



Welcome Audit



“I believe in God the Welcomer”

Christian Welcome is not just about being nice to visitors, it is about incorporating new people into the Body of Christ.

Do you agree with this statement? Write your own statement of what you think welcome means. How a newcomer and visitor would feel. How would you like them to have gone away from the church different from the moment they came?

.....

.

.....

.

.....

.

Even though many people come to churches – how are they drawn into more than just a historical monument but into a living Christian community?

Becoming a stranger

First impressions leave lasting impressions.

The only way to know how a stranger feels is to become one. Try visiting the TAB.

A Welcoming Church Exterior

Finding the church

- Signposts

Approaching the Church

- Parking—disability access
- First impressions
- Church Notice Board
- How attractive and welcoming is it?
- Beware negative signs—e.g. No parking here, No entry
- Are your service times made simple + outcomes?
(e.g. AAPB and TIS are “in-house” and mean nothing)
- Are the contact details displayed, name, address, phone number
(academic qualifications not necessary)?
- Is there information for disabled people?

Action to take!

.....

.

.....

.

.....

.

Church grounds

- Often more important than the church for people
- Are paths neat and in good order?
- How neat is the church grounds? Does it say “We care” or “We neglect”?

Mission statement of a pub:
 “Your next visit is our success”

Action to take!

.....

.

.....

.

.....

.

A Welcoming Church Interior

What is the building saying about itself?

- What are the impressions created by architecture furnishings

and fittings, light, smell etc?

- A museum?
- A holy place?
- A homely place?
- A forsaken place?

Action to take!

.....
.
.....
.
.....
.

What is the building saying about its life and family?

- Do they care for the building?
- Mission Statements and other sentiments.
- Parish Magazine available, weekly newsletters, good news stories.
- Displays of Sunday School material.
- Welcome kit available for visitors and newcomers.
- Welcome cards to fill in with contact details.
- Attractive (not old and out of date) material for children
Pictures of people —photos of vicar/churchwardens, parish family etc.
- Do we really need to know how much it is to bury ashes?
- Out of date notices and “In-house” notices?
- Is there a place to pray, candles lit, lights on, music playing, flowers?

Action to take!

.....
.
.....
.
.....
.

What does our building say about God?

- Is God central or peripheral?
- Is God given a chance to engage with visitors?
- Is it made easy for those who come in and pray? How and where?
- Is there any devotional literature, suitable for the visitor?

- What “atmosphere” is or could be created?

Action to take!

.....
.
.....
.
.....
.

What does our building say about money?

- Is it mentioned at every turn?
- Does the place look as if money is in short supply or unimportant?

Action to take!

.....
.
.....
.
.....
.

What does our building say about

- Disability
- Comfort
- Ambience
- Safety

Action to take!

.....
.
.....
.
.....
.

A Welcoming Church Member

“consider others better than yourselves” - Philippians 2:3

Before the service

- As this is a ministry, why not gather to pray a prayer together
- Whose job is it to welcome people to the church? Are they the best people?
- Do sidespersons think of themselves as “ministers of welcome”?
- When is their job over? When the service begins, or when the last person leaves?
- What about some people welcoming, whilst other worry about books?
- Do we know where to direct people – especially children and disabled
- What about toilets? – clearly marked – on the pew sheet?
- Where do sides persons stand? Inside or out?
- Good questions to ask: “have I met you before?” is better than “are you new?”
- Introduce yourself to people.
- What happens to late comers? How long are you hanging around at the back? Do you need a piece of felt on the latch or the door?
- Do regular attendees (including children) have nametags?
- Making space in pews for newcomers (ends of pews, and pews toward the back more accessible).

Action to take!

.....
 .

 .

 .

During the service

- Introduction to the service – why not just give a warm welcome, rather than highlight visitors (after all we are all visitors!)
- Welcomers should be willing to sit with others not just their friends
- To introduce and gently guide through the service if people are struggling
- Be sensitive to different needs
- Be aware to greet newcomers during the passing of the peace

Action to take!

.....
 .

.....

.

After the service

- How are they welcomed before and afterwards?
- How are we sensitive to different people's needs?
- How do we find out about people and follow them up?
- Do we have information on the activities of the church as well as its history?
- Invite them for coffee, which means:
 - escorting them over,
 - getting them coffee
 - chatting to them
 - introducing them to others who may have similar interests

Action to take!

.....

.

.....

.

.....

.

After Sunday

- What about a follow up visit? How can this be organised? A small group of people who call round within about 10 days.
- In an average church, there may be up to 10% of people who have either never come, not come for ages, or are passing through.
- Do we have a welcome pack with a flavour of the life of the parish?
- What activities of ours incorporate newcomers into the life of the church?
- Do we have social activities which include children, adults, singles, families?
- Do we regularly evaluate our services and activities and ask how 'outsider friendly they are'?
- Do we have a pastoral system which keeps track of people and follow up if they stop attending?
- What opportunities for faith formation are offered?

Action to take!

.....
.
.....
.
.....
.

You only get one chance to make a first impression

Homework

Ask three or four people to interview some of your new members and ask them:

1. what they found most helpful when they first came,
2. what they found most difficult, and
3. what things they think could be improved about the church's welcoming

With thanks to the Diocese of Brisbane

Supported by Trinity Ministries