

## Welcome Audit

This audit is to give the opportunity to assess what may need to be changed, in and around the church property, in order for a guest to feel welcomed. It is extremely important that each new person to your church knows that you care about where you are and what you believe.

We suggest that you and your team walk around the facilities of the church with pen and paper in hand asking yourselves the following questions. When you have done this, make an action plan to improve where necessary. Some actions may have financial implications and so will take time to complete but it is still important to work towards the goal of improvement.

### A Welcoming Church Exterior

#### Finding the church

- Is your church well sign posted on street corners?
- Is the major sign outside of the church legible and visible?

#### When on church premises:

- What does the Notice Board at the front of the church say?
  - Are the times of services clearly marked?
  - Is there a contact name and telephone number?
  - Is there a crèche or children's programme?
  - Is there any information that is there that is confusing to a guest? Any unnecessary information?
  - Is the font size legible?
- Is there parking for guests and also for the disabled?
  - Are these signposted clearly?
- What are the first impressions a guest has when they enter the property?
  - Does it show that you care for the grounds and buildings (for some guests, care of the grounds of the church would rate higher for them than the buildings)
- Is it clear where the guests need to go?
  - Are there signposts to the entrance of the church, bathrooms, kid's church, morning tea?

### A Welcoming Church Interior

#### What is the building saying about itself?

- What does your building say about itself?
  - What are the impressions created by architecture, furnishings and fittings?
  - If you were to think of the five senses, (sight, sound, hearing, taste and touch) are there any sensations that need addressing or are over powering?
- What does the building say about the life of the church family?
  - Is the building cared for?
    - Look for dust, cobwebs, left over papers and bulletins etc
  - Are all handouts up to date?
  - Is the Vision and Mission statement clearly communicated, either by a sign or handouts?
  - Is there a Welcome Kit for the guest?
  - Is it easy for guests to leave their contact details or requests for help and prayer?

- Are there notices in the foyer or church that are not necessary to know as a first time guest that could be in a booklet for another day?
- What does the building say about God?
  - Is God central or peripheral?
  - Is it easy for guests to enter and find somewhere to pray?
  - Is there devotional literature available that is suitable for guests?
  - What 'atmosphere' is or could be created?
- What does your building say about money?
  - Is money or the need for it mentioned at every turn?
  - Does the place look as if money is in short supply or unimportant?
- What message is communicated re:
  - Those with disabilities
  - Comfort
  - Ambience
  - Safety

## A Welcoming Church Service Preparation

### Before the Service:

- This is an important ministry so before you do anything pray for God's blessing.
- Have clearly marked name badges for both Welcomers and Ushers.
- Have your best people welcoming guests to church.
- Do your ushers see their role as 'ministers of welcome' along with handing out prayer books and bulletins etc?
- Decide whether the welcomers are more easily seen if they stand outside the church at the entrance or inside.
- The role of a welcomer lasts right up until the last person leaves to go home.
- Have your welcomers/ushers introduce themselves to any guest.
- If they are unsure if a person is a regular member or guest have them ask the question, 'Have I met you before?'
- Be sure to have a welcomer or usher near the back of the church after the service has started to direct and welcome late guests.

### During the Service:

- Give a very warm welcome to everyone, not just the guests.
- Regular members and welcomers should be willing to sit with any guests not just with their regular friends.
- The service leader is to gently guide everyone through the service with clear instructions of page number and directions if necessary e.g. when to sit and stand.
- If there is the facility for a crèche or Sunday school, then be sure to advise parents that these are available without them feeling guilty if they choose to have a baby or children in church.

### After the service

- Continue to welcome and introduce guests to regular members of the church.
- Encourage church members to be proactive in meeting the needs of guests

- Consider ahead of time how your church can follow up on the guests that attended BTCS
- Immediately at the end of the service be sure to invite guests to morning tea, which means:
  - Escorting them to where morning tea is held
  - Offering to serve them
  - Chatting to them
  - Introducing them to others with similar interests

#### After Sunday

- Encourage your members who invited guests to follow up personally their friend or family member who attended BTCS.
- Is there a welcome pack that can be given when doing a follow up visit?
- Are you running any Christian/Faith formation courses that you can invite guests to attend?
- Are there any social events that you can invite guests to attend?
- Do you have a system when you can develop a data base of names and contact details for future follow up?

#### Homework if you dare!!!!

If you have a number of relatively new members at your church, then ask them the following questions ahead of BTCS.

- Did they feel warmly welcomed?
- What they found most helpful when they came?
- What they found most difficult?
- What things do they feel could be improved about the church's welcome?

After BTCS have a couple of members interview a number of guests who attended BTCS and put the same questions to them.

Once you have collected this information then where necessary take action!