



Growing Hospitality

Welcoming & Belonging

Where we'll go

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Defining Hospitality

What does hospitality mean?

02

Belonging

Why it matters to focus on belonging.

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Theologically speaking

Hospitality rooted in God's love, and Jesus' teaching.

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When have you experienced hospitality & belonging?

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Growing hospitality, creating belonging

Tools of engagement & prayer to develop your practices.

What is Hospitality?

- "Hospitality has everything to do with how we make people feel."
(Art of Hospitality, Methodist Church)
- Hospitality is how people feel, it is a dialogue- listening, thoughtful, gracious. (Danny Meyer)
- "Hospitality means breaking down barriers." (Will Guidara)
- Hospitality is taking care of people on their own terms, on their own journeys.
(Dan Ryan)

What is Hospitality?

Hospitality is seeking and serving Christ in all, loving our neighbor as ourself, participating in the breaking of the bread, respecting the dignity of all.
(Baptismal Covenant)

Hospitality is making people feel seen, known, and loved. (Saint John's Denver)



Hospitality is not...

You do not need anything special-
a fancy kitchen, a lot of people, or
the perfect sermon- hospitality is
not about entertaining,
assimilating, or being perfect.

“Whoever observes the
wind will not sow; and
whoever regards the clouds
will not reap.”

- Ecclesiastes 11:4





**Hospitality is not
what you DO it is how
people FEEL.**

Do people feel seen, heard, loved?

Importance of Belonging

“Even fleeting experiences of belonging... can have far-reaching benefits. They raise our sense of self-worth, improve our performance, lessen our defensiveness and hostility, increase our tolerance of outsiders, and make us more compassionate.” (Geoffrey Cohen, *Belonging*)

Belonging is the feeling of being a part of a group that values, respects, and cares for us.

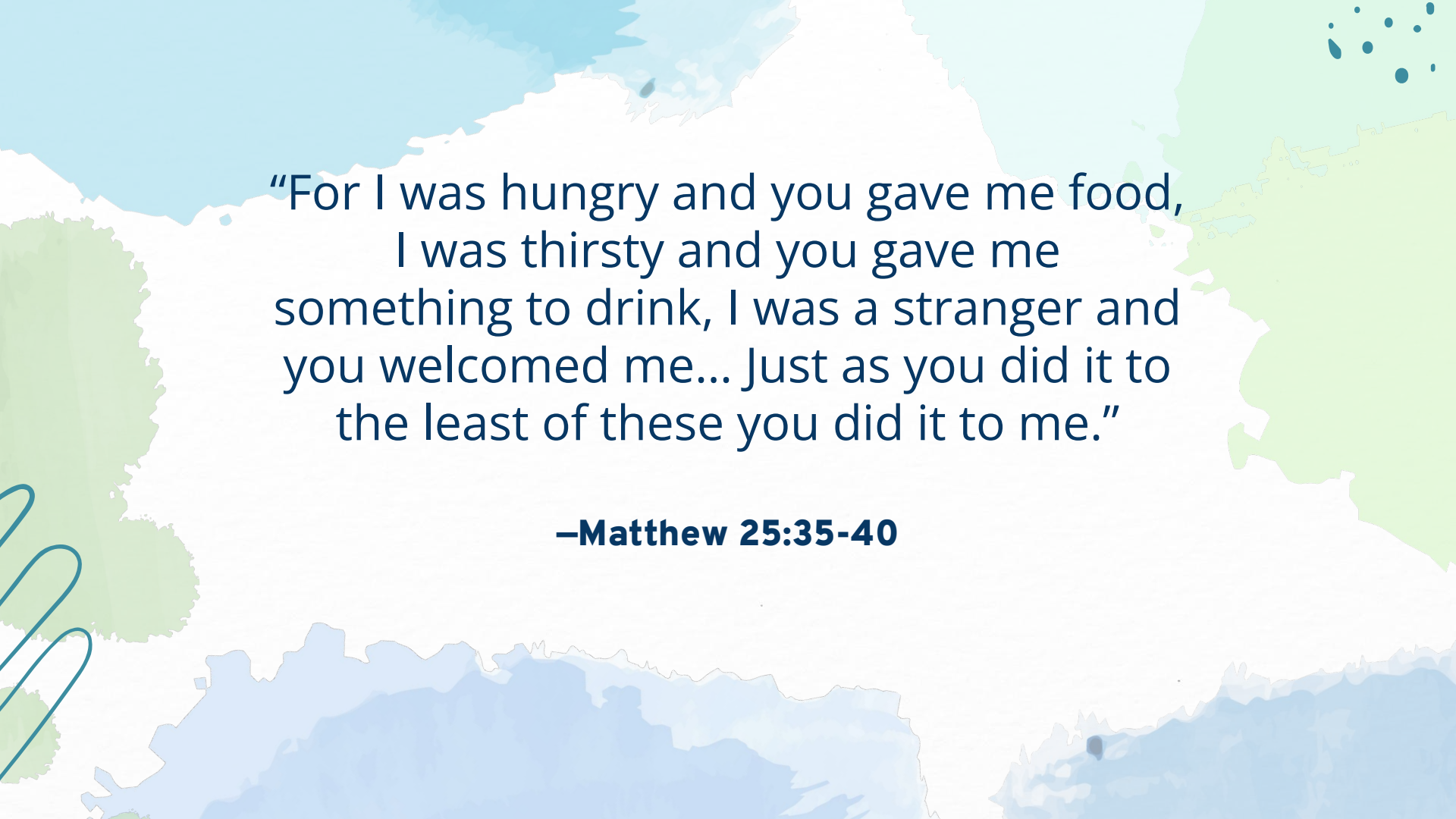
Hospitality that emphasizes belonging looks deeper than “welcome” and asks us to reflect on how our community ensures a stranger does not feel strange.

Grounded in Love & Liberation

We value hospitality in response to God's love, and God's call to love the stranger, the neighbor, the enemy.

To be a church that values hospitality is to be a church that knows God's love. We are loved by God who created the cosmos, who became incarnate in our human experience, who transcends barriers of even death and liberates us to love.

We express our liberation in profound hospitality that breaks down barriers, that remains committed to relationship, that adamantly seeks Christ in all.



“For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me
something to drink, I was a stranger and
you welcomed me... Just as you did it to
the least of these you did it to me.”

–Matthew 25:35-40

Mutual, Brave - Hospitable

“When hostility is converted into hospitality then fearful strangers... become guests revealing to their hosts the promise they are carrying with them. Then, in fact, the distinction between host and guest proves to be artificial and evaporates in the recognition of the *new found unity*. Thus the biblical stories help us to realize not just that hospitality is an important virtue, but even more that in the context of hospitality guest and host can reveal their most precious gifts and bring new life to each other.”

- Henri Nouwen

Danger of Indifference

“The opposite of love is not hate,’ Elie Wiesel said. ‘It is indifference.’ That indifference stems from our failure to see and therefore to feel other’s humanity. We’re indifferent about who they really are and don’t consider them as unique individuals.”

Geoffrey Cohen, *Belonging*

Hospitality Creates Feelings of Belonging

“People will forget what you do; they’ll forget what you said. **But they’ll never forget how you made them feel.**” (Will Guidara)

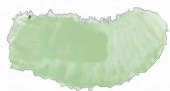
Hospitality that makes us feel something becomes a legend, a story we tell, a story that is part of our greater story.



How has an experience of hospitality made you feel?



When did you receive authentic hospitality? What about that experience was significant to you?



What is your legend experience?

When I was new...

Reflect on your experience as a newcomer.

Is it the same experience for folks today?

What do you hope a newcomers experience is?

What are your current practices of hospitality?

You matter most

“The human beings who animate our restaurants have far more impact on whether we succeed than any of the food ingredients we use, the decor of our dining rooms, the bottles of wine in our cellars, or even the location of our restaurants. Because hospitality is a dialogue.”
(Danny Meyer).

You make the difference

You are there, this work is for you

Your presence at church, your interactions with people, is vital to people's experience of God's love in action.

More than anyone else

Within 5-7 minutes people have decided whether to return to church or not.

Habits of Hospitality

Where do I start?

10 Foot Rule: greet everyone within 10 feet of your seat.

Pay attention

Genuinely listen and respond thoughtfully and personally.

It's exhausting

3 Minute Rule: spend 3 minutes talking to someone new or new to you.

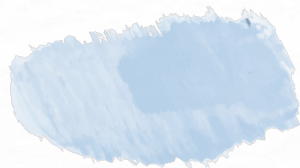
But I'm an introvert

Introvert ≠ Indifferent

Hospitality Mentality

“Hospitality is not a one-off interaction but an entire mentality.” (Hospitality from Within)

We always have the intention of bringing people into relationship with God, enabling their experience of God's love.



Intention means every decision, every interaction, from the most significant to the mundane matters.

The intention of our baptism therefore means every decision, every interaction comes back to seeking and serving Christ in all.

Spiritual Practices for Hospitality

Bless me, Lord, that I may be a blessing.

Awareness and attention: cultivate a practice of awareness of yourself, know your tendencies of reaction and compassionately pay attention to your needs. Thoughtfully give yourself space for growth.

See Christ in all.
Love my neighbor.
Respect the dignity of all.

God, open my heart, that I may be open to you at the heart of others.

Larger than the self: contemplative prayer, meditation, mindfulness practices move us beyond ourselves. They help us to know the interbeing of all and to cultivate a seeing of Christ in all.

It Starts Here, With You

“Nothing would ever matter more to me than how we expressed hospitality to one another... Our next core values would be to extend gracious hospitality to our guests, our community.” (Danny Meyer)

Before committing to Christian life and community people must see themselves in the community, feel they belong.

It starts with us showing hospitality to one another *who is here*. Constant intention of hospitality, seeking Christ in all, will grow belonging for those here now, those just arriving, and those generations to come.



**May we serve
Christ in all.**

Alternative Resources

