

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

How Sun Valley Community Church Is Reaching New People - Episode 230

Reaching New People (Part 1)

“The percentage of Americans who identify as Christians now stands at 63%, down from 65% in 2019 and down from 78% in 2007. Meanwhile, 29% of Americans now identify as having no religion, up from 26% in 2019 and 16% in 2007” ([Pew Research](#)).

That's about **45 million fewer Americans who are identifying as Christians** from 14 years ago, and about 6.5 million fewer in the last two years.

This trend in culture confirms what we're seeing in the churches we work with. Many churches are attributing their declining attendance to a retention, or “back door” issue, when more often than not, they're actually experiencing a **front door issue**: They're not reaching enough new people to counteract the natural attrition that's happening. That's why this new podcast series is all about **helping your church reach new people**.

Key Learnings from Sun Valley Community Church

In this episode, Tony and Amy sat down with Chad Moore (Lead Pastor) and Paul Alexander (Executive Pastor) from [Sun Valley Community Church](#) to discuss some uncommon results: Their church has reached new people, baptized hundreds of new believers, and even started new campuses—during the pandemic.

- What was driving the momentum at Sun Valley? “I wish I knew or could share a silver bullet, but I really believe it's just us consistently working the plan. It's the flywheel concept. We've been practicing **consistent strategic obedience** over time.”
- “Crisis has a tendency to expose what's already there. So when the crisis hits, it's too late to prepare.” Sun Valley has kept momentum through the pandemic in large part because **before** Covid hit, they had already established clarity around who they were, what they were called to, and how they were going to get there.
- If new people weren't meeting Jesus in your church before Covid, Covid didn't make it better. It made it worse. So when is it time for the church to change and pivot? “**The church**

should change and pivot when their approach and tactics are limiting new people meeting Jesus—because that's why Jesus put the church here.”

Next Steps

- **Begin practicing consistent strategic obedience.** Sit down with your leaders and determine your direction for this next season and decide what needs your time and focus *today* in order to get there.
- **Embrace the both/and.** Churches who are reaching new people in the next seasons will be managing the tension between in-person environments and online connection.
- **Study your mission field.** Find some data, get to know the people in your community who are outside of the church, and begin adjusting your strategies to reach *those* people. To reach new people you really have to become a church that's *for* them, not just a church that's near them.

Webinar: 3 Strategies for Reaching New People on February 17

Rather than focusing on who left, we need to get refocused on the true mission of the Church: reaching the lost people in our communities. [Join us on February 17](#) @ 1PM ET and hear from **leading church voices** Dave Ferguson, Chris Hodges, and Jerry Sen and continue this conversation on how you can **reach new people in 2022** using practical strategies.

Listen to the episode on Apple Podcasts or at theunstuckgroup.com/episode230.