

Building a World-Class Assimilation System

A Practical Toolkit for Moving Newcomers From Guest to Partner Through LIFE Track

“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

Acts 2:47

1. Lay the Foundation First

A guest doesn't become a partner by accident — a church either has a system for it, or it loses people quietly to a lack of one. Assimilation exists to take someone from their first Sunday to full partnership on purpose, with a clear next step waiting at every stage. This is the same principle behind LIFE Track: SOW, GROW, and GO isn't just our vision for the world — it's the path we walk every newcomer through, one step at a time.

Vision, Values & Guidelines

The purpose of assimilation is simple: no one falls through the cracks, and no one wonders what's next. Core values: intentionality (every newcomer is tracked, not left to find their own way), personal touch (a phone call and a real signature beat an automated text every time), and a clear runway (there is always a next class, next step, and next relationship ready for them).

Developing a LIFE Track Team

Even a small assimilation team needs a lead who owns the pipeline and a small group of people covering its parts: guest follow-up, LIFE Track facilitation, and partnership. Meet weekly as a small core to review where every newcomer currently sits in the pipeline — this is the single meeting that keeps people from getting lost.

Roles, However Few

Write down every function assimilation must cover: capturing and logging new guest information, the first follow-up contact, teaching or facilitating each LIFE Track course, walking someone into partnership, and placing new partners into a serving team and a MyGroup. If two people are covering all five, write it down anyway.

The LIFE Track Pathway

Stage	What Happens
1. First Impression	A guest's information is captured at the door or info desk, entered into the pipeline the same day, and assigned to a follow-up caller.
2. Immediate Follow-Up	A personal phone call within 48 hours, followed by a handwritten letter within the first week, and a personal invitation to the next LIFE Track class.
3. New Believers Course	For anyone new to faith or new to church, grounding them in salvation, baptism, and the basics of a walk with Jesus before moving further into the Track.
4. Core Values Course	Introduces ALC's vision, mission, and core values, so every newcomer understands not just what we believe but how and why we do church the way we do.
5. The Bait of Satan	Every newcomer walks through John Bevere's <i>The Bait of Satan</i> , dealing directly with offense — because unresolved offense is one of the most common reasons people leave a church, and we address it on the front end, not after it's already cost us someone.
6. Partnership	A guest who completes the Track is personally walked into partnership — our version of membership — through a covenant class with a pastor or LIFE Track leader.
7. Placement	Every new partner is personally connected to a serving team and a MyGroup before they're considered fully assimilated. Partnership is a beginning, not a finish line.

2. Practical Structure — The Small Things That Matter Most

- **Track every person in one place** — A single shared list or system (spreadsheet, Planning Center, or a dedicated CRM) showing every newcomer's name, contact info, and current pipeline status. If it only lives in one person's memory, it dies the day that person is out sick.
- **One name, one owner, per guest** — Every new guest gets exactly one assigned point person responsible for their follow-up sequence — no guest should ever be everyone's responsibility, because that means they're no one's.
- **Standardize the touchpoint sequence** — Call within 48 hours. Mail a handwritten letter within the first week. Personally invite them to the next LIFE Track class as soon as one is scheduled. Consistency, not creativity, is what makes a sequence work.
- **Keep the Track running on a fixed cycle** — Run New Believers, Core Values, and The Bait of Satan on a predictable, recurring calendar (for example, every six to eight weeks) so there is always a near-term class to invite someone into. A great pipeline with no upcoming class is still a stalled pipeline.
- **Review the pipeline weekly, not quarterly** — A five-minute review each week — who moved forward, who's stalled, who needs a second phone call — keeps people from quietly disappearing between stages.
- **Hand off to serving and community before you let go** — Completing the Track is not the finish line. Every completed partner should leave their covenant class already scheduled to meet their MyGroup leader and try a serving team.
- **Celebrate every step, not just partnership** — A short note, a call, or a mention from the stage when someone completes a stage of the Track goes a long way — assimilation runs on relationship, not just process.

3. Running the Pipeline Week to Week

This packet is built entirely around assimilation, but the format is meant to be copied — every ministry at this conference should build its own version of a pipeline for the people it's responsible for.

- **Monday: log every new guest** — Every guest card or digital entry from Sunday gets logged into the pipeline system by Monday, with a point person assigned before the week starts.
- **Within 48 hours: make the call** — The assigned point person makes a warm, unhurried phone call within 48 hours of first contact — not a script read quickly, a real welcome.
- **Within one week: send the letter** — A handwritten letter goes out within the first week, along with information about the next upcoming LIFE Track class.
- **Follow up a second time before giving up** — If a guest doesn't respond to the first two touches, a second attempt is made before marking them inactive — people are often just busy, not uninterested.
- **Watch the Track itself for drop-off** — Track who's registered, who's attending, and who's stalled between the New Believers, Core Values, and Bait of Satan courses — a person who stops attending mid-Track needs a call, not silence.
- **Walk them into partnership, don't just invite them** — Once all three courses are complete, personally schedule the partnership covenant class rather than waiting for the newcomer to sign up on their own.
- **Make placement personal** — The moment someone becomes a partner, connect them the same week to a MyGroup leader and a serving team leader by name — a warm handoff, not a generic list of options.

4. Top 5 Struggles in Church Assimilation

1. Guests Slip Through the Cracks at the Handoff

Information captured by a greeter or usher doesn't always make it to the person responsible for follow-up, so the very first touch — the most important one — never happens.

2. Newcomers Stall Mid-Pipeline

Someone attends once, maybe starts a course, and then quietly stops — and without a system watching for it, no one notices until they're long gone.

3. No Predictable Next Step

When LIFE Track courses run inconsistently or infrequently, there's no near-term class to invite someone into right when their interest is highest.

4. No Shared Visibility Into the Pipeline

Without one shared tracking system, everyone's information lives in a different head or a different spreadsheet, and no one can see the full picture of where people actually are.

5. Partnership Treated as a Finish Line

People complete the Track and become partners, but without a personal handoff to a serving team and a MyGroup, they drift right at the moment they should be settling in.

5. Top 5 Solutions for Assimilation Growth

1. Assign One Owner to Every Guest

Every newcomer gets exactly one named point person responsible for the full follow-up sequence, so accountability never gets lost between departments.

2. Put Every Person in One Shared System

A single pipeline — spreadsheet, Planning Center, or CRM — that the whole assimilation team can see and update removes the guesswork and the memory dependency.

3. Run the Track on a Fixed, Predictable Calendar

Schedule New Believers, Core Values, and The Bait of Satan on a recurring cycle so there's never a newcomer ready to take a next step with no class to offer them.

4. Review the Pipeline Every Single Week

A five-minute weekly review of who's moved, who's stalled, and who needs a second touch catches problems while they're still an easy phone call, not a lost relationship.

5. Make Partnership a Handoff, Not a Graduation

Personally connect every new partner to a MyGroup and a serving team the same week they finish the Track. A guest becomes a partner through a class, but they become a lasting part of the church through relationship and a place to serve.

Closing Word

Every name in the assimilation pipeline is a person God brought to this house on purpose. A system doesn't replace that miracle — it protects it, making sure the person who walked in for the first time on a Sunday doesn't quietly walk out for the last time a few months later, unseen and unfollowed. Build the pipeline, staff the follow-up, and keep the Track running — and watch how many more of those first Sundays turn into a lifetime of partnership.

“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.”

1 Corinthians 3:6
