



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Evangelism

The simple act of sharing the good news of God's love in Jesus.

Hospitality Matters

"...extend hospitality to strangers." Romans 12:13b

We all know what genuine hospitality feels like when we experience it as a guest.

It feels like you, as the new person, are cared for...because your hosts have taken the time to anticipate and meet as many of your needs and questions as possible.

In the church, being intentional about hospitality sends the message that those who are new to the community matter just as much as those who have been there a long time.

Hospitality is the practice of seeing and removing the barriers that make people feel like "outsiders."

Ultimately, the goal is community; to help the stranger feel just as important and loved as those who have been there a long time.

Existing Members of the Community...

New Members of the Community...

...assume they belong there	...need lots of extra reminders that new people matter as much as those who are not new
...intuitively understand the flow of worship and other church activities	...need guides, notes, and extra resources that can help ease a sense of confusion
...know where to find answers & who to ask	...need to know where to find answers and who to ask
...know where things are in the building	...need good signage to help ease a sense of disorientation
...already have relationships in the community	...need people with gifts of kindness & warmth strategically placed at their first point of entry

Questions to Ponder:

If visitors come to your church, either in person or digitally, to whom would they turn if they have questions? How can you make it easy and clear for them to find answers?

How does your website provide quick & easy answers to common questions a new person might have?

What system does your congregation use to intentionally designate specific people to “meet and greet” visitors? How might this be done online for virtual visitors as well?

How else might your congregation “extend hospitality to strangers,” putting them at ease?

Which partners or friends do you know in the community who could be “secret shoppers,” and enter your physical or digital space as an “outsider,” providing your congregation with important feedback?