

# Prayer of Invocation

**Almighty God, by the power of your Holy Spirit, open our eyes, ears and hearts to your presence so that today we may worship and serve you in faithfulness, and be blessing and healing reminders of your love to all whose lives we touch. We offer our prayers in the name of Christ. Amen.**

Hospitality is an attitude of heart that seeks to turn strangers into guests, friends and eventually brothers and sisters. It is an attitude that goes after new people and making them feel welcome, by your ways, your facial expression and your spirit. And especially when it goes after people whom the world excludes, people who are different, unlovely, not wealthy and unconnected. When you make people like that feel welcome and accepted, you've got God's Spirit of hospitality!

Hospitality is also a practice. It is bringing people to your home or taking them out to your favorite places, opening and listening to them and making them feel accepted. Beyond that, it means the widows, the orphans, the immigrants and the homeless people that need hospitality more than anyone else. It means finding ways to put your money, your goods and your time into their lives so that they may be refreshed."

Timothy Keller, Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

Do not forget to **show hospitality to strangers**, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2 NIV

Do not forget to **entertain strangers**, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.

Hebrews 13:2 NKJV

“entertain strangers” =

*Philoxenia* =

love of strangers

Hospitality is the  
*love of strangers*

Share with God's people who are in  
need. **Practise hospitality.** Romans 12:13

Remember to welcome strangers in your home. There were some who did that and welcomed angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2 GNT

Genesis 18:1-8

# Ways to show hospitality

1. Abraham made his guests feel welcome
2. Abraham refreshed his guests with food
3. Abraham offered rest for his guests
4. Abraham created free and friendly space for his guests

Entertainment says, "I want to impress you with my home, my clever decorating, my gourmet cooking." Hospitality, on the other hand, seeks to minister rather than impress. It says, "This home is a gift from my Master. Let him use it as He desires."

Entertainment declares, "This home is mine, it's an expression of my personality. Look, please and admire." Hospitality whispers, "What is mine is yours. I am here to serve."

Entertainment looks for a payment – the flattering words. "My, isn't she a remarkable hostess" Hospitality has no thought of reward. It takes pleasure in giving, doing, loving, and serving.

"Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. It is not to change people but to offer them space where change can take place...

The paradox of hospitality is that it wants to create emptiness, not a fearful emptiness, but a friendly emptiness where strangers can enter and discover themselves as created free; free to sing their own songs, speak their own languages, dance their own dance; free also to leave and follow their own vocations. Hospitality is not a subtle invitation to adopt the life style of the host, but the gift of a chance for the guest to find his own."

Henri Nouwen



Hospitality is not entertainment, as many of us would envisage. Rather, it is an attitude of heart and a practice to love strangers and accept them as they are. The Bible stories continue to remind us that God values hospitality or the love of strangers to such a great extent that the Hebrews writer alerts us to the possibility of hosting angels along the way. We cannot change the world by a new plan, project or idea. We might not be able to change people by our convictions, stories, advice and proposals. But we can offer a friendly space where they feel welcome and accepted. Eventually, there will come a day or a time when we can reach out to them and invite them into a new relationship, seeking to turn them into friends and finally, into brothers and sisters.