**Chaplain’s**

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### Hospitality Comes in Many Forms

I’ve heard it said, perhaps a little closer to the truth than makes us comfortable, that “hospitality is making people feel at home when you really wish that’s where they were.” It’s OK, go ahead and laugh. We’ve all been there.

I want to point out that hospitality is not something that only takes place in our houses. I have a coworker who comes to his workspace and says, “Ah, home sweet home.” Everyone sitting around him laughs, but it has occurred to me that the familiarity of his chair and computer are not what makes it “home sweet home,” but it’s that our workgroup works hard to make each other feel welcome. That’s hospitality. This can take place anywhere two or more people interact.

The opportunities to show hospitality are too numerous to count. I can’t think of any interaction where we are not faced with the choice of helping people feel welcome or unwelcome. It’s easier to make them feel unwelcome. Let’s fight hard against that tendency! Here are some weapons of thought for the fight:

Unwelcome...

* is embarrassed if something doesn't fit the kind of reputation it is trying to project or protect.
* is arrogant and needs to be repaid.
* tends not to associate with the "lowly."

Welcome...

* tries to make people feel comfortable especially in their weakness or inadequacy.
* doesn't try to hide weakness or flaws--they are assumed.
* serves by sacrificing urgent time to spend priority time with others.
* is open to the “lowly” and seeks no repayment.

I am convinced that true joy comes from a sense of being welcome. If you think about it, I bet you’ll be hard-pressed to think of an example where that isn’t true. That’s hospitality: not making people feel at home when you really wish that’s where they were, but making people feel welcome just like you enjoy feeling wherever you are. William Shakespeare said, “Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast.”