

The Messenger



A Newsletter of the
Genesee 1st Congregational, United Church of Christ, Inc.

August, 2022 - special edition

Volume 17, Number 2.5

Pastoral Ponderings

7 Things That Will Drive Future Church Growth

I came across this excellent article on church growth written by my friend Carey Nieuwhof. Please take time to read it and consider how we might incorporate his ideas into the life of our congregation. This is important work for the future of our church.

He begins....

You got into church leadership because you wanted to introduce people to Jesus. That's pretty much how all of us begin, isn't it? And yet every year, it seems to get harder to reach people. It's not for lack of effort. Most church leaders try hard, pray hard and do their very best to advance the mission of their church. But the facts speak for themselves. The majority of churches are in decline, and 94% of all churches are losing ground against their community (that is, their community is growing faster than the church is). And yet, even in the midst of that, some churches are growing. In those churches are the early clues to what future church growth looks like.

Here are 7 factors that will drive almost all future church growth.

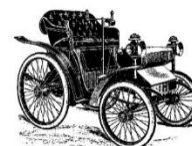
1. Personal Invitation

One of the things that fly under the radar of most growing churches is how much personal invitation fuels church growth (and discipleship).

A great social media presence is important, as services unchurched people can access. But at the heart of it all, in almost every growing church is this: *people inviting their friends*. Personal invitation fuels much of future

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11TH Annual Genesee Church Car Show



Saturday, September 10
8 AM – 2 PM

Save the Date!

Genesee Church Education Center
W306 S5075 Church St., Genesee, Wisconsin

- **First 100 Cars get a dash plaque**
- **Food, beverages and music**
- **\$8 donation, all proceeds to go toward community, church and Children's Hospital**
- **Huge Raffle at 1 PM**

Sponsored by: S/S Automotive
Contact: 262-968-3324

www.ssautomotive.pro
e-mail: bj@ssresearch.com

19th Annual Pig Roast



Saturday, October 8, 4 – 7 PM

Genesee Church Education Center
W306 S5075 Church St., Genesee, Wisconsin

Save the Date: October 8th, 4 – 7 PM
Pig Roast and Prize Drawing

We would like to bring back our event this year but we need your help! We need volunteers to commit now so we know if we can move forward.

Call Mary Ann Ludtke: (262-544-1242) or call / email the church office (262-968-3849) /

geneseechurch@wi.twcbc.com and let us know you are interested in helping with:

- our food prep party the Thursday and/or Friday before the event
- Decorating the Ed. Center (the week before)
- Set up our dining room, prize tables and games
- making a dessert to deliver Saturday morning
- Serving food or help in the kitchen the day of the event and working with the kitchen clean-up crew

In addition, please, we need help with:

Donate and/or solicit prizes for our drawing. Donation letters are attached to this newsletter. **(e-copy recipients click on the separate attachment.)**

Buy advance sale tickets (available in August) so we can buy only what we need.

We appreciate your commitments in advance so we can continue to hold this event! Thanks!

WELCOME to the August, 2022 special edition of the Messenger. On Sunday, July 17 our service time went to 9 AM. It stays at 9 AM the rest of this year. We share Pastor Dave with the Hartland, UCC. As such, we have the early service six months and Hartland gets it the other six months

Our Sunday services are in the church sanctuary. The exception to the rule is that our monthly communion service is at the Ed. Center. Having monthly communion at the Ed. Center allows for handicap accessibility. An exception to this rule is that on Sunday, August 7 service will be at church and the Sunday, August 14 service will be at the Ed. Center w/ communion.

At 10:30 AM, a “zoom” service is broadcast from the Hartland UCC. For those of you unable to get to our service, here is the link to that service:

To Join the group via Computer or tablet or smartphone, click on the following link or copy into your browser.

<https://zoom.us/j/396301165> Password = 365422

You may also join by going to <https://zoom.us> and click on the “JOIN A MEETING” heading at the top of the webpage.

When prompted, enter:

- Meeting ID: 396 301 165
- Password: 365422

To join meeting by phone (Audio only)

- Call 1-312-626-6799
- and enter when prompted:
 - o Meeting ID: 396 301 165
 - o Password: 365422

Bible Study

This is your opportunity to learn about the Bible. The study is currently on break and will reconvene on Wednesday, September 7 with a study of the gospel of Mark. With the exception of summer break, as shown above, is held every Wednesday, at 10 AM, at the Hartland UCC – (Capitol Dr. at Church St.) You may attend live by going to Hartland, OR like the “zoom” service, it is a “virtual” event for those in Genesee. To Join the group via Computer or tablet or smartphone, copy the following link into your browser. <https://zoom.us/j/324446460>

You may also join by going to <https://zoom.us> and click on the “JOIN A MEETING” heading at the top of the webpage.

When prompted, enter:

- Meeting ID: 324 446 460
- Password: 789656

To join meeting by phone (Audio only)

Call 1-312-626-6799 and enter when prompted:

- Meeting ID: 324 446 460
- Password: 789656

Explore God’s word daily

Copies of the devotional booklet: “The Upper Room” for September–October, 2022 are available. Call the church office at **262-968-3849**, or come to worship service on Sunday morning, to get your copy. On every page is a daily inspirational reading and Bible verse.

Church Budget Update:

The most recent income and expense figures are highlighted below.

June Income	\$ 2,484.00
June Expenses	\$ 3,955.37
Net Total	- \$ 1,471.37

We continue to be grateful for all the gifts contributed by our members. We pray for God’s grace and blessings as we continue to navigate through these challenging times. We value your fellowship. Join us at our Sunday service, enjoy the beauty of our church building, listen to the good word and say “hello!”

How do I contribute my offering?

Not only are our services back in the sanctuary (except once a month at the Ed. Center for communion), but we are back to having ushers take the collection. For those of you who absolutely, positively can’t make it to the Sunday services...make checks out to “Genesee 1st Congregational, United Church of Christ” OR, if you prefer, just “Genesee Church.” Send them to the church office – GENESEE CHURCH / W306 S5075 Church St. / Mukwonago, Wi 53149-9732. Our treasurer, Angela, picks them up on a weekly basis. OR You can mail your check direct to Angela: Angela Williams / W956 Miramar Rd. / East Troy. Wi. 53120.

AUGUST – SEPTEMBER USHERS

The following teams / individuals are scheduled to usher on Sundays in August and September. Arrive by 8:30 AM (for the 9 AM service), greet people, hand out bulletins, light candles and take collection. For the latest update, or if you are unable to fulfill your commitment, please notify Diane Sickels at **262-968-3954**.

August 7	Deacons
August 14	
August 21	
August 28	
September 4	Deacons
September 11	
September 18	
September 25	

Pastoral Ponderings – From Page 1

church growth. Conversely, if your church members don’t invite their friends, don’t expect to grow. This assumes Christians actually *have* non-Christian friends they can invite. Shockingly, too many Christians don’t. Many Christians cocoon in their little bubble, distraught over the direction the world is heading and angry at or indifferent toward people who don’t hold their values and beliefs. Don’t miss this, Christians: it’s hard to reach a world you don’t love...or know.

2. Refusing to Settle for Mediocre

It’s one thing to invite your friends. It’s quite another to have a great experience to invite them *into*. Many churches settle for mediocrity. Don’t. Battle mediocrity instead. Too many churches allow what’s good to stand in the way of what could be great. To some extent, that means a service with decent music (decent to outsiders, not insiders), authentic, compelling preaching, a solid next-gen ministry and a good guest services approach (making your guests feel welcome). An awkward reality of stuck and declining churches is that they choose inclusion over excellence. We let a not-very-gifted singer sing because no one has the courage to tell him he can’t. We let non-leaders lead because they’ve been there the longest, and they’re bossy, and we’re all afraid. I’m not judging. I’ve led in that context before, and that’s one of the first things a leader has to change. God designed some people to sing. Get them singing. He gave others the gift of rhythm. Get them drumming.

He gave some the gift of leadership or communication. Get them leading and communicating. It’s a mistake to dismiss that as entertainment. It’s called gifting. And the body of Christ works best on gifting. The price you pay is a service nobody really likes, except the insiders, kind of like a school play parents endure because they know their kid is in it. If your worship service is something only insiders love, don’t be surprised when outsiders walk away. Learn how to preach more engaging and memorable sermons in a value-packed on-demand workshop.

3. An Open Door Online AND A Great In-House Experience

The online world is continuing to become more and more real. Your regular attendees and everyone you want to reach moves seamlessly between the digital and real worlds these days. Future churches know this is true. One of the tensions most leaders have felt, though, is a fear that a great online experience will mean people stop coming to church. If you post your messages online, why would people attend? If you give your best content away from free, why would people show up? That can be a superficial fear (attendance alone is a

poor motivator), but it points to something more deeply real.

Future churches will realize their online presence is their *front* door, not their *back* door. Will you lose a few people when you launch a great online presence? Sure. But they weren't the kind of people you could build the future of the church on anyway. The people you lose through a solid digital presence are the kind of people who were sitting in the back row not serving, not inviting friends and not giving anyway. They were already on their way out or at least were barely hanging in.

The people you'll reach? Well, there are 1,000 or 10,000 of them for every person you might lose. Future churches will also realize, though, that following Jesus is about more than consuming content while you run, drive or cook dinner. Our digital age also leaves people hungering for greater community, greater experience, and greater transcendence. Which is why churches that are growing are focusing more and more on creating experiences that engage more than just the head on a Sunday...but also engage the heart and relationship. In short, people don't just want to know what's true, they want to know what's *real*. And what's real is deeper than just an idea—it's an experience. They come looking for something bigger than themselves, and something frankly, bigger than us. They come looking for God. It's a shame is when people come to church looking for God and only find us. I think the best future churches will have content that leans toward the immanent—practical, helpful and digestible. And they'll also offer experiences that are transcendent...that you had to be there to experience. If everything your church does in the future feels downloadable, probably all you'll get is a lot of downloads, not a lot of gathered people. To put it simply, if people feel like they missed nothing when they missed church, they'll keep missing church. If what your church does touches the *soul*, people will continue to gather.

The best churches will offer both because that reflects the character and nature of God and the character of the Christian church at its best.

4. Genuine Community

The paradox of our age is that we've never been more connected as a culture, and we've never felt more alone. Churches that grow in the future will prioritize community. *Real* community. Real community isn't just 'fellowship,' where the people who already know each other catch up over coffee while new people go unnoticed. Churches claim to be friendly, but that usually only means we're friendly to each other. And catching up on what happened this week and talking about sports or the weather is hardly what Jesus had in mind when he told us to love one another. But the truth is the real mission of the church is relationship. It defines the vertical nature of our faith (love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength) and the horizontal essences of Christianity (love your neighbor as yourself). If anyone can get relationship right, it should be the

church. So, ask yourself as a church leader: what are you doing to forge the deepest relationships you can forge between people in your church? Then do it.

5. Deep engagement

Because in the future church only engaged people will attend because only the engaged will remain. Think about it your church right now, whether it's growing or not. Again, and again, it's engaged Christians who advance the mission. Engaged people are *passionate* people. They know what the mission is. They serve in it. And they live it out. They're passionate enough about it to invite their friends. Over the long-term in a church, you can accomplish more with 300 engaged Christians than with 3000 disengaged attendees. The disengaged group will dwindle. The 300 engaged Christians will advance the mission and never stay the same. Yes, only God can bring growth. But he uses people who are engaged to do it.

6. Clarity

This may seem like a strange one to add to the list, but it's essential. Growing churches are clear churches. They have clarity about the mission. Clarity about the vision. And they have clarity about the strategy. It's strategic clarity that scares a lot of leaders. Here's why: clarity takes courage, which is why so many leaders shy away from it. Clarity means *this is how we're doing music*. Often blended worship in a church exists to try to keep everybody happy, which of course means, no one is happy. Especially the leaders. Clarity means *this is how we're going to reach our community*. It also means, *no, we're not going to do X Y and Z. We're about THIS instead*. I know language like that strikes fear into many hearts. Clarity does not mean you issue executive fiats. It doesn't mean my way or the highway. It means a group of leaders has prayed and thought through the future, chosen what they believe is the best path to accomplish the mission, and then invited others along. They focus on who they want to reach, not who they want to keep. And usually (if the clarity points them in the right direction), they reach them.

7. Risk and Experimentation

To accomplish a radically new future, you will have to do radically different things. The people you're trying to reach don't care what you did yesterday. Actually, they don't really care what you're doing today. This scares the socks off of most of us. After all, risk is for risk-takers, and many of us are not crazy risk-takers. Whether that's pop-up church, micro campuses, new approaches to social, or even different ways to connect people, your church needs to rethink its current methods to accomplish its mission.

Pastor Dave Schnepf

Events Calendar

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER events

Listed here are the dates of meetings, holidays and events in August and September 2022. All dates are correct at the time of publication. All events are at the Ed. Center, unless otherwise noted. Service time is Sundays, 9 AM. First Sunday services are at the Ed. Center with communion. An exception to this rule is the month of August.

AUGUST

- SU 7** 9 AM service at church (no communion)
Mike Whiteley – guest speaker
- TU 9** Wisconsin Primary Election **VOTE!**
- FR 12** Pastor's birthday
- SU 14** 9 AM service at the Ed. Center w/ communion
Rev. Dave Schnepf preaching
- SA 20** Editor's birthday
- SU 21** 9 AM service at church
Rev. Richard Broach – guest pastor
Newsletter copy due for September-October Messenger
- SU 28** 9 AM service at church
Rev. Richard Broach – guest pastor
- TU 30** 5:30 PM: Executive Board

SEPTEMBER

- SU 4** 9 AM service at the Ed. Center
w/ communion
- MO 5** **LABOR DAY**
- WE 7** Bible Study reconvenes, 10 AM, with a study of the book of Mark. Broadcast from Hartland UCC. Zoom link on page 2.
- SA 10** 11th Annual Car Show: 8 AM – 2 PM
- SU 11** 9 AM service at church
RALLY DAY
PATRIOT DAY
- SU 18** 9 AM service at church
Newsletter copy due for October Special ed.
- TU 20** 5:30 PM: Executive Board
- TH 22** 8:03 PM: Autumnal Equinox – fall begins
- SU 25** 9 AM service at church

Building Rental available

Do you have a large family gathering, wedding, birthday party, etc., but not enough room to host it? Both our Education Center and Church are available to responsible parties. Call the church office at **262-968-3849** for details and a rate schedule.

Church Office Hours

I (Scott Burdette) am usually in the church office from 2 – 4 PM on Wednesdays and Thursdays. In addition, Rev. Dave Schnepf is usually in the church office from 2 – 4 PM on Wednesday and 9 AM – 4 PM on Thursdays. In emergency, call Pastor Dave at **618-402-2041**.

In Memoriam

Some of you may remember Ellen "Cookie" Manteau of West Allis, formerly of Waukesha. She died on Monday, July 18, 2022 at Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center in Milwaukee at the age of 77. She was born on April 24, 1945 in Waukesha, the daughter of David and Caroline Williams. A celebration of life will be held by the family at a later date.

SOURCE: Waukesha Freeman, online obits

Messenger Available via E-mail

If you are not receiving your newsletter via e-mail, and you have an e-mail address, send an e-mail to: geneseechurch@wi.twcbc.com and the secretary will get you on the e-mail list. Also, let us know if your e-mail address changes by sending an e-mail using your new e-mail address. Thank you for helping us save mailing costs.

A FINAL NOTE

The deadline for the August special edition is Sunday, July 17. The deadline for the September-October, 2022 edition is Sunday, August 21. To submit an article, event information, or to receive your newsletter via e-mail, send e-mail to:

geneseechurch@wi.twcbc.com

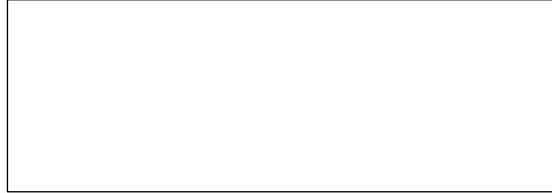
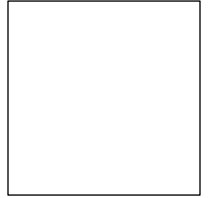
Articles submitted in person need to be typed or written legibly.

Scott W. Burdette



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MUKWONAGO (GENESEE), WI 53149-9732
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NEWSLETTER AUG 2022
TIME VALUE MAIL
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



9 AM, Sunday
In Person Worship – at church

10:30 AM, Sunday
Virtual Worship (Hartland, UCC)
(see Page 2 for LINK)

1st Sunday of the month –
service at the Ed. Center
(except in August – see “Welcome”
article on page 2)

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