

Welcoming at the Fellowship

Walking in the door...

Visitors are vulnerable guests. When we invite people into our homes, we do not let them find the bathrooms and coffee; we show them where important things are. We help them feel comfortable. Most guests are looking for connection, kindness, acceptance and shared values. They want to be personally recognized and welcomed. It is easy to provide these things:

- A smile and a warm welcome (“Hi, how are you? I don’t believe we have met.”)
- A friendly question (“Is there anything I can answer for you?”)
- Showing them the Order of Service, coffee/tea, bathrooms, Religious Education classrooms if appropriate
- Telling them about your first experiences at the Fellowship
- Introduce them to someone else

One quarter of Americans have no close personal relationships. We can be gentle in our approach but still ensure our visitors/guests know that we want them to be part of our community. There are some people who would prefer to have space on the first time they are here. They will make that clear. Please don’t assume this is the case because most newcomers will open up if

Guest Questions and Answers

How do you explain Unitarian Universalism quickly? Now is a great time to rehearse your elevator speech! What is the most important thing about the Fellowship for you?

- Strong community
 - Faith in action- social justice
 - Unity in diversity- many different faith backgrounds coming together
 - Non creedal faith
- Create a statement that explains why you come here to a newcomer.

Where do children go?

- The children are welcome to go

given the chance. If the guest does want to be left alone, tell them you will be available after the service at the Welcome Table, if they have any questions.

How do you know if they are new?

We have a lot of members, friends and guests here during services. It is hard for all of us to know who is technically new. It may feel awkward going up to someone and finding out they have been a member for 10 years. Please keep in mind that although we have Welcomers to ensure newcomers are greeted and to answer questions, we want everyone who walks in our door to feel welcome- so it is ok to Welcome everyone! Starting out by saying “I don’t believe we have met...” rather than “Are you new?” helps ease the awkwardness.

Some good ways of determining if someone is new:

- Someone who is looking at books in the bookstore, bulletin boards, lobby displays, etc.
- Someone who is looking awkward or unsure
- Someone who shows up really early before the service starts (especially if they go straight into the Main Hall)

into the Religious Education classroom or to stay with their parents in the service. There are activity bags hanging on the side of the bookstore.

- The first weekend (remember, it goes by the Sunday of the month) the children start in the Main Hall. The other weekends, unless it is a service for all ages, the children start in their Religious Education classroom. Please show the parents where they are and if possible, introduce them to the Director of Religious Education.
- There will be signs posted on the front doors if the children are to start or stay in the Main Hall. If you are not sure, check them out.



1. You will receive a weekly email from Marie each week. It will include where the children start the service and any special events.
2. Arrive 20 minutes before the start of the service.
3. Wear your nametag and an “Ask Me!” tag (at Welcome Table).
4. When you meet a newcomer, give them a newsletter and small group brochure. Invite them to fill out a white guest card when they would like to receive the newsletter and/or get a nametag.
5. Once the service starts, stay in the lobby to assist latecomers. Remember to stand facing the entrance doors.
6. If asked, assist with the collection.
7. **After the collection**, count and mark attendance in the Welcomer’s binder on one of the lower racks of the bookstore. Count every body in the Main Hall and lobby.
8. After the service, please continue greeting newcomers.
9. If you are unable to Welcome on the assigned day, please try to find a substitute by using the Welcomer’s email list (welcomers@fvuuf.org).