

DOING CHURCH TODAY FOR VITAL MINISTRY TOMORROW

Pittsburgh Presbytery Meeting

May 23, 2019

TOP TEN LIST:

10. Stop advertising your fax number. Please.
9. Don't assume everyone knows the Lord's Prayer – get rid of coded language in your bulletin and worship service. And don't assume people have cash for the offering plate. Allow for other ways to give.
8. Empower your committees and encourage them to make good faith efforts to be up to date on “real world needs” such as child safety policies, accurate insurance coverage, volunteer clearances, etc.
7. Work out partnerships with your neighbors. Invite them to hold music recitals, host school choir concerts, offer free movies, allow your kitchen to be used to help a local caterer, etc.
6. If you say “All are welcome” and don't live into this intentionally, you're offending your guests. People will often decide in the first six minutes whether you are truly hospitable and a church worth visiting a second time.
5. Fix your webpage! Or create a webpage – do something!
4. Use social media – livestream – reach out using the resources your congregation members and neighbors are already using!
3. Re-define your church's boundaries – your church doesn't end either at the sanctuary walls or your property lines. Pick a “ministry perimeter” – whether it is 1 block or 1 mile and truly serve that community.
2. Pittsburgh Presbytery lost over 1600 members last year. Out of 134 churches, only 22 showed any membership gain and only 3 gained more than 5 members. You don't need gimmicks, better coffee, different music. You need to learn to talk about what matters – and stop being silent about important stuff. Find ways in worship, education, prayer time, bible study to raise hard topics like racism, economic disparity, criminal justice inequity, flawed presidential politics, abortion, addiction. Our faith is meant to guide us in all areas of our individual and common lives. Being silent on Sunday guarantees people will see the church as irrelevant.
1. Find someone to do some research for you – to go online and see how long it takes them to learn when your worship is held, whether you have childcare, and what is the “spirit of your congregation” based on what they read/see online. Ask an unchurched person what they would look for in a congregation/church and truly listen to their answer.