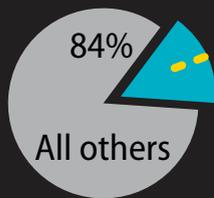


Inviting congregations

EVANGELISM: THE WAYS CONGREGATIONS REACH OUT



16%
OF PC(USA) CONGREGATIONS
ARE "INVITING" AND OFFER
AT LEAST 3 OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Sermons that give reasons to attend worship
- Sermons that emphasize inviting others
- Training to help members issue effective invitations
- Evangelism as their top priority

HOW WORSHIPERS REACH OUT TO OTHERS*

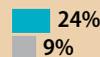
Percent of worshipers reporting these outreach efforts in the past year
■ in inviting congregations ■ in all other congregations



Invited someone to worship or church activity



Made telephone calls to invite people to visit



Contacted people who visited their church



Distributed information about their church



Contacted people who are new to their church



None of these



* Based on worshipers who are members of the congregation, have been attending for at least one year, and attend worship regularly
 Source: U.S. Congregational Life Survey, 2008–2009

Does a congregation's focus—or lack of focus—on evangelism influence worshipers' outreach and inviting activities? Yes, it does!

Let's define *inviting congregations* as those that offer at least three of the following things: sermons that give reasons for attending worship, sermons that emphasize inviting others, training to help members issue effective invitations, and evangelism as their top priority. Inviting congregations use multiple means of preparing their worshipers to reach out to nonmembers and to warmly welcome visitors.

In inviting congregations, two-thirds of members personally asked someone to visit the church; only half in less-inviting congregations did. In addition, the percentages of members in inviting congregations who have telephoned people to encourage them to visit, contacted visitors and those who are new to the church, and distributed flyers or other information about the church are at least twice that of other congregations.

Among members who asked someone to visit, the median number invited in inviting congregations is three; in other congregations, just two. Inviting congregations substantially increase the number of invitations per worshiper! Previous research shows that the reason new members give most often for visiting a congregation for the first time is a personal invitation.

The evidence is clear. Congregations set the tone and equip their worshipers for evangelism. What steps can your congregation take to ensure *all* worshipers know they play an important role in the church's outreach efforts? Is your congregation an inviting one?

Deborah Bruce, research manager in the Research Services office of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, died July 11 (see page 2).

» Other findings www.pcusa.org/research