

Church Evangelism Strategy

Level 1: The Pastor as a Personal Soul Winner

- The church's evangelism strategy begins with the pastor.
 - If the church is to have a heart for evangelism then the pastor has to have a heart for evangelism.
 - In many churches, years pass with no baptisms. Lack of baptisms does not always reflect an absence of conversions, for pastors often lead people to Christ who are not baptized into his church for various reasons. However, if the pastor is regularly sharing his faith and following up, some will be baptized and join his church. Preaching evangelistically is not enough. Pastors need to be personal soul winners as they engage the community in which they serve.
 - See Appendix A for a pastor's perspective on the role of the pastor in evangelism.
- The pastor must look for ways to share his faith in the community
 - A wise pastor once observed that everyone needs a pastor whether they are Christians or not, and he used this perspective for sharing the gospel. He told unchurched people in the community to call him if they had a need. When they did, he had the opportunity to minister to them and share the gospel.
 - When the pastor encounters waiters and waitresses, mechanics, repair men, and others in day-to-day life, he can ask them if there is any way that he can pray for them. Many times this simple question can lead to an opportunity to minister and witness to someone. The pastor should get to know the people working at places he frequents so that he can develop genuine relationships with them and through that share the gospel.
 - Look for ways to participate in school and community events in order to build relationships with people outside of your own church.
 - Offer to help with team devotionals, club devotionals, and community planning groups in order to build relationships with unchurched people.
- The pastor must make a personal commitment to share the gospel. Do not let sermon preparation, ministry, and meetings be excuses for not sharing the gospel. Look for opportunities and be prepared for "divine appointments."
- When the pastor is sharing his faith with lost people regularly he will often have the opportunity to share those stories from the pulpit as he preaches. Being able to share those kinds of stories energizes the church to do evangelism.

Level 2: Evangelism through the Pulpit and Office of Pastor

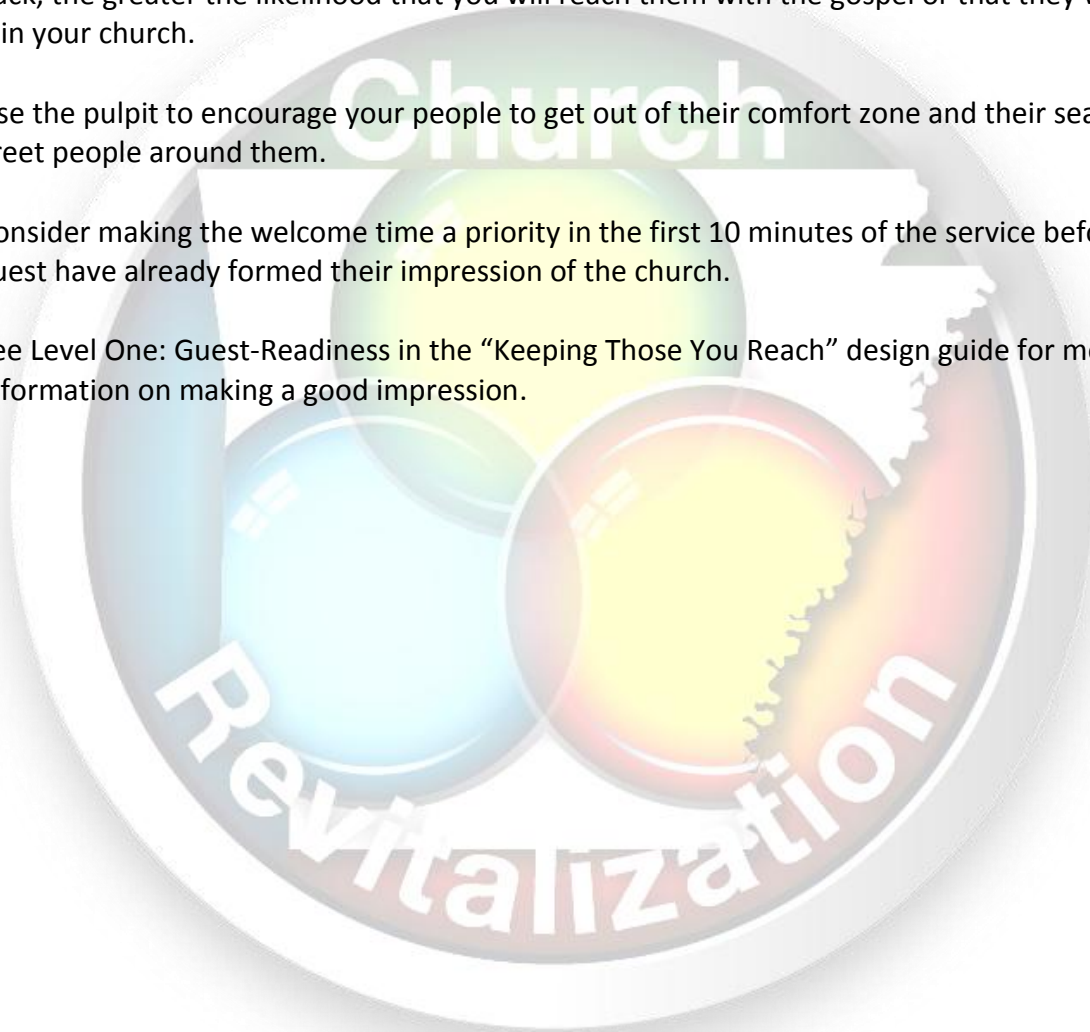
- Being evangelistic from the pulpit is very important.
- Evangelism should be consistently emphasized from the pulpit.
 - While every sermon does not need to be primarily evangelistic, it should direct people to the gospel. The pastor should give careful consideration to how the sermon points to Christ.
 - Always assume a lost person is sitting in the pew. While this assumption does not change your sermon content, it does affect how the pastor presents the gospel.
 - Plan a simple two minute gospel presentation leading into the invitation.
 - Occasionally consider presenting the gospel strategically at another time during the sermon.
- Effective evangelistic invitations should be planned in advance in conjunction with sermon preparation (a good resource for this is *The Effective Invitation* by R. Alan Streett).
- Share the gospel during special occasions.
 - Weddings, funerals, community services, and large fellowship events provide great opportunities to share the gospel.
 - Even when a formal time of response is not possible, the pastor can still call for a decision and make himself available after the event.
- The pastor must lead staff and lay leaders to keep evangelism a priority.
 - Do not assume that children and youth events and ministries are evangelistic.
 - How is the gospel being presented?
 - How often is the gospel being presented?
 - Who will follow up with those making decisions and how?
 - Is contact information being collected on guests so that follow-up can be done?
- Consistently teach evangelism to the congregation.
 - Emphasize praying for the lost, sharing testimonies, and presenting the gospel.
 - Consider offering congregation-wide training on those three themes annually.
 - Repetitious evangelism training helps people develop a high level of confidence in their ability to share their faith.

Take the time to share the gospel and answer question with every baptismal candidate. Even if you chose to present them to the church immediately, take the time later in the week to meet with them privately in encourage a real commitment to Christ.

For more suggestions about evangelism tools and resources see www.namb.net/evangelism/ and www.namb.net/personal-evangelism/.

Level 3: Good Impressions

- Why making a good impression is part of an evangelism strategy? Because guests are the easiest people to reach with the gospel.
- Many people form their first impression of your church the first eight minutes they are on the church grounds. If they have a bad experience or impression then sharing the gospel with them later will be very difficult. The bottom line is the more frequently they come back, the greater the likelihood that you will reach them with the gospel or that they will join your church.
- Use the pulpit to encourage your people to get out of their comfort zone and their seat and greet people around them.
- Consider making the welcome time a priority in the first 10 minutes of the service before guest have already formed their impression of the church.
- See Level One: Guest-Readiness in the “Keeping Those You Reach” design guide for more information on making a good impression.



Level 4: “Come and See” Events and Ministries

- “Come and See” events and ministries take place on the church property.
- The church extends public invitations for people to come to the church to attend an event or have a need met.
- Examples include Sunday morning worship, Sunday School, VBS, Wednesday night youth worship, friend day, wild game dinners, fall festivals, food pantries, and revival meetings are just a few examples.
- The evangelistic effectiveness of these events will largely be determined by how many lost or unchurched people participate (many churches struggle to get lost friends and family to attend church so the effectiveness of some of these ministries is decreasing).
- Below are some ways to increase the effectiveness of “Come and See” Events.

Planning:

- Start with a big picture that has a clear mission and purpose for the ministry.
- Be able to succinctly communicate the vision for the ministry to the church.
- Formulate a timeline of tasks that need to be accomplished for the ministry to be effective.
- When choosing a date(s) on the calendar, gather information from school calendars, community calendars, etc. that might impact participation for your event.
- Prayerfully consider any “key” people, speakers, or leaders that will be needed.
- Decide when and where the event will take place. Check the church calendar to reserve rooms.
- Decide what financial needs exist. Consider putting together a budget for the event.
- Determine a point person or team from which information and decisions will flow.
- Order any necessary materials for publicity, evangelism, registration, and follow-up.
- Determine any person or groups that will have special responsibilities and establish communication with them.
- Have the team dream of the desired response (crowd size, prospects, specific people groups) and set goals accordingly.
- Have the team discuss if your church has the foundational elements to meet the needs of the target audience and to continue ministering to them as they assimilate.
- Formulate follow-up procedures. The time to plan follow-up is before the event and not after the event has taken place.
- Equip groups to do the follow-up. Make sure they are committed and ready to begin follow-up when the event is over.

Promotion:

- Make the ministry outreach a focus of prayer. Have it on the prayer lists for several of your groups that come together to pray.
- Determine the target audiences for the ministry and how to build relationships and lines of communication with those particular people.

- Decide what mass media can be used for promotion such as flyers, social media, print, announcements for various groups, website, etc.
- Build trust with those who receive your promotion. Do not overpromise and under-deliver. Do not hide intentions for the event.
- Communicate clearly the “who,” “when,” “where,” “what”, “why,” and “how” of the event details.
- Have all promotion of your event remain consistent in theme, logos, printed materials, color schemes, etc. in order to build consistency.
- Make a schedule accessible for those considering participating and stick to that schedule.

Implementing:

- Create a team whose sole responsibility is to welcome guests, train them to be friendly as possible, and be willing to introduce guests to members.
- Have proper signage to direct guests to important locations.
- Have parking lot hosts who know how to smile and voice directions.
- Make certain the building appears well-kept.
- Have a program or schedule for all guests to understand what is happening during the event.
- Consider having elements that will lighten an atmosphere for strangers such as door prizes, giveaways, refreshments, etc.
- Think through any necessary seating arrangements and how to best help guests feel welcome.
- Have volunteers (various ages and gender) ready to concentrate on building relationships with guests during the event. Consider training them in having an introductory conversation and how to highlight the ministries of your church. Make sure those volunteers know where relevant information can be found in case of questions concerning the church’s ministries.
- Make name tags available for everyone. If one wears a nametag, all wear a nametag.
- Do any necessary introductions during the program, and do not assume that attendees will know key people.
- Determine when and who will share the gospel message and carefully detail how to handle responses including having decision materials available.
- Make sure there are good ways of gathering contact information in order to do effective follow-up.
- Offer an evaluation process where members and guests can give feedback. If someone has a bad experience, you want to know about it.

Follow-Up:

- Discover how your church can best minister to those affected by your event. Make a direct effort to discover and meet needs of those particular people.
- Assign visitors to groups with which they are most naturally affiliated. Enact the plan that was formulated in the beginning to have that group follow-up.
- Have a strategy for accountability to make sure each person is doing his or her part.

- Prepare a “welcome” letter or email ready to be sent. Prepare a newsletter or church information packet ready to be sent.
- Equip a rapid response team, ensuring that contact is made within 48 hours.
- Consider offering a Discovery Class soon after the event to help interested guests understand more about your church.
- Invite guests to a “get to know us” fellowship time immediately following one of your weekly services.
- Celebrate the success of the outreach with your church. Have photographs, testimonies, decision information, etc. available for the church. Enthusiastically communicate how the church was impacted by the ministry.
- Examples of “come and see” events being used effectively across our state are:
 - Vacation Bible School
 - Wild game suppers
 - Men’s Bible study groups (8-10 weeks at a time)
 - Men’s ministry events and retreats (fishing, hunting, golf)
 - Women’s retreats
 - Women’s Bible study (8-10 weeks at a time)
 - Revivals (In many places revivals and harvest days are still extremely effective)



Level 5: “Go and Tell” Events and Ministries

- For most churches, the majority of their evangelism occurs on the church property.
- The Great Commission compels the church to go out into the community and world to share the gospel.
- If a church wants to reach and baptize more people it must become a going church.
- A church that successfully hosts evangelistic events on the church property can transfer those principles and strategies to conduct similar evangelistic events away from the church.
- Minor logistical adjustments may be necessary to make the evangelistic event effective away from the church. Use the information on planning, promotion, implementing, and follow-up in the “Come and See” stage to help make adjustments.
- Examples of “Go and Tell” events:
 - Servanthood evangelism outreach events
 - Wild game dinner at high school or other off-campus locations
 - Mission VBS or Backyard Bible Club
 - Block parties

For more suggestions about evangelism tools and resources see www.namb.net/evangelism/ and www.namb.net/personal-evangelism/.



Level 6: Transforming the Church's "DNA" to Being Evangelistic

- Leading a church to be so thoroughly evangelistic that all resources, personnel, and ministries are evaluated in light of evangelistic impact is no easy task. In most of our churches people value tradition, unity, and financial security so much that evangelistic impact falls way too far down the list. Changing what people value is very difficult, but not impossible. Change at that level is like changing the DNA of a person, hence the phrase "Church DNA". Remember that change at this level will take time, must be intentional, must come from the pastor, and will cause some people to leave or not join the church.
- DNA Changes Through Common Vision Shared with New Members.
 - When the pastor has a compelling vision of what a thoroughly evangelistic church looks like, he has the opportunity to share that from the pulpit on a regular basis.
 - Another way the pastor can begin to change the "DNA" of the church is to take personal responsibility for new member training. When people join the church and go through a class or interview led by the pastor, he has an opportunity to share his vision of what the church will be and to insure that those who join are on the same page with him about that vision.
- DNA Changes Through Emphases Like "One Focus."
 - "One Focus" is a year-long program to assist a church in becoming more effective by leading church members to share their faith. "One Focus" was written by Scotty Sanders and Dr. Michael Walker and is sold and supported through Life Catalyst (see at www.one-focus.org). I (Terry Bostick) have not encountered anything like this material before. The program comes with a manual, training, publicity materials, printed materials, sermon ideas, outreach ideas, and timelines. This program takes work. It can be used in churches of all sizes. It is church-wide in that all age groups participate. It involves lay leaders and staff. This program would be a great way to begin to activate the passive evangelistic muscles in your church.
- DNA Changes Through a Church-wide Strategy Like "FAITH."
 - Most of the thoroughly evangelistic churches that I (Terry) am acquainted with changed their "DNA" through the use of a church-wide strategy of evangelism like Evangelism Explosion or FAITH.
 - When the pastor and church move these evangelistic strategies to the center of church life, budget, and programming, inevitably the DNA of the church begins to change.

For more on moving an evangelistic strategy to the center of church life see Appendix A & B.

For more suggestions about evangelism tools and resources see www.namb.net/evangelism/ and www.namb.net/personal-evangelism/.

Appendix A

One of the churches in our state that has an evangelistic DNA transformed by FAITH is FBC Marion, pastored by Dr. Clay Hallmark. Here are some ideas from Pastor Clay:

“I am thoroughly convinced the reason most churches do not have an evangelistic DNA is because the church’s pastor and subsequently the church’s leaders do not have an evangelistic DNA. Evangelism is both taught AND caught! It is not one or the other.

By and large, pastors across the Arkansas Baptist Convention possess some evangelism characteristics that are key to possessing an evangelistic DNA. For example, most ABSC pastors understand the basic tenets of Scripture related to evangelism. In other words, they have studied, taught, and preached great passages on evangelism. Additionally, most pastors have been exposed to clear examples of what evangelism looks like throughout their ministry in conferences, revival meetings, seminars, mission reports, and printed materials. Finally, a large majority of ABSC pastors genuinely care about the people they pastor both inside and outside of the church. All of these factors are great beginning points for possessing and passing on an evangelistic DNA, but these factors alone are simply not enough.

What is the problem? The basic issue is that the pastor himself is simply not doing the work of evangelism. Pastors across our state love people, but they are not telling many people one-on-one how to go to heaven. Pastors are preaching great sermons and sharing great principles of evangelism in their pulpits, but they are not teaching, training, modeling, and mentoring their leaders how to do evangelism and share their own faith stories. Many of these same pastors get excited about going around with world or raising money for missions, but they do not lead their congregations to go across the street to their neighbor’s house and tell them about Jesus.

The good news is that all of this can change starting today. I believe there are several things you can do starting today that will help you develop an evangelistic DNA in your church.

1. Consider if you need to personally repent of the sin of omission. If so, tell God how you have omitted the Great Commission. Tell God how the focus of your ministry is going to change to match the focus of our Lord’s ministry found in Luke 19:10, “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”
2. Consider if you need to publicly confess this sin of omission to your congregation and commit to them that you will be a personal soul-winner and that you are going to lead them to learn to be soul-winners as well. Be transparent and honest with your congregation on the subject. It will be a breath of fresh air to them to realize you are no longer pretending to be perfect. They will follow you.

3. Using the tools available through the ABSC Church Revitalization efforts, determine where you are in relationship to evangelism individually, among church leadership, and among the members of the congregation. Look closely at the church budget and find out how much is budgeted for evangelism efforts. Look at the church calendar and see how many events are “attraction” events or “come and see” events. How many outreach events are on your calendar? Do a thorough statistical study of your church related to enrolling people in Sunday School, missions participation, baptisms, prospects, new small group classes being started, and the number of Sunday guests attending.
4. Realize you cannot do everything at once. It takes time to create a DNA of evangelism in your church. I have pastored First Baptist Church of Marion for almost 14 years now. For us, it took almost four years before it was completely noticeable to everyone that evangelism was now the key ingredient of our DNA makeup as a church family. However, evangelistic efforts, an increase in baptisms, the enlistment of new leaders, the training process for evangelism and leadership, the start of new small group classes, and the implementation of a proven evangelism strategy all took place within the first twelve months I became pastor.
5. You must commit yourself to the 2 Timothy 2:2 strategy of modeling and mentoring church leaders who will in turn learn to model and mentor others. This strategy of multiplication will become an important factor that begins with the leadership of the pastor. The model is of one teaching two, then three teaching six, and six teaching twelve and so forth.
6. You must employ and use a proven evangelistic strategy that is intentional, ongoing, comprehensive, and sustainable in your church. You cannot simply choose a program. See notes in Appendix B for information related to FAITH Evangelism as a strategy. Once you have chosen a strategy it must be Plan A in your church for reaching the lost. There needs to be no Plan B. Choosing correctly is vital to your success.
7. You must help your people get some easy wins. Set the leaders of your church up for evangelism success. Celebrate people being saved as you make visits with them, as you do evangelistic events (VBS, revival, block parties, Backyard Bible Clubs, etc.), as you create “come and see” events (seasonal productions, children’s events, sports, fall festivals, etc.), and as you see new leaders take on the responsibility of investing in the process of model and mentoring others. One of the most helpful things you can do as a pastor is to allow the person who leads a lost person to faith in Jesus to stand in the baptistery with you as you are baptizing the new believer. Celebrate the church’s successes on Sunday mornings, on the church website, in printed materials, and social media outlets. For example, if a Sunday School class starts a new class, you can have a new birth celebration at your church. When people come to know Jesus as their Savior the church should erupt in praise.

8. Continually evaluate, adjust, and meet real needs of the people you are visiting, discovering through events, and people who are walking in the doors of your church. At First Baptist Church of Marion, every ministry we have started in the past 13+ years has grown out of the work of evangelism as the people in the congregation began sensing needs that we as a church could meet. Every ministry we have started was started by members of the congregation or Sunday School classes because of the evangelism DNA that is present in the church. Not one ministry has been started by a staff member or out of the church's office. Ministries include: Celebrate Recovery, Grief Share, Divorce Care, Divorce Care for Kids, the Marion Arts Center, Hope House Ministry, FAITH Jail ministry, and Fresh Start. Coming soon are two new ministries starting here at FBC which include the "Brady Bunch" ministry for Blended Families and a ministry focused on foster parents and foster kids.
9. Commit more of your budget and resources to the task of evangelism. Evaluate your current ministries and programs asking this one question: Who has been saved in or through this ministry/program in the past 12-24 months? If the program or ministry does not in some way relate to evangelism or to discipleship that leads to evangelism it needs to be reinvented, repurposed, or replaced.
10. In time allow the lay leaders of the church to become the spokespersons for evangelism in the church while you as the pastor remain the #1 participant and cheerleader for evangelistic efforts.

Personal note: Here, at First Baptist Church of Marion our DNA is distinctly evangelistic. Here, every Sunday School teacher but one (a new teacher) has been trained to share their faith through our FAITH Evangelism ministry. Additionally, every deacon in our church is trained to share their faith and 90% of them participate and lead evangelism teams every semester here in this church. We have absolutely no written policy related to these things, but they happen as expectations of FBC leaders. Our missions participation continues to expand yearly. FBC members not only go across the street, but around the world with the good news of Jesus. Additionally, we have made children's missions groups a major focus of our church. This has resulted in kids growing up with a heart for evangelism and missions which is evident in over 50 students enlisting to participate in FAITH Evangelism in our next semester. Here at FBC every single man that has been elected as a new deacon over the past 10 years has been a man involved personally in evangelism at FBC. This is not a policy it is just now an unwritten expectation that comes out of the DNA of the church. It all begins with me...the pastor. It is passed down to my staff and the expectations I have of them. This expectation level is elevated among church leadership such as deacons, ministry leaders, and small group leaders as they model evangelism to the people that they lead.

Appendix B

One of the churches in our state that has an evangelistic DNA transformed by FAITH is FBC Marion, pastored by Dr. Clay Hallmark. Below is Pastor Clay describing FAITH at FBC Marion.

“At First Baptist Church of Marion we are actively involved in creating outreach events that match the evangelism strategy of our church.

First, here at FBC we employ the FAITH Evangelism strategy. In the fall of 2014 we began our 27th consecutive FAITH Evangelism semester. To better understand FAITH Evangelism you must first come to the realization that it is NOT a program. Programs have beginnings and endings. FAITH is a strategy. In other words, it is a comprehensive process of making disciples who learn how to make disciples. In the past number of years I run across churches who will say that they have “tried FAITH” and then they will say, “It didn’t work for us” or they will say, “We ran out of prospects.” The reality is that neither of these factors actually is true when FAITH Evangelism is done properly. Too many churches approached the FAITH strategy or other similar strategies as a “fix-all program” instead of a process. FAITH works for every church of any size in any location as long as THEY work the strategy. Additionally, churches do not have prospect problems. Many churches just do not know where to look for prospects, or they consider a prospect to be “somebody who has to look just like me.”

The strategy is built on several key principles that make FAITH different from any other strategy available today. Let me mention several of the key factors that must be in place for FAITH Evangelism to be successful in your church:

1. FAITH must be pastor led.

People in the church will only do what the pastor models in his personal life. It is one thing to preach on evangelism and another thing for the pastor to lead his people to DO evangelism.

2. FAITH must be built on the model of 2 Timothy 2:2.

Leaders model and mentor evangelism to new learners each and every semester. In turn these learners become leaders themselves who mentor and model evangelism for new learners.

3. FAITH must be a Sunday School evangelism ministry.

FAITH has to be 100% tied to the small group Sunday School classes of your church. Every leader in Sunday School needs to learn how to share their faith story with others. Additionally, every FAITH participant learns how to properly enroll someone in Sunday School, and class members are organized and trained in how to follow up with and reach these new enrollees. Sunday School classes become the catalyst for follow-up, care, and ministry to new people.

4. FAITH must be done using the FAITH outline.

FAITH is a simply acronym that is used to share your faith story with others using your own testimony and a few short Bible passages the majority of the church members already know.

5. FAITH must involve both class time and visitation.

At First Marion we meet on Sunday afternoons at 4:00 pm (the time when most people are home any time of the year and it is daylight year around). From 4:00-4:15 we have team time as the teams go over the outline with new learners and look through their visits for the day. From 4:15-5:15 the FAITH teams make their visits. From 5:20-5:55 the participants go to their FAITH basic, FAITH advanced, or FAITH discipleship classes. At 6:00 pm we start Sunday night service with FAITH praise report celebrations.

6. FAITH requires that churches are continually developing prospects.

We define a prospect like this: *A prospect is anyone who is not currently and consistently active in the life of the church.* The first group of prospects we visit every single week are Sunday School absentees. We also visit Sunday morning's guests, people who attend our "come and see" events (fall festival, Easter drama, 5th Quarters, Christmas productions, etc.), anyone who lives in the home of a FBC member who does not attend church, people with ministry needs within the church, and new homeowners.

7. FAITH must continually be kept in front of the members at all times.

Sunday School FAITH participants need to give a testimony weekly about what God is doing through their participation. Sunday night celebration time is key to keeping FAITH in the hearts and minds of people. Printed material should use the FAITH logo and material should be reported in publications and on the website and social media sites of the church. Finally, individual's lives who are changed through participation or through being visited by a FAITH team need to be highlighted in worship.

8. FAITH participants must have prayer partners.

Prayer is the key to God's power and anointing on this great ministry.

Second, at First Marion we find creative ways to interact with our community for evangelism. For example, we created a nice DVD featuring people from all over our community (not just FBC members) who are sharing their faith stories of how God changed their lives. Also on the DVD I tell people how they too can have their own faith story with Jesus. Using FAITH teams and Sunday School classes over a 3-week period of time, we delivered a DVD to every resident's home in Marion, Arkansas. The impact and the talk were tremendous. We experienced a huge surge in Sunday guests, and that year was the largest year for baptisms in the history of FBC.

Third, we do many off-campus block parties as well as Back Yard Bible Clubs throughout the summer. Every other year we have participated in "Mission to Marion" which allows our Sunday School classes to take 2 weeks to be involved in ministry/mission projects in our local city that are highly visible and make a huge difference.

Fourth, like other churches, FBC thrives on creating ministries that actually meet the real life needs of people. From Celebrate Recovery, to Divorce Care, Divorce Care for Kids, Grief Share, FAITH Prison Ministries, and Hope House ministries, we are seeking to meet people where they hurt with the love of Jesus Christ.

Finally, in 2014-2015 church year we are seeking to expand off campus small group bible study groups that will be both short-term and long-term throughout the city with the only primary target being to enlist people who are unchurched and/or lost. We are calling this our “Highways & Hedges” ministry. We want to help people in the areas of parenting, finances, grief, facing tough decisions, blended families, foster parenting, and finding God’s will for their lives. We will have small groups at the country clubs, work places, schools, shooting range, fire house, and in people’s homes. We will take a small group study to any place we are allowed while expanding our on-campus small groups and Wednesday LifeGroups.

