

Church idea's for encouragement to stabilize, sustain and grow.

Many of these ideas are for individual members and are not geared for church funding. And are not original with me, but are from different experiences, from reliable people, of whom I have seen success.

In matters of encouragement: individual members who have regular potlucks, or invite as a tradition the whole church family to ice cream after evening services on Wednesday night, to McDonalds, etc, will engage in strong bond group creation. Either at home or in restaurants, Hospitality does make a closer church.

Encouragement idea as a rule for members: give accountability to members. Ask them to have a 5-minute rule to greet the visitors and those they know who are struggling, (before doing other things), before and after services.

For Preachers: put new converts, teens, (who often feel isolated in church) and the spiritually weak/discouraged to work in duty roster assignments and in events you do outside of church. Invite them to participate in spiritual actives, visiting the elderly, sick, doing evangelism, teaching classes, opening up the church building for service, greeting people, helping with hosting a gathering at their house, etc; Can have more than a few helping in a group, doing the work with you. And if it's a lady, invite and ask your spouse or others ladies, who are active in service, to do the same. Inclusion is important. Even in non-spiritual things; But especially in things related to God and heavenly matters. These are just guidelines. The focus is to basically just be in their lives, more than just saying hi on Sunday's and Wednesdays.

Encouragement idea for getting a group to help those in need: Get the church to get have the opening announcer mention a group meeting in a class, for interested members after church to discuss people who need visits, calls, cards, a hug at church, etc. The class will be focused on people who are hurting, who are sick, who are visiting, new converts, discouraged, ignored.

This group would also focus on calling or writing people who are missed. Who did not come to church for a service or services? They are needed, valued and important. And the group should let them know that. The meeting does not take as much time, as it would at someone's home and can be done on each Wednesday evening or Sunday evening after services. For each person, let the leader in charge of the group, ask for a volunteer to contact each mentioned person, and let the leader give the reason for contact. Have pens and paper for group to write down names and needs. Also have group sign a card together. Mutual Christians signing together a card, is also a powerful way to reach people.

People who have not been to church in a while and return due to being contacted, should have some members set aside to greet them warmly and welcome them back. And if possible, be shown some hospitality.

Visitors should have some people by the door to get greet visitors and slack attenders, who start coming back to a service, immediately. And the greeters should have items with pen's for getting the visitors contact info. Also hospitality should be shown by the greeters, to the visitors.

New converts should have a weekly Bible Study class to go to. The church should have (through a list) homes open and ready to rotate hospitality and Bible teachings. Each family should have a meal and someone familiar with the lesson material to teach a class; (Recommended first having a "new convert" class to go over the material for the families to get familiar with).

The Preacher and the Elders need to make new converts a priority as well and have them into their homes, or out to eat, once a month. A general Bible class by the Preacher should be conducted for all the church members, in a potluck setting, each week and the Preacher should encourage the new converts to come. This will encourage the new converts to become active in building connections and in doing Bible study.

Churches that thrive are bonded through hospitality and through working together on the same themes. Churches that thrive also must be unified in doctrine. This leads to peace and unity. These are important measures.

Sound doctrine must be preached and taught for a church to be spiritually strong, emotionally secure and mentally grounded.

Evangelism idea: take time to gather sound advice, effective techniques, responsible/accountable people and get these interested church members together after services to do evangelism. Have the church announcer say that the evangelism group will be meeting at someone's home, after church. For this group, meet once a month, and have announcer invite all church members. Those that are interested will come. Prepare for group meeting (as with anything else), with bulletin, email and announcements for upcoming event. The meeting each month can be a workshop, to teach evangelism materials or methods, it can be a assignment day, where the members are assignment certain evangelism tasks, or it can be to notify the group of future events, (like door knocking, etc) and overall plans for the group, (like in having a goal to grow the church by 6 new people this year, etc).

A group of people who have the gift of encouragement should be given duties in hospitality and accountability to these people should be emphasized. Their focus should be for people who need it; As well as for college students, visitors, new Christians.

Accountability: Dis-fellowship needs to be done, emphasized and preached on or referenced regularly, in written articles, taught in class, to create accountability (in moral issues and attendance) in others. Just because someone goes to church does not make someone doctrinally sound. Vet in picking a Preacher, a Bible class Teacher, when you want someone to teach others.

Reminders: Have in bulletin, opening or closing announcements and even briefly in sermon rhetoric, highlighted the following scriptural Bible themes; Evangelism, hospitality, encouragement (of those in need spiritually) and sound doctrine. Also have in main church area, where others can see it, a poster or large sign that has these ideals outlined. I have noticed that when people see something regularly in a church, they tend to be reminded of it and dwell on it. And in this I have seen such behavior take root in action. But in the following qualities, the Preacher and Elders need to be leaders and show

the themes in their lives as well. Leaders who don't lead are a distraction and discouragement to a church. And are sending out conflicting messages in what they say and in what they do.

Training: Get an annual preacher training program created. Young men will thrive doing this, the church will be encouraged seeing this, and if you do this 6 months or more a year you can apply prepare men for the work before them. More churches should be doing this. If the young men are near a college, (like FC) and are going to school, don't pay them. Does a college pay? This is a free education; and if taught right, a priceless one. The college cost will cover room, food cost for students; which is supported by parents or by other means. 1-12 college age men can be aptly taught, a lectureship style with resources and workshop, homework assignments. The class should entail both reading and active work, like evangelism and visitation and conducting Bible studies. The more men who help in this class, the more work will be done for the church. Also, the more trainees who come, the more of their friends, girlfriends, etc will come, as well as college people, who like being around college folks their own age.. Estimate max trainee number (12) of drawing 20-40 people in. But growth is secondary. This main focus is in giving a man or men the education to make them be the best they can be. In training, they should be strongly grounded and admonished when speaking false things.

Anytime a church gets behind an idea, such as in having members put together a group for evangelism, encouragement, etc. It is much more effective in member support, then if an individual member is trying to set up a group, by himself. Can be 10 times more effective.

Churches with a strong support system, knowledge foundation, evangelism work, will grow. Not diminish; having such pillars of church growth and security; in encouragement, accountability, work, sound doctrine, and evangelism, will lead to a better church family and a lasting one.