

OCTOBER – “Strangers In Our Midst”

***“In Christ there is no east or west, in Him no south or north,
But one great fellowship of love, Throughout the whole wide earth”***
Lutheran Service Book 653

OPENING PRAYER. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Let us pray. Holy God, when we were strangers and foreigners before You took us in to Your home and in Christ Jesus You gave us a place at Your table of grace. Teach us to know that in Your name there are no strangers. Amen

READ: Hebrews 13:1-3

¹ Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. ² Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. ³ Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Church That Works, Part 3 “Church Visitors”, Part 4 “People Flow”, and Part 5 “Assimilation”

“There’s an old saying that you never have a second chance to make a first impression. How do you say hello to first-time visitors to your church?” (p. 59)

ASK

1. How many guests were in church this past Sunday?
2. What do you do when you approach someone you don’t recognize in church?
3. The stranger and the sojourner were of concern to God in both the Old and New Testaments. How did God show His love for those who “did not fit the mold” or “slipped between the cracks” of community life?

DISCUSS

1. What do people see when they come to your church? A parking lot clearly lined with special parking places for visitors and the handicapped? A difficult maze of cluttered hallways to pass on the way to the Sanctuary? Greeters at the door and friendly handshakes in the pews? Hospitality has many faces of joy and pleasure and forethought.

2. Be intentional about addressing your weaknesses. Would it be helpful to actually pay a person from the community, not a member of the congregation, to attend worship and then report to you on what they saw, felt, and experienced?

CLOSING PRAYER IDEA

Say a prayer for all the visitors who have been to your church this past month.

NOVEMBER’S DEVOTION. “Caring for Servants“. Who will the leader be?