

Moody Memorial First United Methodist Church
Shepherding Program Overview
February 8, 2006

Purpose of the Shepherding Program

The Shepherding Program is a team of volunteer church members who assist new and prospective members in becoming oriented to the church's organization, activities, and facilities. The goal of the program is to have new members achieve a more fulfilling church life experience by becoming aware of the variety of opportunities and connecting with those activities that match their interest. In doing so, they will become more involved and participating members of the church family.

Role and Responsibilities of a Shepherd

Since large church organizations can appear complex, intimidating, and even impersonal to someone new, the key concept behind Shepherding is to establish early on a personal one-on-one contact relationship with a new member. The assigned Shepherd serves as a mentor to assist them with way finding in the organization, but only to the extent the new member needs or wants this support. It's expected this assistance should only require a few contacts over the span of a few weeks after the member has joined the church (see Shepherd's Check List).

In many respects, the responsibilities of a Shepherd are similar to that of a concierge:

- Answering questions
- Explaining where to go
- Explaining where to find things
- For activities the new member is interested in, arranging and facilitating contact between the new member and leaders for those activities.
- Following up with new members to see if they are assimilating into church life

The Shepherds also have an opportunity to gather and assess feedback from new members about their church experience, so this can be shared with program leaders to improve how we serve church members and visitors.

Participation

Any church member is welcome to participate on the Shepherding team. Besides establishing new friendships with fellow church members, there is great fulfillment in helping a new member find their niche within the church community. You will probably learn a few things about the church you weren't aware of either! The Shepherding program is designed to be a low time commitment activity that has a clear start and end for each assignment.

For more information, e-mail Bob Skaggs at moodyshepherds@sbcglobal.net

Shepherding Process

- A set of reference information sources will be available to the Shepherds for use in their discussions with new church members (Note: some of these documents are being updated and will be made available as soon as possible).
 - Shepherd's Check List (suggested contact procedure)
 - Contact List (names and contact information for leaders of the different church programs)
 - New Member Packet (includes information flyers for the various church programs)
 - Annotated Building Diagram
 - Blank church business cards will also be provided so you can write your contact information to give to the new church member.
- By Tuesday of each week, the church office will forward a list of names and phone numbers for new members who joined each Sunday to Bob Skaggs. He will maintain a contact roster of volunteers and assign them by rotation.
- Once notified by Bob, the assigned Shepherd should make first contact with the new member within one week to offer assistance. If the Shepherd is not available to take the assignment, it will go to the next Shepherd in rotation. The unavailable Shepherd will be put next in the rotation.
- When contacting the new member, the Shepherd can follow the suggested steps outlined in the Shepherd's Checklist. It's anticipated the follow up commitment should be finished within a few weeks.
- On a quarterly basis, the Shepherding Team will meet to debrief their experiences:
 - Progress made with new members
 - Overall assessment of how the program is working
 - What methods to keep, change, stop doing, etc.
 - What new member feedback can be shared with program leaders to improve service