

## Church Growth

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### 19 Ways to Encourage Your Church to Invite

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Teaching your church to invite is one of the most important things you can do as a pastor. It's one of those [keystone habits](#), and it affects nearly everything else in the church. When your members invite others, good things happen.

Personal invitations are usually more effective than social media, advertising, and direct mail. In fact, if you don't create a culture of inviting, other efforts will likely fall flat. A church that has a culture of inviting is likely going to be a growing church.

It's important to prepare your church for guests. You might want to [take a look at these things before you go to your congregation and ask them to invite.](#)

But when your church is ready, you must equip your people. Not just ask them, equip them.

Here are 19 ways you can equip your people to invite others.

**#1 – Stop asking for a few weeks.** If you constantly say something like “don't forget to invite your friends next week” people might tune you out. Leave it alone for a while, so you can...

**#2 – Then ask big.** Instead of a small mention each week, devote a considerable amount of time to talking about inviting. Let the congregation know next week's service is designed for new people, share stories, and ask big.

**#3 – Provide invite cards.** You can make it easier for people to invite by giving them simple tools like printed cards. Print them for an upcoming series and make versions students and teenagers can use. Make a display for them somewhere in your lobby and teach people how to use them. [Here are lots of examples.](#)

**#4 – Encourage Social Media Use During the Service.** During a welcome, encourage everyone to take out their phones and share a status update or Tweet. People don't have to wait until later in the week to invite someone, they can do it from their iPhones at church. Besides, [it's time churches stop greeting people like it's 1999.](#)

**#5 – Provide lawn signs.** Print up a few lawn signs and make them available for people to put in their front lawns. If people will do it for politicians, some will do it for their church. We've actually got a full graphics package for some fun yard signs inside the Church Fuel resource

library. [Join now and get instant access to this and hundreds of editable documents, templates, and resources.](#)

**#6 – Make an invite page on your website.** Create a page on your website with graphics, sample Facebook posts, and ideas for people to invite their friends. Tell your members everything they need to invite people online is on that one page. Make it easy for them.

**#7 – Create shareable content.** It's not tough for you because you're a professional Christian, but sometimes, it's scary for people to invite their friends to church. So create helpful content that is easier for people to share. It might be an inspirational quote or a helpful article. It could be a list of local restaurants that let kids eat free. People share humorous and helpful stuff, not announcements and sermon series graphics. It might not seem like much, but if you can get people to share content from their church, it will make it easier for them to talk about their church.

**#8 – Write Facebook Posts for People.** Instead of just telling people to invite their friends on Facebook, create a post they can cut and paste. Remember, the easier you make something, the more people will do it. Make the images and write the posts.

**#9 – Send a text reminder on Saturday.** Use this sparingly, but text your members, volunteers or regular attenders on Saturday night and ask them to invite a friend to church tomorrow. A tool like [Text in Church](#) will get the job done.

**#10 – Give away t-shirts for guests and those who bring them.** Guest gifts like t-shirts, mugs, or books are common, but consider extending the idea for those who bring guests. You could encourage guests and those who brought them to stop by a welcome center for a special treat. It's something nice for the guest, but it's also a simple way to thank your inviters. [Here's our guide on guest gifts, including a breakdown on some costs.](#)

**#11 – Thank people personally.** When someone brings a friend, thank them personally. Send a thank you note that says, "Jimmy came to church Sunday and he said you were the one that invited him. Thank you so much for extending that invite." Members will find ready-to-use templates for these cards in the Church Fuel resource library. You might want to add a "How did you hear about us?" question to your connection cards or kid's registration cards. New people will often let you know who invited them and you can say thanks.

**#12 – Tell stories of inviting.** There is no better form of communication than stories – it's how we learn best. So make sure you're telling stories about inviting in your sermon and throughout your service. Remember...every story you tell doesn't have to end with "So I found Jesus and now I'm a missionary."

**#13 – Always welcome guests.** Even if there are 15 people in the church service and they are all related to you, intentionally welcome guests and let them know what to expect. It's a powerful

way to reinforce to your regulars that new people are supposed to be here. It's a culture thing. This is also one of the keys to [making sure your church is really ready for guests](#).

**#14 – Talk to guests during your sermon.** Make sure every message has a moment where you're addressing new people. If you reference a series, make sure you provide context for guests. If you say the name of a ministry, make sure you explain what that means to guests. Without that simple explanation, nobody knows what Xtreme or Waumba Land is.

**#15 – Create a custom audience on Facebook.** Create a group of church members on Facebook (it's called a Custom Audience) and then run ads to that segment of people. It's perfect for reminding people to invite, and driving them to the inviting resources you created for them. It is not expensive and someone in your church can figure it out.

**#16 – Shoe Polish Sunday.** The Sunday before a really big day, have some people and shoe polish ready to write on people's rear windows. Make sure they give permission, of course. This doesn't cost a lot of money and helps create a culture of inviting.

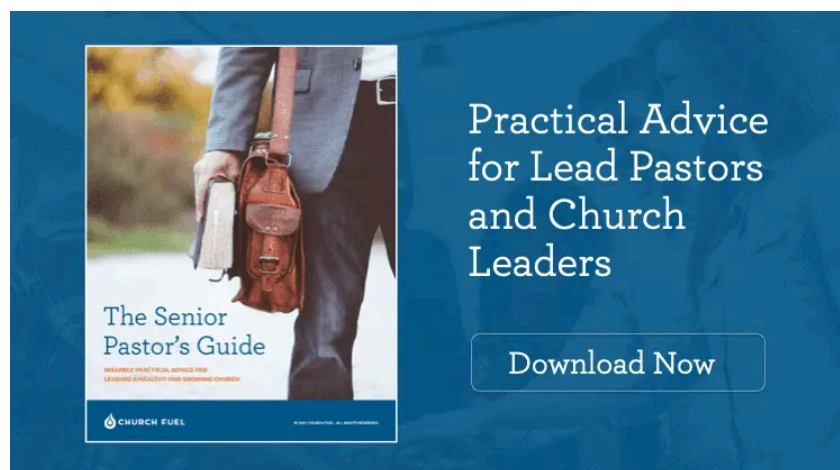
**#17 – Display names.** Ask your church to write down the first names of people they would like to see come to church and find a creative way to display these. One church had their members write names on the front of the stage. Another built a display using building blocks (representing families).

**#18 – Prayer Time.** Organize a time of prayer, either in person or online, to pray for those who need to be invited. You could have a prayer service, or you could do it online.

**#19 – Tear-Off Postcards.** Send a perforated postcard to the homes of your members or regular attenders. One half talks about inviting and the other half is designed to give to a friend or neighbor.

Some of these ideas will work right out of the box. Or maybe one of these ideas inspires an even better idea that would work in your church.

But the key isn't just to ask your people to invite, it's to equip them to invite. Give them the tools, explain how to use them, and your people will rise to the occasion.



If you want more ideas and tools on equipping your church to invite, we have a free resource called [The Senior Pastor's Guide](#). This insanely practical resource is filled with ideas, examples, and principles to help you lead your church to healthy growth.

There's a section on reaching new people, which is great to inspire ideas or share with your team. Get your copy of the [Senior Pastor's Guide to Breaking Barriers](#) today.