4 things that will keep people in church

1. Practical Biblical Preaching

* Biblical preaching should be encouraging – Colossians 3:16, Acts 20:32 -*So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*
* Biblical preaching should be challenging – Hebrews 4:12 -*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
* Biblical preaching should be truth spoken with love – Ephesians 4:15, Jeremiah 23:16-17, 21-22
* Biblical preaching is not about being entertained; it’s about being challenged to be better people. It should give hope, inspire faith and bring a loving conviction - Acts 24:24-27

2. A sense of God’s presence in the church

* There is a difference between the omnipresence of God (Psalm 139:7-12) and the manifest presence of God. There can be a tangible presence – Luke 5:17, 2 Chron.5:13-14
* Jesus promises to show up when we gather – Matthew 18:20 -*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*
* God’s presence brings fulness of joy – Psalm 16:11 - *You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*
* The enemy is turned back at His presence – Psalm 9:3 - *When my enemies turn back, they shall fall and perish at Your presence.*

3. We have a mission and we give to missions

* We are a part of something bigger than ourselves, the AG missions. The Assemblies of God is the world’s largest Pentecostal denomination. With 384,000 ministers and outstations in over 212 countries and territories serving approximately 67.9 million adherents worldwide.
* We give 10% of everything donated to the General fund to missions. We also add to the mission’s budget everything given directly to missions. Missions are international, national and local. We believe in tithing and we tithe as a church – Malachi 3:8-12, Matthew 23:23, Matthew 5:17-20
* We are called to bring the Pentecostal message of a Spirit filled, Spirit empowered, full gospel to our region and the world – 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, 1:4-8, Acts 1:4-8, Matthew 3:11 - *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

4. People need to find at least one friend

* Genesis 2:18 - *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*
* We were created for community, it’s important that we establish meaningful relationships with others who will pray with us and for us. We need a support system in the midst of life’s challenges.
* Proverbs 18:24 - *A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.* Reach out!
* *Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 - Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.*