



# Core Value: Hospitality

## "Tending the Orchard"

Fall 2016 Sermon Series

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire. Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 12:28-13:2

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When I think about the kind of hospitality that Jesus offered, the word "radical" comes to mind. Jesus sacrificed in order to show love and give others life. He welcomed the strangers, healed the sick, ate with sinners. When people were labeled "Unclean" and "Unworthy," Jesus stepped in and showed they were people of dignity and worth. He put in jeopardy his own acceptance in his community and religious tradition because he believed in showing hospitality. He offered himself and all that he has as an expression of his love.

A dictionary definition for hospitality is "the quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way." I believe it is this and so much more. We are called to be like Jesus in offering hospitality. A core value for us as a church means that everyone who walks through the doors of our building is welcomed, connected, and offered grace. It means that we think of them first before our own needs and desires. We offer guests the best seats in the house, the best parking spots in the lot, and the warmest of greetings.

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Hospitality also means that we are generous with our faith community, praying for our church family, ensuring that when members are struggling they have support, visits, meals, rides to the doctor. We all engage in caring for one another.

When we have hospitality as a core value, we are also inviting people to come to our church. We provide community events such as Touch-a-Truck and the Drive-Thru Living Nativity that are free of charge and open to everyone. Through such events we have the opportunity to offer a generous welcome and demonstrate who we are as a church.

The Bible commands us to offer hospitality. Hospitality is a holy thing. When we are extending grace and love and welcome, we have Holy Spirit moments as we experience joy in entertaining angels.

### Questions for Reflection:

- When have you experienced radical hospitality?
- How are you entertaining angels?
- Is hospitality a core value for your life? If so, how do you live it out?

### Prayer

Gracious God, who offers endless hospitality to me, may I extend generosity to all who cross my path. Guide my church in entertaining angels unaware.

Amen.