

No Longer a Stranger

by Craig Swanson, p. 64

How one church embraces hospitality to their neighbors.

1. Describe an encounter where you experienced a welcome from a stranger. What did they do that made you feel welcomed?
2. Craig Swanson's church uses the proximity of the high school across the street as an opportunity for hospitality. In what ways do you reach out to your neighborhood? What connections does your church have with its neighbors and the surrounding community?
3. What is the difference between a visitor and a guest? What do you do to make people feel more like a guest than a visitor when they come to your home?
4. Bible scholar C.E.B. Cranfield is quoted as saying, "One is not just to wait and take the stranger in, if he actually presents himself at the door, but to go out and look for those to whom one can show hospitality." When is it best to bring people through your doors to extend hospitality? What does hospitality look like outside the walls of the church?
5. The article ends with the image of a loving father with arms stretched wide, an image also used to describe Jesus on the cross. What is the cost of such "arms wide open" hospitality?