

## THE 5 PURPOSES OF THE CHURCH AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

### Session 4 – Fellowship in the Congregation

#### *Turning Attenders into Members*

In this session we want to specifically address Fellowship in the Congregation, where we seek to move those from the circle of the Crowd into the circle of the Congregation.

*“Now you are no longer strangers to God and foreigners to heaven, but you are **members** of God’s very own family...and you **belong** to God’s household with every other Christian.”*  
Ephesians 2:19 (TLB)

*“In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member **belongs** to all the others.”*  
Romans 12:5 (NIV)

#### 1. Create a \_\_\_\_\_ Where People Want to be Part of Our Church Community.

The two things people crave most: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

*“By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you **love** one another.”*  
John 13:35 (NIV)

*“**Accept** one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”*  
Romans 15:7 (NIV)

**Fact: Growing churches love, and loving churches grow!**

Communicate that your church is a \_\_\_\_\_, not an \_\_\_\_\_!

**Seek to express love and acceptance in the following ways:**

- a) Being approachable and real.
- b) Being vulnerable and open to acknowledging our failures.
- c) Encouraging people to ask questions in order to create a climate of openness.
- d) Greeting people before and after services.
- e) Learning names.
- f) Practicing “*The 3-Minute Rule.*”
- g) Accepting and affirming diversity when it does not conflict with biblical values.

*“Let us concentrate on the things that make for harmony and the growth of our fellowship together.”*

Romans 14:9 (Phillips)

- In church background
- In levels of commitment and maturity
- In non-essential doctrines

**2. Communicate the \_\_\_\_\_ of Being Members of the Church Family.**

The difference between being an attender and a member is \_\_\_\_\_t.

**The Three Parts of the Christian Life**

**(1) Believing**

*“**BELIEVE** on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.”*

Acts 16:31 (TLB)

**(2) Belonging**

*“You are members of God’s very own family...and you **BELONG** to God’s household with every other Christian.”*

Ephesians 2:19 (TLB)

**(3) Becoming**

*“From the very beginning God decided that those who came to Him... should **BECOME** like His Son....”*

Romans 8:29 (TLB)

The word “*church*” is used in the Bible in 2 different ways:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Church:
- \_\_\_\_\_ Church:

#### **Benefits to Membership**

- a) It identifies me as a genuine believer. *Ephesians 2:19; Romans 12:5*
- b) It provides a spiritual family to support and encourage me. *Gal. 6:1-2; Heb. 10:24-25*
- c) It gives me a place to discover and use my gifts in ministry. *1 Corinthians 12:4-27*
- d) It places me under the spiritual direction of godly leaders. *Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28-29*
- e) It gives me the accountability I need to grow. *Ephesians 5:21*

#### **Responsibilities of Members**

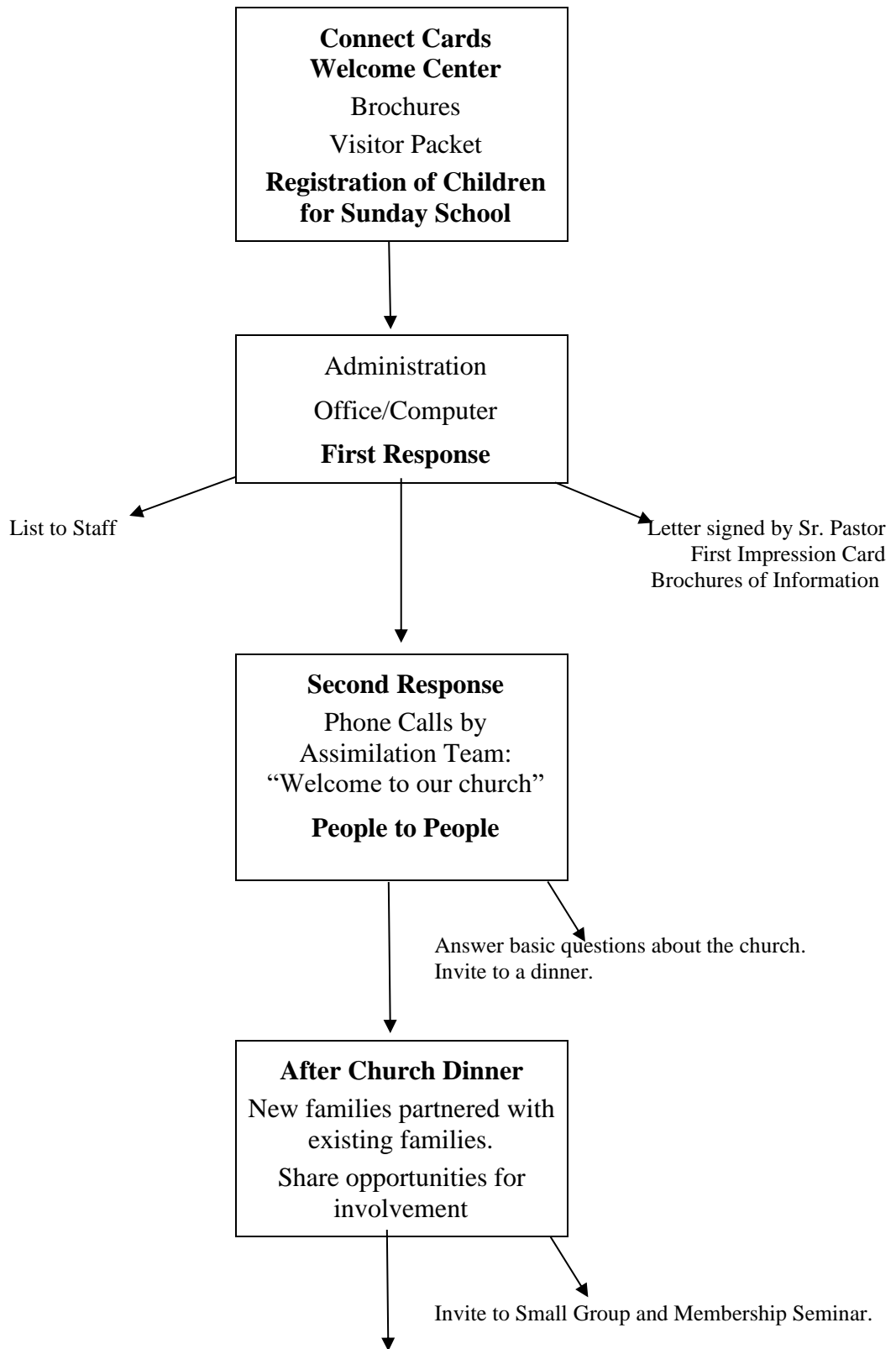
- a) Acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord. *Luke 9:26*
- b) Participation in the symbols of salvation: the Lord’s Supper. *Acts 2:41-42*
- c) Faithful attendance at worship. *Hebrews 10:25*
- d) Respect for church leaders. *Hebrews 13:17*
- e) Participation in a small group. *Acts 2:46*
- f) Praying for the church. *2 Thessalonians 3:1*
- g) Financial support. *Deuteronomy 14:23; 1 Corinthians 16:2*
- h) The use of spiritual abilities/gifts in service. *1 Peter 4:10*

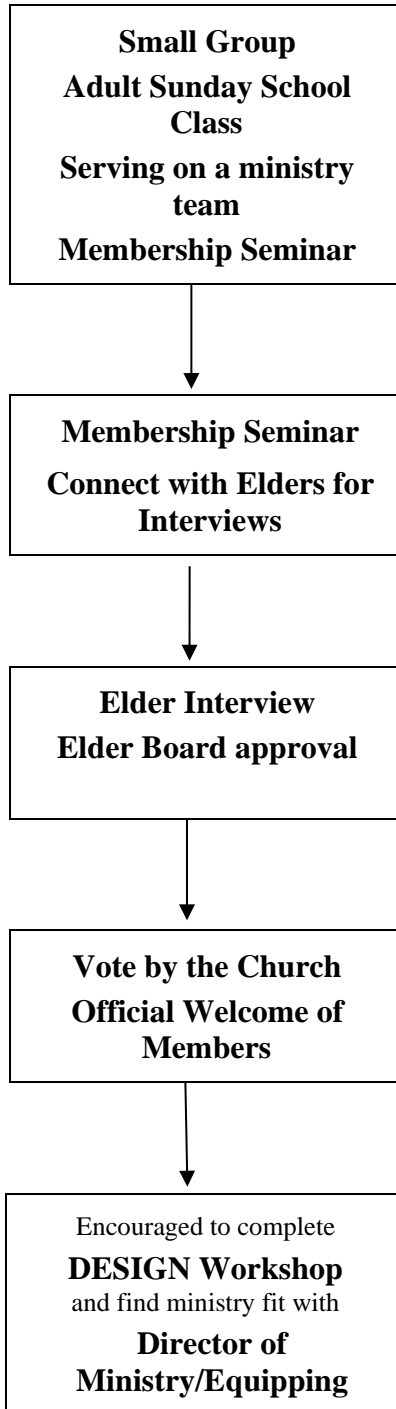
**Help people see “Membership” as a step of  
Spiritual growth rather than an organizational ritual.**

### **3. Develop a \_\_\_\_\_ to Assimilate New People into the Life of the Church.**

*“Make plans by seeking advice.”  
Proverbs 20:18*

## ASSIMILATION STRATEGY





**4. Establish a Required \_\_\_\_\_.**

**The manner in which people join our church will  
Determine their effectiveness as members for years to come.**

**A strong membership class will grow a strong church.**

### **Membership Class Outline**

#### **SECTION ONE: OUR SALVATION** (What God Has Done for Us)

- How a Person Becomes a Christian
- Making Sure You Are a Christian

#### **SECTION TWO: OUR SYMBOLS** (Illustrating What God Has Done)

- Baptism (if there is interest, not for membership)
- Communion

#### **SECTION THREE: OUR STATEMENTS** (Why and How We Exist as a Church)

- Our Foundation: What We Believe
- Our Purposes: Why We Exist
- Our Values: Who We Are
- Our Vision: Where We're Going
- Our Covenant: What We Agree To
- Our Strategies: How We Do It

#### **SECTION FOUR: OUR STRUCTURE** (When and Where We Fulfill Our Vision/Purpose)

- Our History
- How Our Church Is Organized
- Our Elders
- Our Staff
- What It Means to be a Member
- Next Steps

**A membership class needs to answer the following questions:**

- What is a church?
- What are the purposes of the church?
- What are the benefits of being a member?
- What are the requirements of being a member?
- What are the responsibilities of being a member?
- What's the vision and strategy of the church?
- How is the church organized?
- How can I get involved in ministry?
- What do I do now that I'm interested in membership?

It's helpful to offer 3 versions of the Membership Class: Children's, Youth, and Adults.

## **5. Develop a Membership \_\_\_\_\_.**

The apostle Paul mentions 2 different types of commitment:

*“First they gave themselves to the Lord and then by God’s will they gave themselves to us.”*  
2 Corinthians 8:5

### **Three Requirements for Membership:**

- A personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- Complete Membership Class 101.
- Commit to abide by the Membership Covenant.

### **Our Membership Covenant:**

We covenant together by God's grace to live our lives consistent with the standards of biblical teaching. This means (1) supporting the local ministry in attendance, prayer, service, outreach, and giving, (2) living lives in word and deed that encourage others to know and imitate Jesus Christ, and (3) reflecting the servant-love of our Lord in all of our relationships.

## **6. Create Opportunities for People to Build \_\_\_\_\_.**

### **Some Ways to Promote Relational Connections:**

- Welcome Center: give a visitor's packet with a mug, pen and brochures.
- Ministry of Greeters/Hosts.
- 10-Minute Tours: answer basic questions and communicate our mission/vision.
- Small groups.
- After Church Dinners: planned regularly with new families being partnered with existing family for 3 months; share opportunities to get involved and membership seminar.
- Men's/women's events and retreats.
- Name Tags.
- Relational activities in *every* meeting, including Adult Sunday School.

## 7. Encourage Everyone to Join a \_\_\_\_\_.

*“Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.”*

Acts 5:42

Every \_\_\_\_\_ needs to be part of a small group!

### The Five Purposes in Small Groups – Acts 2:42-47

*“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup>And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup>And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup>And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup>And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”* Acts 2:42-47

1) They grew \_\_\_\_\_ (Maturity).

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching....”*

Acts 2:42a

2) They grew in \_\_\_\_\_ (Membership).

*“They devoted themselves...to the fellowship. All who believed were together...  
They ate together....”*

Acts 2:42b, 46b

3) They grew in \_\_\_\_\_ (Magnification).

*“They devoted themselves to...the breaking of bread and the prayers...praising God.”*

Acts 2:42a, 47a

4) They \_\_\_\_\_ to each other (Ministry).

*“They were selling their possessions...and distributing the proceeds to all,  
as any had need.”*

Acts 2:45



## 5) They \_\_\_\_\_ the lost (Mission).

*“And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”*  
Acts 2:47b

## 8. Keep \_\_\_\_\_ Open.

*“Be sure you know the condition of your flock; give attention to your herds.”*  
Proverbs 27:23 (NIV)

**Channels for Feedback:**

- Welcome/Connect Card
- First Impression Card
- Sharing Prayer Concerns
- E-Mail/Phone/Verbal Contacts
- Personal Calls and Visits
- Small Group Leader Reports
- Town Hall Meetings
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

**Channels We Can Use to Communicate a Message to the Congregation:**

- Social Media
- Email
- Video
- Voice Mail
- Newsletters
- Prayer Chains
- Postcards
- Website: <https://prairiehill.church>

## 9. Make Your Members Feel \_\_\_\_\_.

## Suggestions:

- 1) Print a nice certificate of membership.
- 2) Welcome new members as part of a Sunday service (ask them questions based on the covenant).
- 3) Host a meal for new members as part of their welcome.
- 4) Invite people to share Faith Stories during the teaching time on Sundays.

- 5) Take their prayer requests seriously.
- 6) Invite small groups to a Pastor's Coffee or Gathering.
- 7) Send cards on special days.
- 8) Give them a meaningful ministry role and freedom to do it.
- 9) The ministry of presence/listening: people's questions/concerns are valued.
- 10) Challenge them with an eternal vision!

### ***Personal Action Checklist***

- Do I welcome those who are new?
- Do I communicate the biblical value of membership?
- Have I attended the Membership Class? Do I encourage others to attend?
- Am I taking my covenant and commitment to other believers seriously?
- Do I take advantage of opportunities to build relationships?
- Am I part of a small group?
- Do I keep communication channels open?
- Do I make other members feel special?

### ***What Our Church Can Do***

Give your church a 1 (needs improvement) to 10 (doing very well) in each of these areas. Which ones are you strongest in as a body? Where do you need some work?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Create a climate where people want to join.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communicate the value of membership.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develop and implement a plan to assimilate new members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Establish a required membership class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develop a membership covenant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create opportunities to build relationships.

- \_\_\_ Encourage every member to join a small group.
- \_\_\_ Keep communication channels open.
- \_\_\_ Make our members feel special.