

## **Leadership Meeting Agenda**

### **Being Guest-Friendly—All Leaders Together**

#### **Prepared by:**

Wayne Poling, Senior Lead Sunday School Specialist, Leadership and Evangelism Training and Events, LifeWay Christian Resources

#### **PREPARE:**

##### **Provide the following resources:**

- Nametags, markers, large sheets of paper, markerboard, dry-erase markers
- CD Player and appropriate Christian praise CD

##### **Display the following resources:**

- *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis

##### **Prepare the room for learning:**

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle. Place nametags and markers near the entrance of the room.
- Prepare four large sheets of paper, each with one of these words in large letters at the top of the sheet: ADULT, STUDENT, CHILDREN, PRESCHOOL. Place the sheets on the wall in different areas of the room. Tape markers to the wall near the sheets.
- Play an appropriate Christian music CD in the background.

#### **PRESENT:**

##### **1. INTRODUCTION (5 min.)**

Ask each person to complete a nametag as they enter and to begin thinking about how it feels to be a new person coming to church and Sunday School for the first time. State that this session will be exploring how our Sunday School and each of their classes can be guest-friendly.

##### **2. DISCUSSION (10 min.)**

Point out the papers on the walls in various sections of the room. Direct the participants to go to the one that denotes the age group with which they work. Direct them to imagine they are a first-time guest to your church or class and list the feelings they might experience. After five minutes, ask each of the groups to report.

Ask: *Why is it important that we take intentional steps to make our Sunday School as a whole and each Sunday School class guest-friendly?* Encourage discussion.

##### **3. ACTIVITY (15 min.)**

Instruct the participants to stay in the same groups and use their large sheet of paper as they complete the following assignment.

- List mistakes the church or your class can make with that first-time guest in your age group.
- Prepare a short role-play of one of the mistakes.
- State what you think is the most important thing to remember regarding guests.

Ask each group to report and share their role-play. Summarize some of the best responses given by the groups.

#### **4. TEN THINGS TO MAKE YOUR CLASS MORE GUEST-FRIENDLY (20 min.)**

Share and discuss each of these things. (If possible, record each one on the markerboard.) Discuss implications and additional items specifically for preschool classes.

1. Have designated greeters at the door each week. In preschool and children's groups, greet them individually, at eye-level, and help them get started in one of the activities.
2. Have registration forms and sharpened pencils available before the session begins.
3. Have nametags for everyone each week. Members and guests need to have nametags in order for them to feel comfortable meeting people.
4. Train your class members on why and how to welcome, register, and enroll guests.
5. Introduce the guests to other members who will host them and help them feel comfortable and get acquainted with others in the group.
6. Help guests feel important: call them by name, give them the Bible study materials, invite them to participate in class activities, invite them to enroll in the group.
7. Provide empty chairs each week to make it easy for the guest to join the group.
8. Play age-appropriate music in the background as people arrive.
9. If worship services follow Sunday School, walk with the guests to the worship center and invite them to sit with you.
10. Ask the class outreach leader to photocopy the guest registration and arrange for someone to do immediate follow-up.

#### **5. CONCLUSION (10 min.)**

Instruct participants to regroup with those who work in the same age group. Ask them to determine specific steps they can/will take to make their classes more guest-friendly. Call for groups to share their plans.

Read 1 Peter 4:9-11 — *Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God. If anyone speaks, it should be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, it should be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To Him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.*

Conclude with prayer that God will help your Sunday School be one where every guest feels important, valued, loved, and cared for.

## **Leadership Meeting Agenda Being Guest-Friendly—Adults**

### **Prepared by:**

Alan Raughton, Lead Adult Ministry Specialist, Leadership and Evangelism Training and Events, LifeWay Christian Resources

### **PREPARE:**

#### **Provide the following resources:**

- Nametags, markers, pens, large sheets of paper
- CD Player or other music source
- Praise Music on CD or other format
- Markerboard and dry-erase markers

#### **Display the following resources:**

- *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis

#### **Prepare the room for learning:**

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle facing the markerboard.
- Place nametags and markers on a table near the entrance to the room.
- Place two large sheets of paper on two different walls. Provide markers.

### **PRESENT:**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION (10 min.)**

Have upbeat praise music playing on CD or other music source. Direct each person to complete a nametag as they enter the room. Note: Though most of your leaders will know others in the room, there may be some in attendance who are new. Wearing nametags during the session will set an example for why we wear nametags in Sunday School each week.

Welcome leaders to this training event. Tell participants that this session will help them develop a guest-friendly environment in their Sunday School class.

#### **2. EXPECT NEW PEOPLE EACH WEEK (10 min.)**

Invite leaders to pair up with another person, other than their spouse, and share a dream or goal they have for their class. Allow three-four minutes for sharing. Ask for a few people to state the dream their partner shared with them. Look for someone to say, “His dream is to reach more people for his class” or similar statement. If no one reports this statement, ask: *Does anyone desire to have more people in their class? ...to reach more people?*

Share with leaders the definition of an open group: An open group expects new people each week. Ask: *Do we really expect new people in our class each week?*

#### **3. NAMETAGS FOR EVERYONE (10 min.)**

Brainstorm with leaders: *Why should everyone in class wear a nametag?* Record responses on the markerboard or on a page from the easel pad.

Supplement responses with the following: Nametags make guests feel more welcome. Nametags

also enhance discussion and prayer. For example, “Following up on what she said...” or from praying, “Lord, please help our brother with this need...” Instead, you call people by name. Nametags go a long way to help a group or class connect.

*Ask: How do you respond to a member who asks, “Why do we need to wear nametags? We already know the names of everyone in the class?” Suggested response: We don’t wear nametags for us. We wear nametags because we expect new people each week, and the newcomers need to know our names.*

#### **4. GUEST-FRIENDLY (25 min.)**

Divide leaders into two groups.

Group 1: Ways to make my class guest-friendly

Group 2: Things to avoid that make my class not guest-friendly

Have groups move to one of the sets of paper placed on a wall and record responses from team members. Allow time for group discussion, then debrief, having each group report to the larger group.

Add the following if not listed by the appropriate group.

Guest-Friendly: Nametags for everyone; designated greeter at the door; at least two empty chairs, located near the door or back (guests don’t want to sit on the front row!); Learner Guides for newcomers; age-appropriate music playing in background as people arrive; offer guests refreshments (if available); invite guests to sit with you in worship.

Not Guest-Friendly: Class does not welcome guests; no nametags; lack of chairs, or only empty chairs are on front row where no member wants to sit; lack of Learner Guides for guests to use; call on guest to respond to a question regarding the lesson.

#### **5. CONCLUSION (5 min. )**

Share with leaders that a guest is one of the most important people who attend your class on Sunday. Some who come are hurting. Some have a need or concern. Still others are unbelievers who recognize a void in their life. A guest-friendly class can do much to connect these people with your group. Through relationships and community a guest can meet Christ and others who want to join with them in doing life together.

Close by asking leaders to gather in groups of three or four, praying that God will prepare their class for a harvest of guests and newcomers on Sunday.

## **Leadership Meeting Agenda Being Guest Friendly—Student**

### **Prepared by:**

Chuck Gartman, Youth Ministry Professor, Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas

### **PREPARE:**

#### **Provide the following resources:**

- Nametags (have four different colors of name tags for the opening exercise).
- Markers, pencils
- Secure a list of guests from the past three months (longer, if necessary). Include name, address, cell number, and e-mail address if available. Do the same for those students who have not attended your Sunday School in the last three months.
- Invite some student leaders in your ministry to join you for this special emphasis of reaching unchurched students or occasional attenders and making them feel welcome.
- Prepare a handout with the following information:
  - Title: Our Promise to Youth.
    - ☐ An opportunity to accept Christ as Lord and Savior
    - ☐ An opportunity to grow in your faith
    - ☐ Caring adults
    - ☐ Safe places
    - ☐ A healthy start and healthy development
    - ☐ An effective education
    - ☐ Opportunities to help others through service
  - Beside each description, type the numbers 1 through 10 (to use for evaluation). Allow space between each promise for writing.
  - Write the title and these seven promises on the markerboard.
- Type instructions for four small groups to perform a skit for the entire group. (For a large group of leaders, prepare multiple copies of the skits. For smaller groups, eliminate skits that are less appropriate for your group.)
  - Team 1—Prepare a skit to introduce the other leaders to the assignment of *reaching students* for Bible Study in your church. You must act out the task silently (pantomime). Include as many on your team as possible.
  - Team 2—Prepare a skit to introduce the other leaders to the assignment of *assimilating student guests* into your Sunday School. You must act out the task silently (pantomime). Include as many on your team as possible.
  - Team 3—Prepare a skit to introduce the other leaders to the assignment of *staying in contact with students* after they visit your Sunday School. You must act out the task silently (pantomime). Include as many on your team as possible.
  - Team 4—Prepare a skit to introduce the other leaders to the assignment to *make student guests feel welcome* when they visit your Sunday School. You must act out the task silently (pantomime). Include as many on your team as possible.

#### **Display the following resources:**

- *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis

#### **Prepare the room for learning:**

- Arrange chairs into four groups, depending on the size of your group. If you have a large group, have several groups of four to six chairs.

## **PRESENT:**

### **1. INTRODUCTION (30 min.)**

As people enter give them a nametag. Evenly distribute the four different colors of nametags. Instruct them to sit in groups with people with the same color nametag. After a few minutes of visiting, give the skit assignment to each team. Say: You have 7 ½ minutes to prepare your skit. Instruct them to include as many in the group as possible. Remind them this is not Charades.

Ask someone from each group to read the assignment aloud and then call for the skit. If you have time, you may want to make it a game and invite the other groups to score each team as to how well they communicated their assignment. Guard your time.

Discuss these four elements as skits are presented.

### **2. PROMISES STUDENT'S NEED (15 min.)**

Call attention to the markerboard, reading aloud the title, "Our Promise to Youth." State that the first two statements come from us as student leaders and the last five come from "America's Promise Alliance" (downloaded from The National Conference of State Legislatures, "Positive Youth Development"). Distribute the handout you developed and direct leaders to evaluate how well they're doing on each item with a scale of 1-10 (1 being not so good and 10 being perfect).

In the space below each promise have the leaders write an action they can do to enhance their success in keeping the promise or to improve in an area of weakness. Allow opportunity for them to share their action plans.

### **3. AN ACTION PLAN (10 min.)**

Say to your leaders: *One of the ways that we can stay guest-friendly is to be in contact with students after they've visited or when they have not been present for several weeks.* Hand out the lists of recent guests and students who attend sporadically. Encourage leaders to text, call, or e-mail students in their class/group tonight when they get home. Remind the leaders that this action should be a part of their weekly routine as a Sunday School leader. Also stress the need to make contact each week with those who attend faithfully.

### **5. CONCLUSION (5 min.)**

Close the meeting by taking prayer requests, praying, and then promoting upcoming events.

## **Leadership Meeting Agenda Being Guest-friendly—Childhood**

### **Prepared by:**

Klista Storts, Childhood Ministry Specialist, Childhood Ministry Training and Events, LifeWay Christian Resources

### **PREPARE:**

#### **Provide and/or prepare the following resources:**

- Nametags, markers, pencils
- Gather the following tools and place in a toolbox. Label each tool with the word listed:
  - Hammer/signage
  - Work gloves/welcome team
  - Measuring tape/security
  - Paintbrush/environment
  - Level/schedule
- For fun, you may want to come dressed in overalls or similar work clothes.
- Label large sheets of paper with the tools and descriptions listed above and secure to the front wall.

#### **Display the following resources:**

- *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis
- *Kids Ministry 101: Practical Answers to Questions About Kids Ministry*

#### **Prepare the room for learning:**

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle facing the front of the classroom.
- Place nametags and markers near the door or in chairs.

### **PRESENT:**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION (5 min.)**

*Ask: When you go to a new location for you—a restaurant, a mall, or a school—what types of things do you look for to help you feel comfortable there?*

Listen to the list of answers without elaborating or discussing.

*Ask: Have you ever been a guest at this church? Today we're going to pretend just that. We're going to take a tour and try to see it as a first-time guest. We're going to look from the outside in, from the parking lot to the front door to the preschool hall and to the children's hall to see just how guest-friendly our church is. But before we go, let's get some tools to help us evaluate.*

#### **2. TOOLS OF THE TRADE (20 min.)**

As you pull each tool from the toolbox, read the label to the group and tell how that tool can be used to help make the church more guest-friendly.

Here are some suggestions to help in your discussion.

Hammer—Signage

- Outside: Parking lot—Guest parking spaces, which could even be labeled “for preschool parents.” Signs at doorways showing the way to the Welcome Desk.



- Indoor: Sign at the Welcome Desk, directional arrows to the preschool/children's areas and to the restrooms, signs to the worship center.

#### Work gloves—Greeters

- Greeters stationed outside in the parking lot and at the entrance doors. Greeters at the Welcome Center who can not only direct parents to the preschool/children's area, but who will actually take them there.
- Greeters at the child's room. Usually the director or a teacher who will make a child feel welcomed the moment he comes in. Or the teacher could pair the guest with a child who is already a member of the class.

#### Measuring tape—Security

- How does this church measure up on security issues? Remind the group that a parent must feel that his child is safe when they are leaving him with people they don't know.
- Suggestions of items that will help a parent and child feel secure: ID badges worn by all teachers; security cards or something similar received when dropping off a child; sign-in sheets; a list of policies; limited entrances into the children's area. (You may add items to this list.)

#### Paintbrush—Environment

- Does your church or childhood area need a fresh coat of paint? Does it smell and look clean when you walk in? Is the lighting dark or warm and inviting? Are the rooms and hallways clean and tidy or is there clutter?

#### Level—Balance of Schedule

- Today's families are very busy. Does this church offer multiple schedules to help balance their lives? How is this information conveyed?

### **3. TOUR OF THE BUILDING (30 min.)**

After discussing the tools, take the group on a tour of the facility, inside and out. Encourage leaders to either take pictures with their smart phones as they travel or write down things they notice—good and bad—as they take the tour.

Once the tour is finished, assemble back in the room. Ask conferees to write down their findings on the tear sheets labeled with the tools introduced earlier.

Discuss the lists and help the group determine what the next steps would be to help make the church more guest-friendly.

### **4. CONCLUSION (5 min.)**

Congratulate the group on their efforts. Encourage leaders to regularly check the church and their areas to ensure that they continue to be a guest-friendly church. Close in prayer.