

## MISCELLANEOUS EVANGELISM-RELATED THOUGHTS

1. Material from the School of Outreach, a WELS program to help congregations with their evangelism focus and organization, has these things to say about a congregational evangelism program.

- “Evangelism cannot become an isolated program of the church relegated to just one committee of a few members or to just one Sunday of the year. Evangelism needs to be an integrated and essential component of the entire program of every congregation.”
- “Before any aspect of the evangelism program happens, the congregation as a whole and as individuals will need to commit itself to this work.”
- “Evangelism is a congregational concern. The congregation needs to commit time, talent, treasure and testimony to it ... The zeal for witnessing and sharing the Savior is not taught or dictated; it is caught.”
- “With an understanding of the present situation, the next step is to lay out the goals (long range, medium range and short term) for congregational outreach. The goals need to be realistic and measurable.”

2. Research has shown it’s the personal invitation that makes a difference. The following statistics were taken from Pastor David Valleskey’s “Building Bridges Seminar”, page 1-2. The material for the entire seminar is available on the Evangelism pages of WELS.net.

- One survey: Over 14,000 people were asked what or who was responsible for bringing them to that particular church. The results:

|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| Special need         | 1-2%    |
| Walk-in              | 2-3%    |
| Pastor               | 5-6%    |
| Visitation           | 1-2%    |
| Sunday school        | 4-5%    |
| Evangelistic crusade | ½ of 1% |
| Church program       | 2-3%    |
| Friend/Relative      | 75-90%  |

- Gallup poll
  - a) 58% of those who now go to church regularly, who had been unchurched before, first began going when they were invited by someone they knew
  - b) 63% of those who don't go to church say that none of their friends or acquaintances ever invited them

3. Some evangelism-focused things Abiding Word has done in the not-so-distant past:

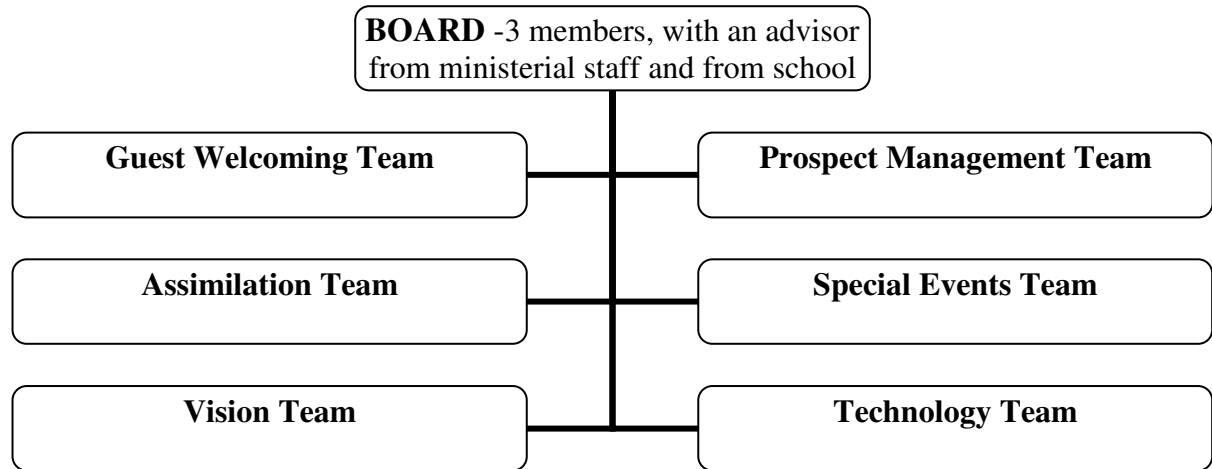
Currently doing:

- Mail welcome cards to those who sign our guest register
- Ministry staff visits worship guests who appear to be good prospects
- Have assigned greeters most Sundays
- Encourage everyone to greet visitors and make them feel welcome
- Canvass neighborhoods with invitations to such things as VBS or Holy Week worship (Holy Week canvass this past spring)
- Mail VBS announcements/invitations to the area
- Follow-up with prospects identified through VBS
- Use the electronic sign to let people know what is going on
- Have an ad in the yellow pages
- Run ads in the newspaper (recent school program)
- Maintain a website to help people locate a Bible-based church
- Three elders have a special focus on evangelism
- Have been conducting BIC/Bible Class in Spanish and have live translation of the late service into Spanish
- Hear about the need for and the joy of outreach and mission work from the pulpit and in Bible classes
- Congregation mission statement is highly visible and has outreach as a primary element
- Have growth as an important goal in our 5 year plan

In the past:

- Mailed welcome letters to those moving into the community
- Formed an evangelism committee (that got bogged down in meetings rather than actions)
- In 1998 sent a small group to a School of Evangelism workshop (material is available in the library)
- Had teams of people who called on all church visitors that Sunday afternoon
- Put out door hangers throughout a neighborhood
- Mailed 20,000+ professionally designed cards with invitation to attend
- Used the "Andrew Plan," asking each member to bring a friend to worship or BIC
- Had classes in friendship evangelism
- Sent monthly newsletters to prospects

4. One WELS congregation sees all members of the congregation as the “evangelism committee” and has successfully organized their outreach as follows:



The Board helps coordinate the work of the teams, makes assignments, helps get people involved and encourages the teams in their innovation and activities. The more members they can involve in some type of evangelism activity, the better.