

# WELCOMING DEFINITIONS AND TIPS

Hearts. Minds. Doors.

First impressions are lasting ones. People make up their minds about your church within the first 10 minutes of contact. Long before the preacher preaches, people most often will have decided if they plan to return. These ideas and definitions may help your church make a life-changing impression on those who are new to your congregation.

## TWO TIPS FOR THE WHOLE CONGREGATION TO DO EACH SUNDAY:

**CIRCLE OF 10:** Greet anyone, member or guest, who comes within 10 feet of you. Make a special effort to greet the people you don't already know within your Circle of 10.

**RULE OF THREE:** Try not to talk to other members for the first three minutes after the service. Talk only to those you don't know and to people that you know are guests. It takes guests about three minutes to exit the church after worship so it's important to make sure someone has made contact with them before they leave.

## SOME EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE YOU WILL ESPECIALLY WANT TO WELCOME:

Remember that welcoming is a lifestyle that extends well beyond shaking hands at the door of the sanctuary. As your church grows a more welcoming lifestyle, you will probably want to design different ministries and follow-up activities for these and other groups of people.

### VISITORS

Igniting Ministry defines visitors as people who attend a worship service or event at a church but are not likely to be regularly connected to the congregation (they live out of town, have another church home, etc.). Remember, welcoming is not about growing your church; visitors deserve special attention even if you never see them again.

### GUESTS

Igniting Ministry defines guests as people who attend worship or another event, perhaps at the personal invitation of someone from the church, who may reasonably be expected to return and get involved in the congregation. Those treated as "honored guests" are likely to return.

### NEWCOMERS

Igniting Ministry defines newcomers as people who are relatively new to a congregation—not yet members; no longer first-time guests; interested in connecting with the church and its members. Newcomers are trying to find a way into the life and ministries of your church, so it's important to remove barriers and serve their needs.