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Greetings church family,

Do you remember the first time you came to Coats Baptist Church? What was that experience like? You pulled onto the property for the first time, thought about where to park and what door to enter, and probably wondered if you were on time. If you had children, you thought about where the children's area could be (along with a host of other thoughts about safety and security, cleanliness and friendliness).

Once you arrived at the door, it happened - the *first impression*. It may have been a handshake, maybe a "good morning!" but something happened, some kind of personal interaction took place, to move you in a positive or negative direction towards the church. As the morning went on, you were met by experience after experience begging you to answer the question - "Can I see myself coming back to this place?" Well, thankfully that answer was "yes" - and you came back!

But now that you've been coming for a while (and I can say the same), you and I often forget what it's like to be a "first-timer" in a new place with lots of new people. It's kind of overwhelming if you think about it! Church family, guests are coming to church and they're coming in large number. A Sunday *does not go by* when we do not have a first time guest. Because we have a passion to see people connected to Christ and to the local church we must strive to provide a pleasant experience for every guest, every Sunday from the parking lot to the pew. I believe we are a friendly and welcoming church but let me offer a few points to keep in mind every Sunday.

#### Park in the worst spot

The first impression really starts in the parking lot. We want our guests to navigate our campus and find a great parking spot! There's just something about parking with ease that makes for a good morning. So if you can, park a little distance away. Free up those spots to make a good impression for guests, senior adults, or parents of young children. Juice boxes, blankets, diaper bags and all the rest can be a hassle if you have to walk. So park as far out as you can, get in those steps!

#### Show your teeth

That means, "Smile!" Friendliness can break down the walls of fear in the hearts of many guests. A simple "Good morning, my name is \_\_\_\_" coupled with a big nice grin can go a long way. I thank you church for doing well in this area, but it's always something I have to keep in mind - just smile, Neal!

#### Make room on the pew

Second to a good parking spot comes a good seat. We've all been there, trying to find seats at the movie theater - party of 5 coming through! It can be kind of awkward. So be courteous and cognizant of your seats. Scoot in towards the center and leave the aisle seats open (especially on Together Sundays). Be engaged in the worship service, and afterwards invite them to sit with you again next Sunday. Our guests will thank you.

#### Cheer on the new parents

Most parents of little ones face the emotional tension between "I never want them to grow up" and "please God let them grow up fast! I can't face another sleepless night!" Isn't that right?! What young parents need most is a simple word of encouragement. If you see a young family in distress, encourage them with "You're doing a great job," or "Can I help carry something for you?"

#### Look for the lost

Some people just have that look, "Where am I and where do I go?" You can spot that look a mile off. So go ahead, introduce yourself, be kind and helpful. Sometimes people just need a little help when they're in a new place. Just remember, while they may just be looking for the bathroom at the moment, they could also be looking for Jesus in their hearts. After all, they did come to church!

#### Remember the "after party"

I'm the worst at this. Forgive me. When the service is over sometimes I'm more concerned about lunch plans than with speaking to guests. Why not do both?! Be sure to say hello one more time, perhaps invite them to lunch, or just say a quick "hope to see you next Sunday". Just be intentional with everything you do.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Neal

And a special word of thanks to Mark Langdon, our facilities coordinator, for keeping our space nice and clean!

**LIFE OF WORSHIP** | Pastor Jonathan [Psalm 34:3]

I want to simply remind you of who are in Christ. We too easily forget that when our identity is in Christ, we are...

Chosen (1 Thess 1:4)  
 Called of God (2 Tim 1:9)  
 Being changed into His image (2 Cor. 3:18)  
 Healed by His wounds (1 Peter 2:24)  
 A temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19)  
 Forgiven of all our sins (Eph 1:7)  
 Free from condemnation (Rom 8:1)  
 Accepted in Him (Eph 1:6)  
 Blessed (Gal 3:9)

Redeemed from the curse of the law (Gal 3:14)  
 Joint heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17)  
 Victorious (Rev 12:11)  
 Reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:18)  
 Strong in the Lord (Eph 6:10)  
 A new creation (2 Cor 5:17)  
 More than a conqueror (Rom 8:37)  
 Complete in Him (Col 2:10)  
 Set free (John 8:32)

**NEW • MUSIC • CORNER**

Listen. Worship. Be Encouraged.

"You Say" by Lauren Daigle  
 "Living Hope" by Phil Wickham  
 "God, You're So Good" by Passion Band

Do you use Spotify on your desktop or mobile device? If not, you should because you can learn and sing the songs that we sing here at Coats on Sunday mornings! Search: **Worship All Week with CBC.**



**LIFE ON MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP** | Pastor Jimmy [Phil 3:10]

She must have been about 8 years old. We never got her name but let's call her Nicole. This morning, she was standing at the door in a local restaurant with worry written all over her face. She would step away, then right back, look around, and again squirm desperately back to the door. Despite a store full of people, Nicole was feeling very alone. When asked if she was ok, her fragile emotional hedge just collapsed. The words wouldn't come out right, yet she mumbled, "my mom was right here but ...". Tears welled up and her body language seemed to scream, "I really need help - I don't know you - but I don't know what else to do." Even now, as I recall her panic, it brings me to tears. We started to walk back into the restaurant when mom came around the corner and Nicole's anxious prancing became a sprint into loving arms.

Perhaps you've had similar experiences. I once lost (and found) my own child at about the same age on the national mall in D.C.; I felt like a horrible dad. But in contrast, we serve a good, good Father. He always knows where we are and what we need. We may run from Him, we may lose our way, but He is always there, always faithful, always just, always secure.

But let me ask: for whom are you broken hearted? Are you actively looking for those who are lost? Are you paying attention to those with whom you come in contact? Many, perhaps most, of those we meet each day are far more lost than Nicole. They may not realize it; they may be accustomed to it; they may simply be good at covering it up but they need a good, good Father. They need the hope and security of eternal life; they need the atoning blood and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. And, they need someone to help them find their way. To quote a friend, "the lost are not nearly as offended by the Christian's message as they are confused by their silence."

**SENIOR ADULT NEWS**

Senior Adults who are signed up to attend the Fall Jubilee in Gatlinburg will be leaving CBC on Monday, September 17 at 7 am. Please see Gail, Kathy, Sherry, or Bonnie by September 9 to make your final payment and get ready to enjoy three great days of preaching, laughing, and singing in Tennessee 's Great Smokey Mountains!

Coats Baptist Church  
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**WORSHIP SCHEDULE**  
 8:30 am Worship Service  
 9:45 am Sunday School  
 11:00 am Worship Service  
 Children's Church 8:30 am & 11:00 am  
 6:00 pm Evening Worship Service

**SEPTEMBER PRAYER CARDS**

During the month of September, remember to pray for: **Children, Students, & Teachers.**

**SEPTEMBER**

- 9/3 Church Office Closed for Labor Day
- 9/9 Pinewood Derby Practice (3:00)  
 Business Meeting  
 Deacons Meeting (7:00)
- 9/12 Grocery Assist (5:30)
- 9/15 Beth Moore Conference (Benson)  
 Couples Game Night
- 9/16 College Lunch at the Langdon's  
 Pinewood Derby Race (3:00)
- 9/20 Men's Ministry Meeting (7:00)
- 9/22 Quilting Session-Fellowship Hall  
 Worship Ministry Fall Fellowship
- 9/23 New Member Luncheon
- 9/30 Homecoming/Together Sunday  
*more information →*



Our next Together Sunday is also our 2018 Homecoming Sunday: **Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 30.**

Schedule: 9:45 Sunday School  
 11:00 Worship Service  
 Homecoming Lunch  
 6:00 Worship Service

Our own Steven and Tara Wilkie will be with us to share about their ministry during both services on this special Homecoming Sunday.

For the covered dish lunch, please bring enough food so that your family and a guest would be full after lunch.

**STUDENT MINISTRY** | Anthony [Psalm 51:10-13]

There is a book that we used to read to our oldest children when they were little. I cannot recall the title, but it was a Berenstain Bears book where the family is asked the question, "what's your favorite season?" The question goes around and is answered last by Mama Bear. She loves Fall...because that is when school starts back.

Mama Bear has visions of enjoying a second cup of coffee in a quiet house. She thinks of time to do her chores, and still have "me time" to go shopping or whatever else she wants to do. And then the day finally arrives. She wakes the children, feeds them breakfast, and then watches them as they leave on the bus.

Here is where the "but" comes in. The one that always interrupts what we thought we wanted. Mama's fantasies do not hold as much satisfaction in reality. The problem? She misses her children. This leads her to have hot cookies waiting for them when they arrive home, and she wants to hear all about their day.

There is a great lesson here for many of us as parents. At times, it seems like many parents are like Mama Bear; they cannot wait to be rid of their children. I hear this and cannot help but think of the contrast of this attitude with scripture like Psalm 127:3, "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him." Or Deuteronomy 6:4-9, where parents are told to teach their children about the Lord, "when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

School starting back is a change for everyone. In this day and age, I believe it to be especially challenging for teachers and students. We need to pray for, and support them. We also have a responsibility to be living witnesses, and effective teachers, to our young people in what it means to live for Christ.

Over and over in the Old Testament we see one generation rise up and follow the Lord but the next generation does not. Have you ever considered that this happens because that "Godly" generation did not pass on their faith? It is not the fault of our children that they do not walk with the Lord as they should, at least not for the majority of the years they live in our home. It is our responsibility as parents, and adult influencers, to pass on our faith. We cannot do that by separation, and we cannot do it through force obedience. We must be the example. We must live a Godly life and engage our young people actively in conversation about the Lord. None of this can happen without one primary ingredient...we must spend time with them.

**BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES** | Wednesday Nights

**Bible Study and Prayer with Pastor Neal** | Men and women are welcome to attend a time of prayer and Bible study with Pastor Neal on Wednesday nights at 7 pm in the fellowship hall. He'll be leading a study on "Basic Christianity". Whether you're a new believer, new to the church or a long time member—this study is for you.

**Men's Bible Study** | Starting Wednesday, September 5 at 7 pm, men are invited to open God's Word and discuss issues relevant to their spiritual growth. This Bible study meets in room 204. For more information, contact Pastor Jimmy at jimmy@coatsbaptist.com.

**Women's Bible Study** | We will resume on September 5 at 7 pm. Our fall study will be "Creation and Covenant: Genesis 12-50." This Bible study meets in the conference room. For more information, contact Stephanie Womick at srwomick@gmail.com.

**PRECEPT BIBLE STUDY** | Tuesday Afternoons

We will begin a seven week study on the book of Galatians. Newcomers orientation will be on September 18 at 1 pm in the fellowship hall. Those familiar with Precept may pick up their workbooks from the church office beginning September 17. Lesson one will begin on October 2 from 1:00-2:30 pm. Childcare can be provided if requested. Contact Diane Allen at (910) 890-0679 or by email (dsa1229@yahoo.com) with any questions, to reserve a workbook, or to arrange childcare. Workbooks are \$15.