

# What growing churches do

The research says **congregations** using the following strategies or approaches grow in numbers and ministry effectiveness:

## Strong churches welcome new people

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1. Increase the number of worship visitors.
2. Increase the visibility of the congregation in the community (e.g., Web site, paid newspaper and telephone book ads, good outdoor signage, participation in community events).
3. Encourage members to invite others; equip members to invite effectively (e.g. Bring a Friend Sundays, special events).
4. Identify and make personal and telephone follow-up contact with all visitors, especially first time worship visitors.
5. Offer a group for new people.

## Strong churches encourage participation

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1. Fast-track new people into meaningful ministry roles. Ask them what they feel passionate about. What do they see as their ministry?
2. Identify what types of new people the congregation attracts (e.g., returnees, switchers). Ask new people what made the church attractive to them.
3. Create additional small group experiences, such as prayer or study groups.

## Strong churches offer meaningful worship experiences

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1. Evaluate current worship service(s) for vitality. Are service(s) connecting with all age groups and relevant local cultures (e.g., ethnic groups, family types)?
2. Offer more worship service options (e.g., additional services, more variety in worship and music styles, different types of services).

## Strong churches help people grow spiritually

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1. Focus on the long-term development of disciples (spirituality or faith, financial stewardship, and ministry).

## Strong churches commit to a positive future

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1. Use multiple ministry methods and strategies all the time.
2. Identify congregational strengths. How can the church optimize and leverage these strengths? How can the congregation be more effective in the areas that encourage numerical growth — such as, care for children, participation, and more new people?
3. Evaluate current church organization and committee structure. Minimize the number of maintenance committees. Create ministry teams.
4. Try new strategies. Evaluate efforts. Learn from failed efforts. Fix it and try again.

