

# Gearing Up for Newcomers at Seacoast

After 13 years of steady growth from an initial group of 65, Seacoast Church has experienced rapid growth for the past three years. So how do they attract newcomers and keep them involved?

Seacoast's focus is on the newcomer. Sam Lesky (Campus Pastor for the Mount Pleasant Campus of Seacoast Church) says, "We are gearing for the guy or girl that is coming in for the first time." For that reason, they put great priority on the weekend services. They know that when they get people inside their doors, they have to deliver or the people won't come back.

## "First Touch" Ministry

From the moment a newcomer drives up to the church, the "First Touch" ministry team is in place to make them feel welcome. This team includes police directing traffic, fun-loving parking attendants showing people where to park, team members



driving around picking up people in golf carts, greeters at all the doors and on the sidewalk, and ushers inside the building.

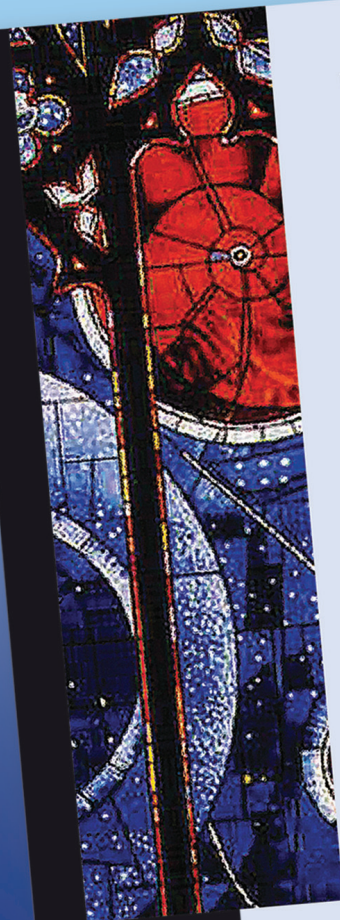
## Inside Atmosphere

Inside the building, the atmosphere is targeted toward making newcomers feel welcome and comfortable. A group of volunteers and staff come early to make sure the lobby is prepared for guests. Their bookstore and coffee shop are open. A prominent information center is specifically geared toward newcomers. "We only have one sign-up at the information center, and that is for the newcomer," Sam

says. They've found that it's better not to bombard people with the multitude of activities the church has to offer, since this can be confusing and overwhelming. Each week, the executive staff chooses only two ministries or activities to highlight. "We may have four activities this week," Sam says, "but we're only going to advertise two... we advertise different ministry activities each weekend."

## Creating A "Safe" Place for Newcomers

"During the services we don't do anything hokey. We're not going to have newcomers put name tags on, stand up, or raise their hands and embarrass them. They are going to be able to sneak in and sneak out," emphasizes Sam. The worship guide has a perforated card for people to fill out to let the church know they were there or to request more information on one or more ministries of the church. **V**



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