

Membership Team Notes

Counts for Membership

We now have 214 members. We also have a number of pledging friends, so the number of 214 does not reflect the participation of people who are informal members. Since 1/14 to the present, we have added 13 members. Our new member count last year was 22. The board goal and our team goal was 20. However that did not take into account that we lose approximately 10% each year as people die, move or resign. The expected loss in a growing church is 10-12%. Our loss last year was a total of 19, which was under that 10%. Out of that 19, four died, 6 moved and 9 no longer attended and were removed from the membership rolls. The loss number was a little inflated as some were lost the previous year, but not removed from membership.

We are doing a good job of retaining members. We are tracking the numbers in our data base thanks to Barb Ross and Anne Rivas, and the numbers I am quoting you will serve as a guide for what our team will focus on this next year.

As of 10/19/14, we had 132 visitors. On a ratio of 1 visitor to each member with growing congregations, we should have at the end of the year approximately 80% of that ratio, more or less. We do want to reach the 1 to 1 ratio. Of our visitors we should expect to convert 14 to 20% to members and should have 20 to 40% return of 1st time visitors.

As of 10/19, we had 30 visitors who attended more than 5 times, so by the end of the year, that number should be around 50. Here is where our team intends to focus. We know that the majority of visitors tend to drop out after the 5th visit. The conversion of visitors to members in growing churches is 14 to 20% so that is our goal.

One article mentioned that visitors are not just looking for a welcoming atmosphere, but are searching for friendships. We are doing a great job this last two years of welcoming our visitors, thanks to more participation of the congregation at coffee hour and the enthusiasm, thanks to Bill Ross, of the hospitality teams. Based on the notion that people are looking to be more connected to potential friends, we need to involve visitors in our community much sooner, probably after the 3rd visit. So far, our first time visitors get a letter from Frank and after the second visit, another letter goes out from the office.

Two members of our team will be working on engaging visitors after the 3rd, 4th or 5th visit in our social events, educational programs, etc.

We are also developing ways to question the frequent visitors (those who continue after the 5th visit) about what is hindering their taking the next steps to membership and will

create surveys and questions for casual interviews with that group. We have a lot of frequent visitors who are not members, so that will be a major effort for this team.

What we do have in place: Visitors forms (may need revision). Brochures, including a Path to Membership Brochure which we created, a way of tracking our counts and a data base manager, our UU&You program, a New Member Co-ordinator in Jaime Alexander, and a Membership Ceremony. We have revised a number of forms and procedures and have them available on our Visitor Table. We have New Member Celebrations twice a year, and now that the welcoming atmosphere has been established, we can focus on the frequent visitor conversion to members and also actively engaging visitors in our community. We track members and contact who are not attending and are coordinating efforts with the Caring Team. We have a variety of letters in place to send people who for a variety of reasons, can no longer attend or resign membership. We will also be working on integrating new members into the community, using other team leaders and the Ministry Team to assist us.

Since our task is large and the effort needs to be community wide in this congregation, we have expanded the team, but would also appreciate your support for adding even more members to form sub teams for special projects.

Jacqueline Anderegg, Chair Membership Team