

### *Just Leave a Spot Open*

Everyone thinks they are a “friendly church.” That is because they have friends at church and it feels that way. They know people, they know where they sit, they know how things work. They easily engage in conversation, catching up on the latest news. It’s all very familiar, like a favorite pair of old jeans.

However, for a visitor it’s very different. You don’t really know anyone, maybe just the person who invited you. You are not sure how things are done or how to behave to fit in. Everyone around seems to be talking to each other in little groups with their backs to you. It’s all very unfamiliar, like the first day in a new school.

Being a truly welcoming church takes conscious effort. We need to be looking for new faces, introducing ourselves and leaving spots open in our conversation cliques. This is especially important in social events, where our natural tendency is to seek out those you need to talk to about something, or ask about how their sick parent is doing - the one we just prayed for. We need to leave a spot open in our hearts to seek out and engage the new people - the ones who have been invited to Movie Night, to Water Day, to Kick-off Sunday.

Yours in Christ,

Greg & Pat