

In early 2017, I began a new role at the Overland Park Church—Involvement Minister.

My goal as the Involvement Minister is to help the church sustain a welcoming, comfortable, and warm environment. I want to create clear processes that increase retention. I support guests as they learn about the communities and ministries that make up the life of our church.

In addition to the areas of responsibility below, I also enjoy preaching occasionally, teaching classes, and offering pastoral care.

I am responsible for these four areas:

- **First Impressions**—I work with volunteers from within the church who have an impact what people notice and experience during the first moments after they walk in the church building. This includes the OP Coffee Ministry operations and being a leader on our OP Church Welcome Team. I also monitor furniture needs, oversee literature at the welcome kiosk, produce slides for the screens in the lobby, evaluate existing signage, and make proposals for upgrades in any of these areas if necessary.
- **Guest Follow-Up and Connect Class**—In the spring, we researched ways for our church to be more “sticky” regarding guest retention. In June, we launched a four-week course called Connect Class that introduces newcomers to our church and helps them learn more about our history, what we believe, and ways to get involved. We will also introduce them to the concept of Grace Gifts and invite them to attend a Grace Gifts seminar with Dan Knight, the Minister of Adult Discipleship. One goal for Connect Class to is to help members know that we have a class specifically for friends they plan to invite to church. The class will let guests know that there’s a resource to help them learn more about the life of the church. Starting in late 2017, on the last day of the course, Taylor Penrod, our Community Liaison, will present current opportunities for people to serve the community outside of our building.
- **Guest and Member Involvement**—At a church the size of the OP Church, it’s natural for even long-time members to feel like they’re still trying to find their place in the church or that they’re not connected in the life of the congregation. I partner with the Minister of Adult Discipleship and the Community Liaison to make ministry opportunities, small group involvement, and other community-based opportunities accessible to everyone. We have a sizeable absentee list that we need to develop an effective strategy for addressing. Part of my new role is developing and implementing such a process so that we can let people who have stopped attending church regularly know that we notice and care. My goal is to address this in late 2017.
- **Missional Partners**—I have been having conversations with a group of elders and with the ministers over the last 18 months centered around the language and processes we use regarding church membership. What has come out of those conversations is a commitment from leadership to a shift in language from

membership to missional partnership. One of my objectives in 2017 has been and is still to work with all levels of OP Church leadership to develop strategies to successfully introduce and implement missional partnership.