

## Welcomer Party and Training

Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>

white board, handouts

6:30: **Potluck dinner**

7:00: **Opening:** “How are we caring today for the many people who dare get out of bed on a Sunday morning and risk meeting us in hopes that we will provide the religious community they want?... Let us treat each visitor as the precious gift they are, just as we were when we first visited... This is not rocket science, this is human love.” UUA Moderator Gini Courter

**Introductions:** Please briefly say what your experience was of the welcome (or lack thereof) when you first came to the Fellowship.

7:30: A little about Visitors:

### **What do we call them?**

- Visitor: a person who resides temporarily; one who makes a short stay at a place for a particular purpose.
- Guest: a person welcomed into one’s home; a person to whom hospitality is extended; a person held in honor who is due special courtesies.

### **Question: What are guests looking for when they enter our doors?**

- Friendliness and warmth (This is the number one factor in determining whether they come back)-- HOW do they dtn friendliness?
- Character of worship service
- Place for children (and someone to recognize children!)
- Adult programs
- Church building
- Reputation in the community
- After service greeting-- first 10 minutes AFTER the service is most important time!

### **Other reminders:**

- Hospitality is not about growth, it is about how we treat each other coming into the door.
- Welcoming is the responsibility of the entire congregation, not just the designated Welcomers, but you are able to set the example and the practice will spread!
- Welcoming requires an open heart and to listen. Hospitality means we don’t tell people how to feel or expect to know what they are feeling. We listen to them and let them tell us how they feel.

- You are the ambassadors of the congregation. We have something important here that you help those who come here find.

BREAK

8:00: **QUESTION if time: Why do people come to us?**

- Many are going through a transition in their lives: new baby, move, divorce, death
- Many are anxious: have not been to church in a long time; have not been part of UU congregation before. They need to know we are happy they are here.
- Most of the time they have checked us out online, so they have an idea of what we are about. They want to know we are who we say we are. Also, the energy we have and the sense of our community cannot be explained on a website.

**QUESTION: Problems that can arise with making people feel welcome: Write down answers and have long term Welcomers answer.**

- Brainstorm list
- How can you spot a guest?
- What kinds of questions do guests ask?
- What are the opportunities for us to be welcoming?
- What are the obstacles?
- When does greeting become badgering?

8:50: Walk to lobby

- Role play one or two situations (20 minutes before service and 2 minutes before service) (with child and without)
- Service starts: Stand looking with back to door and have guest come in tentatively
- Show Welcomer nametags, DVDs, binder
- Offer opportunity to follow up with that guest by putting name on yellow card. (food at restaurant from owner vs customer)
- Will also get letter from me, call if requested and invitation to orientations.

9:00: Thank you and goodbye!