There are 5 levels of commitment:

Community (PARKING LOT & BEYOND)

Crowd (GRANSTAND)

Congregation (BENCH)

****THE WHITE LINE****

Committed (FIELD)

Core (TEAM CAPTAIN)

The church's goal and purpose is to evangelize and disciple the lost. With this being its primary purpose, the process listed below is meant to be used as a tool to help ensure this is done most effectively. This process will address the steps to assimilate individuals at the point when they walk through the church doors.

Where are you?

Establish Assimilation Ratio (either current or a goal)

How many first time guests do you have per 100 regular attendees?

- 3:100 - Maintaining Church
- 5:100 - Steadily Growing Church
- 7-10:100 - Rapidly Growing Church

Street to Seat (H.U.G.S team)

- Establish an effective process to connect your target individuals to the vision and discipleship processes of your church.
- Remember this principle: Everything you do should be done with the *first-time* guest in mind.

1. Greeted

- Ensure a guest's first impression is a good one. You only have 7 minutes to give a good first impression, maximize this 7 minutes.
- Items to take note of:

Zero to Hero Assimilation

MIKE KECK

- Parking**:**
  - Is there adequate parking?
  - Is it easily identified and accessible by outsiders/guests?
  - Do you need people to assist guests to the entrance?

- Entrance:
  - Do you have adequate signage directing people to the entrance of the church?
  - Is it necessary to have greeters outside to direct people?
  - Is the entrance aesthetically pleasing and inviting?

- Entry:
  - Does the entryway set a 'welcoming' tone? Is it dark/gloomy? Is the first scent a guest smells a good one?
  - Are there individuals greeting a guest with a joyful, excited attitude in the entryway?
  - "Greeters should practically radiate the underlying message you want to send to your guests: "We are nice people, and we are glad you are here!"" (*Fusion*, 55)
  - Make sure your greeters/hosts understand the importance in their role. They are the front lines - they set the tone for how a guest will perceive the rest of the entire service.

- Greeters should:
  - Be presentable in their attire and look. Make sure they are adequately supplied with breath mints and smell nice.
  - Have a name tag/lanyard identifying them as a volunteer/ team member.
  - Welcome guests with a big smile and possibly even a handshake.
  - There should be 2-3 greeters, depending on the space. You don't want to overwhelm guests with a huge army of people, but at the same time you don't want to look unstaffed.
  - If possible, have multiple levels of greeters/hosts. If your meeting space is a distance from the entrance, position greeters at major hallway intersections/doorways.

2. Directed

- Once a guest walks in the front door:
    - Where do they go? (Is there signage or are there individuals helping them discover this?) You need signs for:
        - Bathrooms
        - Kid's Areas (Elementary, Preschool, Nursery)
        - Connection Areas (coffee, Information Desk, etc.)
        - "Every good system needs to be backed up. Let your staff and greeters serve as backup to your signs." (*Fusion*, 59)
        - What do they do? (Clarity will always ease anxiety. Help ease a guest's anxiety with adequate explanation.)

3. Treated

- "What do first-time guests want to feel? Respected and welcome." (*Fusion*, 59)
    - Go above and beyond to make guests feel welcome, but do so with consistency. It is very important for both guests and regular attendees to see a consistent process in place for rolling out the 'red carpet'.
    - "When you give [guests] a consistent pre-service experience that makes them feel important, their skepticism lowers while their positive impression and curiosity rises, leaving you in the perfect position to make a real spiritual impact." (*Fusion*, 61)

- Hospitality Area
    - Staff with friendly, welcoming people
    - Have coffee or other drink options (tea, juice, water, etc.)
    - Provide, at least during high traffic times, some kind of food option (muffins, bagels, donuts, etc.). Food can go a long way in make a solid first-impression. Quality, not extravagance is the key.
    - Have information about the church. (Brochure, Info Cards, etc.)

4. Seated

- Have ushers/service hosts positioned at the back of the seating area. As guests walk into the seating area, they are there as a personal guide to their seat. This usher/service host should:
    - Look presentable & have some sort of name tag/lanyard identifying them as an official 'usher/service host'. This will help a guest understand this person was intentionally placed here to help you.
    - Welcome guests with a friendly handshake & smile.

- Possibly have a bulletin/service information to hand guests/attendees (if applicable.)
- Joyfully volunteer to help your guest find an open seat/seats.
- Ask the guests if they have a preference on the location of the seats (if space is available).
- Walk them to the best available open seat (avoid the very front row or back row).
- Kindly ask those already seated in that row to either move toward the middle or stand for the guests.
- Before the usher/service host returns to his/her post ask the guests if there is   anything else he/she can do for them.
- The usher/service host then returns to their previous location at the back of the seating area.

Gather Information

- Once a person is seated, now they are more prepared to enjoy the service.
- To help this first-time guest connect with the church and what it offers, there has to be information gathered at some point.

  - The primary means to do this is through a connection card. It should include a place for a guest's:
    - Name
    - Email Address
    - Mailing Address
    - Phone Number
    - Age Bracket
    - How they heard about the church?
    - Member Attendance check box

  - Provide a time in the service when guests/regular attendees are filling out this card. If you don't provide the intentional time, the majority of people will not fill it out.

  - Communicate clear action steps for the card.
    - Should it be placed in the offering?
    - Should it be returned to the hospitality area?
    - Should it be used for something else?

  - Give compelling motivation to turn the card in.

- Whatever the means to collecting this card, make sure your guests have   some incentive to turn it in. This might include, but is not limited to:

    - Positive Peer Pressure: Having everyone fill out the card at the same time. Also, this allows guests to not feel left out during the offering. They are able to put something in the offering, their info/connection card.

    - A Gift: They turn in the gift card in the hospitality area and receive a gift (a book, gift card, COOKIE, etc.)

    - The opportunity to get more information about the church.

The Process

- Now that you have collected all the necessary information, you want to establish a good follow-up process. This step is key because without follow-up, collecting the information is useless.

- Before the follow-up takes place, you want to plug the information into a church database.

- This follow-up should be "*Fast*, *Friendly*, and *Functional*" (*Fusion*, 87)

Post-Service Follow-up

- Once the service is over, you need a way to connect with new guests. As mentioned above, a connection card will help you collect information; however, you also want to provide them an opportunity to connect with a person. Not every person will want this, but make it available.

- In order to do this, you need to have a Guest Information that is manned by friendly, welcoming individuals ready to meet, greet and answer any questions guests might have.

- Here are some items that should be at this table:

    - Clear signage - make sure this table/area is easily accessible by guests and clearly marked. You want to provide guests the opportunity to stop and talk if they so choose.

    - It should be positioned in an area close to or on the way to the exit.

    - If possible, make sure this area does not block the flow of foot traffic toward the exit.

    - Information about the ministries offered by the church (children's, youth, small groups, etc.)

- Information about next steps (Membership, Water Baptism, etc.)
- Connection Cards (in case a guest has failed to get a card or loses their card.)
- A gift for first time guests - this can be either picked up at the guest's leisure or   redeemed by turning in their connection card (gift suggestions: a short, but relevant book; a coffee gift card, a relevant worship CD.)
- In this gift, make sure you include a brief note/letter from your pastor thanking them for attending and inviting them back the following weekend.

Post-Weekend Follow-up

- In order to be effective in this step, make sure you have a capable staff member/volunteer taking the lead. Their goal is to not only follow-through with this process, but also to develop a reliable team of volunteers to help. This is usually more than one person can handle alone.
- Your goal with the post-weekend follow-up is to help guests see that they are valued and are a priority. In order to do this, you want to follow-up in two ways:

  - **36 Hour Email or Phone Call**
    - This accomplishes a few things: Helps guest see that you appreciated them attending and gives you an opportunity to invite them back the next Sunday.

    - This follow-up is most effective for communities/churches where the majority of attendees/guests utilize email.
    - Make it as personal as possible (mention the current series, how it was great to have them in the service, etc.)

One-Month Follow-up Letter

- This letter is only for those guests that receive each of the previous follow-up items and yet have not returned.
- This letter should be sent on church letterhead from the pastor a month. You should include the following points:
  - Thank them for visiting last month.
  - Explain the brief mission of your church (in a non-churchy way).
  - Touch on something that is coming up (a new series, launch of small groups, a big event, etc).
  - Let them know the church is available to help them and they can feel free to contact the church if they need anything.
  - Provide the necessary contact info (website would be best).

- Let them know you hope to see them at the church in the future.
- Signed by the pastor.

Second-Time Guest Follow-up

- "When your guests return for a second look, you have won 80 percent of the battle of gaining new regular attendees and have drastically increased the chances that they will begin a journey with Christ." (*Fusion*, 105)

- Your goal in this step is similar to your goal for first-time guests: to have them fill out their connection card, only this time check 'Second-Time Guest'.

- These guests will be more likely to check that box then first-time guests, because they know that they received 'gifts' from filling out this card as 'first-time guests'. As Andy Stanley says, "What gets rewarded gets repeated".

- In addition to them identifying themselves as 'second-time guests', you want to start to create movement through your membership process. Your goal is not that they stay simply as guests, but that they start to take clear steps toward involvement.

- Do this by inviting them to the Link and them to Sunday Membership Class.

Follow-Up Letter

- Make sure this is still personalized, but can be a little more formal. (Don't send in church envelope, but can be on church letterhead.)

- Thank them for returning.

- Invite them to let you know if there is anything the church can do to help them.

- Encourage them toward some next steps.

New Member Assimilation Process & Queues

Through Church Community Builder Software

What is a Process?

A Process is a way to track people through a series of steps (Queues). The intent is to make sure that no step is missed along the way.

Creating and using a Process not only lets you track people through ministry steps and action items, but also allows you to easily delegate the tasks, calls, or visits that will be needed from specific volunteers or staff members so you can empower and equip people for successful ministry.

Definition of Terms

- **Process:** A Process is the overarching purpose and intent of what you are trying to accomplish, such as Guest Connections, Hospital Visitation, or Pastoral Counseling.

- **Queue:** A Queue is a specific ministry step or action item that you want to accomplish and track within the Process. Each Queue may have one or more Managers who are responsible to accomplish the task (such as calling a new guest). A Manager can be notified when an individual is added to the Queue so they know to log in and perform the action needed, and you can even set due dates that are viewable in your reports to help promote accountability.

Rock Family Church Process Queue Order & Direction

1. The **Guest Data** is entered into the system. This action is completed immediately by Office Personnel (Monday).
   - I.   Be sure all guest information is added to the system.
   - II.   If there is any missing information on the Connection Card, contact the individual to attempt to gather data.
   - III. Add the individual into the Membership Assimilation Process.
   - IV.   A "New" membership type will automatically be generated on the individual's profile.
   - V.   When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Welcome Letter.

2. When added to the **Welcome Letter** queue, the individual's profile will automatically be added to the *Welcome Letter Mail Merge* for the letter to be printed, addressed and sent. This action is completed immediately by Office Personnel (Tuesday).
   - I.   The *Queue Manager* can select the automation of this mail merge for mail or email.
   - II.   When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual's profile will automatically be added to the next Queue: Welcome Phone Call.

3. The Office Personnel or a Volunteer will complete the **Welcome Phone Call** when added to this queue. This action is completed immediately by Office Personnel or Volunteer (Wednesday).
    I. All contact made with individuals is noted in the individual's profile under the *Notes Tab*.
    II. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Link Invitation.

4. When added to the **Link Invitation** queue, the individual will automatically be added to the *Link Invitation Mail Merge* for the email to be sent if there is an accurate email on file. If there is not an accurate email on file the *Queue Manager* can select for the profile to be added to the *Link Invitation Mail Merge* for the letter to be printed, addressed and sent. This action completed by Office Personnel (Friday).
    I. The *Queue Manager* can select the automation of this mail merge for mail or email.
    II. The *Queue Manager* can assess the upcoming Link attendance by checking the signups in *Forms* to determine if the event has reached its capacity. From there, the *Queue Manager* can conclude the appropriate Link Invitation date.
    III. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Link Review.

5. During the Link, attendance is recorded and entered in the *Event Description*. The **Link Review** is completed by Office Personnel (3rd Tuesday of the month).
    I. The *Queue manager* will evaluate the attendance to see if the individual(s) attended the Link.
        i. If not, there will be a second Link Invitation sent before the individual's profile advances.
    II. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Membership Class Invitation.

6. When added to the **Membership Class Invitation** queue, the individual will automatically be added to the *Membership Class Invitation Mail Merge* for the email to be sent if there is an accurate email on file. If there is not an accurate email on file the *Queue Manager* can select for the profile to be added to the *Membership Class Invitation Mail Merge* for the letter to be printed, addressed and sent. This action completed by Office Personnel (3rd Tuesday of the month).
    I. The *Queue Manager* can select the automation of this mail merge for mail or email.
    II. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Membership Review.
        i. An "Attendee" membership type will automatically be generated on the individual's profile.

7. During the Membership Class, attendance is recorded and entered in the *Event Description* The **Membership Class Review** is completed by Office Personnel (4th Tuesday of the month).
   I. The *Queue manager* will evaluate the attendance to see if the individual(s) attended the Membership Class.
      i. If not, the profiles will pend.
   II. If the profile is pending, an invitation will be resent.
   III. If the membership class was completed office personnel makes a phone call to the family and the family is scheduled to receive their *Baton*.
   IV. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Membership Completion Letter.

8. When added to the **Membership Completion Letter** queue, the individual will automatically be added to the *Membership Completion Letter Mail Merge* for the email to be sent if there is an accurate email on file. If there is not an accurate email on file the *Queue Manager* can select for the profile to be added to the *Link Invitation Mail Merge* for the letter to be printed, addressed and sent. This action completed by Office Personnel (4rd Tuesday of the month).
   I. *Queue manager* will customize the letter per the discussion with the family to add a reminder for the service they are scheduled to receive their *Baton*.
   II. *Queue manager*/ Office Personnel will enter all membership data from application into the profile.
   III. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next Queue: Generate Activation Email
      i. A "Member" membership type will automatically be generated on the individual's profile.

9. When added to the **Generate Activation Email** queue Office Personnel will log onto the Individual's Profile and select the option *Generate Activation Email* on the right-hand side (4rd Tuesday of the month).
   I. When completed and the profile is marked "Done", the individual will automatically be added to the next **Process**: Volunteer Process.
   II. Members will be assigned to the Department Heads to be contacted and plugged into their team.