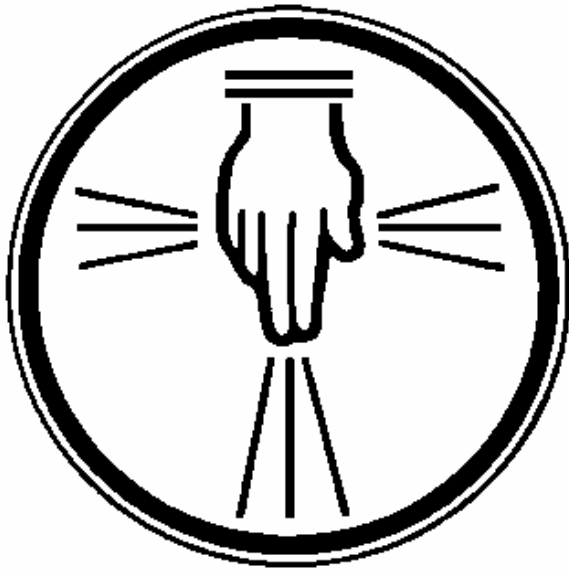


**THE
GREETER
HANDBOOK**



Peace Lutheran Church

10626 Ranch Road 620 North
Austin, Texas 78726
(512) 258-2293
peaceaustin@sbcglobal.net
www.peaceaustin.org



A Ministry of Hospitality

The practice of hospitality to strangers by the Christian community is older than the Church itself. It dates back to the time when there were no hotel chains or other safe places to stay when people traveled in the ancient world. A person had to depend on the hospitality of local people for food and shelter. Many societies had strict rules about how travelers were to be treated.

Today in our mobile society, people don't have a problem with where to stay at night, but they do need a hospitable place to worship. Most first time visitors to a church, who come to on their own, come as a response to a crisis or change in their life. It may be a good change, like a marriage, or a new baby, or a desired move; but it may also be a stressful change such as loss or illness of a loved one, a difficulty at a previous church, loneliness or an unwanted move. It takes courage to attend a new church. It is vital that the greeters, the ushers and most of all the members of Peace will help the visitor feel welcome. They need to be welcomed and feel a part of a worshipping community so that we are able to maintain our roots in the Gospel and worship as part of God's family. The greeter ministry is a vital part of our congregation's ministry of hospitality. We follow the example of the earliest Christians who welcomed strangers into each new church family with love and affection. Examples of this are found throughout the New Testament letters and the book of Acts.

In a sense, the ministry of hospitality is an outgrowth of our theology of the Lord's Supper as a meal which we share with Christians of every time and place. We welcome everyone to the Lord's Table by Jesus' invitation. We treat visitors with the same all consuming love that caused our Lord to give his life for us. We welcome visitors just as we have been welcomed by Jesus Christ.

Acknowledgments:

The Greeter Handbook was prepared by Kevin Anderson and the Board of Evangelism.
Major Revision: August 2005 by Irene Beattie, Updated Sept 2006, Updated Nov 2008

Greeter Responsibilities

Your ministry is *very* important. Please:

Be there when you are scheduled.

If you are unable to greet for the day and service scheduled, please call and find a substitute or trade with someone. (You will have received a list of other greeters with their contact information with your schedule.) Call the church office and notify them of the change. Try to call before noon Wednesday prior to the service, so the bulletin insert can be updated.

Arrive on time.

It is scary coming to a new church. If you arrive in between services it can be very confusing. Everyone else seems to have someone to talk to or knows where to go. Greeting is especially important between services to both welcome and to answer questions. See Checklist for details.

Be welcoming prior to the service.

Peace is your church home. Welcome people like you would to your own home, keeping in mind we are representing Christ. Say hello. If there is time introduce yourself and offer to answer any questions. See Checklist for details.

Be friendly and available for a few minutes after the service.

Hopefully regular worshippers will take the opportunity to introduce themselves, and welcome the visitor. Sometimes this doesn't happen. The visitor shakes the Pastor's hand after the service. If that is the only contact the visitor gets, Peace will not seem welcoming. By deliberately introducing yourselves to visitors, or people you don't know after the service, you give people another contact and help them feel welcome.

Greeter Checklist

- 1) **8AM Service:** Arrive about **20 minutes prior** to the service.
9:30AM & 11AM Services: Arrive **30 minutes prior** to the service
- 2) Make sure guest book is open and a pen is available.
- 3) Stand near the main door of the narthex. (Don't block guest book.)
- 4) **Welcome people as they come in.** This includes:
 - Say hello, and possibly open the door for them.
 - Introduce yourself (if practical) to people you don't know (Sometimes it is busy, or people are late, so it might not be practical to introduce yourself; a good morning may have to suffice.)
 - Encourage any visitors to sign either the guest book or the black registration books on the pews whichever they prefer.
 - If they have young children, let them know the nursery location, restroom location and/or mention the activity bags and children's bulletin as appropriate.
 - Offer to answer any questions they might have.

Sometimes greeters chat with each other or others when no one is arriving. This is OK, as long as they know greeting is the *highest priority* and you *stop as soon as you see someone* nearing the door.

- 5) Remain at your post about **5 minutes after the service starts.**
- 6) **Sit near the glass doors or the back** so you can welcome late visitors, and be quickly available after the service for a few minutes.
- 7) After the service, go into the narthex and watch for people who you know to be visitors, or people who you simply don't know. Introduce yourself to them and/or chat with them. Obviously if there are a lot of visitors, you may only have time to talk to one or two of them. That is just fine. There are other greeters and other regular worshippers who will hopefully doing this also.

Notes