

*Jesus said: "Do you love me, Peter?"... Take care of my sheep.*

The Ministry of Connections is an important ministry in any church. The first impression church visitors receive is a **deciding factor** as to whether or not they will return. No church can minister to them if they never come back. The friendliness people experience through our hospitality ministry is not the only reason they return, but it is a major contributing factor.

I can illustrate this point with a personal experience. When traveling on business, I went to church on Sabbath. The cab driver who drove me to church was friendly but I noticed he had a bad smoker's cough. During our conversation, he told me that he had helped to build that church in the 60's. I encouraged him to return, and he said he thought it would be good for him and he would do it. Inside the church, no one talked to me before, during or after the service; I felt invisible! My heart ached thinking about the day that cab driver would walk into that church. Do you think he would ever return?

According to Chris Walker, a specialist in this ministry ([www.evangelismcoach.org](http://www.evangelismcoach.org)), churches must cast a vision for growth, not only in numbers, but in impact. To accomplish this vision, we must view church visitors as guests; a gift of God. Some may be believers and followers of Christ looking for a place to can use their gifts and talents in service.

The Connections Ministry at CPC was created seven years ago to not only properly receive visitors, but to go beyond a simple "hello" in the lobby. We increased the number of return guests by becoming their friends. Once a year, all newly baptized and transferred members are part of a Dedication Service which is followed by a "Love Feast" – a special lunch in their honour.

If you wish to enhance your ministry in welcoming guests, then I suggest that you expand the definition of "greeters" and "Hospitality" to "Connections Ministry". Use social media, which is a tremendous tool to help you achieve your goals. After all, research shows that at least 174 million people in North America will use the Internet for faith-related reasons this year.<sup>1</sup> Facebook is an excellent tool keep the congregation connected. Make a promotional video of your church; it has the potential to spinoff as evangelism tool.

Social media is a tremendous tool to reach out to church-seeking souls in the virtual world. Research shows that at least 174 million people in North America will use the Internet for faith-related reasons this year. Make your website user-friendly, updated, and relevant. Use YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. Make a promotional video of your church; enhance your

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<sup>1</sup>"Fishing on the 'Net? Three Reasons Your 'Net Is Empty—and One Easy Solution", by Dave Sharpe.

“greeters” or “hospitality” ministry by changing the name to “Connections Ministry” and tap the potential of these new members to bring even more guests. Accept Jesus’ calling to get involved and change the world one guest at a time.

You may be a small group or congregation, but think about this statement attributed to Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has”.

Tannia Amorim

**Resources:**

Visit [www.collegeparkchurch.ca/connections](http://www.collegeparkchurch.ca/connections) to learn more about Connections Ministry at College Park Church and see our promotional video and testimonials:  
[http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_OrGO5AGmXW70-tgMFFYsQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_OrGO5AGmXW70-tgMFFYsQ).



Become our friends on [www.Face Book Connections Ministry CPC – SDA](http://www.Face Book Connections Ministry CPC – SDA)

To get the right tools and ideas to start or revamp your ministry, visit  
<http://www.evangelismcoach.org/resource-links-for-church-hospitality-committees/>