

ST. ANDREW'S
CHURCH
GORLESTON-ON-SEA

Our vision to promote

**FRIENDLY
HOSPITALITY**



A guide to resourcing the life and mission of the church.



What is hospitality?

Hospitality is a foundational characteristic of Christian lifestyle and is an act of obedience to God's commandment to "love your neighbour as yourself."

In ancient cultures and languages, the word "hospitality" meant "love of strangers."

Hospitality is an act of sincere care and kindness. It is an expression of God's love for people. It is the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers.

Evidence of hospitality is found throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament we discover it was a key component of the Israelite's society. Under the Law, God instructed the Israelites to treat visitors well. For example, we read in Leviticus 19:33-34,

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

In the New Testament the Jewish practice of hospitality was demonstrated by many people who welcomed Jesus and His disciples into their homes and provided for them as they travelled.

The practice of hospitality

1. Extending a welcome.

Feeling at home is key to feeling that you belong and that you are part of the church family. Whether you are attending a service or an event at St. Andrew's as a new-comer or as a regular we aim to extend a warm and friendly welcome.

2. Paying attention.

Most of us understand hospitality when it comes to inviting people over to our homes. We roll out the metaphorical red carpet and attend to the comfort of our guests. But more than that, we open ourselves and focus our complete attention on visitors, doing everything we can to make our home feel like theirs. As a church family we are striving to make hospitality at St. Andrew's look like the kind of hospitality we experience in homes.

3. Attending social events.

Social events involving food and fun are frequent in the life of St. Andrew's Church. They are great for building relationships. Interacting with one another creates opportunities to talk about our everyday lives and the things that really matter to us.

Imagine a scenario

A young single mum arrives for a Sunday Service. She stands awkwardly at the entrance with her toddler, looking around at people she doesn't know on her first visit to the church.

She's wondering about child care, self-conscious about the fussiness of her little one, unsure where the toilets are, too timid to ask questions, doubting whether this is the right kind of service for her, or whether this is even the right kind of church.

Where will she sit and what if her child makes a noise? She feels the need for prayer, for some connection with others, and for something that will lift her above the daily grind of everyday life.

Now imagine a quality of welcome that would ease the awkwardness of such a scenario. Imagine a sensitive enthusiasm that is ready to help, to serve, to receive, to support, to encourage and to put people at ease in such a situation.

Here at St. Andrew's we believe that taking hospitality seriously means being ready to re-draw boundaries and distinctions that might otherwise prevent people from meeting with Jesus and coming to know him as Lord, Saviour and Friend.

*What the Bible says
about*

... hospitality and Christian priorities:

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.

Romans 12:10-13 (NIV)

... hospitality and Christian standards:

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

Hebrew 13:2(NIV)

... hospitality and Christian attitudes:

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

1 Peter 4:9

Our Purpose

The church of St. Andrew exists to know Jesus better and to make him better known.

Our Vision

In order to achieve the kind of future we are striving for, our vision is to promote:

- **A**dventurous Mission
- **S**pirit-inspired Worship
- **C**ommunity Engagement
- **E**xtravagant Generosity
- **S**trategic Leadership
- **I**ntentional Discipleship
- **S**upportive Administration
- **F**riendly Hospitality
- **C**aring Relationships

