INVITING AND WELCOMING NEW PEOPLE

After Worship "Coffee Hour"
Provide a regular fellowship gathering after morning worship. Encourage persons to remain and mingle, greeting visitors and existing members alike. Have light refreshments on hand to help entice folks to stay.

Bake and Deliver Pies to Church Guests
Individuals from your congregation bake and deliver a pie or other baked goods to persons who have visited your church.

Baptism as a Time for Invitation
Provide baptismal candidates with invitation cards. Encourage them to use the cards to invite friends, relatives and loved ones to the baptismal service. Ask them in particular to invite folks without a church home, so they might come and see for themselves the joy of entering the family of God.

Christmas or Easter Card Outreach
Invite prospective and inactive members to Christmas or Easter worship services through hand-delivered cards.

Congregational Card Invitation
Print business card size cards that include a brief invitation to the services of your congregation and a map to the location of your church building. Provide a dozen or so of these for each adult of your congregation, encouraging them to carry them in their wallets and purses for distribution to co-workers, neighbors, friends, etc.

Cross-Connections
A program for middle school students who come to church through recreational activities and talk times, building meaningful relationships with Christian staff and a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Evangelism Training
Train your whole congregation to share their faith in Jesus Christ. Themes should include the content of the gospel, conversational skills, and confidence to share the gospel. Provide on-the-job training as part of the training. The goal is to help persons learn how to adequately share a gospel presentation in order to lead people to Christ. A good one many have used is Becoming a Contagious Christian Video Curriculum available from Zondervan Publishing House.

Friendship Team
Organize a Friendship Team. Ask this group to invite visitors to dinner at their home after Sunday services.

G I F T Growing In Fellowship Together
(GIFT), a program for women of all ages and preschool children. GIFT’s ministry targets two groups of women: 1) those from our own church family, for whom we strive to provide a time of encouragement and enrichment; and 2) women from the community (some may attend a church; some may not). For this diverse group, the goal is to encourage them in their daily lives and plant some seeds of God’s love and joy. Gatherings should include quality Christian child care for all mothers attending. MOPS is also a great outreach.

Good News Dinner Plan
Organize fellowship dinners to which existing members can invite their unchurched friends, relatives, and acquaintances. Provide a warm, inviting, hospitable atmosphere at the dinners. Along with the fellowship meal provide some brief entertainment.

Greeter/Usher Training
Strengthen the welcoming ministry of your congregation by providing an annual training and enrichment session for your ushers and greeters.
**Hospitality Ministry**
Conduct a study of a biblical approach to hospitality, then develop a ministry that makes all people feel loved and welcomed when they attend your church.

**Including Friends of Church Youth**
Encourage youth in your church to bring their friends to youth meetings and church events. Find ways to develop an outreach mentality among your youth so that they will be motivated to invite their school or community friends to youth events in their church. Assist the entire youth group to make the newcomers feel welcome and included.

**Invitation Signs**
Encourage personal involvement in the ministry of invitation. Provide members yard signs that read: THIS FAMILY INVITES YOU TO THE ______________________ Church. Ask them to display the signs on their front lawns for a designated (short) period of time. (Be sure to observe local zoning ordinances for lawn signs.)

**Invite a Friend Sunday**
Organize a special Sunday for friends. Encourage members to invite their friends, colleagues, and acquaintances (not active in another church) to this worship experience. Welcome and follow-up the visitors who come. Thoroughly plan this event for maximum results.

**Multiple Worship Services**
Add an additional worship service on either Saturday night, another weekday night, or Sunday. This will provide room for more worshipers, fit into people's varied schedules, and allow different styles of worship.

**Organizing a Church Nursery**
Set aside one or more rooms in your church building for a church nursery. Decorate it in bright, inviting colors; provide, clean, attractive toys. Convey through this ministry your desire to include young parents and to welcome their children. Or, if you have an existing nursery, review it from the perspective of new persons and young parents.

**Personalized Invitations**
Use Christmas, Easter, baptism services, and other special occasions to involve your congregation in giving personal invitations to persons who are not Christians or not actively involved in a church. Printed invitations provide an excellent means to encourage participation.

**The Phone's for You!**
Use the telephone to discover prospective members and invite them to a special worship service. Fifty volunteers phoning 2 1/2 hours per week can each make 100 calls. In four weeks this equals 20,000 phone calls. New churches and congregations beginning a new worship service often find about 2,000 (10%) of these people willing to be placed on a mailing list (four mailings sent over a four week period), with 200 (10%) of those people coming to the first or special worship service. Results for established churches are normally about half of those for new churches/new services.

**Reach Out Calling Program to First-Time Guests**
Organize a team of persons to follow-up first time guests. Through special training materials, equip them to make short, friendly "hello, we're glad you visited us" calls. Demonstrate the welcome and warmth of your congregation.

**Senior Adult Outreach Program**
Develop an outreach program for senior adults. Remember that there are really two groups: active and older.

**Survey Guests to Gain Feedback on Your Church's Climate**
Survey your visitors to discover their first impressions of your congregation. Learn from their insights regarding the warmth and hospitality of your people. Make adjustments on the basis of their suggestions.
Team Visit to Another Church
Over a period of thirteen Sundays, send four teams of three people each from your congregation to visit the worship services of effective and growing churches in your area. Sense what it's like to be a guest (an outsider). Pick up helpful ideas and evaluate how you might improve your own welcoming and including system.

Usher/Greeter Training
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Van-gelism
Ask members to watch for moving vans in their neighborhoods, which often signal the arrival of new people. Provide a pew card for easy response, or ask them to contact the church office. Provide the information to a "Welcome Wagon" style task group.

Visitor Follow-up Strategy
Plan a series of steps that your congregation can follow with each first-time guest, progressing from their first visit through the third month of their participation.

Visitors Lunch
Organize Sunday lunches in your church fellowship hall to which you invite guests hosted by 8-10 family units.

Visitor's Packet
Offer Introduce your church to visitors using an attractive visitor's packet and an offer to have a copy of a church video or cassette tape. The packets should contain a personal message from the pastor, a brochure about the church, and a card offering a video or cassette tape.

Welcome Class
While we normally think of a "pastor's class" or "inquirer's class" as focused toward membership, it may also serve as a way to invite new people to the church and to a relationship with Jesus Christ as saving Lord.

"Welcome Wagon" Style Task Group
Invite new residents in your community to "come and see" the life of your congregation. Use the same principles utilized by the community Welcome Wagon. Provide a simple welcome packet containing helpful community information along with a brochure from your congregation.