank them for returning
- Invite them to fill out second-time guest survey
  - Can ask for some critique now
- Present more opportunities for them to get involved
  - Ministry opportunities
  - Small groups
  - Special events
- Let them know what value they will receive by attending your church
- "Candy express team" or "P.I.E." ministry
  - Make a delivery of candy or a pie, or some other appropriate gift
  - Don't go in, just deliver it and welcome them to your church
  - Ministry opportunity for others in the church

#### **96-Hour Second Visit Follow-Up**

- By Thursday
- Typed letter

- Similar content to phone call or email
- Include another small gift (last time).  
Something more fun, like Starbucks or a movie rental
- Show that you really do care

### **96-Hour Follow-Up**

- Include more details about ministries and small groups that they can get involved in.
- Thank them for returning
- Invite them to continue to come

### **Session 4** – (Greeters and Ushers)

#### **The Art of Greeting Guests**

The Greeter Team - Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ. For He is going to say, "I came as a guest, and you received me." Rule of St. Benedict

#### **Hosts (or greeters)**

- Doing the best with what you have
- All the friendliness training applies to the Greeters as well as the congregation
- Need a team, not just one couple
- Great place to plug in new regular attenders and new Christians
- Balance of ages
- Seek friendliest people, choose them for the quality of their smiles
- Like a high class hotel
- Reflects Jesus' mind set towards your guests
- Good pre-service and they will likely give you their information
- They look for you to mess up. Many have had negative experiences with churches
- Your vision plus 1%
- Consistency translates to credibility

#### **Train Your Hosts**

- Choose the leader and work with him or her to choose the team
- Label your hosts
  - Sweater or vest
  - Name tag identifying their name and "Host", or "I am your host for today"
- Design a written training program to make sure all the skills and functions are covered
- The message, "We are nice people and we are glad you are here"
- Understand the importance of their job
- Decide if you want your hosts or the ushers to hand out bulletins or programs
- A warm welcome specifically for guests. The rest will accept a "good morning, how are you today"
- Take them to the **welcome table** and introduce them to the **hosts at the table**. Welcome table hosts welcome them, too, and very briefly explain the function of the welcome table. Ask questions to determine which Sunday School class(es) to send them to.
- A **Welcome Table Host** escorts family to Sunday School classes and introduces them to the **Sunday School class greeter** (adult classes)

- **Sunday School class greeter** introduces them to the class and offers to sit with them.
  - Offers to sit with them in the worship service
  - Offers to take them to lunch after church **next week** (church reimburses)
- If they are coming in at worship time, **Welcome Center Host** takes them to an usher and introduces them to the usher, who seats them and hands them a bulletin
- **Welcome Table host** offers to sit with them in the service and to take them to lunch **next week** after the service
- An honest friendliness
- Place hosts in numerous strategic places
- Introduce guests to several people (time permitting)
- Take them to the refreshment table if you have one. Introduce them to people at the table and a few in the area.
- Some churches have a separate team of introducers who look for guests, introduce themselves, and then introduce them to at least one other person
- Teen hosts work great for connecting with teenage guests
  - Don't separate teenagers from their families
  - Teen hosts could tag along and make conversation with the teenage guest until the family is turned over to an usher
  - Chance to invite to youth group
  - Teen host should try to connect with teen guest after the service

#### **Parking Lot Attendants - An extension of your host team**

- Chosen for outgoing friendliness and a great smile
- 5% of spaces reserved and marked for first and second time guests
- Seek new guests and welcome them at their car. Make sure they know to use the special parking spaces that are just for them.
- Walk them to the door and introduce them to a host or to the Welcome Center
- Well marked with vests or a clear name tag

#### **Ushers**

- Friendly, happy people
- A positive pre-service – more positively engaged in the service, and more likely to give you their contact information
- If guests have a negative pre-service – they look for more negatives in the service
- 1 Cor. 14:40 “Let all things be done decently and in order.”
- Represents God's Character

#### **Train Your Ushers**

- Choose the leader and work with him or her to choose the team
- Label your ushers
  - Sweater or vest
  - Name tag identifying their name and “Host”, or “I am your host for today”
- Design a written training program to make sure all the skills and functions are covered
- The message, “We are nice people and we are glad you are here”
- Responsible for the comfort and care of guests
- Arrive early and make sure the church is in order and everything is ready for guests

- Introduce yourself to guests and tell them you are here to help them with anything they need today. You may have been introduced by a host.
- Decide if you want ushers or hosts to hand out bulletins or programs
- Escort guests to good seats
  - Aisle seats
  - Near front, but not right in front
  - Near rear, but not the last row
- As service fills up, help all who arrive to find seats. May need to ask people to stand or move in to accommodate them - usher should do this.
- Train your regular attenders to move in ahead of time and leave the aisle seats for guests
- Introduce the guests to the people sitting next to them
- Escort guests to anyplace in the church they need to go before or during the service
- After the service, meet guests and walk them to the refreshment area, Sunday school area, or anyplace else that your church carries on functions after the service.
- Walk them to the door and invite them back next week

### **Session 5** – (Church Grounds and New Relationships)

#### **Irregular Attendance?**

- Common with new guests
- Contact up to 8 times in a four week period
- Continue contacts up to 8 months

#### **Third Week Follow-Up and Beyond Assimilation**

#### **Membership Problems**

- People disconnected – not committed
- Not Christ's model or commands
- Accountability – necessary for true growth
- Develop good Christian habits from the beginning

#### **Assimilation Buzz Words**

- Return
- Relationships
- Responsibility
- Stay
- Stick
- Serve

#### **From Outer Circle to Inner Circle**

- Community
- Crowd
- Congregation
- Committed
- Core

## **Two Roads for Second-Time Guests**

### Road 1

- Left on their own
- Not involved
- Fade away in 4 - 6months

### Road 2

- Comfortable, hospitable environments
- Relationships
- Begin to return the care

## **Return > Relationships > Responsibility**

- From “your church” to “my church”
- Involve in ministry - project - “my projects”
- Allow people to be involved before they become a believer - early
- Ladder principle for ministries
- One rung - must be a believer
- Other rungs - must be a member

## **Relationships are the glue Invite them in**

- Relationship with God
- Relationships with God’s people
- Sunday School
- Small Groups
- Fun Events
- Personal invitations to join in activities
- Pastor’s dessert or staff reception
- Orientation classes
- New Believers’ Class

## **Responsibilities**

- Ushers
- Greeters
- Serve Refreshments
- Working with children (not in charge)
- Do more with more people, not less people
- Help them get involved

## **Encourage Membership Teaching**

- Special sermons
- Baptism sermons
- Openings in other sermons
- Orientation classes
- In Sunday School
- General conversations

## **Encourage Membership Regular Sign-Ups**

- On communications cards
- Orientation classes
- Membership classes
- Baptism classes

- New Believers' classes
- Link messages with sign-up times
- Move people forward in their spiritual walk
- James 2:18 "... show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by what I do." James 2:26 "... faith without deeds is dead."

## **Getting Ready for Company Buildings and Grounds**

### **First Impressions are Powerful**

- Research shows that most decide if they are returning for a second visit within 7 minutes from the time they enter your parking lot.
- If your facility doesn't impress them, they may never hear your sermons.
- Your facility can make an eternal difference in people's lives.
- **You never have a second chance to make a first impression**

### **See your facility through your visitors' eyes.**

Method 1 - Find someone unfamiliar with your church. Invite the person to tour your facility and take notes, inside and out. Encourage the person to note everything that is unsightly or in need of updating.

Method 2 - Have your board do a tour of your facility starting with driving down the street and including an inspection of the entire facility. Pretend they are 1<sup>st</sup> time visitors.

## **Session 6** – (Nursery School and Welcome Centers)

### **What About Your Nursery?**

Most guests are experienced childcare shoppers

#### **A Notch Above What is Expected**

- Cribs and furniture up-to-date
- Redecorate every year
- Signs leading to the nursery
- Parking for single moms
- People greeted and helped - train
- Nice toys - replace if broken
- Many people measure the quality of the church by the quality of the child care
- Separate infants and toddlers

#### **Cleanliness**

- Sanitize weekly – All surfaces, Cribs, Toys, Tables, Trays, Bedding, Bibs, Doors
- Walls - monthly
- Carpets - every other month

#### **Staff**

- Recruit those who interact with children well
- Ratios: Infants 4:1, Toddlers 5:1, Mixed 2 infants and 2 toddlers per volunteer
- Rotate as little as possible - relationships

- Child abuse screening
- Friendly
- Concerned about safety and cleanliness
- First aid and CPR training
- Training

### **Safety**

- Fire alarms
- Fire exits marked
- Posted fire escape plan
- Only the parents can pick up the child
- Safe, appropriate toys
- Narrow slat spaces on cribs
- Notification system
  - Numbers notification system
  - Pagers
- Good ventilation, cooling, and heating
- Sign-in system

### **Policy Manuals**

- One for workers and one for parents
- Qualified workers
- Discipline policy
- Room care procedures
- Safety measures
- Registration procedures
- Notification procedures
- Sickness or accident
- Age guidelines
- Hours of operation
- Wellness policy
- Use of volunteers
- Fire escape plan
- Provide copies for all parents
- Post one copy by the door

### **Refreshment Table**

- Relationships - the second step of assimilation
- Fellowship and personal connections are important
- Food works
  - If you do it, do it well
  - Quality, but not extravagance
  - Don't skimp, like cutting donuts in half
  - Don't glare at someone who takes a lot
  - You could provide a donation box, but don't charge
  - Coffee, hot chocolate, donuts, and fruit are normal

- Some add homemade baked goods, bagels, pastries, cereal

### **Refreshment Table Team**

- Need a team and a team leader to organize
  - Someone with the gift of service
  - Someone who has a good eye for making things look nice
  - Consider a nice serving table, and tables or places for people to sit and talk
  - One church has Café Esperanza. They built a nice serving counter outside the kitchen. They set up tables with table cloths and small flower arrangements on them. They added a lounge area with a sofa and soft chairs.

### **Refreshment Table**

- Decide - before or after the worship service, or both.
- Link with greeter team - need hosts at the table for guest that are new to the system and to introduce them to others
- Train regulars to look for new people and get to know them a little, then introduce them to someone else.
- Pastors and staff should be there
- Great time for the elders or deacons to connect with people
- Great time for ministry leaders to talk to potential new people to include in their ministry teams
- Great time for Sunday School teachers and Bible study leaders to invite new people.

### **Refreshment Table Promotion**

- From Pulpit
- An invitation in the bulletin
- Posters and signs
- A destination spot for host escorts
- Personal invitations from regular attenders and members
- Express appreciation to workers from pulpit and in newsletters

### **Welcome Center**

- Part of Greeter Team?
  - Decide where - near sanctuary and where everyone must walk past it.
  - Decide - nice table with table cloth and decorations, like in a hotel lobby.
  - Match your demographics
  - Signs clearly identifying it
  - Make guests feel comfortable to take what they want “FREE - Take One” signs
  - Staffed with hosts (greeter) who can leave their station to escort guests
  - Staffed with friendly, knowledgeable people
    - Express appreciation to guests
    - Prepared to talk to guests about classes and ministries that directly apply to them. (Orientation class, New Believer’s class, Sunday School classes, etc.)
  - Help guests pick an appropriate Sunday School class for adults and children
  - Invitations to ministries, refreshment table & Sunday School classes, no arm twisting
  - Invite them to come back to the center at the end of the service for their free gift



- A Pastor should be nearby to meet new people and answer any questions
- Promote the welcome center in the bulletin and from the pulpit

### **What goes in the Welcome Center?**

- Everything at the center is geared to guests
- General brochure for your church - church information
- Leaflets or other brochures for ministries that apply directly to new people in the church
- Gift Pack and/or guest packet
- Welcome CD or DVD
- Map of church
- Give-away items
- Basket of mints and lollipops (or other appropriate)

### **The Information (or Concierge) Center**

- Geared to regular attenders and members
- Some smaller churches may combine with the welcome center, but watch that traffic flow doesn't discourage guests
- Detailed flyers for every ministry and mission of the church
- Part of Greeter Team?
- Staff with friendly people who know a lot about the church functions and ministries
- Staff with people who can answer questions
- Sign-up lists for ministries and other church functions
  - Baptism classes
  - Small group lists, guidance, and sign-ups
  - Membership classes
  - Ministry team information and sign-ups
  - Service opportunities
    - Church sports team sign-up
    - Special trips sign-up
    - Camps and retreat sign-ups
    - Extra newsletters

### **The Media Ministry Center**

- Attractive table
  - Table cloth
  - Signs inviting to take tapes, CDs and DVDs
  - Display racks
  - High traffic area easily accessible
- Messages-To-Go
  - Today's service ready when people walk out of the sanctuary
  - Nice packaging and printing
- Preaching series in albums
- Special orders for series or past sermons – list available
- Welcome tapes, CDs, and/or DVDs
- Teaching media - special situations and topics
- Evangelism media

- Training media
  - Marriages
  - Personal evangelism
  - **Sunday School and Bible Study leadership**
  - Training for each ministry in the church
  - Many more
- Team and team leader - linked with audio visual team
- Work with professional media ministry consultants at Kingdom
  - They will guide you to learn what works in churches
  - They will guide you to learn how media ministry functions work
  - They will guide you to the latest equipment and match it to your specific situation
  - In essence, they can train you over the phone

## **Session 7** – (Membership Classes)

### **Membership Classes**

#### **High Value for High Assimilation**

#### **The Problem with Current Church Expectations**

- Many churches don't follow the Biblical pattern for church involvement
- Less expected for church membership than civic organizations
- Churches that communicate no expectations or commitment levels more likely to lose members
- We have “dumbed down” church membership

#### **Why a Membership Class?**

- 73% of churches in high assimilation studies have membership classes.
- Evangelism tool - 43% rank it a 5 on a five point scale
- Communicate expectations at front end, before they become members
- Develops relationships
  - with pastor
  - with other members of the class
- Tend to remain active members for a long time
- Inactive membership fast becoming a contradiction in terms
- Membership means ministry

#### **Who Takes the Classes?**

- Those asking to become members
- 98% allowed and/or encouraged non-members - Visitors and prospects
- New members (during transition only)
- Uninvolved members
- Long-term involved members - refresher course
- Personal invitations by the pastor

### Quotes from Pastors and Laypeople in Chuck Lawless' Study

- "I get to know my new members personally"
- "New members get grounded in major beliefs"
- "Our class has generated an enthusiasm and anticipation among new members"
- "We've greatly reduced the number dropping out or going out the back door"
- "Members are getting involved"

### Membership Class Required, Expected, Available?

- Available - neither required or expected, just offered it – 72% visitor retention rate
  - Expected - but not required – 89% retention rate
  - Required - before membership – 100% retention rate
- Churches are moving toward requiring membership class

### Handling Resistance

- Fears! From a church in the Southwest
  - could move toward legalism and autocracy
  - families left church
  - many supporters had questions and doubts
  - feared less people added
- Findings after transition
  - 1 - 2 years plateau or decline
  - Turn around was dramatic - fast growth rate after that
  - Much higher retention rate
  - Longer lasting retention rate

### Membership Class - How Long?

- From Nelson Searcy – *Fusion* – normally a 3 hour class
- From Thom Rainer - *High Expectations* – 70% one day only – typically 6 hours
- From Chuck Lawless - *Membership Matters* - Ave. of 5 1/2 hours, Shortest = 1 1/2 hrs
  - Longest = 16 hrs 1hr/wk for 16 weeks
  - 70% = one day
  - 56% = multiple sessions
  - 26 churches = 4 or more weeks (strongest relationships)

### Advantages of short and long classes

- Short
  - Offer class more often
  - More consistent attendance
  - Tend to be stronger on outreach
  - Content more condensed and less intensive
  - Followed up with other teaching courses
- Long
  - More time for Doctrine training
  - Builds relationships
  - Addresses more material
  - More training oriented as well as informational

- More people plugged into ministry during or at the end of the class

### **Membership Class How Often Offered?**

- Short courses offered more often - several times a year or once a month
- Classes that were information only were scheduled more frequently
- Will grow in number of classes - circular result - outreach leads to more classes. More classes trains for more outreach

### **Membership Class What is taught?**

- Take out Content List that was included with Session 7 Assignments
- List is a compilation of five researchers and authors - Thom Rainer, Gary McIntosh, Nelson Searcy, Chuck Lawless, and Rick Warren
- List is in order of frequency for Thom Rainer's findings. (T.R.#1)
- List includes percent of pastors who ranked topic as very important from Chuck Lawless' research (ranked 5 on a 1- 5 scale) and the % of churches including the topic

### **Membership Class - Who Teaches it?**

- Primarily Pastors - 69.5%
- “Too important a time to delegate to others”
- Passion and commitment level
- Embodies the church vision
- Usually the best teacher in the church
- Staff member - 16.3%
- Lay person - 10.5%
- Other - 3.8%

### **Included in the Placement Interview**

- Personal testimony
- Required Membership Class, New members, but not existing members
- Pointed questions about salvation
- Gifts and talents
- Previous ministry experience and desires
- Agree to basic doctrines of the church
- Agree to church covenant and discipline policies
- Attendance expectations at worship, small groups, and Sunday School
- Some require attendance before membership
- Baptism discussed
- Committed to discipleship
- Committed to ministry involvement, often required before membership
- Promise to follow leadership of church

### **What About Long-Term Attendees That Don't Join?**

- Some are still courting the church
- Some suffered previous wounds
- Some want spirituality without accountability
- Some don't know how to join

- Today - takes longer for people to join
- Invite to take class - with no obligations
- Don't coerce them - patience
- Let the excitement of a growing church have its affect
- Let the Holy Spirit do His work – pray

### **What About Long-Term Attendees That Don't Join?**

- Plugged into Sunday School and small groups. Involve in ministry that is appropriate for non-members
- Membership must mean something
- Also for uninvolved members - invite to take class - 60% will become involved immediately
- Preach on the Church, the local church, and the importance of church membership (many Scriptures - let the Scriptures speak for themselves)
- Teach accountability to one another in the body
- Teach about the benefits of belonging to a local church
- Work with those who are willing to join
- Celebrate those who join publicly
- Celebrate those who get involved in ministry publicly
- Make people who minister in your congregation heroes
- Meet with them privately and ask them why they haven't joined yet - listen and use good counseling techniques

### **Church Membership Means:**

- Public commitment to a particular group of believers
- Allows leaders to shepherd
- Defines the team - work of the church
- Support system - temptation and struggles
- Opportunities for spiritual growth with accountability
- Challenge to use and develop spiritual gifts alongside other members
- Input and direction of local church
- Provides family in a rapidly changing society

### **Session 8** – (Pastors social and Fun Events)

#### **Helping Guests Make Connections**

Return-**RELATIONSHIPS**-Responsibility

#### **Guest Luncheons**

- High fellowship value
- Great for strong family-like community culture
- For 1st, 2nd, and 3rd time attendees
- Announce - Free ticket, available at Welcome center
- Personal invitations
- If brought by a friend, friend attends, too

- Pastor and/or head elder gives a brief welcome and a brief introduction to the church
- Mostly fellowship - time to talk and get to know one another
- Could be in the fellowship hall, a local restaurant, or someone's home.
- Lunch could be prepared by a restaurant, caterer, or people in the church
- High relationship value
- A great start to making six friends
- Relationship with Pastor
- Early discipleship
- Invitation to orientation class or membership class
- Invitation to Bible study, small group, or Sunday School
- Invitation to other activities and ministries

### **Meet the Staff Time**

- Similar to guest luncheon, but less involved
- Separate refreshment area away from the main flow of traffic after the worship service
- Pastors, elders, and other church staff present
- Pastor introduces elders and staff, everyone welcomes them
- Pastor or head elder gives a brief welcome and a brief introduction to the church
- Invitation to join an orientation class or membership class
- Invitations to join a small group, Bible study, or Sunday School class
- Invitations to church activities and ministries
- Informal fellowship time for everyone to talk and get acquainted
- High welcoming value
- High relationship value
- Great for getting people plugged into small groups, ministries and activities early

### **Pastor's Dessert**

- Great follow-up beyond the 3rd visit
- By invitation only. Don't announce from the pulpit
- Multiple guests
- Purpose - to welcome the new guests that have been returning
- People look forward to getting to know the pastor
- Nicely printed invitations with RSVP
- Include more information about the church when you mail the invitation
- Could include a small brochure or flyer for each ministry you would like them to know about or consider
- Warmly welcomed
- Pastor introduces church leaders
- A little about the church mission and vision
- Guests introduce themselves
- Question and answer time
- Invite to orientation class and other church ministries and functions

### **Fun Events - More than just a good time**

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the FELLOWSHIP, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” Acts 2:42

- RELATIONSHIPS -make those 6 friends
- Fellowship
- Personal invitations by ministry leaders
  - Small groups
  - Bible Studies
  - Sunday School Classes
  - Ministries
- Great place to get returning guests involved
  - Low pressure
  - Low commitment
  - Lots of fun
- Need personal invitation besides announcements
- Fall and Spring - best times
- Plan them to match your highest volume of new visitors
- Dinner groups with 6 to 8 people
  - Include a mix of members and new people
  - More than one new couple or people in each group
  - Match with interests if you can
  - Alternate in homes

### **Fun event Ideas**

• Play groups • Picnics • Bowling • Paintball • Pottery • Fly tying • Outdoor men’s ministry • Christmas party, gift exchange • Pot luck dinners • Barbecues • Concerts - indoor or outdoor • Sports teams • Women’s shopping spree

### **Orientation Class**

- Membership Class Light
- Useful if you have a large number of guests
- Useful if people typically wait a long time to consider the membership class
- Low commitment, not a membership class
- Mostly informational (the membership class could be mostly instructional)
- Invite guests personally - they won’t come on their own
- Invite new believers to the New Believer’s Class
- Include a gospel message and invitation
- Help new people understand and become involved in the church
- Introduce people to church culture - don’t stress membership
- Taught by pastor or other staff
- Don’t call it a membership class. “Meet Circle Drive Alliance Church”
- Make it exciting
- If you meet more than once, add a party
- Use small-group discussion - avoid lectures
- Be intentional to help them fit in

- Refer to church as “our church.” If they say “your church,” correct them in a light hearted way.

### **Orientation Class What to Include**

- Brief history of church
- Core values
- Mission and vision
- Philosophy of ministry
- Small group discussions
- Get acquainted time
- Various ministries – how to serve
- Introduce ministry leaders
- Next steps to getting involved including becoming a member
- Church tour
- Gospel message and invitation to receive Christ
- Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning
- Could meet 4 - 6 weeks

### **Benefits of having a Orientation Class**

- High on relationships
- High on assimilation
- Some may decide the church isn’t for them - better to know that now
- Move from return to relationships to RESPONSIBILITIES

### **New Believer’s Class**

- Personal invitation and announcements
- Open to anyone who wants to attend
- Basic Bible doctrine – the pillars of the faith
- Invite those who you think aren’t saved yet
- Limited time - six or seven weeks
- Billy Graham *Thirty Discipleship Exercises* - the first seven lessons
- Denominational resources – *Basic Bible Truths* - Southern Baptist – *Welcome to the Family!* – Evangelical Free Church
- Christian Bookstores
- Google – New Christian Discipleship
- First Steps: One-on- One Discipleship Workbook <http://stores2.faithhighway.com>
- First Steps Disciples [www.disciplinganother.com](http://www.disciplinganother.com)

### **Session 9 - (Small Groups and Sunday School)**

#### **Project Check List**

- Spreadsheet that everyone of the participating churches fills out
- Helps keep track of where you are and where you are going
- Can compare your progress with others in the group



- Can connect with others in the group who have accomplished what you are currently working on

### **From Guests to Regular Attendees**

- More than just getting guests to return
- More than just getting guests to attend regularly

### **From Regular Attendees to Fully Engaged Members**

- Long-term, fully engaged church members
- Members who serve and reach out to bring others into the Kingdom of God

### **Stay and Serve for a Long Time**

- According to Thom Rainer and Chuck Lawless's studies, 83% of those involved in small groups and Sunday School are still there 5 years later. (Will never be 100% in a mobile society)
- According to the same studies, only 16% of those who attend worship service only are still there 5 years later.

### **RETURN > RELATIONSHIPS > RESPONSIBILITY**

- Can't program relationships – must happen naturally
- Provide opportunities and settings to allow relationships to develop
- Some kind of small group involvement is important

### **Know Where Everyone is in Their Spiritual Walk**

- The top 4% of churches in studies monitored progress of all attendees and members
  - Sunday School Attendance
  - Small Group Attendance
  - Worship Service Attendance
  - Ministry Involvement
- Indicators of Spiritual Growth, but not all inclusive

### **Shepherding - Other Than the Senior Pastor**

- Small group leaders
- Sunday School teachers
- Sunday School class caregivers
- One-on-one discipleship and mentoring
- Member-to-member as part of the family

### **Small Groups**

- Developing stronger relationships with Christ
- Developing stronger relationships with God's people
- Developing a deeper knowledge of the Scriptures
- Support each other in prayer, life's issues, accountability, and passion
- Discipleship groups
- Spiritual gifts development
- Form new groups as new people start attending your church

- Many will continue with each other for years
  - New people relate to each other well
  - Be intentional about introducing new people with each other to form new groups
  - Provide leadership to start new groups, then turn leadership over when they are ready
  - Train leaders – meet regularly
  - Leaders support each other and learn from each other
  - Searcy model – groups meet for 3 months, take a few weeks off, and sign up for new groups for the next quarter.
  - Restarting makes it easier for new people to join groups
  - Less burn out for leaders
- Lawless research - 70% emphasized small groups. Those that didn't emphasize small groups emphasized Sunday School Classes as small groups.

### **Examples of Small Groups**

- Missionary groups, • Home cells, • Men's groups, • Men's outdoor ministry, • Women's groups, • Single adults, • Special interest groups, • Bible studies, • Fellowship, • Discipleship, • Support, • Life needs, • Accountability, • Sunday School, • Prayer groups

### **Small Groups Leadership**

- Need a leader to oversee all the group leaders.
- Form new groups
- Get individuals plugged into the best groups
- Train and support leaders
- Record keeping
- Promote groups
- Organize time frames

### **Small Group Sign-Up Day**

- Tables for each group surrounding sanctuary, lobby, or other appropriate space
- Leader at each table
- List geographic location
- Class sign-up roster
- Topic of quarterly study, or nature of group
- Small child's puzzle 8-10 pieces
- Potential groups sits around tables and discuss the group and choose a good time that all can meet regularly
- Everyone takes a puzzle piece with them - assemble the puzzle at the first meeting. Their part (piece) is important

### **Sunday School**

#### **The #1 Assimilation Tool Identified by the top 4% of Churches in Studies**

- Lower assimilation churches mentioned organization of Sunday School as very important 32% of the time
- Higher assimilation churches mentioned it 92% of the time.

- Christians who immediately became active in Sunday School were 5 times more likely to remain in the church 5 years later.
- Myth #7: The Sunday School and other small groups are ineffective in attracting the un-churched
- Best gauge of assimilation

### **Not just any Sunday School**

- Comprehensive doctrine taught.
  - Churches with low view of doctrine or the authority of the Bible - younger generation tends to leave within 20 years
- Sunday School Class Caregivers
  - Major portion of shepherding
  - Pastor notified for major shepherding issues
  - Each member contacted quarterly
  - All are expected to attend
- High expectations of all members
- Raised the standards of teachers, shepherding, and evangelism.
- Set goals and kept records
- Keep track of visitors in Sunday School
- Attendance increased among active and minimally active members
- Teacher turn-over dropped
- Major increase of ministry involvement through Sunday School - through caregiver function
- Well organized
  - Teachers trained - weekly organizational meetings
  - Strong life-long relationships, even after people move away
  - Overcomes family separation issues of cell groups - childcare and children's classes available at the same time as adult Sunday School class
  - Overcomes weak curriculum that is often part of cell groups
  - Cost of discipleship clearly understood by all
  - Commitment to make Sunday School work - takes work and organization
  - Some resistance during the transition to higher standards

### **Evangelism in Sunday School**

- Most salvations occurred in Sunday School – Contrary to much advice given today
- Personal evangelism training and accountability
- Prayer for people the individual members of the class are trying to reach for Christ
- Most outreach and evangelistic efforts were organized through the Sunday Schools
- The Sunday Schools that emphasized evangelism were more naturally seeing new Christians becoming involved in Sunday School
- Evangelism must be a priority in the whole church for it to work in Sunday School

### **Quotes about Sunday School**

- “Many church leaders have helped perpetuate the myth for twenty or so years. The myth is that Sunday School is no longer effective evangelistically or as an assimilation tool. And those who believed the myth are suffering the consequences today.” Don Cox

- Pastor in California, “I have taken Sunday School for granted most of my ministry. This study has shown me that I must lead my church to make our organization more effective than ever. I will no longer neglect the Sunday School organization.”
- Colorado pastor, “needs-based studies are OK for a short while, but they need to be the exception instead of the rule.”
- Lesson #1 from Thom Rainer research: “The only reason churches are not evangelistic through the Sunday School is that they make no intentional efforts to do so.”

### **Celebrate Heroes**

- Sunday School worker appreciation banquet
- Affirm Sunday School workers (and all ministry workers) in front of the congregation
- Interview new Christians and those making the jump into ministry through the Sunday School classes
- Record “God’s Stories”

### **Session 10** – (The Pastors Self Evaluation)

#### **How Important is Preaching to the Formerly Un-churched?**

- 90% rated the pastor’s preaching as the #1 reason they chose the church
- Attracted to a church with strong biblical teaching
  - Exclusivity of salvation through Jesus Christ
  - Bible totally true
- 91% said doctrine is most important
- Over 40% said preaching that applies to life
- Pastor is a good communicator
- People want objective truth
- Even before they came they wanted a church that would stick to its beliefs
- Insisted that the church should be uncompromising
- Attracted to conservative, evangelical churches
- Conservative churches:
  - Total belief system
  - Distinctive code of conduct - out of beliefs
  - Strict discipline
  - Commit significant resources to their cause
  - Missionary zeal
- Speaking the truth in love
  - Strong convictions
  - Gentle spirit
- None described their church as harsh or legalistic
- Sermons only had meaning when the un-churched were seeking for meaning

#### **What Kind of Preaching Turned Off the Formerly Un-churched?**

- Watered down sermons - insult their intelligence
- Watered down sermons - don’t meet their needs
- Churches that are lukewarm in doctrinal conviction

- Lack of conviction and spiritual challenges – afraid they might offend
- No one wants to be part of an organization that is ambiguous or uncertain of beliefs

### **What Kind of Preaching Helped the Formerly Un-churched to Stick?**

- Expository preaching
- Biblical text central to the sermon
- High expectations to following Christ
- Doctrine
- Conviction of belief
- Passionate
- The Bible is always relevant – life applications
- Transparent – let people know you are like them
- Illustrative
- Well-paced

### **Preaching Styles and the Pastors of the Top 4% of Churches**

- Very few limited to one style
- #1 Expository 52% - explanations or commentaries on Bible texts
- #2 Topical 20% - with Biblical application
- #3 Thematic 17% - series around a central theme
- Almost none used narrative style - Biblical truth in parable form
- Teaching of Doctrine through all styles

### **How Much Time on Sermon Preparations?**

- Top 4% pastors
  - Ave. 22 hrs. sermon prep
  - Some as high as 30 hrs
- Comparison group - non-evangelistic churches
  - Ave. 4 hrs. sermon prep
- High correlation between sermon prep and assimilation rates

### **What about Pastoral Care?**

- Acts 6: 2-4 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”
- Only 15% believed that pastoral care was primarily their responsibility
- Only 26% of evangelistic pastors ranked pastoral care as first
- 78% of non-evangelistic churches ranked it first
- Willing to accept criticism for turning over the pastoral care. Gave it away to laypeople
- Sunday School care givers
- Small group leaders
- Elders

## **Leadership**

What leadership characteristics did the pastors of the top 4% of the churches have in common?

- Evangelistic
  - Tend to believe their congregation is open to change as long as study, prayer, and leadership support is in place
  - Spend much time in personal evangelism
  - Perceive themselves to be less visionary than their laypeople perceive them to be.
- Comparison churches
  - Tend to believe their congregations aren't open to change.
  - Spend almost no time in personal evangelism
  - Perceive themselves to be more visionary than their laypeople perceive them to be

## **High Correlation to Tenure**

- Evangelistic Churches
  - Ave. 11 years
  - Some as long as 30years
- Comparison Churches
  - Ave. 3.8 years (national average)
  - Ave. 4.0 for non-evangelistic churches in study

## **Advantages of Long Tenure**

- Takes a long time to develop change
- Committed to see churches through change
- Developed high trust level
- Renewed ministry and growth - sometimes took as long as seven years
- Effective leadership is a long-term approach

## **The Formerly Un-churched Talk About their Pastors**

- 90% said the pastor and his/her preaching were their #1 reason for choosing the church
- Speaks the truth in love
- Speaks with conviction
- Personal contacts by the pastor are important
- Pastor is a good leader

## **Authenticity of Pastors**

- Down to earth
- Friendly
- Humorous
- Willing to admit mistakes
- Not holier-than-thou
- Real
- Enthusiastic
- Walked the talk
- Relates well
- Regular guy (or gal)

### **Theologically Conservative**

- Heart breaks for the lost
- Theology of lostness - Christ as the only way to heaven.
- Theology of hell – urgency in reaching the lost
- Salvation in Christ alone
- Bible totally true

### **The Pastor “Gives Away” Ministry**

- Eph. 4:11 & 12 Gave some to be apostles ...
- Believes that people are more than able to do the work of service in the body of Christ
- Intensity of delegated ministries
- Gave away pastoral care

### **Leadership Styles**

- Most dominant - high task/high relationship
- A team captain that participates in the game
- One pastor, “I am tempted just to move ahead without a broad consensus, but I realize that would be a big mistake. So I consult with church leaders and take the time to seek input from the members. The process takes a lot longer, but the end result is healthier.”

### **Leadership**

Top 4 Styles

- Task oriented - production and getting things done
- Goal oriented - pushing to completion
- Team oriented - works in a group and leads by example
- Relationship oriented - importance of friends and fellowship

### **Leadership Styles**

- Very few of the evangelistic churches had unique leaders
- Many of the top leaders were not charismatic leaders

### **Leadership trait’s that work -Very consistent across the board**

- Dynamic
- Energetic
- Enthusiastic
- Godly
- Spirit-filled
- Anointed (Called to Minister)

### **Strongest Likes of Pastoring**

- 89% ranked preaching a strongest like
- Only 20% of pastors of evangelistic churches ranked pastoral care as #1 like
- 71% of pastors of non-evangelistic churches ranked pastoral care as #1 like

### **Strongest Dislikes of Pastoring**

- 66% of pastors of evangelistic churches ranked committee meetings as #1 dislike

– Most committees don't accomplish much

- 16% of non-evangelistic pastors ranked committee meetings as their #1 like
- Pastors of evangelistic churches love personal evangelism
- Pastors of non-evangelistic churches avoid personal evangelism

### **Influences and Mentors**

- Not the latest fads
- Pastors had personal mentors
- Shaped by negative experiences and/or failures
  - Opposition from Satan
  - Opposition from Christians
  - “Maybe we didn't do a good job of leading them”
- Learn from failures

### **Most common books read**

- Most are avid readers
- The Purpose Driven Church - Rick Warren – most mentioned
- My Utmost for His Highest - Oswald Chambers
- Knowing God - J. I. Packer
- Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire - Jim Cymbala
- The Master Plan of Evangelism - Robert Coleman
- Pilgrim's Progress - John Bunyan
- In His Steps - Charles Sheldon
- Mere Christianity - C. S. Lewis
- Many books on leadership

### **Motivation**

- #1 A theology of lostness
- #2 Passion and Enthusiasm
  - must be modeled
  - personal evangelism
  - reaching the lost
- #3 Accountability in personal evangelism
  - a person or group to report to weekly
  - prayer of repentance if there weren't any
- #4 Excellence in all things
  - Mediocrity is not acceptable
  - Inspires congregation to be “excellent in all things”
  - Facility, grounds, music, worship
  - Should have members inviting guests every week

### **Top 12 Strengths**

- The pastors were asked an open ended question, “What are your greatest strengths in your leadership?”
- #1 The ability to cast vision 72%
- #2 A sense of humor 68%



- #3 Work ethic 67%
- #4 Persistence 65%
- #5 Leadership by example 59%
- #6 Integrity 57%
- #7 Change agent 57%
- #8 Love of God's word 54%
- #9 Communication skills 53%
- #10 Faith/Optimism 52%
- #11 Relational skills/love of people 52%
- #12 Team building/mentoring 50%

### **Top 12 Weaknesses**

- The pastors were asked an open ended question, "What are your greatest weaknesses in your leadership?"
- #1 Pastoral ministry 73%
- #2 Lack of patience 71%
- #3 Dealing with staff 70%
- #4 Dealing with criticism 67%
- #5 Always task driven 63%
- #6 Too little time for prayer 63%
- #7 Paying too little attention to details 61%
- #8 Moving too fast 59%
- #9 Poor relational skills 57%, In observation they do well, they are hard on themselves
- #10 Time management 54% – tend to be highly self-critical
- #11 Failure to develop a five year plan 53%
- #12 Failure to communicate well

### **You Must Lead**

- Be vision driven
- Seek to involve others in tasks
- High expectations of anyone who commits to being a disciple of Christ
- Vision compelling - attracts leadership – engenders alliances
- A goal is not an end to itself - building block to something greater and more exciting

### **Session 11** – (Worship Ministries “Getting Plugged in”)

#### **The Worship Service “... All things done decently and in order.”**

- Bob Russell, “Mediocrity breeds indifference, but quality attracts ... Imagine how much easier evangelism would be if your church services were done with so much excellence that they inspired people to the extent that they couldn't help but tell their friends about their experience.”
- No correlation between worship service style or music style and effective evangelistic churches
  - High church
  - Traditional

- Contemporary
- Charismatic

### **Quality Music**

- Whatever style fits your church and community
- Do it well
- The better the quality, the better the leading in worship
- The better the quality, the more likely guests will want to come back
- The better the quality, the better guests will be able to join you in worship

### **A Well Organized Service**

- A well organized service will make guests(and everyone else) comfortable with their worship.
- Chaos hinders worship and makes guests feel uncomfortable
- Control the flow, eliminate dead times
- Avoid embarrassing or pressured times for guests
- Says a church is serious about its mission
- “If the worship service isn’t planned well you can be sure that everything else is done poorly, too.”

### **The Message is the Service**

- Not just the sermon
- Theme throughout the entire service
- Variety
  - Drama
  - Interviews
  - Videos
  - A message
  - A greeting
  - Scripture Reading
  - Offering
  - Music

### **It’s a Celebration!**

- People attend because they want to
- People bring friends
- People participate
- People listen
- People grow
- Recruit a worship team
- Mental, spiritual, relational, and emotional nature of worship

### **New Ministries**

- New ministries keep the church fresh and exciting
- Most ministries have a 5 year life span
- Replace with new ministries

- Retool old ministries to make them fresh and exciting again
- New ministries provide more ways to get more people involved
- Most can only start one ministry per year
- Some larger churches might be able to start 2 or 3 ministries per year

### **New Ministries Increase Long-Term Visitor Retention**

- New ministries attract more visitors
- New ministries provide more opportunities to plug in new people
- New ministries help regular attenders become fully engaged life-time members

### **8 Questions for Starting New Ministries** From Gary McIntosh, Beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> Visit

#### • #1 Who is our audience?

- Jesus began with a target audience, “to the Jew first.”
- Prov. 16:19 “...the mind plans ... the Lord leads”
- Open to new directions led by the Holy Spirit
- The church’s primary target audience
- Identify various groups
- How are we reaching them?
- Most effective methods?

#### • #2 Where do we sense the burden of God in our church at this time?

- Luke 10:25-37 -“...neighbor ... to whom am I a neighbor?”
- How can I reach out?

#### • #3 What specific group is God giving us a burden to serve?

- Relate in today’s society
- Clear focus
- Can’t do it all

#### • #4 What needs do these people have that we could meet?

- Interview people and list three major needs
- Analyze resources
  - People
  - Finances
  - Knowledge
  - Skills
  - Facilities
- Develop several charts for several groups

#### • #5 What specific ministries are we qualified to start that fits with God’s burden and the people we wish to serve?

- Research for strongest needs and resources
- Research what other churches in your area are doing and join with them for a while
- Ask God what He wants your church to do
- Examine the list of ministries from Carl George that are included with the assignment for this session. They may help you to explore and pray about new ministries

- #6 What similar ministries are other churches in your area already doing?
  - Learn what is working and what is not working
  - Consider whether there is a need for another church doing similar ministries
- #7 What will be our strategy and plan?
  - Study target group
  - Study resources
  - Form a strategy
  - You don't have to have it all figured out before you begin
- #8 What process do we need to follow to get approval from our church?
  - Connect with leaders
  - Keep leaders informed

### **Other Ideas for Finding New Ministries**

- Leadership goes on a slow tour of the community listing needs noticed
- Newspaper - jot down all needs and groups mentioned
- Meet with fire chief, police chief, and mayor and ask for ideas to serve others
- Randomly call 200 homes and ask for ideas
- Survey church members
- Summarize your findings and pray about them

### **The AAAA Plan**

- Advertise
  - In a location outside your church where the target audience is likely to see it
  - Under promise and over deliver
  - Be prepared to keep people who come - follow-up team
- Attract
  - An event addressing the target audience needs
  - Non-churchy, informal, and non-threatening
  - Use prayers and religious sounding words sparingly
  - Short seminar, no long term commitments
- Ask
  - Those who come to the event to become involved in a small support group or ministry
  - Their involvement begins to build relationships that could lead them to Christ
- Assimilate
  - Make friends
  - Join a group or class
  - Become involved in serving others

### **When a Church Person Comes up With a Ministry Idea**

- Praise the person for the idea
- Ask the person to find 5 other people who are willing to help develop the idea
- Enthusiastically encourage the team
  - To fit the idea with the direction of the church
  - To think how it fits the church culture

- Support with training
- Team must find their own funding
- Assure them the church will support them if they follow the following guidelines
- Maintain legal, ethical, and moral integrity
- Biblically based - doctrine of the church
- Leaders must attend leadership training events
- Report
- People attending ministry
- What's going well
- Difficulties

### **Recruiting Ministry Workers**

- Relational based
- More emphasis on the needs of the individual than on the institution
- Experience
- Gifts, interests, and talents
- Get to know the individual well
- Offer a ministry opportunity that is a good fit
- Ask them to select
- Those who agree with your church values
- Recruit a team that is accountable to each other
- Recruit a project with a limited time span
- “Recruit for the short term, renew for the long term”
- Keep policies, procedures, and formal control to a minimum
- Use cultural control and people's commitments
- Recruit for attitude, train for skills
- Balance between formal and informal training
- Reward those who produce good results and show gratitude

### **Evaluations that Lead to Excellence**

- “The church that seeks to be a church of excellence in all things will see God's blessings. And the difference in the lives of many will be eternal.” Thom S. Rainer
- Evaluation is the key to excellence
- Start with a written plan and strategy
- Turn that written plan and strategy into a series of survey questions or statements that represent the plan being carried out to excellence and add a rating system.
- Have the team complete the survey at least twice a year
- Write similar survey questions for those who used the ministry. Many times they will point out issues that the team doesn't see.
- Note areas that need improvement, make plans to improve, implement them, and evaluate again

Session 12 – (Church Marketing & The Church Brochure)

### **Inviting More Guests**

### **Remember Why They Come**

- Led by God
- Crisis
- Life's experiences
- Children
- Invitation
- Personal evangelism
- Pastor's preaching
- A big event
  - Christmas
  - Easter
- Good reputation of the church
- Programs and ministries
- 90% front door - worship service
- 10% side door - through small groups or other ministries
- A few churches do both well and experience explosive growth
- A positive contact
  - First impressions made with person from church
  - Tend to be generalized to entire church
  - Facility is part of first impressions

### **A Culture of Personal Evangelism and The Importance of Personal Evangelism**

- Billy Graham Crusades can pretty accurately predict how many will come forward to receive Christ by the number of committed volunteers who are trained as counselors
- Several studies range from 65% - 95% who come to Christ because of personal evangelism

### **Two Myths Dispelled by Thom Rainer's Research**

- Myth #4 – the un-churched cannot be reached by direct personal evangelism
- Myth #8 - The most important evangelistic relationships take place in the marketplace

### **Teach Your Congregation to Invite the Un-churched**

- A healthy pride factor about a church that strives for excellence in all things produces people who are willing to invite people
- A healthy visitor retention program creates enthusiasm that is carried through when people invite people to church

### **Teach Your People to Evangelize**

- In Sunday School - not just teach, train them
- From the pulpit
- Use those with the gift of evangelism to train everyone else
- Members hold each other accountable for developing relationships with the unchurched
- Evangelism must be part of the prayer life of the church
  - Prayer meetings
  - Sunday School classes
  - Small groups

### **Train for Evangelism**

- The entire church must have a priority for evangelism
- Expect all members to be involved in personal evangelism
- Train in your membership classes
- Train in Sunday School
- Train from the pulpit
- Train through small groups
- Train through special classes
- Train on CDs and DVDs

### **Marketing for Churches**

#### **Curb Appeal**

- Your facilities and grounds are your most permanent form of advertising
- Church is judged by how it looks from the outside
- Quality sign that catches attention, is easy to read, and is informative

#### **Advertising**

- Not a good method for bringing in new people. Only 3.6% come because of advertising alone

#### **Advertising Will...**

- Build morale
- Give a point of reference for inviting people
- Create a climate of growth
  - Opportunities and openness
- Create an inviting image
- Shapes community attitudes
  - A desire to be helpful
  - Assurance of acceptance
  - Enthusiasm of present members
  - Fulfillment Christ brings to life

#### **Advertising Will Not...**

- Change reality
- Connect people
- Cause personal growth
- Replace personal relationships

#### **Develop a Communications Team**

- Editor
- Writer
- Artist
- Photographer

### **What to Communicate?**

- What you stand for
- What you will deliver and how
- Live up to what you say
- Tie to a strong commitment to the Great Commission
- Determine geographic ministry area
- Select current audience
  - Current members
  - Church shoppers
  - The un-churched

### **Advertising Campaign**

- Think long-term
- Regular communications - newsletter, newspapers
- Plan unfolds over several years
- Takes a long time to develop a recognizable image
- 5% of budget

### **The Church Brochure**

- 4 out of 5 will read only the first page
  - Must catch attention
  - Photo or drawing that illustrates purpose and mission
  - Title that includes a benefit - the church that cares
  - Up-to-date logo
  - Answer questions
- Why would anyone want to come?
- What benefits will they receive by attending your church

### **The Main Part**

- Overview of church, high points only
- Lots of white space around print
- Short biography of Senior Pastor
- Short testimonials from regular attendees with pictures
- Benefits and special features of church
- Short statement of purpose and mission
- Map
- Mailing panel
- Address, phone, and website
- Times and locations of services
- Size to fit standard business envelope
- Also consider:
  - List Activities for all ages
  - Photos - worship and activities
  - Stories - how people are being saved
  - Schedule of activities
  - Any professional services



– Invite to visit

### **The Brochure Campaign**

- Mail or place in doorknob hangers (10,000 = 1,000 read = 200 considered = 50 visitors)
- Include CD and/or DVD introducing pastor and his preaching and an intro to the church
- Spread mailing or door-hanger blitzes out over several months
- Cover every home in your entire area or community
- Must be repeated to work

### **Newspaper Ads**

- Issues the un-churched are concerned about
- Interview and research for area needs
- Write in un-churched language
- Not on church page, in a more read section

### **Two More Possibilities**

- Telemarketing
- 10,000 calls - 1,000 interested - 50-100 show up for the event
- Direct mail 0.5% - 2.0% response
- Minimum 10,000 pieces, 2 times per year
- Fall, pre-Christmas, pre- Easter

### **Word of Mouth Still Best Form of Advertising**

- More people pass on negative news than pass on positive news. 10/1
- It can take 100 positive stories to overcome the effects of one negative story
- Teach your people to avoid negative talk
- Members spread happiness
- Only excellence motivates word of mouth
- Share good news often
- God Stories DVDs
- Interviews from the pulpit
- End of the year event for stories and testimonials
- Communicate victories
- Print answers to prayer, goals, and ministry news
- Read Thank You letters publicly
- Business cards for every member
- Hitting the streets - meeting community needs

### **Direct Contact with Community**

- Meet with mayor
- See how he is doing
- Offer to pray for him
- No other agenda
- Thank you dinner for community leaders
- Firemen, police, city counsel, etc

### **Final Evaluation**

- Results from churches in the group
- Stories from the churches in the group
- View data from the churches in the group

### **This Is Not the End of Your Visitor Retention Program...**

#### **It's Only the Beginning!**

- Many of you have been able to keep up with the development of your VRP
- Many of you are still working on various aspects of your VRP development
- Make prayer a constant part of your development and evaluation
- Carry out your plans to completion
- Let the circular nature of a healthy VRP do its work, led by the Holy Spirit
- If you haven't already, visit the VRP discussion group at:  
<http://kingdominsight.ning.com/group/visitorretention/forum>

### **Remember!**

- Your church is not friendly unless visitors say it is!
- “The Definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results” – Albert Einstein
- TRADITION – Just because you've always done it that way doesn't mean it's not incredibly stupid.

The moral here - Change is upon us, welcomed or not. We either oppose it and fail, or adapt and embrace it, using the Holy Spirit, Scriptures and Prayer to guide us.