

Call-Welcome Ministry Playbook

Description of the Ministry:

Purpose:

The Welcome Ministry is an outreach effort designed to connect with people who have visited St. James's and are interested in joining our parish. The goal is to help visitors feel welcome and connected to our parish, and to help them discern if St. James's is the right church home for them. The newcomer period starts with the first introduction and ends with the "Clergy Close," where a clergy person discusses transferring membership, joining Pilgrims' Path, or not joining.

Activities/Events:

- **Seek and greet:** Members of the Welcome Committee are asked to seek out new faces on Sundays, Wednesday nights, and other times that the parish gathers in order to introduce newcomers to others in the parish. Vestry members are also enlisted by Parish Coordinator Anita Lisk to serve as greeters after the services each Sunday; these vestry members gather information about newcomers so that we are capturing their contact data. The committee is developing a "welcome table" that we hope to launch in 2011. The table will have information for newcomers (music calendar, *Chimes*, newcomer tracts, newcomer card, St. James's case statement, a copy of the Parish Resource Guide, etc.). We also have a page on the St. James's website for newcomers called, "New to St. James's?" The clergy's Sunday morning announcements include welcoming newcomers and an invitation to "let us know who you are" by filling out pew cards. We would like to recruit someone to take pictures of newly baptized families on their day of baptism and put pictures on a bulletin board.
- **Newcomer calls:** We collect names of newcomers via the gathering of pew cards from the offering plates (Altar Guild helps here). These cards are given to a lay member (currently Kitsie Garland) for entry into a newcomer spreadsheet. Anita Lisk, Parish Coordinator, distributes these names weekly to the Welcome Committee, staff and vestry, who are asked to call newcomers to find out their interests, talents, and needs in order to guide them to appropriate ministries. Anita also sends newcomers a packet of info on St. James's.
- **Meet and greet gatherings:** We typically host six gatherings each year in September, October, December, January, February and April (see last page for the specifics of these).
- **Newcomer parties:** We typically host two parties each year, typically in the fall and spring (see last page for the specifics of these).

Impact Observations:

This ministry helps visitors to St. James's feel welcome and connected to our parish, and it helps them to discern if St. James's is the right place to become their church home. Members of this ministry have the satisfaction of being an integral part of making ours a welcoming parish.

Roles in the Ministry:

Chairperson(s): Jane Dowrick (dowhitz@verizon.net, 327-1602); and Newnie Rogers (newnster@msn.com, 282-8262)

Chairperson role: to oversee activities and identify new projects that will enhance our work with newcomers; to recruit volunteers to help with this ministry.

Characteristics of Chairperson(s): sincere interest in welcoming visitors to St. James's; willingness to develop and maintain the network of volunteers needed to support the committee projects.

Staff involvement:

Parish Coordinator, Anita Lisk, helps maintain newcomers list, supplies updated lists for meet and greets and newcomers parties to use for invitations name badges and attendance roster; and generates invitations for monthly meet and greets. Parish Coordinator also attends the meetings of the welcome committee.

Ann Dieterle, Clergy, is assigned to the Welcome Committee and participates in monthly meet and greets and newcomers parties. Ann also attends the meetings of the welcome committee.

Committee members/Opportunities for Involvement:

- Newcomer list manager (currently Kitsie Garland): works with Parish Coordinator, Anita Lisk, to collect names of newcomers, maintain spreadsheet of names, update names for invitations to monthly meet and greets and newcomer's parties.
- Photographer (currently Dave Johnson): takes pictures of newcomers with their name badges at monthly meet and greets and newcomer parties and provides pictures to Parish Coordinator to share with clergy to help connect names/faces of newcomers.
- Hosts/greeters for monthly meet-and-greets and newcomer parties: all members of committee are invited to help produce invitations and take RSVPs, provide food, beverages, etc. and to mingle with newcomers.
- Welcome table in narthex: a committee member would be asked to staff this welcome table each Sunday. Exact rotation TBD.
- Current committee members: Jane Dowrick and Newnie Rogers (co-chairs); Cary Milley, Dick Bennett, Pam Goggins, Anne Pollard, Kitsie Garland, Frances Caldwell, Diane Martin, Susan Bain, Harriett Wright, Patty Duffy, Chris Call, Mimi Herington, Dave Johnson and Sharon Wayne.

Time Commitment by Chair(s) and Committee Members:

Time commitment for the Chairperson: several hours per event (meet-and-greet events, newcomers parties. Etc.) plus about an hour or two per month talking/meeting with staff and lay volunteers. We expect the monthly time commitment to increase as we launch the welcome table and begin holding regular meetings with the members of this committee.

Time commitment for Committee Members: several hours per month staffing the events and conducting the appropriate follow-up. We spread out assignments among committee members, so the time commitment varies depending upon the number of members on the committee.

Involvement by Other St. James's Groups:

None specifically.

Resources Required:

Financial:

\$1,000 is allocated for the newcomer events (monthly meet-and-greets and two parties); this is supplemented by committee member donations of food and services.

Space:

The monthly meet-and-greets are held in the atrium of Gibson Hall. The newcomer parties are held in homes, typically of a vestry member.

Staff:

Office staff have assisted with addressing invitations to newcomer parties, but this might be done by a volunteer as well. The Parish Coordinator helps at all of the monthly meet and greets and the two parties, with checking in attendees, helping with name tags. All Clergy are responsible for assisting in the welcoming of the newcomers and in assisting with their discernment. Sextons may be asked to assist with newcomers events that we hold in the church facilities.

Advertising/Publicity:

We will recruit for new committee members via the *Chimes*. In summer 2010, we put a note in the *Chimes* for people to help with the newcomers fall party and the people who responded to help with the party are being asked to continue on the Newcomers Committee, and we hope to meet in January to help these new committee members get on board with ongoing committee activities.

Manpower:

None other than what is listed above.

Community Impact/Partners:

This is a church-centric ministry, so it does not require community partners. However, we do believe that we have a community impact by being a welcoming and inviting urban parish.

Miscellaneous Playbook Information:

To-do's for monthly meet-and -greet

- Committee reminder: Anita Lisk emails committee chairs to remind them of upcoming dates for meet-and-greets for the year, and then again a few weeks before each meet-and-greet.
- Invitations: using list from Kitsie Garland (committee member), Parish Coordinator generates invitations to newcomers who have attended a newcomer party and to newcomers who have not attended a meet and greet.
- Location: Anita Lisk reserves atrium in Gibson Hall.

- Name badges/check list: Anita Lisk provides.
- Food/beverages: committee members provide. An example of a typical meet-and-greet would include a Starbucks setup of coffee/cups/etc. (\$12 size); assorted goodies ready to serve, napkins, paper dessert plates, water pitchers, and cups.
- Program: Committee members (need 3-4 at least) greet newcomers and talk with them about their interests, etc. Ann Dieterle, Clergy, gives a brief talk about St. James's and highlights opportunities to get involved; if time allows, each newcomer and committee member introduce themselves in a seated circle.

Notes for Newcomer Parties

- For 2011, parties need to be scheduled for April and September.
- Party chair: a committee member who oversees all of the details listed below.
- Location: Co-chairs identify vestry members willing to open their homes for parties.
- Invitations: Committee member recruited to produce invitations for mailing to newcomers; list is provided by Anita Lisk from Kitsie Garland's list; invitations are posted and mailed from church by staff.
- Check-in table: Anita Lisk brings the RSVP list and name badges, and staffs the check in table.
- Photographer: Whitney Zimmerman has helped with this; also Dave Johnson, lay member has done photography before.
- Food/beverages/flowers: provided and/or arranged for by committee members; typically we spend per party about \$300 for a caterer (Carter Foster, cwfoster8@verizon.net, 908-4961, cell; 254-4961, h) to provide several items (such as pork tenderloin, a hot dip and a veggie appetizer); \$150 to hire a server/clean up staff (Robin Melton, 779-2354, home; 512-7767, cell); flowers and vase, beer/wine/soft drinks, extra appetizers and desserts were all donated by committee members for 2010 parties.
- Glassware: Pam Goggins and Carter Foster have loaned us wine and highball glasses for parties in 2010.
- Plates/napkins/cutlery: we used plastic ware provided/donated by a committee member.

(February 2011)