

Contacts & Connections Minutes

February 2007

By Email

Because no one was available to meet on Monday, February 12th, the Committee met through Email discussion.

Evangelism Outreach

MONTHLY EVENTS:

4th Friday FunFest 4th Friday FunFest resumed January 26, 2007. Debbie filled out and submitted building use forms for 2007. Some dates (February, for example) were not available because there is a wedding rehearsal at the church that day and the entire church is blocked for Friday and Saturday.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Date to be Determined: Outreach Training The committee will be looking at ways to educate and train people in outreach evangelism, in relational/servant evangelism methods in 2007. Gene Price indicates that she has a training study in her office and offered to share that with the Committee as we look at studies.

March/April: Easter Outreach For Easter outreach we will again purchase booklets for the visitors table, put the church address in them and ask our church family to offer them to their friends and neighbors who might be seeking God or needing a refresher. It is suggested that we look into getting Lee Strobel's, "The Case for Easter."

April 14: Tax Day Outreach On April 14, members of the congregation interested in going out to spread some love, will be encouraged to come to the Panther Creek Post Office to provide stamps to those mailing their tax returns on that day.

May: Gas Buydown (Tentative) We will attempt to coordinate with a gas station in The Woodlands, hopefully near the church to offer a "gas buydown" event. In this case we would buy down the cost of a gallon of gas by, say, 25 cents per gallon. We would do this for 1-2 hours. (Memorial Day weekend is traditionally the weekend on which gas prices increase for the summer.)

July: Fourth of July Parade Float We will again plan and design a float to be entered in the South Montgomery County Parade on the 4th of July. We will design the float to meet the theme and seek additional volunteers to give handouts to those attending the parade. While the stickers were well received last year, it takes more than 2 people to hand them out. We can also consider other giveaways.

August/September: Alpha Class Buster and Melanie are looking into offering an Alpha course this coming fall. The Alpha class would be advertised and offered to our church family and our neighbors and would include time spent over a meal.

September/October: Outreach in The Park We will be seeking out entertainment for an outreach event in the park in September or October. Debbie is looking at Christian entertainment that could include comedians or musicians. The Committee would also try to provide hotdogs and bottled water (bottled water was hugely well received in 2006).

November: Thanksgiving Community Dinner We plan to continue this new tradition in 2007 following a similar schedule and seeking donations from our church family as well as Woodlands area businesses. We will expect at least twice as many as were served in 2006 and will extend invitations ahead of time to fire and police. In addition, we will do newspaper advertising, so will plan for 200 with a maximum of 500.

December: Christmas Outreach For Christmas outreach we will purchase booklets for the visitors table, put the church address in them and ask people to offer them to the unchurched around them. These booklets would in some way offer information on simple topics, such as what Christmas means, what it means to recognize Jesus Christ as our savior, what being a Christian can mean to you.

December: Caroling, Cookies & Cocoa We will plan to do our Caroling, Cookies and Cocoa event again this December, although probably earlier in the month, perhaps, December 15. We will solicit cookies and bake as well. A door hanger or other drop off will provide information on our Christmas Eve services.

OTHER: Financial Peace University This item has been tabled for now, owing to budget issues, but we hope those issues can be resolved early enough in the year that we are able to offer this 13-week course on building financial freedom to our church family as well as our neighbors in The Woodlands. In addition to setup costs and refreshments, the cost for the course is \$100 per family, and we would like to be able to cover at least half of that for those attending.

Communications/Advertising

- Website** Pages are being maintained and new pages are being updated. The youth page is now available. Additional work needs to be done, but the youth now have an avenue for communication with the outside world and also have a blog.
- Newsletter/LOC** With Melanie's resignation as editor (effective April 2007) of the newsletter and our inability to find others willing to take on this role, the newsletter will likely become an on-line only publication beginning in June.
- In regards to the Life of the Church, Debbie Atwood is resigning as designer on this piece. She will produce her last version for Sunday, March 11th. The weekly time commitment has been ongoing for 15 months and is too much for one volunteer.
- Both of these communication items remain under the purview of this committee, but new volunteers and/or office staff support are needed as the preparation of these pieces is too cumbersome for one volunteer.
- Advertising** With budget changes (reductions), we will not be able to meet our goal of monthly newspaper advertising and will even be scaling back a bit at Easter and Christmas. We will continue to use the free space on woodlandsonline.com.

Intentional Hospitality / Visitors

- Greeters** Greeters are currently being scheduled by Buster Schroeder and things are booked through February.
- The Greeters Thank You Brunch was held on Sunday, February 11, as a "We Love our Greeters" brunch. Buster and Debbie Cain worked together on this and did a fantastic job using Valentine's day decorations and plenty of food for the approximately 50 greeters who attended. Others stopped by as well and signed up for future greeting.
- Crossroads Table(s)** Logo ideas were reviewed and discussed and one was selected. Zach Corson suggested one other and so that one will be worked up and emailed to the Committee for consideration and review for our information areas, both inside and out. Given the budget cutbacks, this may need to be deferred until the future.

Inquirer's Class

- Class** While the committee had discussed and agreed to a new format beginning in January 2007 that would include 3 Wednesday nights, David Jones has returned to the one Saturday morning format, indicating that several new members indicated they would not have attended three meetings. The committee still has concerns that in the past year several of these new members have left by the back door because they do not feel connected. The committee would still like to have more than just David involved in these classes, to include some staff and some elders/deacons.
- At this time, the classes continue on Saturdays with only David teaching. The new member new member group working with Kathy Richardson (see Attachment) is graciously working to provide refreshments for these classes. We will only be able to provide 2 new member brunches in 2007, as opposed to the 4 we held in 2006.

Assimilation

- Retaining New Members** Kathy Richardson is working with a new member team (see Attachment) that is working to reach out to newmembers to get them to feel connected. This new member team of the Deacons will work to help assimilate new members into the church. At some point, we would like to coordinate with them to provide some introductory Christian education classes, for example, on "How To Study Your Bible," "How and When to Pray," etc. that will help those that are new to living life as a Christian.

Budget

2007 At its January 2007 meeting, the Session reviewed the proposed budgets versus the pledges and we were asked to consider cuts to our budget. Contacts and Connections offered to cut \$3,000 of its requested \$26,800 budget (an 11% reduction). All areas of our budget were reviewed and budgets reduced.

New Business

Session Presentation Debbie has been asked to make a presentation to Session on February 20 in regards to the Contacts and Connections Committee. All members of the committee are encouraged to attend this presentation if they are able.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Atwood

New Member Ministry Team Meeting

The following members met on Wednesday, November 8th and developed a plan of action for welcoming new members to our congregation.

Present: Bonnie Norman, Karen Braden, Sarah Snyder, Cherry Calender, Pat Huck, Lucia Queen, Kathy Richardson

Action Plan

Continue with monthly Saturday morning inquirer's classes on Presbyterianism (David Jones) One member of the team will be there to welcome inquirers and provide information forms. (We are encouraged to invite someone from the congregation to participate in this welcome with us.)

The following Sunday morning, persons who wish to join our congregation will meet with the Session between services. The team members will also attend this meeting and collect forms from the new members.

A welcome letter will be sent from the New Member Ministry Team, welcoming them to our congregation and encouraging them to attend the quarterly New Members Brunch. They will also receive a copy of the current newsletter and telephone directory.

A follow-up telephone call will be made by members of the Ministry Team to see how they are doing and offer information as needed.

The Ministry Team will track their involvement in the life of the church for the following 3 months after joining to assure they are being assimilated and meeting members of our congregation.

A quarterly New Members Brunch will be scheduled and all new members from that quarter will receive an invitation to attend. At the brunch they will be introduced to leaders participating in various ministries of the Church. All members of the New Member Ministry Team will attend the brunch.

Team members were given names of the previous two classes and asked to make a welcome call to these new members.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 6th at 7PM in the Church Parlor.

Kathy Richardson

Minutes for New Member Ministry Team
Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Present: Pat Huck, Libby Greeley, Karen Braden, Bonnie Norman, Rev. Gene Price, Kathy Richardson

A devotional was given by Libby Greeley. We had a short meeting this month, since the January Inquirer's class did not take place. We discussed our contacts that month and how our new members were adjusting. Most we find are participating in various activities and classes.

We discussed the February 17th class and distributed forms to be completed by new members. Gene will notify us of possible attendees. Bonnie Norman and Pat Huck volunteered to be the welcoming team for this class, with Kathy Richardson as a substitute. A suggestion was made that as supply of the forms the clerk of Session needs to complete be left in a drawer in the Parlor. Kathy will make copies and put in the end table drawer.

Rev. Gene Price closed with prayer.

Minutes submitted by
Kathy Richardson