

What the Heck is a Member Engagement Coordinator?

I started my new job as Member Engagement Coordinator the first week of September 2019. Folks asked what I'd be doing. Yikes! That's a good question without a clear answer. The official job description is, "to direct the church's efforts to provide hospitality and orientation to new members and assistance in becoming engaged in the life of the church." The unclear part is exactly HOW to do that. I like to define my job as shepherding visitors to become members and getting them involved with our ministries. Obviously, there are many ways we could work to accomplish these goals. I'll share here a few of the areas on which we've focused:

Encouraging all members to wear name tags and to proactively identify and greet visitors. We now have a First-Time Visitor Bag available at many locations around the church. They're small navy blue paper bags with handles. Look for them and feel free to give them to a first time visitor!

Creating a communication system by sending emails and letters for someone's first, second and third visits. By this, you can see why it's important for everyone to fill out an attendance card. Michelle Groom (staff member for 18 years) is the MASTER of all things UCC and especially knowing who's who and who's here. She provides me with updates every Monday.

Combining and rewriting the Starting Point class with the UCC & You class. We now have a 5-session newcomer's series every 3 months. Lee Nelson is our devoted and talented leader. This class is different because it's for visitors AND new members together. It's proved to be helpful for these groups to meet one another and to feel a more immediate connection. One Sunday in January, a whopping 6 members of the class encouraged each other and filled out their new member forms together. That was a happy day for membership at UCC!

Initiating a once a month, New Member Sunday. Instead of calling for new members during the service every week, Russ makes the call on the third Sunday of each month. This has streamlined our process and

provides incentive for visitors to come forward together.

While those are a few of the steps we've taken thus far, we have to ask ourselves what happens six months or a year down the road? Are those members still here? Are they engaged in Sunday mornings

and our ministries? The follow up is tricky because there isn't a firm system in place for that. Obviously, it's a key piece to our success for lasting membership and like the rest of this, it's a work in progress. Stay tuned for the next steps in coordinating member engagement.

Until then, greet someone by name, introduce yourself (even if you've seen them many times before), sign up to greet at a door, and look around for folks who may need direction. Jesus calls us to welcome everyone to His house and to His family. University Christian Church is our answer to His call.

In the midst of the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, I have enjoyed contacting our newest members and our prospective members (defined by at least 3 visits to UCC). It's been a step in the right direction toward my follow up strategy but mostly it's been a real treat to get a phone visit with so many that I wouldn't normally catch with that much time to talk! More than ever, I can see the value that people and community has to UCC. I have a new appreciation for the importance of bringing folks to our flock and more importantly, helping them feel connected as a part of our family. After all, we never know when we might be separated from one another. Wow, what a wonderful lesson of gratitude!



—Stacy McCoy, Membership Engagement Coordinator