



Open House Preparation

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The People of the United Methodist Church.

Offering the Invitation

Jesus' ministry embodied the themes of invitation, welcome and discipleship. In the coming weeks, we will be looking at each of these areas, to see where we can offer those same things to our community.

In Matthew 28, we are instructed, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." To make disciples of all nations often means making disciples one person at a time... one person who must first be invited.

- According to a 1996 Barna survey, 65% of people who don't go to church regularly say they would be more interested in going if a friend invited them.
- 62% say they would be more interested in attending if the church sponsored a concert or event of interest.
- 36% said they would be interested in attending if a pastor or a church member visited their homes and invited them. Other research suggests that invitations from church members are even more well-received than a pastors', because the pastor is "paid to invite" while the church member does it out of enthusiasm for the church.

Putting it into Action:

Maybe you have a hard time putting into words exactly what to say or how to invite someone to church. By answering the following questions and looking at some examples, this simple exercise might give you the help you need to offer the invitation.

Invitation Inventory...

Q.) When I ask someone to do something with me that I really enjoy, how do I do it?

(Ex. Asking someone to go to an event like a game or a concert, or to go with you to something the other person likes, such as shopping or a movie. Think back to an invitation you have recently offered and go from there.)

Q.) **What are some things** about the church that are either coming up in the future or have happened this year that I have really enjoyed or **that I am excited about?**

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If you can't think of anything, then it is important to pray about this and see what you can do to change this. Maybe you could look for new ways to serve God in the church, or try something that would spark your interest. This will not only help you offer effective invitations, but is important for your own spiritual growth and development.

Q.) Who can I invite to church?

Think of someone who likes to read, and see if they might come to Bible Study with you. If someone likes to sing, have them come to choir or to your praise service (if available). If a child or youth, introduce them to others in those ministries. Use your imagination, and look around you with "God's Eyes" to see who might be interested in coming to whatever you invite them to.

Use the FRAN Plan for help.

Think and pray about your FRANS— offer to pick them up on your way to church, or to help get them involved. Write down specific names and covenant with God to pray for them before you invite them, that they might have a receptive heart to your invitation. Pray daily.

Friend: _____ Relative: _____

Associate: _____ Neighbor: _____

Starter Ideas for Personal Invitations

Remember to pray for them and for yourself in offering the invitation.

1. **Face-to-face invitations.** Think about what you would say if you were inviting this person to your home.
2. **Printed invitations** with a special note from the sender.
3. **Telephone calls.** Offer to give them a ride, or to meet them at church. upon arrival.
4. **Church "business cards"** with location and worship times, which members can use to invite FRANS.
5. **Door-to-Door invitations**, using a flyer or a door hanger from the church. Be courteous, inviting, interested and brief when encountering people— just a quick doorstop visit to invite them.
6. Special Events at / through the Church gives you the opportunity to invite people to them, and invite other people while *at* them.
7. _____
