



# Recruiting and Keeping Volunteers Workshop

Northeast Cluster of the UU  
Florida District



# The Path of Commitment

**Not  
Committed**

**Somewhat  
Committed**

**Very  
Committed**

**Involved**





# Awareness Model of Membership

- **awareness leads to opportunities**
- **opportunities lead to engagement**
- **engagement lead to relationships**
- **relationships lead to increased commitment**
- **increased commitment leads to participation**
- **participation leads to membership**



# Leadership Development in Congregational Life

Nancy Bowen, District Executive  
Mountain Desert District

## ■ **Common Existing Model: Nominating Committee**

- A few hassled people meet a few times at the last minute to try to talk a few other busy people into doing jobs none of them understand and none of them really want to do.



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- Standing committee of 5-9 members, accountable to Board and congregation, meets throughout the year to support congregational leadership and assist members in identifying the ways in which service to the mission of the congregation will be most rewarding to them.
- The responsibilities of the committee include: leadership identification, development and nurture.



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- They are concerned with the quality of experience people have as leaders; intentional about inviting newer members into appropriate positions of leadership, mindful that all have different gifts and that those are best recognized and used to serve the congregation's mission.
- The committee maintains close communication with Membership, Religious Education, Adult Programming and the professional staff.



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- Members of the new committee must be committed to the mission of the congregation and able to:
  - maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality;
  - assume a broad level of responsibility;
  - educate themselves on these issues and
  - meet year round.
- Ideally the committee is balanced across age, tenure of membership, gender and interests.



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- **Specific Committee Responsibilities:**
  - Presenting informed and prepared nominees for the elected positions
  - Nominees to fill vacancies created by resignation
  - Maintain job descriptions and resource files for volunteer positions (committees, task forces, events, activities, etc.)



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- Provide congregation based leadership development opportunities
- Help members identify the ways in which they wish to serve
- Provide training opportunities:
  - Internal or outside facilitators



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- Recruit people to attend outside trainings:
  - District workshops, UUA sponsored conferences and worthwhile local opportunities.
- Identify areas that need to be strengthened:
  - Decision-making, group process, conflict management, strategic planning, others



## Another Model: Leadership Development Committee

- Orientation of new leaders:
  - Board members, task leaders and committee chairs
- Retreat planning, resources and assistance:
  - for Board and or committees
    - (e.g. Search Committee, Strategic Planning Committee)



## **Another Model: Leadership Development Committee**

- Assessing the leadership experience:
  - Check-in with new leader after 2-3 months in the position
  - Conduct exit interviews with those finishing a term of service
  - Facilitate or provide resources for group process self assessment



# Another Model: Leadership Development Committee

- Recognition:

- Installation of elected leaders
- Commissioning of new ministry leadership teams
- Recognition of service completed



# Communicating

- How does this new committee communicate the opportunities?
  - Need vs. Opportunity
  - Fulfilling the mission of shared ministry
  - Being a part of a covenantal community



# Communicating

- What methods do you use to recruit volunteers?
  - The Newsletter
  - Email
  - Sunday announcements
  - Snail Mail
  - Website
  - Personal asks
  - Bulletin Boards
  - Order of Service
  - Other?



# Group Wisdom

- Recruiting techniques that work
- Rotating volunteers through
- Challenges for smaller congregations
- Challenges for larger congregations
- Success Stories



# Membership Integration: Beginnings Steps For Church Growth

Northeast Cluster of the UU  
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# First Things First – The First Visit

- First 11 minutes –
  - Well trained greeters with welcome packets
    - How well are greeters aware of Lifespan RE programs and how to direct visitors in order to meet their needs?
    - Do the packets offer invitations for involvement?
    - Do the packets have good clear contact information?
    - How do we do it now?



# First Level

- Hospitality

- Trained Greeters
- Patio Behavior and Sunday Designates
- Welcoming Materials
- Tracking Methodology
- Floaters - designated people who connect with visitors after the service



# First Level

- **Worship**

- Inviting the visitor

- High energy, well done and welcoming beginning of the service
- A service that lets new people know something about us
- Announcement Awareness



## Second Level: Follow-up

- **Hospitality – Follow-up** – (If you can't do it all, what can you do?)
  - Phone call to visitors by a layperson within 72 hours of first visit
  - A letter or e-mail from the minister
  - Invite them to a some kind of event, social or otherwise



## Second Level: Follow-up

- Tracking Methodology
  - Place all visitors on mailing list (and make them a printed nametag)
  - Track returning visitors



## Third Level:

### Deepening the Commitment

- Building Awareness and Connections
  - Invite all visitors to a brunch or other social event with congregational leadership –at least each quarter
  - Invite them to UU class, offered at least twice a year
  - Small Group Opportunities - Help returning visitors (guests) to connect - (covenant groups, book clubs, etc.)



# Fourth Level: Entering Into Covenant

- Making an invitation

- Invite them to join the congregation
- Responsibilities of membership – pledge and participation
- Celebrate their joining
- If not done at 3rd level, invite them to join a small group
- Invite them to share their gifts in the ministry of the congregation



# The Visitor Experience: Accessibility For Visitors

## ■ Parking

- How full is the parking lot?
- Do you have visitor parking marked?
- Do you need parking lot greeters?

## ■ Worship Accessibility - How full is the service?

- If you are regularly at 80%; are you moving to a 2nd service?
- Do you hold services other than on Sunday morning?



# The Visitor Experience: Accessibility For Visitors

- For Families
  - Does your RE program for children and youth have a strong UU curriculum?
- Physical Accessibility
  - How accessible is your building and your parking lot?
- How clean is your website?
  - Is your website easy to navigate and help visitors quickly identify useful information about the congregation?
  - Are directions to the church and worship times visible?
  - Does your website have bright colors and pictures of happy people in community with each other?



# Group Wisdom

- What are some of the most effective strategies from your congregation?
- How do you best follow-up?
- What does formal and informal communication tell you about why your visitors return?