

New Member Visit and Interview
Our Father Lutheran Church

Date_____

Interviewer_____

Individual/Family Name_____

Thoughts on New Member Orientation Classes:

Thoughts on gifts and talents and how they can be shared within the church:

Any follow-up on interests or activities required:

Other thoughts and comments:

Guidelines to New Member Visit

The Member Integration Committee wants to get our new members involved and comfortable at Our Father Lutheran Church. We don't want to lose new people "out the back door" because they don't feel they "belong." We think an open, friendly conversation between the newer members and a more established member of our church community would provide a good avenue of communication. We have several goals in conducting this kind of "interview" with a new member family at the 3-6 month time period after they have joined Our Father.

- To give the opportunity for new members to meet another person who is involved and is more knowledgeable about some of the activities here at Our Father.
- To get some feedback and evaluation regarding the usefulness of the "new member program."
- To have an opportunity to see if these new people have become involved with and integrated into any areas of life at the church.
- To encourage them to become involved in activities based on their God-given talents and gifts.
- To give us the chance to help new members "over the hump" when they may be feeling overwhelmed by the size of the church and so many new people.
- To give them the chance to ask questions about our programs and activities.
- To refer any perceived "problem area" to the appropriate staff member for follow up.

Studies have shown that meeting and being able to recognize and chat with 7 different people in the church by the end of the "new member" period is vital for the new person to feel comfortable in the new environment. One of the main goals of the New Member program is to help them become acquainted with the staff and members of the church. They are introduced to the other new members, committee chairmen, lay ministers, another member or family that acts as a sponsor, and the church staff.

METHOD

We are going to invite all families from the previous "new member classes" to join us for a "New Member Reunion." We will interview all the members who come for the session in a Sunday School time period. Postcard and personal calls will be made to encourage families to come. We are also giving away coupons for Peaberry's to those who come. We are really trying to get a good turnout.

We are utilizing volunteers from the congregation and providing this training session on interviewing. We are very willing to hear and interested in your feedback on this experience.

Suggested format for interview:

Opening time: (10 minutes) Introduce yourself and use this time to share information about hobbies, occupation, family information. You may find similar interests, children involved in

similar things, job connections. Maybe even talk about some of your involvement at OFLC.

Evaluation time: (30 minutes)

The following questions are given as suggestions on guiding your interview.

1. How were the **new member classes** helpful? Now that you've been here a while, what do you look back on and **appreciate** about this series?
2. How well did the classes serve to give you an **overview of the church**?
3. How **many people** might you say you have gotten to **know** who you could visit or greet on Sunday mornings?
4. What **group or activity** might you have found that you have or could **join**?

Stating the Opportunities and Offering an Apology

As you have hopefully seen, we have many active members, helping and working and worshipping together in many ways. We have people involved in musical programs, altar guild, teaching and attending Sunday School and adult classes, women and men's ministry programs, grounds and building committees....the opportunities are endless. Sometimes we struggle with the updating and use of our Time and Talent forms. We have good intentions, but we know their use is a weak area. We are trying to better utilize this information.

1. What particular **talents or abilities** might you have that you would **like to share**? Areas of interest that you have not yet been contacted about? I.e. Teaching Sunday School or VBS classes? Cooking skills, accounting or computer skills?
2. What particular **ministry** area is there in which you would **like to become involved**? Are you interested in small group Bible studies? The women's, men's or youth ministry programs?
3. It may sound strange, but sometimes there are things we really do NOT want to do in our leisure time. We have professional school teachers who prefer not to teach Sunday School as they feel they need a break from the classroom, even though excellent skills are in place for teaching. Is there something you would **prefer not to be asked to do here** at our church?

Follow up on interests:

Explain what happens now. Show them the list of leaders and tell them who the contact person is for a particular area of interest. We will pass along the information, and if they would like to, they can also contact this person to express their interests. Any evaluation information on the New Member Program will also go back to that committee. We will use their comments to make that new member series as helpful and welcoming as possible.

Wrap up: (5 minutes)

What other additional information can we give them about OFLC that would make them feel more comfortable? Any particular questions that we can answer or at least refer them in the right direction to find out the answers?