



GUIDE: **CREATING A WELCOMING SPACE**



FIRST IMPRESSIONS



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THE POWER OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

WHY IT MATTERS

The first moments a guest experiences your church are crucial. It only takes seconds for someone to decide whether they feel welcome and safe.

KEY PRINCIPLE

Every detail, from signage to greeting, communicates how much you value your guests.

1. CURB APPEAL: WELCOMING BEFORE THEY WALK IN

PARKING

Ensure parking areas are clearly marked, easy to navigate, and that volunteers are available to greet guests or help direct them to open spots.

SIGNAGE

Place clear, friendly signage from the parking lot to the entrance. Ensure directions to the sanctuary, restrooms, and children's areas are easy to find.

FIRST CONTACT

Position warm, approachable volunteers outside the building to greet guests before they even reach the doors. A simple smile and "Welcome, we're glad you're here!" goes a long way.



2. THE WARM WELCOME: SETTING THE TONE AT THE DOOR

OPEN DOORS

Have volunteers hold the door open and greet people as they enter. This gives guests the sense that they are truly welcome.

TIDY & INVITING

Ensure the entrance is clutter-free, clean, and aesthetically pleasing. Consider adding plants, banners, or décor that reflects the warmth of your church's culture.

FRIENDLY FACES

Place your most outgoing, friendly team members at the door. These volunteers should be prepared to make introductions and offer help with navigating the church.



3. HEARTFELT GREETINGS: ENGAGING GUESTS WITH GENUINE CONNECTION

PERSONALIZED GREETING

Train your volunteers to greet guests in a way that feels genuine, not scripted. Encourage eye contact, a handshake (if appropriate), and an introduction like, *"Hi, I'm [name]! How can I help you today?"*

CONNECT AT A DEEPER LEVEL

After the initial greeting, encourage volunteers to connect with guests by asking simple questions like, "Is this your first time here?" or "Can I show you around?"

BE READY TO ASSIST

Whether it's helping guests check their kids into children's ministry, finding a seat, or locating the restroom, volunteers should be ready to assist with any need.



4. THE HOSPITALITY HUB: WHERE CONNECTIONS ARE BREWED

THE COMFORT OF COFFEE

A coffee station can serve as a great conversation starter and help guests feel at ease. Ensure the area is easy to locate, well-stocked, and clean. Offer a variety of options (regular, decaf, tea), and if possible, provide alternatives such as flavored creamers, sugar-free options, or herbal teas.

SNACKS FOR FAMILIES

Offering simple snacks, like muffins, granola bars, or fruit, can make a big difference, especially for families with children. Having something for guests to enjoy helps them relax and encourages mingling before and after the service.

INVITING SETUP

The coffee/snack area should be warm and inviting, with clear signage and a well-organized layout. Have volunteers stationed nearby to welcome guests, offer assistance, and engage in light conversation.

SPECIAL DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS

Consider offering gluten-free or dairy-free snack options for guests with dietary restrictions. This extra step can make guests feel considered and cared for.

STRATEGIC PLACEMENT

Place coffee and snack stations in areas where guests naturally gather, such as near the entrance or in a comfortable seating area. This encourages interaction and helps guests feel comfortable lingering after the service.



5. COZY CORNERS: DESIGNING COMFORTABLE, INVITING INTERIOR SPACES

SEATING

Ensure seating is comfortable and easy to access, with enough space for movement. Make sure no one has to awkwardly search for a place to sit.

LIGHTING & SOUND

Soft, warm lighting and calm background music in common areas can set a relaxed tone. Avoid harsh lights and loud noises that might overwhelm first-time visitors.

KIDS' AREA

Have clear, secure check-in systems and welcoming volunteers. Ensure that kids' spaces are safe, colorful, and well-supervised so that families feel confident leaving their children.



6. THE SANCTUARY WELCOME: MAKING WORSHIP FEEL LIKE HOME

The sanctuary is where guests spend the most time, and it's crucial to extend hospitality here too. This section focuses on creating a warm, inclusive atmosphere during the worship experience.

SEATING STRATEGY

Have volunteers strategically guide guests to comfortable, accessible seats, especially if they arrive late. Be sure to leave room for latecomers, so they don't feel awkward finding a spot.

FRIENDLY USHERS

Equip ushers to greet people as they enter the sanctuary and offer assistance with finding seating, special needs requests, or any other concerns.

ENGAGING WORSHIP ENVIRONMENT

Ensure the worship team, lighting, and sound are welcoming and engaging without being overwhelming. Soft transitions between parts of the service can help guests feel at ease.

WELCOMING FROM THE STAGE

Encourage those leading worship or speaking to acknowledge first-time guests and make them feel at home. A simple, "If this is your first time, we're so glad you're here!" can go a long way.

COMFORT IN THE DETAILS

Small touches like having extra blankets for cold weather, ensuring the temperature is comfortable, and minimizing distractions can help make guests feel cared for.



7. HOSPITALITY TIPS FOR INTROVERTED GUESTS

RESPECT PERSONAL SPACE

Some guests may prefer to explore on their own. Provide subtle guidance with friendly, informative signage so they don't feel pressured.

OFFER QUIET SPACES

Designate areas where guests can sit quietly before or after the service if they prefer a more reflective experience.





CONCLUSION: THE WELCOMING CULTURE

Creating a welcoming space is about more than décor and logistics. It's about making sure every guest feels valued, seen, and included. Equip your team to make genuine connections, remove barriers, and create a space that reflects the love and hospitality of your church's mission.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

BUILD A RADICALLY HOSPITABLE CULTURE

COMMUNITY

Join a thriving network of church leaders who encourage, problem-solve, and share strategies.

CONTENT

Plug-and-play scripts, templates, and plans you can use this Sunday.

COACHING

Expert coaching each month: group sessions, Q&As, and panels to move your church forward.

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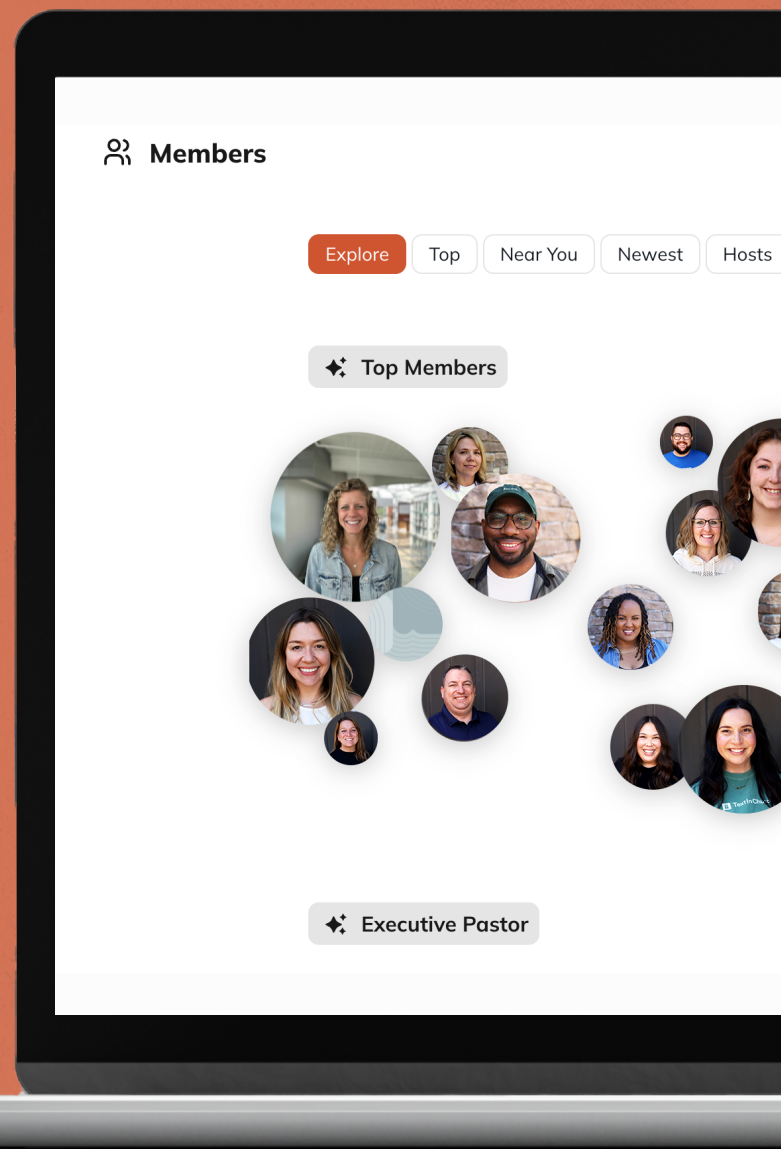
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Huddles Talks + Volunteer Survival Guide + Volunteer Tract



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