

Evangelism Ministry Team Update July 2013

Mission: Working in conjunction with the pastoral staff, to provide direction and leadership to the congregation in executing the Great Commission...to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Over the last few years the team has evolved from an internally focused social committee to an externally focused evangelism/outreach team. The team has moved from sponsoring events for church members to a focus on inviting and welcoming the unchurched.

Current Team Members: Jim Rainwaters, Chair; Mary Jacobs; Melissa Giannasi; Beth Hagemeyer; Al Brunsting; Roger Barney.

We are currently looking for new team members. If you are interested in joining, please contact Jim Rainwaters.

Overview:

We have used The Race to Reach Out (Anderson/Coyner) as a template for our Evangelism activities, including our assimilation process. Our activities are authentic, focused and intentional.

Our process includes the following:

1. Attracting Newcomers.
2. Welcoming Newcomers.
3. Identifying Newcomers.
4. Responding to Newcomers.
5. Listening to Newcomers.
6. Including Newcomers.
7. Including Newcomers as Members.

Within each of these areas, we have established specific actions and activities, ranging from NCTV interviews to greeter scheduling and guidelines to our Faith Bites program. This process works and needs to be continually monitored and improved.

State of CUMC:

One of the key metrics of any church is AWA (average worship attendance). Community's AWA had been in decline for several years, but has flattened out and is currently on the rise. This can be attributed to pastoral leadership, renewed harmony in the church family and the continued emphasis on inviting.

Church membership is also a well used metric for measuring church growth. The challenge is to insure that we are not losing members out the back door while being

focused on the new members coming in the front door. Our Caring for Inactives program (led by Mary Jacobs) is one way to monitor the back door.

We have aggressively focused on the neighborhood for growth. Ours is a church the neighborhood can walk to. We have partnered with ECHO (East Central Homeowners Organization) to work together for the betterment of the neighborhood with National Night Out being our signature event. Within the immediate ECHO neighborhood, there are roughly 400 homes and easily another 1,000+ homes within walking distance. Similarly, we have refocused our efforts on North Central College, which are showing good results. Assume that 35-40% of the neighborhood has no church home. The pews can easily be filled with the unchurched, i.e., the "nones" from the neighborhood.

The process of Evangelism can be divided into inviting and welcoming. Community is good at welcoming; but we can improve the inviting. This is not being critical; its just fact. Once we get a guest in the door, we are welcoming and turn the guest over to the Holy Spirit. The challenge, faced by all churches, not just ours, is to encourage members to go out beyond the church walls and begin the process to make disciples. 75% of first time visitors showed up on Sunday morning because they received a personal invitation. We all have family members, relatives, business associates and neighbors who have no church home. We know who to invite.

What's Next...Short Term?

1. Sunday Church in the Park (three Sundays in July)
2. July 25...Central Park Band Concert; CUMC hosting Ice Cream Social
3. August 6...Co-Sponsoring National Night Out with ECHO.

What's Next...Longer Term?

1. Continue the neighborhood focus (assess the Who Is My Neighbor program).
2. Renew the church wide focus on inviting.
3. Develop the CUMC "brand" within the neighborhood and Naperville.

Thank you for your ministry. If you would like more information on Evangelism, please contact me via Rainman1947@comcast.net.

Jim Rainwaters
Chair Evangelism Ministry team