

From Sandra's Study
Rev. Sandra Fees

On Sunday mornings it is such a delight to see familiar faces, isn't it? We get to see friends and acquaintances we may not have seen for some time. It's actually tempting to spend all our time and energy with the people we already know. And every once in a while that may be what we need to do.

But a church community is also called to be "hospitable to the stranger." Hospitality to the stranger is something we each need to be practicing. It is not the responsibility of the minister or Sunday morning greeters alone.

In an Alban Institute article on the theology of hospitality to strangers, Thomas Long describes the difference between being a "friendly church" and one that welcomes the stranger. He says:

When the notion of hospitality to the stranger is understood theologically and freed from shallower notions of intimacy, we discover that welcoming people to worship is far more complex than simply being "a friendly church." To be sure, people need to be treated with kindness and generosity, but that is not all they need. They need to be welcomed into the house and graciously invited to the table, but that is not all they need. What do people most deeply need? Viewed theologically, people need to be welcomed into God's house, recognized and known by name, and joined with others in offering their lives to God in acts of mission.

We are a friendly church, and we strive to be hospitable. If we are to be honest with ourselves, we need to acknowledge we have room to grow in hospitality. We can do more to extend ourselves to those who enter our doors every week. We can do more to ensure they don't walk away hungry for a deeper encounter. Let's risk inviting them in and offering them the opportunity to join with us in fulfilling acts of service and mission. Let's learn their names. Let's find out what they care about. Let's make space at the table for those who are longing for what our great religion has to offer.

Warmly,
Sandra

Jane – Please include Sandra's blurb about hours:

Minister's Schedule:

Monday - day off

Office hours by appointment - call or email to schedule a time