

**V.E.L.C.R.O**  
**How To Greet Our Guest**  
**Visitor vs Guest**

**Company is Coming**

A **VISITOR** is one who visits.

The meaning is to “stay temporarily with someone or at some place as a passerby or a tourist.

To stop by.

To spend time with

A visitor is not expected to stay.

A **GUEST** on the other hand is one who spends time with you and receives your hospitality.

A visitor could be one who lives in another city and has come home to visit family. They are welcome but we know they are not going to stay.

A guest is one who lives close enough to be able to drop by anytime. They live in the neighborhood.

We have guest over for dinner – we never say we are having visitors over for dinner.

As a congregation, we should like to have our guest to drop by as often as possible.

We want them to feel welcome.

Our churches must develop their own way of welcoming our guest in a way that they desire to return so often they feel they are a part of our family of faith.

The way we prepare our physical campus and our people to allow our guest to feel more at ease is an area of every church that always needs our attention.

**THE MEETING PLACE**

When we are planning for our guest, I want the property to look nice. In order to do this, I need to put forth the energy necessary to make it appealing.

I mow, edge, trim, sweep, all areas where our guest will be entering.

I will not only sweep but use my leaf blower to make sure I did not miss anything.

I don't want the property to appear unkept or trashy looking.

I want my entry way to be clean and safe for all to come.

I will move my autos out of the driveway so our guest can have the best and closest parking.

Our church members have become selfish and they think that because we pay the bills, we get the choice places to park. Not only that but we sit in our chosen reserved seats. We do pay the bills around here you know. So why shouldn't we get our choice?

**NOTE** – Because of our “It is all about me” attitude, we park the closest and sit the furthest. It should be just the opposite if we really want the guest to feel welcome and return. We should park the furthest and sit the closest.

If our guest notices trash all over our yard and leaves stacked up by the steps, they begin to form their opinion that is exactly how the inside is going to be.

Our guest recognizes parking area is prepared for them so they can have the easiest access to our entry.

A welcoming church will prepare the guest parking that is clearly marked and closest to the entry.

Most of our churches want to have young families to become a part of our fellowship.

This attraction should begin in the parking area.

Our guest should get the best parking.

Our guest should get the best seats.

Our guest should get preferential treatment.

Signs should be clearly posted reading “Parking for our Pre-school parents”

## **MEETING THE PEOPLE**

Greeters should be stationed at these entry points to assist these pre-school parents with items they are bringing with them.

When our guest arrives, we always go to the door with a smile, a hug/handshake, and a glad you came attitude.

This will communicate several messages to our guest.

I am expecting them to come.  
I open the door for them to come in.  
I shake their hand and usually follow up with a greeting and a hug.  
I speak to each one of our guests and call them by their name.  
I will do everything I can do to make them feel at home.  
I want to make sure the conversations with other has begun.

Our guests are welcome to stay as long as they would like.  
We have extra rooms for them if they choose.  
When they leave, they even have access to a take home bag to take left-overs with them for later if they like.

**EXAMPLE** – We have hosted our family Thanksgiving dinner for years. Our home is centrally located making it easy for everyone to get to. It is large enough to host the ones who are coming.

There is preparation that will be done for our guest that will be joining us.

There is the invitation to join us.  
There is the menu to be planned.  
There is the meal to be prepared.  
There is the outside work to be done.  
There is the inside cleaning to be done as well.

Everything we do, selecting the place to meet; selecting the food we eat; the places we park; the places we sit – all is done with our guest in the forefront of our event.

Every church should strive to treat every guest as a gift from God.  
Could this be the reason Christ told us how we should treat others.

Matthew 25:40, ***...truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for Me.***

Hebrews 13:1-2, ***Let brotherly love continue. (2) Don't neglect to show hospitality, for by doing this so have welcomed Angels as guest without knowing it.***

If we will see our guests as a gift from God and go out of our way to treat them as special guests, then we can watch what God does among us.

**NOTE** – I have been convicted for years that God is searching for a church to love, encourage, and minister to those who are lonely, those battered and bruised from their battles in the world.

**Are we that church?**

Our mission field is full, but our churches are empty! WHY?

Because of how we judge and treat one another and how we treat those God sends our way.

Matthew 9:36-38, ***When Jesus saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed, discouraged, and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd (to care for them). (37) Then Christ Jesus said to His disciples, the harvest is abundant, (lots of folks) but the workers are few. (38) Therefore, pray to the LORD of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.***

If we wait until these gifts from God show up, then we will be scrambling to do enough of the right things that hopefully they will come back ---  
**THAT IS TOO LATE!!!**

Dr. Hemphill discusses how we can “engage every guest with intentionality” (pp16-17). He points out “four important and undeniable truths.”

**FIRST** – The church is a critical instrument for advancement of the Kingdom of God and thus Christ Jesus has promised to grow His church.

**SECOND** – The church will not grow without regular guest coming.

**THIRD** – The church will not grow if these guests do not return.

**FOURTH** – You never get a second chance to make a great first impression.

**NOTE** – So if we are serious about wanting this church to grow, then how we prepare and treat our guests has to be a priority for each person – both young and aged.

God though hospitality was so important that He included it as one of the Spiritual Gifts He gave to born-again believers.

Hospitality is defined as “The gift of hospitality is that special interest in opening one’s home (life) for food, fellowship, and friendship. It also can be seen to just provide a place to stay for someone in need. Those with the gift of hospitality seem to always be ready and willing to invite guest over or offer their home for a place to meet for any occasion. They love to provide refreshment or prepare

meals for individuals or groups. They seldom show irritation over last minute request to have someone over or to host a group. They tirelessly serve to make people comfortable and encouraged.

They are social butterflies and love to provide fellowship and friendship without sacrificing family time. Hospitality is mentioned in the following Scriptures: 1 Peter 4:9-10; Acts 13-15; Luke 14:12-14 along with other Scriptures already mentioned.

Romans 12:12, reminds us how unnatural it is to have a self-giving behavior. (AMP)  
Constantly rejoicing in hope -because of our confidence in Christ Jesus –  
steadfast and patient in distress, devoted to prayer continually seeking wisdom,  
guidance and strength.

This is not an option, but we have the opportunity to make a difference in other's life.

As a Christ-follower, we are to use the gift of hospitality to show our authenticity as a community of faith.

Dr. Hemphill writes (p20), *People are looking for authentic community and if the church would dare to follow the mandates of Scripture we would jettison out of Teflon coating in an instant and become life VELCRO.*

The scattered and lost sheep would be drawn to us like burrs to your hiking socks.

These people would be "linked" into the body of Christ and His church with an bond.

We would open wide the front door with our authenticity of compassion and care and at the same time close the back door with our assimilation of our valued gifts from God.