

Evangelism Notes
First United Presbyterian Church, Tarentum
Rev. Phil Beck, Pastor

(This evangelism plan was developed by the session of First UPC Tarentum. It has resulted in a more open and welcoming environment in the congregation and has helped the church welcome many new families with young children. You are welcome to use this plan as is or adapt it to fit your own congregation and community.)

Getting People to the Church the First Time

1. Invite, invite, invite – about 65% of our first time guests come from a personal invitation.
2. Hold regular “open” events at the church with focus towards families with children (key group). These include a puppet show in the winter, Easter gathering on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, Vacation Bible School, Fall Harvest Festival (first weekend in October) and Children’s Christmas Party (first Saturday in December).

An invitation is handed out to families concerning upcoming events and worship times at these events. Names, addresses and emails are collected to add to our database. All the events are free!!! Do not charge for events – this includes Vacation Bible School.

3. News from the Pews. A twice a quarter, one page “newsletter” particularly focused towards guests to the church is produced and hand delivered to the various groups that use the church. These groups include a Boy Scout Troop, Cub Scout Pack, three Girl Scout Troops, and Kindermusik families (approx. 120 families). The newsletter includes events, invitations, and information concerning the church with a particular emphasis on photos with families and children.
4. Use the “church sign” effectively. The church sign is invitational. It always includes our worship and Sunday School time and is always advertising either our next event or our missional activities. We intentionally do not put the little quips and quotes found on many church signs – these may be funny or thought provoking, but we have found these quotes and quips have been ineffective or even a “turn off” to people looking for a church.

Getting People to Return to the Church

1. The pastor is outside the main entrance to the church at least a half an hour before worship begins and is the first greeter to those coming to the church.
2. Greeters welcome everyone and give out bulletins and also have been trained to welcome first time guests.
3. Families with children who arrive are shown where “coloring pads” are for children and are either “walked to” or given information and directions to the church nursery and/or family room.
4. All families who have a child in the nursery are asked to sign in and sign out their child.
5. About 6-8 individuals have been trained to “recognize” guests and to greet them appropriately during our time of passing of the peace. These same individuals are trained to invite our guests to the fellowship hour following worship and then to sit with these individuals during that time (Nothing is worse than for a first time guest to come to a time of fellowship and sit alone).
6. During announcements, the pastor or leader encourages guests to put their name and address in a ministry pad in the pews. Ministry pads should have place for name and address and these days, email address.
7. Other notes: directional signs, clean bathrooms, well kept grounds, convenient parking for guests, up to date bulletin boards, clean and up to date nursery (families do not like to see outdated toys or dirty nurseries) are also important to having guests return.

First Visit Follow-Up

1. If a first-time guest places name and address in the ministry pad or on a “visitor” card, they are identified Monday morning.
2. On Monday morning, an evangelism team member is called and/or emailed with the name and address of the family.
3. By Monday evening, the evangelism team (it must be 2 people) does a doorstep visit to the identified guest. A bag of “goodies” is given to the first time guest. In the bag is a color brochure about the church, coloring items and a book for children (if children are part of the family), a candle, and a 6-pack of Smiley Cookies from Eat ‘n’ Park. (Please note – we have found it best to use purchased cookies, that way there is no concern about someone getting sick from homemade items). If the family/individual is not present, the gift is left at the door with a note.

This is truly a doorstep visit of no more than 2-3 minutes. It is:

1. Hello, I am _____ from First United Presbyterian Church.
2. Thank you for visiting us yesterday.
3. Here is a small gift from our congregation.
4. We hope to see you back next Sunday.

As a doorstep visitor you may be invited inside, we encourage our doorstep visitors to remain outside and “decline the invitation.” It is truly a “thanks for coming to our church visit,” nothing more.

4. On Monday, the pastor hand writes a note to the first-time guest expressing appreciation for their visit and inviting them to come back to worship.
5. On Thursday, the doorstep evangelism team writes a short note to the first-time guest:
 1. If they met the guest on Monday, it was a pleasure meeting them.
 2. If they did not meet the guest on Monday, hope they received the gift bag.
 3. Hope to see them this Sunday in worship and also give their contact info if the guest has any questions about the church.

Next Steps:

1. If the guest returns for a second time, a follow-up note is again sent by the pastor and evangelism team expressing how it was good to see them return.
2. If the guest returns for a third time, they are added to the church newsletter list and to the church email contact list (if we have their email).
3. Regular “new member” classes are offered throughout the year. If a guest marks, “wish to join” on the fellowship pad. The pastor follows up with the guest the following week.