

How to Host a Guest Speaker/Evangelist/Missionary

Many pastors have asked us to provide a guideline/helpful hints on how to host a guest speaker. Whether you are hosting an evangelist, missionary, denominational leader, Gideon's representative, personal friend, or any other type of speaker, there are a number of different suggestions that may assist you.

Pastoral Care, Inc.

1. As a professional, you should at all costs make your speaker feel as welcome as possible, providing a good introduction for them, and taking care of their needs, remembering that most speakers are there to help you.
2. Provide for their needs:
 - a. Motel if needed. You may want to also provide a guest basket of fruit and misc. snacks as a welcome. Be sure to include a welcome card.
 - b. Provide either an offering or honorarium. The total number of evangelists has diminished **92%** over the last 10 years due to the high cost of travel. Having someone travel and not compensate is showing disrespect for his/her calling as a minister.
 - c. Take them out to lunch or dinner after the service. Many speakers may not be familiar with your city and providing a meal is common courtesy.
 - d. Give ample time for the minister to speak. We have heard of so many stories where ministers could not share what was on their heart. If speakers have prepared a message or shared an outline, they have spent time in prayer and have traveled to your church to share this message. Please give ample time for speakers to share what they have prepared for your church. It is truly not professional to not allow speakers ample time.
 - e. Prepare an article announcing your speakers ahead of time. Make sure that their names are in your church bulletin for that service. It is disheartening to speakers to be handed your church bulletin and not have them recognized as the speaker for that day.
 - f. Ask your speakers if they have audiovisual needs. Many speakers today use power point presentations or may show a video to the congregation. Ask before the service begins.

- g. Make sure you greet your speakers before the service to make them feel welcome. Ask if they need water or need a prayer room. Be courteous enough to show them the restrooms. If they have children, offer to have someone escort the children to children's church or Sunday school.
 - h. Introduce your speakers to the leadership or key individuals of the church to make them feel comfortable and not alienated.
 - i. If a speaker conducts more than one service, be sure to invite them over to your home, someone else's home, or provide a motel so they can relax or meditate.
 - j. If evangelists are speaking more than one day, be sure to include meals. You can either have them sign the receipts at the motel, include them for meals outside of the motel, or provide meals to be brought to them. Some churches and evangelists like the laity to be involved with either taking the ministers out for a meal or bring a homemade meal for them. Be sure to include a dessert, such as a pie, cake, cookies, cinnamon rolls, etc..
 - k. Please have respect for the speaker's time. Have someone else other than you to lock up the church. It is tiring for many speakers to wait until everyone else leaves the church, waiting to have a meal with the pastor. Some will be waiting to travel back to their home. Be sensitive to their needs and time.
 - l. Be sure to include the speaker's spouse on any activities or announcements as often as you can. Have your spouse involved with personal contact. Make sure their names are correctly spelled and pronounced.
 - m. If your speakers will be with you for more than one day, find out what types of activities they may like, such as golf, jogging, site seeing, etc. Give them information before they get there if possible or have it available when they get there. Include yourself if possible in any activities.
 - n. Speakers with children. You may want to do something special for them, such as giving them a small gift or gift card to make their time enjoyable and meaningful. Make their stay a positive one. Many children of pastors have negative memories of the ministry. Let your church stand out in a positive manner.
3. Educate and encourage your church to make any speaker and family welcome.