



Lewis Center  
for Church Leadership

# Leading Ideas

August 18, 2010

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One of the first things we discovered about adapting congregations was that they simply notice what is going on around them. Declining congregations often barely realize that the world has changed.

*Nancy T. Ammerman  
and Carl S. Dudley*

[\*Printable Version\*](#)



Weems

**[If You Count the Money, Count the People](#)  
By [Lovett H. Weems, Jr.](#)**

At a recent gathering, clergy and laity from several congregations were asked how they keep track of their attendance each Sunday and how they keep up with who is attending. A vigorous debate ensued. Some reported how they monitor the numbers and keep track of people attending, but the energy was with those who did not attempt either task. The churches represented tended to be smaller membership and mid-size churches.

Common responses included:

There are only a few of us, so why count? Do you know how much trouble it would be to keep up with who is attending? We don't have any staff to do that. We are more like family, so to count doesn't seem right. We count the attendance, but there is no way we could keep up with which people are present.

At first what they said seemed to make sense to others. Perhaps there are churches where counting is not a part of the culture and other places where there are no staff or volunteers to make sure such monitoring takes place.

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**[Ways to Welcome Worship Guests Warmly](#)  
By [Robert Crossman](#)**

- Greet guests when they first arrive in the parking lot.
- Greet guests as they arrive at the door, saying "Good to see you. Glad you are here." Do not ask for their names as many guests are cautious and prefer anonymity. The larger the church, the more this is true.
- Clearly mark the rest rooms, nursery, and worship rooms. In a large building with a complicated layout, have greeters stand at the intersection of hallways ready to escort guests



who are unsure about finding their way.

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### *The Right Question*

*Leaders do not need answers.  
Leaders must have the right questions.*

An article for business leaders claims that they spend far too much time with the wrong questions such as only asking operational questions that begin with "how." Instead, the authors offer some other questions that are more likely to challenge assumptions and conventional wisdom.

Why?  
Why not?  
What if?

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