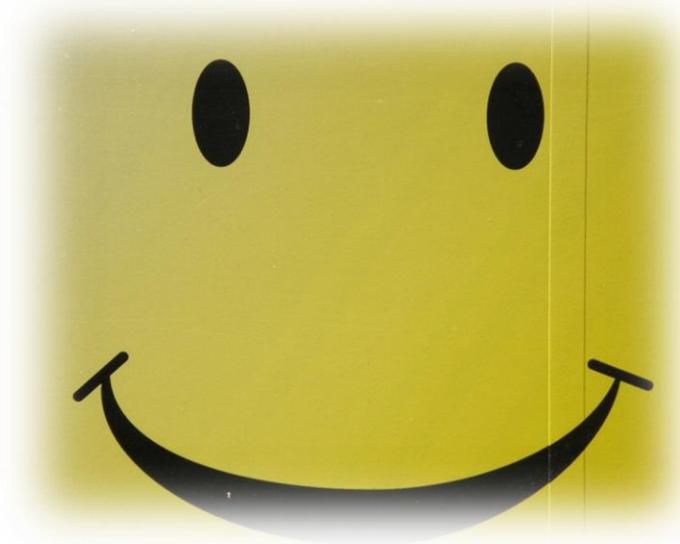


May I Get a Smile with that Handshake?



"May I get a smile with that shake" is what comes to mind when I think about hospitality at many of our churches. That comment reminds me of our fast food chains but in this situation I am talking about the church. Recently I had the opportunity to visit a few worship services and was amazed how often people can shake your hand and never share a smile.

Welcoming is a ministry. Yes we are reminded so often in the Bible to practice hospitality but does every Christian get that? Should it be left to the ushers or greeters to be the only ones to share smiles and well wishes with newcomers? I don't think so. Romans 12:13 reminds us to "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." It is that simple.

Recently, I spent time at a national usher's convention. I was absolutely excited to witness the smiles, enthusiasm and commitment to hospitality shared by this group. One lead usher in my leadership workshop, shared that he makes great effort to encourage people with friendly personalities to consider being ushers. Now can you imagine what would happen if every congregation had that as one of the requirements for ushering?

Add "sincere smile" to your list of criteria for greeters, ushers and people who will be on the front lines of your ministry. As I shared at the convention, we do not know why people end up on the doors of our congregations but we do know, God sent them.

If you're a volunteer in any area of the church, carry a smile with every handshake. It's contagious! You'll be happy to see the smiles that come back at you.