

7 Reasons Why Guests To Your Church Don't Return

Most church leaders will ask themselves why guests don't return. It is great to see visitors come into the church, but it can be discouraging when many only seem to come once. In this workshop we will consider seven reasons this may be happening. What will it take to help guests come back and become part of the active life of the local church?

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Introduction – We can often think of evangelism as the work of individuals outside the church (personal evangelism and apologetics). Or perhaps we think about how the church can organise an event that is evangelistic. And then we tend to think about how church can provide for the spiritual needs of the congregation. But what about when guests come into church? Let's think about that, and specifically, what are some reasons that they might come in, but not return . . .

1. It is not the church for them.

- A. Visitors to the area

- B. Healthy Christians considering their options

- C. Unhealthy Christians considering their options

2. It is not a friendly church.

- A. This is hard to evaluate – it will be friendly to you.

- B. Evaluate by observation and feedback: human contact, conversation, clarity.

- C. Beware of “awkward friendliness”

3. It is a mysterious church.

A. Your religious assignment.

B. The “foreign service rituals” – service plan / length, singing, Bible readings, etc.

4. It is child unfriendly.

A. The loudest quiet voices on the journey home – concerned parents.

B. The loudest loud voices on the journey home – captivated children.

5. It is environmentally unfriendly.

A. What is it like to arrive at your church? – Directions, parking, entrance, security, welcome, seating, smell, temperature . . . see it through their eyes.

B. Ask for feedback from visiting family, or new people before they grow accustomed.

6. It didn't make sense.

A. The service elements need to be consistent with the whole
– i.e. warm and contemporary tone, why have an overbearing organ?

B. There needs to be a consistency with the size of the gathering
– i.e. the habits of 20 doesn't work at 200 (music, message, etc.)

7. The preaching didn't connect.

A. People will join and leave because of the preaching.

B. It is too “something?”

- i.e. too lofty, too academic, too angry, too affected – disconnect.

- or too flippant, too humourous, too desperate to sound relevant, too weak on the Bible – disconnect with some.

C. Does it point them to themselves or to Christ?

Jesus builds his church, but let's do what we can to not get in the way!