



7 Habits of a Warm Church

*Is your church a warm church? How can you tell? Recently, I sat across from a woman that was reading the book by Stephen Covey, **The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**. The thought of this book prompted me to ponder the thought of what makes up the seven habits of a warm church? Every time I have talked to new members or discussed sharing a warm welcome in workshops, I almost always hear, demonstrating warmth begins with a smile. So to answer the question at the beginning of this paragraph, one of the ways to tell if your congregation will ever be accused of being warm is to look for smiling faces.*

Smiles are at the heart of a warm church, but that's not all that matters. When we send worship guest evaluators into congregations they see things from outsiders' views. They see how people treat one another; what people say to each other and how open the congregation appears to outsiders. Interestingly, the congregations that appear to have high marks in warmth also seem to draw others to their ministries. They invite visitors to come back; they share information about ministries and they pay attention and welcome people who they do not know. *What are the signs of a warm church? Smiling is part of it but there are other habits that seem to generate the warmth and spirit of churches that treat people*

with sincere, genuine, Christian love. The list below is seven themes we have often heard when talking with new members or worship guests about their visits to various churches. The churches that are labeled warm seem to do the following.

- 1. Smile a lot.*
- 2. Make guests feel like VIP's (Very Important People).*
- 3. Get names of guests and use these names in conversation.*
- 4. Break the ice during worship service with a time for fellowship.*
- 5. Treat people like their family (God's family).*
- 6. Invite people back in a way that shows they mean it.*
- 7. Minister to others.*