

**THE
" VISITOR THANK YOU BAG" DELIVERY
HANDBOOK**



Peace Lutheran Church

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A Ministry of Encouragement

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.

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 hoped that the greeters, the ushers and most of all the members of Peace will have helped the visitor feel welcome. The thank you bag ministry reinforces this feeling of being welcomed. It is our way of sharing God's love and making it easier for visitors to return if they wish to.

Hospitality was the sign of the people of God from earliest times. It is a ministry of care and concern. It is a natural outgrowth of our Christian love.

Acknowledgments:

The "Thank You Bag" Visitor Handbook was prepared by Irene Beattie and the Board of Evangelism. August 2005, Updated June 2006, Updated Sept 2006, Updated May 2007, Dec 2008

"Visitor Thank You Bag" Delivery Process

Your ministry is very important. Please be there when you are scheduled or arrange for a substitute.

If you are unable to deliver thank you bags the day you are scheduled, please call and find a substitute or trade with someone. (You will get a list of other thank you bag deliverers and their contact information with your schedule.)

After the 11 AM Service: Determining who to visit

- 1) Check the guest book. If there are any new entries, make a copy of those pages with new entries.
- 2) Get the worship registration sheets from the ushers or the office administrator's mail slot.
- 3) Review the books and sheets for 1st time visitors. Look for any names that are checked as "first time visitors" or name you don't know. Compare names you don't know with the directory and the report of recent visitors (in Evangelism Coordinator's (Irene Beattie's) mail slot). If they aren't on either list, assume they are a first time visitor. (sometimes they check return visitor, but they didn't leave their address the first time, so they didn't get a bag and won't be on the visitor list and still need a bag.)
- 4) Make copies of the sheets containing these first time visitors. Put the original sheets and any copies of the visitors book pages back in the office administrator's (Debbie's) mail slot.
- 5) Either use the Mapsco mapbook, or the church computer to look up address locations and print/copy the maps. To turn on the computer:
 - Turn on the power strip
 - Press the power button on the computer.
 - Log on as Peace User Temp1 (password provided at training.)
 - Use internet explorer to get to the map program of your choice and print any maps you need.
 - Use the Power Off command from the "Start" Menu to shut down.
 - After the computer has shut down, power off the power strip
- 6) Select the number of bags you need, one for each household.

Early that afternoon: The visits themselves:

The purpose of the visits is to make visitors feel their presence is important to us at Peace. Mostly we are doing this by the action of making the effort to deliver something to their house. We are showing God's love in the world. With that in mind, please remember to dress neatly (to show them respect) and above all to **smile**.

- 1) After locating the residence, knock on the door.
- 2) If there is no answer, either hang the bag on the doorknob or place it on the stoop.

OR

- 3) If they answer the door:
 - First smile and ask if "whatever name(s)" live here.
 - Introduce yourself and say (in your own words) that you are from Peace Lutheran Church and you wish to thank them for worshipping with us today, and to deliver this bag. (or this "Welcome Bag".)

Most people will look a bit surprised, and you can wish them a nice day and leave.

If they do wish to talk a bit, feel free to chat for a couple of minutes if you feel comfortable. If they want lots of information or invite you in or wish to chat for quite a while, ask if someone can call on them. Even if they invite you in, politely refuse at this time.

Some people may ask if they can call you if you have questions. It is up to you how to answer. If you feel comfortable giving them the contact information, please do. If you don't, you might offer to call them later in the week or refer them to the information in the bag.

Visit Report: When all the visits are complete either email, or leave a note with the office administrator of who was visited, if they were home and any special information like requests for a call. If using email, please also copy pastor and the evangelism coordinator

Special Situations

If your delivery day is a holiday (Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas) than the bags should be delivered the following day.

If you cannot physically locate the address of the person to be visited, or they live in a gated community or apartment complex just do your best. If it is an option, leave it in the office or mail slot. If it cannot be left, notify the evangelism coordinator so the coordinator can mail them a packet (the bag contents except for the candy.).

If the first time visitor is not local than please note the contact information for that visitor and provide it to our "Visitor Thank You Note Coordinator", who will write the visitor a short note thanking them for worshipping with us. The name of the "Visitor Thank You Coordinator" is provided at training and via email.

Visit Report Details

May be left by note with the office administrator or sent by email.

Office administrator: *peaceaustin@sbcglobal.net*

Pastor: *plcpastor1@sbcglobal.net*

Evangelism coordinator: provided at training

For **each household** visited please provide the following information:

Who you visited.

Were they at home or did you leave bag?

Your comments, if any. (Like do they need a visit, interests, etc.)

Notes