



## Newsletter #7

# Practice Compelling Invitations

Along with this article, you may like to consider the previous [Hope25 planning steps](#), especially the step "[Build relationships with the people you are trying to reach.](#)"

### **The invitation of Phillip to Nathaniel**

As Phillip invited Nathaniel to "come and see" Jesus in John 1:46, many have found their journey into the Christian faith begins with an invitation to church. Archbishop Temple famously wrote that inviting people to see Jesus is "*the greatest service one person can do for another.*"

So, you have a friend or loved one you would love to help in their spiritual journey? And you would like to invite them to a church service or activity but feel nervous or hesitant for some reason? You are not alone.

### **Practice inviting to anything**

Practice inviting your friends to anything. Invite them to a meal, invite them to coffee, invite them to a concert. Reflect on how invitations are an act of love to share life together. An invitation is a gift that helps someone feel loved, even if they are not yet ready to accept. Inviting to a church activity is no different! Invitations require a depth of friendship and a willingness to include others in what is important to us.

### **Start your invitation with prayer**

Well, not the actual invitation, that would be weird. But in considering who and when and how to invite someone to church, ask the Lord for help. Pray for your friend. Ask him to give you good words and help the person to respond positively. This will align you to God's will and remind you who is really doing the work here.

### **Be open about your church involvement and give general invitations**

General invitations are a great way to start. Let people know you're a Christian and share which church you attend, offering an open invitation for them to join anytime. You might like to ask them if they have ever been to church before, and what it was like. Then the invitation becomes part of a conversation, and you may discover their picture of church is very different from yours. Talk with your friends about the roles you have in the church and how they enrich your life. If you use social media, consider sharing appropriate photos of church activities to give your friends a glimpse into this meaningful part of your life.

### **Invite people to Christian activities that have a special value to you**

Our friends are interested in what we are passionate about. This includes sharing what you love about the church service or activity you are inviting to.

For example:

- *This service is always one of the highlights of my year.*
- *Last year when I was suffering I got so much comfort and strength from this group.*
- *I love the music in this service.*
- *This Christian course is one of the most helpful things I've done recently.*
- *I'm on the planning committee for this event, and I'd love you to see it.*

### **When discussing, be ready to answer with key information**

What details can you share that would be helpful to your friend? What is it like and what will happen there? What is the start time, and when does it end? Is there food? Will they have to give money? Is there a social aspect, and if so, is it optional? Is it safe to be an observer, or will I be expected to participate in some way (e.g., communion)? How many people will be there? Can you share an online link to previous messages from the preacher so they can get a sense of the church?

### **Relationships before results**

Pray for the person more than you pray for your invitation. The important thing is to be a Christ-like friend, rather than the performance of an invitation. Trust that God will prompt a receptiveness to invitations at the right time. Many people are 'hungry but hesitant' and will appreciate ongoing opportunities.

It may help to find opportunities for your friend to meet other people from your church in other contexts. Compelling invitations are a team activity. Even when the response is indifferent or a clear rejection, your friend will sense your care in offering them a chance to engage with spiritual opportunities. Additionally, such moments can provide valuable insight into the reasons behind their hesitation.

Whilst not all of us are gifted evangelists, every believer can invite people to come and see.

### **This Advent and Christmas season, could you start practising invitations to church services and special activities?**

#### **Invitation Best Practices - A Training Video**

We are pleased to share this 5-minute training video on *Compelling Invitations* with Jeri Jones Sparks (Anglican Minister and Evangelism Consultant)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzYKbG1-eN0>

#### **Hope25 Contact Details:**

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## Hope25 Parish Working Group Meeting Notes:

Has anyone invited you to something recently? As the recipient, what makes an invitation pleasant and what might make it uncomfortable?

Watch the 5 minute training video - what could we put into practice immediately?



Review your church website or some of the parish advertising for special events. Are they understandable by someone not familiar with your parish? Could you ask outsiders for feedback?

What are some of the best outcomes that might result from an invitation to church? Spend some time praying.