
“Welcome One and All”

Sunday School Lesson on Matthew 10:40-42



Sunday School Suggestions on Hospitality and Valuing Others

What does it mean to welcome someone? The term can take on multiple meanings, when we think about it. “Welcome” can be a casual hello, a verb used to bring people in, or an adjective that refers to appreciation for someone’s presence. In modern culture, we can often encounter debate over the idea of welcoming people or things. In fact, when we discuss welcome with relation to issues such as immigration, acceptance, or diversity, it can become something of a controversial topic. Who should really be considered “welcome”?

In terms of Christianity, we are all welcome to be part of God’s family. Unfortunately, the reputation of the church does not always carry a connotation of such acceptance. Jesus demonstrated love and care for all people, from young children to sinners and society outcasts. He invited us to be ambassadors of His love. We are called to embrace others with hospitality and genuine care. What does this look like when we seek to educate children? Most importantly, we remind them that God cares for kids and for all people. Because of that, we want to welcome others and let them know they are loved. This might be in church, in school, or even in our homes. We welcome others because Christ welcomes us.

Lesson focus: God welcomes us to be part of His family, and loves each and every person unconditionally. As followers of Christ, we are called to extend hospitality and love to those around us. We welcome others in the name of Jesus.

Passage: Matthew 10:40-42; Matthew 25:34-40; Luke 18:15-17; Galatians 3:28

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (or whoever you might have at home!)

Materials Needed: Construction paper, decorative materials, paper plates, paper towel tubes, scissors, glue or tape, coloring supplies, string or pipe cleaner, Bible (all optional, depending which activities you choose to use—except for the Bible, you need that for sure).

Don’t miss the [children’s sermon](#) and [craft ideas](#) that are included in this lesson plan.



Teaching Games and Lesson Introduction

Lesson Opening: There are several fun activities to get the ball rolling when it comes to talking about hospitality and welcome. Your options will vary, of course, based on timing and personality.

Here are some activities to get kids thinking...(select the best ones for your audience and age group):

- What does the word “welcome” mean? How about the word “hospitality”? Check them out in a dictionary or thesaurus (best for older children).
- How do people say “welcome” in other languages? Look up a few and practice.
- Find a video clip of a grand welcome: it might be a parade, a welcome home celebration, or a festive honoring of a dignitary. Discuss what might make someone feel welcome.
- Why do we offer hospitality? When we are filled with Christ’s love, we can’t help but burst out and invite others into His family. To illustrate this concept, think about popcorn. It’s just a small thing, but when filled with hot air, it expands. Enjoy some popcorn and think about how it reflects on our lives as Christians.
- Tea party, anyone? Act out what you might do if you hosted a dinner party or tea party. Why is it important to treat others kindly when you are hosting them as guests?

Explain that you will be talking about how to demonstrate hospitality to God’s beloved people, and what it means to welcome and care for others. Jesus welcomed others, and wants us to do the same.

Ask: Has there ever been a time when you did not feel welcome somewhere? Have you ever been “unwelcomed” because you were young?



Sunday School Lesson (Matthew 10:40-42)

Welcoming Others

Bible Lesson: As always, how you choose to experience the story will vary according to the ages and abilities of your children (and how many are participating). For this lesson, Take a look at some of the words of Christ (well, and Paul, if using the epistle passage). Consider how Jesus exhibited the ability to welcome all people, and how He wants us to do the same.

Feel free to review the stories with video clips, puppet show reenactments, children’s Bibles, or whatever method works best for you to communicate the verses and stories. Some are likely best to simply be read and explained. Here are a few potential passage options:

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. ⁴¹ The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. ⁴² And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.” -Matthew 10:40-42

There are two significant things to note here. For one, we see in these verses that Jesus cares about kids. Not everyone in Bible times thought children were valuable or important. But Jesus welcomed them. Here, he uses children as an example of the “least” in society, but promises that anyone who treats others with generosity and care will actually be serving Him. When we welcome others and demonstrate hospitality, we are welcoming Christ, and allowing ourselves to be used by God.

Ask: How can you demonstrate hospitality to someone else? How can you help others?

Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁷ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” -Luke 18:15-17

Here is another passage where we see Jesus welcoming and loving children. This reinforces His care for all people, and the joy kids can experience in knowing that they are embraced and loved by a Heavenly Father. Jesus welcomed them and others into His presence, even if no one



else would. Sometimes children get left out, when it comes to things like parties or amusement park rides. Jesus will never leave us out!

Ask: What do you think Jesus means by saying we need to “receive the kingdom of God like a child”? (This may require some explanation and assistance.)

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave^[a] nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

-Galatians 3:27-29

What does this mean? Jesus welcomed ALL people. It didn't matter what background they came from, He died for everyone. We want to share that good news with others, no matter who they might be. Even if people are different from us, we are one in Christ, part of His family.

Ask: Who might God want you to reach out to or pray for?

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,^[i] you did it to me.' -Matthew 25:34-40

How does this relate to the passage from Matthew 10? Jesus is telling us that by caring about other people, we show we care for Him. Sometimes we think that by doing charitable things, we are helping others, which is true. However, we are also encountering Christ, and receiving our own special blessings and rewards through such actions. Consider how we might act differently if we took this attitude. For example, what if we chose to see Jesus, rather than a smelly homeless person? By welcoming others, we welcome the Lord.

Close with a prayer of thanks to God for His acceptance and welcome. Ask for help as we seek to offer hospitality and welcome to those around us.

Crafts: “Red Carpet Welcome Note”, “Popping up to Welcome” decoration, “Warm Welcome Hands” banner.



Follow up/Additional Activities

- Host a block party for your neighborhood, and invite friends to play!
- Find out how you can pray for and encourage those in your community.
- Make cards for teachers, community workers, and others in need.
- Prepare kits for homeless or needy people you see in town.



“Welcoming Others & Hospitality”

Craft Ideas on Matthew 10:40-42

The dictionary defines “welcome” in a few ways, mostly involving offering “friendly greeting” or “receiving gladly.” In the Gospel verse focus, Jesus encourages us to welcome all people, assuring us that by doing so, we welcome Him and His father. We want to remember how important it is to gladly receive others in Christ’s name. These crafts, whether decorative or gift-worthy, are geared toward the concept of welcoming and loving others.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider...

*“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.”
-Matthew 10:40*

“And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.” -Matthew 10:42

Welcome, one and all!

“Popping up” with the love of Jesus!

You are welcome!

You are a treasure in God’s eyes...valued and gladly received!

We open our hands and hearts...welcome!



Craft one: “Pop-up Welcome Decoration”

You will need:

- Paper Plates
- Markers, stickers, or other decorating materials
- Scissors
- Glue
- String or pipe cleaners
- Popcorn and/or kernels (optional)



Procedure:

1. Decorate the paper plate with colors and stickers, if desired.
2. Starting at the outside of the paper plate, cut a spiral shape, about an inch wide, working from the outside in.
3. Optional: add popcorn, candy corn, and kernels to the plate, gluing them onto the strip. You may also add glitter or other decorations.
4. Allow the popcorn (if glued) to dry completely. Attach a verse or caption and a pipe cleaner or string to hang your “welcoming pop-up decoration”!



Craft Two: "Red Carpet Reminder"

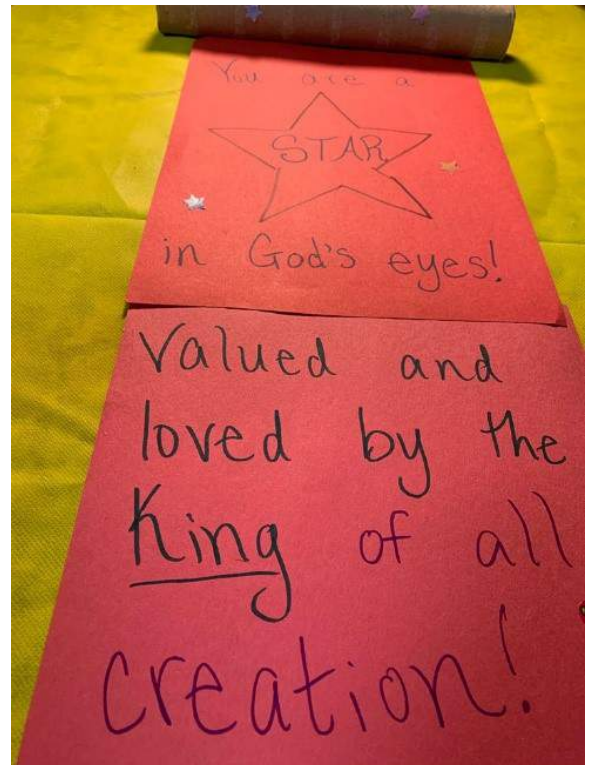
You will need:

- Paper towel tubes
- Construction paper or fabric (red, preferably)
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- Extra decorations (stickers, etc.)
- Caption or verse
- Markers or crayons



Procedure:

1. Decorate the paper "red carpet". Consider making it a special card of encouragement to a friend, or an invitation welcoming them to church or a play-date.
2. If necessary, cut the paper and glue or tape into a long strip.
3. Add extra decorations as desired, such as stickers or glitter.
4. Glue or tape the paper onto the paper towel tube.
5. Add a Bible verse, and deliver to someone special!



Craft Three: “Helping Hands Banner”

You will need:

- Construction paper or fabric
- Scissors
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Extra decorations (stickers, glitter, etc.)
- String, pipe cleaner, or ribbon



Procedure:

1. Choose several pieces of construction paper or cardstock.
2. Trace hands onto the paper (stack several sheets for easier cutting).
3. Cut out hands, and attach together with tape, glue, or staples.
4. Decorate the hands with words, verses, stickers, and additional décor.
5. Attach ribbon or pipe cleaner if desired, for hanging display.





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

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2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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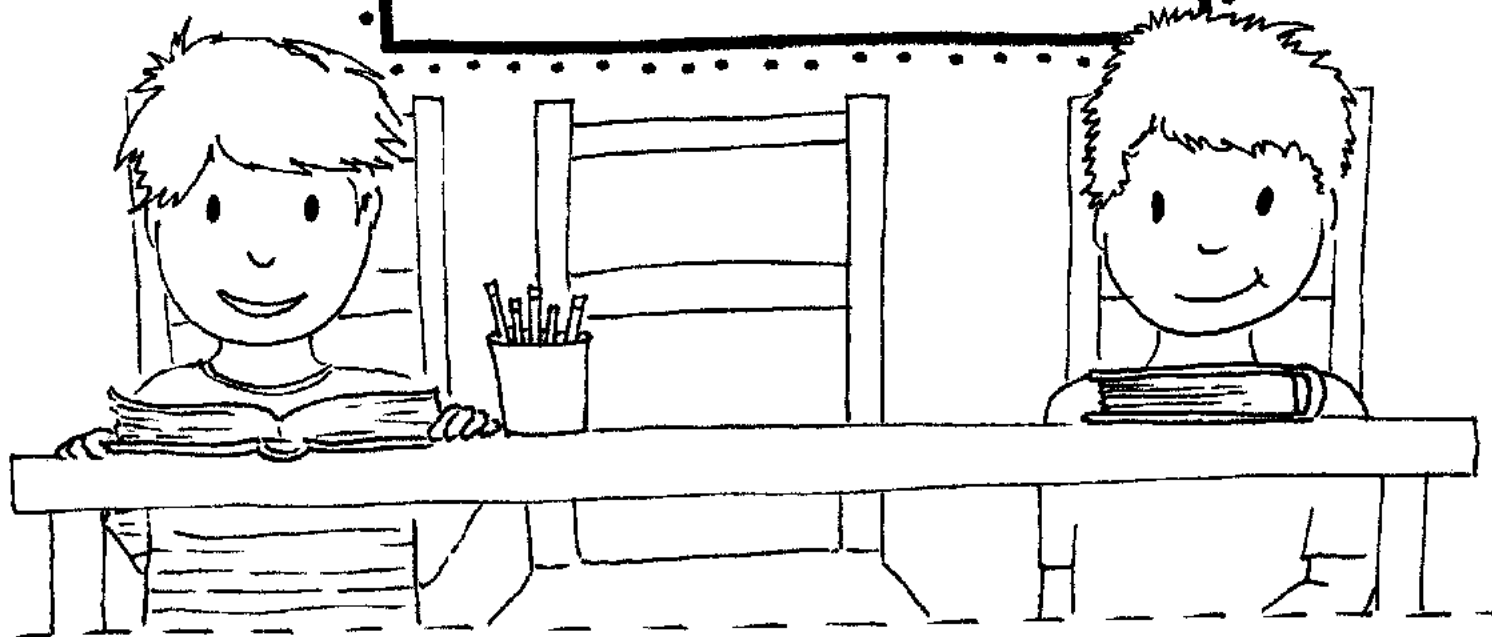
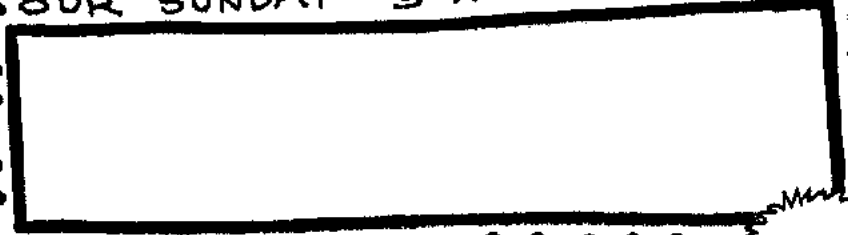
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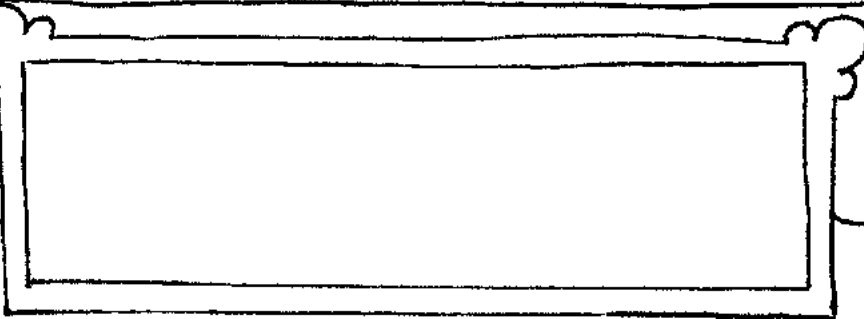
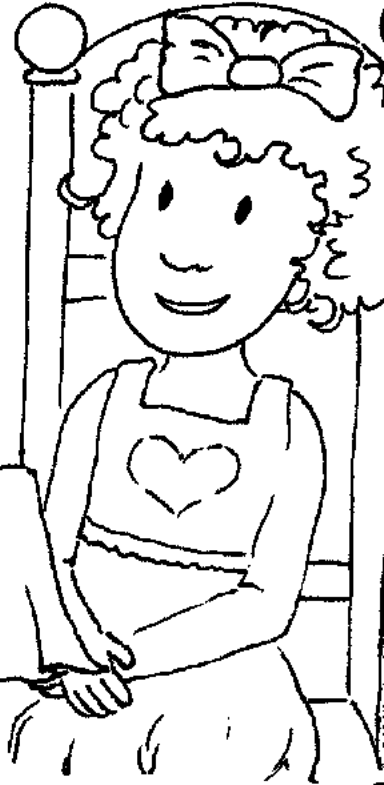
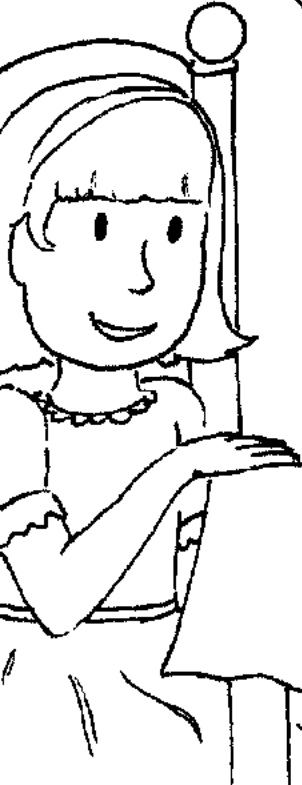
YOU ARE INVITED

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL MEETS:



You are

Invited



Heu are
Invited!

Come
Join Us!

Come
Join Us!

Heu are
Invited!

“Welcome One and All”

Children’s Sermon Object Lesson on Christian Hospitality



Main Objective: As Christians, we should be people who gladly welcome others in the name of Christ. We want to communicate God’s love to all people, and let them know they are valued and cared about.

Unfortunately, sometimes the church develops a negative reputation in this regard. These days,

especially, there are difficulties surrounding how to react and adjust procedures in the wake of the pandemic, and how to be loving but safe with our neighbor. To be fair, sometimes it can be challenging to develop an appropriate balance between exercising wise caution and stepping out in trust. This message communicates the importance of welcoming ALL people in Christ’s name. Jesus makes it clear that when we welcome others, we are serving Him. The Messiah reached out and cared for those who others often rejected or snubbed, including children.

Perhaps we should take a cue from those actions, now and always!

Law/Gospel Theme: When we act out of a sense of judgment or legalism, it can be easy to push others out or make them feel excluded. Proclaiming truth and encouraging righteous living are important things, but we want to declare the grace of God and the good news of Jesus even more. This message reminds children that Jesus has compassion and love for children and for everyone. He wants us to welcome and love others in the same way.

Optional Materials: Pictures of various signs or places (use the actual item if you have one available): welcome banners; welcome mats; the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island; modern immigrant processing center or refugee area; red carpet; church. (Use various options)

Bible Passage: Matthew 10:40-42

Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students.



Children's Sermon (Matthew 10:40-42)

Welcome All in Christ's Name

Greet children with specific words of welcome...

Welcome, children of God!

I want to talk about that word today: “welcome”. What do you think it means? (*Allow responses.*) You’ve probably heard the word plenty of times before. You might have seen it around town lately, with banners like this (*hold up a sign or picture of one, if you have one*), “Welcome Back!”

Restaurants and stores that have been closed are eager to welcome people back to do business. Or maybe someone you love has travelled, and when they return, you make a sign that says “welcome home.” Perhaps you have a mat like this (*demonstrate if available*) in front of your house, that says “welcome.”

Maybe you’ve seen celebrities on TV being welcomed with a big red carpet! The dictionary defines the word as a “friendly greeting”, or as someone or something that is “gladly received.” When we welcome others, we communicate to them that they are valued and that we are glad to see or be with them.

Sometimes, though, these types of signs and words can be a little deceiving. We might say “welcome,” but only receive people under certain conditions. These signs around town might welcome people back into stores...but only if you’re wearing a mask, and you haven’t been sick in recent months. The doormat might say “welcome”but not if you smell bad, or if you’re trying to sell something or tell something. You know, even in our nation’s history, we see a lot of mixed message welcomes. For example, do you recognize this? (*Hold up picture of the Statue of Liberty*)

It’s called the Statue of Liberty. It stands in the harbor outside New York, right by a place called Ellis Island. The statue is a symbol of freedom, and it even has a poem on it welcoming people who are tired and yearn to be free. It was the first thing that immigrants saw when they moved to the United States from other countries. But they would pass through this processing place called Ellis Island, where they were screened, and sometimes sent back home, if they didn’t have good health, or plans, or enough money. Even if they made it through, these immigrants



were often treated poorly by other people. Sometimes Americans refused to give them jobs or food or a place to stay. I wish that were ancient history, but it still happens. (*Hold up recent picture of immigration processing center, protest at a wall, or other immigration-related news*).

Some people do not want to welcome others who aren't like them. Unfortunately, this can even happen in churches. We might say we welcome everyone, but if people look a certain way, they might be treated negatively or feel cast out.

This is not what Jesus wanted. To be sure, we need to make sure that we stay safe. We can't just throw open the doors of our houses to anyone who might walk in and do something evil. We do want to wear masks and make sure we're feeling healthy for the sake of other people. And we need to monitor the situation of our country and population.

However, we are called to communicate to others that they are gladly received. Jesus told people that when we receive and welcome others, it's like we are welcoming Him, and welcoming "the One who sent Him." Well, that would of course be God Himself! He said that we will receive blessing for welcoming others, whoever they are. Jesus had a reputation for welcoming people who might otherwise be looked down on. He demonstrated love for children, even though kids in that time were not too valued. He went to people who were sick and hurting, outcasts of society and those who had done wrong. Jesus cared for them and loved them. He welcomed them into God's family.

We can rejoice in this, because we know that He welcomes us. He loved us enough to die for us, allowing us to be a welcome part of the Kingdom of Heaven. His arms are wide open for us to rush into in blessed embrace. We also know that He wants us to welcome others. Now, we might not be able to give out hugs just yet, with current concerns...but we can still invite people to church, and give them a hearty wave and welcome when they come.

If we can't welcome folks into our homes, maybe we can send cards and calls. We can remind others that they are valued and loved. And, of course, the best thing we can do is pray! Ask God to bring people into His family, and give thanks for helping us to be part of that process. Why don't we say a word of prayer right now?



Children's Prayer Moment

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for welcoming us into your family

We know that you value and care for all people

Help us to be welcoming to others

And to demonstrate your love to those in our lives

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Matthew 10:40-42

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. ⁴¹The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. ⁴²And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

[Matthew 10:40-42](#)



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Reverse Evangelism: Reaching Families by Serving First

 ministry-to-children.com/reverse-evangelism

October 11, 2011



Are you finalizing your plans for the fall festival, harvest party, trunk or treat, pumpkin carving, or other Halloween related outreach event at your church? A key component of these type of events is always planning how we will connect with, minister to, evangelize with, and preach the gospel for all those in attendance, especially guests who are not part of our church community. It's your big chance to reel them in, right!?! I am going to be so bold as to suggest that maybe this year your plan of attack to win new followers of Jesus would be to have no plan at all.

You read that right. What if you skipped handing out tracts, asking people to share their contact information, or attaching a Bible verse to each piece of candy? What if instead you just provided a free, family friendly, welcoming event with no strings attached or ulterior motive? You in fact would be ministering in much the same way Jesus did. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, befriended outcasts, and gave endless forgiveness and love, not to mention his life and asked for NOTHING in return. Imagine how Christianity could be transformed if we provided genuine hospitality. What if people wanted to come to your church because they wanted to care for others the way you do, not because they were enticed or guilted into it?

I am not arguing that Jesus didn't ask us to go into the world to share the good news and make disciples. He certainly did, but his request didn't come with an instruction manual and maybe, just maybe we don't go about our evangelizing in the most helpful way sometimes. Though I myself have a very strong Christian faith and even work for a church,

I RUN the other way when someone knocks at my door with their faith based literature or wants my phone number so they can call and invite me to their church. I actually find it quite rude. I have a faith and it may be different from yours. Please don't try to persuade me about of my beliefs. Instead, be my friend, show me how you love and care for the world around you, and put sincerity into discovering who I am and what I am about, and you might just get my attention.

Don't think that the first time you forgo the intricate evangelism tactics that you will have droves of new members flocking through the church doors. You won't. But maybe the fifth or sixth or twentieth time somebody feels your sincere welcome, they just might stick around. Even if they don't, you can consider yourself successful in that you are serving as Jesus served, expecting nothing in return.

Reverse evangelism has worked at my church in my community. Will you give it a try in yours?