



Five Sobering Realities About Evangelism in Churches

By Thom Rainer

My wife said she did not understand a word I said to her.

Ouch.

I was attempting to explain **our research on 1,000 randomly chosen churches**, and she had a blank look on her face. I knew what was taking place. A statistical nerd (me) was trying to share research with a normal person (my wife).

Such is the conundrum where I find myself. This research is incredibly revealing, but I often speak in such statistical terms that I cloud its import.

Allow me, then, to attempt to write with some clarity. Here are some prefatory comments:

- In this article, I am addressing the issue of evangelism in our churches. Churches measure conversion growth in different ways. The churches in our study measure conversion growth by baptisms.
- The best way we know to measure evangelism effectiveness is the number of conversions relative to the size of the church. We often used membership as a measure of the size of the church in the past. That number unfortunately is no longer statistically relevant. Too many churches have inflated membership rolls. Some churches ignore membership altogether.
- We are now using average worship attendance as our metric for church size. We will look at the number of conversions relative to the average worship attendance of the church. For example, a church with an evangelism ratio of 19:1 is reaching one person a year with the gospel for every 19 persons in attendance. To be clear, lower ratios are better; higher ratios are worse.

1. **Growing churches are growing largely by transfer growth.** Most of them are not reaching people with the gospel. They are growing at the expense of other

churches. The conversion ratio of all 1,000 churches is 19:1. Growing churches are only slightly better at 17:1. Their growth comes largely from other churches.

2. **The number of effective evangelistic churches (EEC) is surprisingly stable.** We defined an EEC church as one whose conversion rate is at least 50 percent better than the average. Although very few churches are growing evangelistically, the number of such churches is pretty stable. I did a study of EEC churches in 1996. The percentage of such churches has remained in the narrow

range from 6 percent to 7.5 percent. Though we don't have many evangelistic churches, the numbers have really not declined over two decades.

3. **Churches that are not in the EEC category are doing much worse evangelistically than in previous years.** A non-evangelistic church twenty years ago typically did poorly in evangelism. A non-evangelistic church today is typically doing really, really, really poorly today. There is a widening chasm between these two groups of churches.

4. **Evangelism in the EEC churches is a clear priority.** I'm

stating the obvious here. But many churches are not doing the obvious.

5. **There are clear and discernible patterns of action in EEC churches.** It's fascinating to see the simple consistency in evangelistic churches. We will be sharing these patterns in future articles.

May God send an incredible evangelism renewal to our churches.

And may it begin in me. **Thom Rainer**

Ed. Note: Thom Rainer is one of the most highly regarded authorities on church growth among Bible believing churches today. When he speaks, I listen! I pray for a rekindling of evangelistic zeal among the Pitman Road Church of Christ!
-Dan



Our Mission

Meet others where they are and together be transformed into the image of Christ.

From Daniel's Den

Reflections... In my column last week, I shared a dozen powerful “take away” quotes from Patrick Mead’s VBS messages. I just went back and reviewed them...Powerful! Convicting! In my column this week, I am reflecting on Max Dauner’s message from last Sunday. It was hard hitting. The seven major points of his sermon are convicting. While his sermon stirred some strong reactions, from both sides of the pendulum, we were all forced to re-examine our roles as disciples of Jesus Christ. (See page 3 for *Different Perspectives, A Message From You Leadership Team.*)

Seven Challenges for Christians of the 21st Century:

- 1. Educate your children at home, whether or not they attend public school.** Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deut 6:4-6)
- 2. Educate yourself to know God and His Purpose.** ...through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. (Eph. 3:10-13)
- 3. Renounce sexual atheism.** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, ...nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:9-11)
- 4. Be social.** I have become all things to all people, but by all means I might save some. (1 Cor. 9:22)
- 5. Read good books.** Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15)
- 6. Pray like the pilgrim you are.** Pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thes. 6:16-19
- 7. Whatever you do, do it as if everything depends on it.** Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might... Ecc. 9:10
- *Dan the Pondering Preacherman*



Dan Cooper
aka
“Dan, Dan,
the Preacherman”



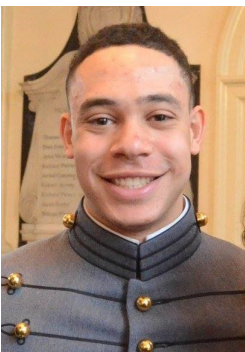
Tim Davis
Deacon: Teen Ministry

A Servant Speaks

How Is Your Serve?

We serve because He served us first. One thing that Melody and I try to do with the teens is to take advantage of opportunities to serve and to be the hands and feet of Jesus. These last several weeks, we as a church body, have had some great opportunities to serve. Here are a few of them: The **teens and some parents of teens** had a great time visiting with **Ted and Pat Schuehler** and working in their yard and garden. It is such a blessing to get to spend time with our Christian family. **Melody** recently took a small crew to **Larry and Fran Point's** house to do a little yard work. Again, thanks to the Schuehlers and the Points for allowing us the privilege to serve. We helped **Larry Kellum, Jr.** with decorations for VBS. Thank you Larry, for letting us help with those incredible and memorable decorations. A few of us marched in the 4th of July parade in Pitman. That was incredible! We felt like rock stars with everyone cheering! (Thanks **Troy and Melody** for the beautiful float!)) We passed out over 300 flyers about VBS and gave out 600 lollipops. We learned we need a lot more stuff to hand out! We capped off the 4th with good music by **Refuge** and by handing out over 100 hotdogs to our visitors while they were watching the fireworks. VBS was next and we had lots of people serving! A big thank you to **Robin, Tina and Melody** for their leadership. **Thanks to everyone who helped with VBS!**

Look for ways to serve! As you know, blessings come from serving. Thank you God for all the opportunities you give us to be the hands and feet of Jesus. WOW God! And thanks to who serve. It's a blessing and an encouragement! -*Tim*



Today!

Today, our very own **Andrew Holden** will be preaching the sermon! If you don't know Andrew, here's a little background. Andrew is the son of **Brian and Cindy Holden**. He is a life-long member of our church; many of us have known him his entire life! Andrew is a creative soul, having taken up theater, guitar playing, and singing, although he has never been one to relish the spotlight. He has always been a servant with a tender and humble heart. Even though it was a bit of a surprise to many of us when he initially expressed a desire to serve our country in the military, it was not a surprise that he earned an appointment to **West Point!** Andrew is entering his forth and final year at West Point. He has learned a great deal about service, about endurance, about working as part of a team, and about the depths of friendship. We look forward to hearing a message from him that is sure to be infused with his deep love of God, and lessons learned through his experiences these last three years.

Different Perspectives

A note from your leadership team...

During the last couple of weeks, two of our guest speakers have communicated with very different styles, God's love and His teaching, specifically as God's word pertains to a variety of social issues. Some of the responses both from church members and visitors have been strong. Very few people were left without strong impressions one way or the other. We do believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and that the scriptures are both relevant and applicable to our 21st century world. It will surprise no one to hear this, but the application of scripture is frequently contrary to our modern day cultural values. (The same was true in the first century. Jesus upset His world. The apostles and early Christians upset their world.) Still, we do need to be mindful of how we present God's teachings to bring us closer to Him!

We uphold and respect God's teachings on marriage and family, and believe that His teachings do not change. At the same time, we want to meet people where they are in their journey of faith. The methods of communicating His teaching vary from one generation to the next, and from one culture to the next, but His basic teachings do not change. We are now living in a world in which many understandings that have been accepted for centuries, even millennia, are being challenged and re-examined. Your shepherds and ministers are searching for the best way to present the divine teachings of Jesus Christ. Be watching as we work to discover the best format, and the most constructive arenas for these discussions to take place.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE NEXT REFUGE!
COREY PEOPLES WILL BE THE DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER
FOR THE EVENING!**



Camp Manatawny 50th Anniversary

Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 25 and plan to attend the Camp Manatawny 50th Anniversary Celebration! Many activities are planned. Take the day to enjoy what camp has to offer, catch up with camp friends, and celebrate God's goodness to Camp Manatawny! Please register in advance online at www.manatawny.org. You can also find a schedule of that day's events there. A suggested donation of \$5 per person, or \$20 for a family of 4 or more is requested.



There will be a Silent Auction as part of the celebration. If you are interested donating an item, either individually, or by forming a group, here's what you need to know! Suggested items: Themed Gift Baskets, Jewelry, Antiques/Collectibles, Sports Memorabilia, Tickets to Sporting Events, etc.

Artists are invited to donate an original work of art, and also to enter it into the juried art show portion of the silent auction. Artwork can be painting, drawings, mixed media, photography, illustration, or textile.

If interested in participating, please contact Evelyn Busby at 215-630-0444, or Carol Bailey at 215-822-3845. Please provide a description of the item(s) by August 12 to evelyn.busby@gmail.com. Items must be delivered to camp no later than 8:00 am on August 26, 2017.

Where Is Everyone Today?

Twice every summer for a while now, there is somewhat of a mass exodus from Pitman Road church into Berks County, PA. It's happening again right now... about 45 of us are at **Camp Manatawny** as staff volunteers or campers for Junior High 1 week, directed by Aaron Pearl. And, it will happen again in two weeks when another large group does the same for Elementary 1 week, directed by Manny Vander Vennen. The Pitman Road church has a long history of dedicating ourselves to getting our children to camp, and to volunteering as staff to support camp's mission.

While we don't normally think of volunteering at camp as a

"mission trip," it really is! More and more, many of our campers come from families who don't belong to a church or attend one regularly, and often camp is their first real encounter with Jesus. We often have children attending as campers who are from difficult family situations,

both Christians, and unchurched, who we get to love on and minister to. We may never see many of these children again, but if we leave camp knowing seeds have been sown, then we have accomplished our mission.



For several years, I was coordinator of the summer camp program at Camp Manatawny. During that time, I was asked to give a speech about what makes summer sessions so special. My answer to that was simple... summer session at Camp Manatawny is so special because everyone who serves,

from the directors, to the cooks, to the counselors, and even the maintenance workers, all work to make every child's week at camp the BEST week of their summer!

-Annette

Our Schedule

Sunday

9:00 am Bible Classes
10:00 am Worship

Wednesday

7:00 pm Bible Classes

Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Last Week

Bible Class	121
Worship	199
LIFE Groups	NA
Wednesday	46
Contribution	\$7,560.00
Weekly Goal	TBA

This Week's Prayer Requests

Praises: Forty five of our members are at Camp Manatawny serving and camping this week! Please pray for a great week!

Prayers Requested:

Frank Sheehan, recovering from lung surgery. He is still experiencing a great deal of pain. Please pray for healing and pain relief.

Rita Burton, Barbara Robinson's sister, serious health issues.

Marie Jean-Jerome, Karelle Pierre-Jacques mother, is in rapidly declining health. Pray for Karelle as she makes important decisions about her mother's care.

Ministers

Dan Cooper, Evangelist dcooper@cochrist.org
..... 856-589-4197
Derrick Busch, Minister dbusch@cochrist.org
..... 267-303-4877

Office Staff

Dottie Grillo dgrillo@cochrist.org
Annette Perine annette.perine@gmail.com

Elders




Mike Broyles mbroyles777@gmail.com
Horatio Fenton horatofenton@comcast.net
Brian Holden bcholden94@hotmail.com
Garth Hutchinson 609-414-2606
..... grth.hutchinson@gmail.com
Mike Lazar teacher.engineer@comcast.net
John Peoples 609-617-7451
Dave Perine davidt.perine@comcast.net
Dwight Thompson 609-561-8561-home, 609-287-0109-cell
..... dothompson@comcast.net

Elder on Call for July and August: Garth Hutchinson

Serving Us Today

Nursery	Robin Steward
Kids For Christ	Summer Break
Jr. Worship	Summer Break
Greeters: Front Entrance	Brian & Cindy Holden
Greeters: Back Entrance	Garth & Diana Hutchinson
Information Center	Dawanna Hale
Ushers	Waverly Hale & Austin Hale
Shepherd's Call	Garth Hutchinson
Song Leader	Dwight Thompson
Communion	Anthony DeStefano

Find Us on Social Media:

 @pitmanroadcoc  www.facebook.com/pitmanroadchurchofchrist  @pitmanroadchurch

Our Next Bus Trip!



It's time to sign up for the next PRCOC bus trip to **Sight and Sound Theater!** We will be going to see their latest show, **JESUS**, on **March 17, 2018**. Of course there will be a stop at Shady Maple Smorgasbord, their market and gift shop, and Good's Store! **Cost of the trip is \$108 for adults, \$90 for teens ages 13-17, \$64 for children ages**

3-12. Departure time from our building on that day will be at 7:45 am. Final payment is due on January 21, 2018 A sign up sheet is available at the Welcome Center!

Thank You Volunteers!

Thanks to all who served Family Promise this past week. We especially thank John Ashton...who has jumped from Host Week right into volunteering at Camp Manatawny! We're on a three week volunteering marathon! First VBS, then Host Week, and now Camp Manatawny! So thank you to all who pulled double duty to fill in slots on the Family Promise schedule. And thanks to all who have volunteered multiple times over these three weeks!

Thank You

Thank you for the prayers, cards and other support you extended to us on the passing of my mom. The expressions of sympathy were comforting and greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

-John and Kathy Ashton

Memorial Service for Barry Thompson

Memorial service for **Barry Thompson** will be held on Saturday, August 5 at 10:00 am here in the chapel. Brunch will follow. Anyone wishing to help out with the brunch please see Rachel Stetser.

Barry's obituary can be found here: <http://kelleyfhpitman.com/tribute/details/1334/Hugh-Thompson/obituary.html#content-start>

In addition, his sister Jeannine is his only remaining close relative. For anyone interested in writing a card of encouragement, Jerri has set up a box of cards at the Welcome Center. Any messages may be dropped off in this marked box. Jerri will be picking these cards up following the memorial service to take with her when she visits Jeannine later this summer. If you prefer to send Jeannine a personal message to her home, please see Jerri for her home address.

Support the Courthouse Church!

This week, we have an opportunity to support an area congregation! A group will be going to the Cape May Courthouse Church of Christ to attend their Vacation Bible School. Dan plans to drive the church van there this Tuesday night, July 25. We will have dinner at McDonald's when we get to CMCH, then go to VBS. The van will be leaving from our parking lot at 5:15 pm. Please let Dan know if you plan to ride in the church van.