

Notes from Growth/Welcoming Committee Gathering
July 11, 2010

Participants: Janet Buschert, Roger Piper-Ruth; Chad Summervill, Jean Yurke, Rick Skinner, Pat Casey, Ernie Bachman

Notes prepared by Rob Hanson

Objectives:

Come up with ideas to 1) improve welcoming of newcomers and 2) to better incorporate people into the fabric of Hyde Park.

The ideas we came up with are listed below from my notes.

1. We need a better system for inviting people to supper for several and meal groups.
2. Show people the needs at HPMF. This will help people see where they can plug in. Invite people to attend committees or participate in meetings like this.
3. Committee information can be shared via announcements, an up to date bulletin board, information on how people get on committees, ask people to participate in committees.
4. Have committees provide reports on Sundays.
5. Work days to help Trustees.
6. Community events like the neighborhood coffeehouse that was held at HPMF.
7. Calendar of events that is easily accessible and used by people – perhaps a web based solution. *Janet was going to investigate Facebook to see how its calendar works.*
8. Use Social Media- this would likely require training for some people.

9. Tie into other church youth groups so we can better support our kids.
10. Advertise in the paper – needs to be consistent; not one time shots
11. Use Dunia as a link to new people – posters, inserts in shopping bags for special events.
12. Can volunteers at Dunia help with some of the social networking duties in their down times.
13. Check out NPR for advertising costs – *Janet was going to call to see what these would cost.*
14. On crowded Sundays, regulars should be asked to sit closer together so that there is room for people.
15. Have greeters introduce newcomers to someone to sit with and help with their first time.
16. Encourage people to invite others to church and church events.
17. Greeters could invite people to events or hand out information when people come into church.
18. Include a church calendar in the welcoming folder.

This was more a less a brainstorming session with some evaluation of ideas.
Below Jean applied a grid that was presented to group ideas into four groups.

The categories of the grid are shown below:

1. Hard to Do/Low Impact – We don't need these ideas
2. Hard to Do/ High Impact – These are highly resource dependent; wait until we have the money and/or the people
3. Easy to Do/Low Impact – If there real easy to do, give it a try, but these are not the focus
4. Easy to Do/High Impact – this is the sweet spot – DO THESE.

You will see the difference between my notes and Jean's in the listing below. You now have the benefit of two views of the meeting.

Easy To Do / Low Impact

Share needs in the bulletin announcements

{This could have a higher impact *if they are READ.*}

Easy To Do with potential for Medium-to-high Impact

Set up a "friends of HPMF" group on *Facebook*

{This could become *Hard To Do* in terms of maintaining.}

Easy To Do / High Impact

Refill leaflets near sign board and Restock "welcome packets"

Include new people when having "Supper For Several" gatherings

Have organized meals more often

Let committees have open meetings during "Second Sunday Soup"

and Talk about what the committees do during worship/announcements

Encourage greater participation in Trustees' work days / projects

Bring friends to church events (like ice cream social and Menno Floats)

Make room for visitors to sit in the sanctuary by intentionally sitting

toward the middle so that visitors can easily fill in at ends {Greeters could assist visitors in "selecting" seats and making introductions.}

Hard To Do / Low Impact

Have a balloon hover over the church building with an anti-torture message

Hard To Do / High Impact

Develop and maintain a more functional bulletin board / church calendar

--and an electronic version, possibly through *Facebook*, or through

Outlook via Lauresta

Operate a coffee house on a regular basis

Organize and/or Promote a youth fellowship program with other churches

Have creative and consistent advertising

--local NPR station, newspaper, neighborhood posters

~"leverage the store" when talking up HPMF

Hold two services on Sunday morning "during the winter"

Have greeters equipped to share "what's happening this month" with

visitors/newcomers (could be included in "welcome packets")

Other ideas from Email

Hand out Mennonite Confession of Faith to newcomers or as part of Mennonite class.