In Des Moines we are using Hospitality Teams- an idea we got while visiting Minn.

We hand selected 16 leaders who we knew we could count on. We let them each pick 5 friends they knew they could count and (and would have fun working with) and then assigned them 6 more members from our newest members. Trying to balance people we thought would get along. Sort of creating a small group ministry vibe. Thinking about all the possibilities for meaningful conversations over the kitchen sink. ;-)

We ask each team to work 6 Sundays a year. We have one team for each service:1st service 1st Sunday, 2nd service 1st Sunday etc. And they do everything. Put out parking signs, greeting, ushering, making coffee, bringing treats (home make or purchased), mingling with visitors who select our Maroon visitor cups, dishes. We train them to think of it as if they were hosting the members, guests, etc....in their own home. The teams form relationships, some members are better at certain roles and the team leader learn each member and their strengths.

We assign all new members to a team. It is considered a responsibility of membership. Of course some drop of for rarely come. But with a team of 12 that is ok. We regroup every summer asking team leaders how many new members they need, etc.

We have all the how to do Greeting, Ushering, etc...written up in cheat sheet form as well as a Check List the team leader needs to mark off on before they leave. So we know essential tasks have not gone undone. We do a big training in August. It is not required as some are pro's, but the new folks tend to come.

It has been an amazing system. Not perfect but a vast improvement over individually recruiting for each of the assigned roles, and a big community builder as a bonus! A huge thank you to Minn for sharing the idea with us a few years back!

In Peace,

Lori
(420 memebrs)
--
Lori Emison Clair
Director of Congregational Life
First Unitarian Church
1800 Bell Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50315
(515)244-8603 Ext. 103
dcl@ucdsm.org