

# The Ministry Of Greeting in the Local Church

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Yours will be a crucial ministry that can be the difference between people getting their needs met once they arrive, or not!

The word "greet, greeting, greetings, greeteth" is used in the New Testament 21 times, and five of these are in Romans chapter 16. God devotes an entire chapter of the Bible to nothing else besides GREETING!

Actually, "GREETING" is part of the "HOSPITALITY" ministry as discussed in the Bible. 1 Peter 4:9 says, "Use hospitality one to another without grudging."

All people have an innate need to be RECOGNIZED, APPRECIATED, and VALUED! Especially in our culture when people are reduced to a nine-digit social security number, or a username and password, PEOPLE need to feel loved. Jesus knew how to greet people! The Bible says that Jesus "Beholding him, he loved him" as he looked at a man. Just the way one looks at another can make a person feel loved or rejected.

The Greeting and Mingling Ministry can develop into an art form of hospitality. **Hospitality is the ability to make another feel warm, welcome, and special in your presence.**

You know as well as I do that preparing and hauling a family to church on Sunday morning can sometimes be a struggle. Just trying to get everyone showered and to church on time is a lofty goal. And often in the midst of such frenzied activity, strife among the family members can break out. Often, by the time a family arrives at church, they feel like they have been through a war zone and wonder if they will ever be able to focus on God.

This is where you as a Greeter or Mingler come in! YOU ARE THE CATALYST! YOU ARE THE ICEBREAKER! YOU ARE THE HEART-WARMER! As people enter the doors of the church, a warm smile and a hearty "welcome" can be the deciding factor as to whether that person receives anything from God in that service. A friendly handshake or a holy hug and just a bit of chit-chat can help a person feel comfortable and settled, ready to receive God's Word. **The LOVE OF GOD is the cure for any human frustration!** As you pour genuine agape love onto that person and as you show a genuine interest in them, their heart will melt and they will forget themselves! Hallelujah!

Church Growth studies have proven with statistical data that the first two minutes a newcomer is at the church IS THE SINGLE MOST DECIDING FACTOR as to whether they will ever return. Think about it... it took courage to visit a new place with new faces! Subconsciously, they are asking questions like these: "I wonder if the people there will accept me? I wonder if that church is friendly? Hope the seating is comfortable! What kind of church is it, anyhow? I wonder if I'll have to sit all by myself until the service starts? I hope they don't embarrass me." So making someone feel warm, welcome, and special before the service starts goes a long way towards helping them enjoy the service and receive from God!

**The ideal greeting team for any given Sunday morning is a team of greeters to cover every entrance, some in the parking lot, and maybe even some designated to mingle to with people once they are seated and waiting for the service to begin.**

**Greeters and Minglers are asked to arrive no later than 30 minutes before church service starts!** Please take your ministry seriously. Greeting isn't an afterthought. It isn't an unnecessary ministry. It isn't inferior ministry. It is CENTRAL to sharing the love of Christ! God welcomes us and He expects us to welcome one another! If a person feels LOVE when they come to church, then they have already received something from God even if the sermon goes over their head or the music is unfamiliar to them.

**Please report to the Chief Greeter when you arrive. This person will also be in charge of any greeting team rotation lists and answering any questions that may arise from time to time.** If you are designated to greet on a certain Sunday and it conflicts with your own schedule, you should swap with another greeter and/or tell the Chief Greeter... **IN ADVANCE!**

**Here are some pointers on greeting church-comers at the door:**

1. Dress neatly. Make sure your clothing does not smell of smoke or offensive odors.
2. Groom neatly. Be freshly showered.
3. Arm yourself with breath mints!
4. As you greet, feel free to hug those of the same sex, but refrain from hugging those of the opposite sex unless you know them well or are confident that their spouse wouldn't mind. You can offer a handshake to any gender and it is acceptable in our culture.
5. Greet the children as well.
6. Especially greet those that seem to shy away from you!
7. As much as possible greet people by their first name.
8. As you greet people whom you don't know, tell them your name, and ask them theirs if you wish.
9. If you discover that this is someone's first time at Life Church, offer to answer any questions they might have or to assist them in any way.
10. Give them a church brochure if they are new (stored in a container near the doorways).
11. **SMILE! SMILE! SMILE! SMILE IS YOUR STYLE! Amen!**
12. Having said all the above, **JUST BE YOURSELF! ENJOY PEOPLE! HAVE FUN AS YOU GREET! DON'T GET HYPER OVER THE DETAILS!**

**Here are some pointers on mingling with people once they are seated:**

1. Understand that people can feel very lonely.
2. Understand that everyone wants to carry on conversation, but some are shy. Don't take it personal if a person doesn't warm to you very fast.
3. Asking questions is the way to a person's heart! When you ask questions about a person, and let them do most of the talking, they will walk away thinking you are the most interesting person they've ever met!... even though they did most the talking.
4. You can always use the formula taught to businessmen to get a conversation going: **F.O.R.M. FORM!** F.amily? O.ccupation? R.ecreation? M.essage! You can ask family questions like: "Where are you from originally? Do you have any brothers or sisters? Where do they live? Are you new to the Tullahoma area? Etc., etc., etc." You can ask occupational questions like: "Where do you work? What is your trade or profession? How long have you worked there? Do you like the company? Where do you go to school? Etc., etc., etc." You can then ask recreational questions like: "Do you have a hobby? What are your favorite pastimes? What's your favorite sport? What's your favorite food? Etc., etc., etc." You can then interject a M.essage like: "Really? You know we have several other nurses in our congregation. Let me introduce one of them to you. Etc., etc., etc." You'd be surprised how small the world really is. Answers to questions like these will spark natural conversation that shows you have a genuine interest in them as a person. Think **F.O.R.M.** Family? Occupation? Recreation? Message!
5. If you are greeting team member designated as **MINGLER** for that service, try to spot people who are seated and no one is talking to them. Go to them and initiate some conversation.
6. If there are more people than one that seem to be seated alone and talking to no one, spend genuine time with each group of people, but preferably don't get stuck with only one person or family. You can always gracefully close a conversation with something like this: "Hey, it has been great talking with you! Excuse me as I greet these other people."
7. Having said all the above, **JUST BE YOURSELF! ENJOY PEOPLE! HAVE FUN AS YOU MINGLE! DON'T GET HYPER OVER THE DETAILS!**