

The Nurture Equation™

How to Grow Your Community
with Intentional Guest Follow-Up



TextInChurch



Why Nurture?

When guests visit your church for the first time, their experience doesn't end when they walk out the door. **A strong, nurturing follow-up system is key to building trust, encouraging return visits, and fostering real connections.** Without it, guests often feel forgotten and never return.

This resource will equip you with a **proven framework** to ensure that every guest feels **seen, valued, and invited back**-helping your church grow and thrive.

🔥 Hot Take:

People who show up for the first time are guests, not visitors.

Seeing first-time attendees as guests rather than visitors is a key part of creating a welcoming and hospitable environment.

Guests are intentionally valued, acknowledged, and treated with care, making them feel like they belong from the start. This mindset encourages deeper connections, fosters trust, and increases the likelihood of guests returning and becoming an active part of the church community.



What's Inside This Guide?

The Guest Follow-Up Formula

Learn the four biggest mistakes churches make and how to follow up with guests in a way that feels natural and meaningful.

5

Multi-Channel Follow-Up

Discover the best ways to connect with guests using a combination of texts, calls, emails, gifts, and handwritten notes.

7

The Guest Follow-Up Template Toolkit

Get ready-to-use scripts and templates to simplify outreach, including text messages, emails, phone call scripts, and personal notes.

9



The Cost of Neglect: How Disconnection Weakens Your Church



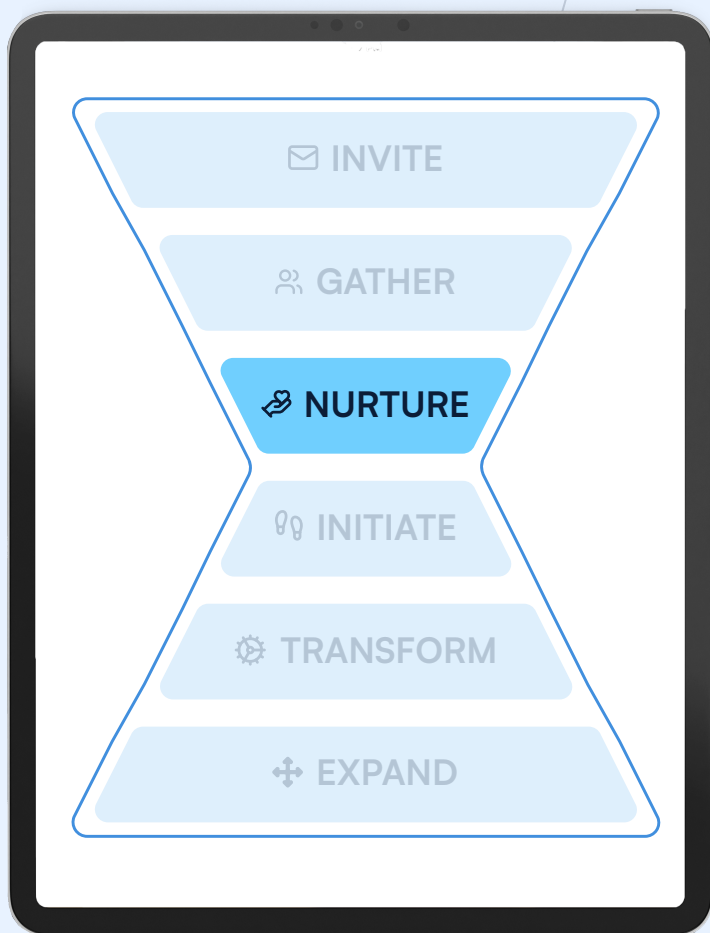
- ❌ **Guests Don't Return** - Without intentional follow-up, most guests never visit again.
- ❌ **Missed Opportunities for Growth** - Fewer returning guests means fewer new members.
- ❌ **Disconnected First-Time Visitors** - Without personal outreach, guests don't feel connected or cared for.
- ❌ **Weakened Community Engagement** - When guests don't build relationships, they don't get involved in church life and discipleship.



Nurture

A part of the **IGNITE Your Church™ Hourglass Model**

This six-stage roadmap helps church leaders share the Gospel and build a connected community. By focusing on guest retention and member commitment, this model equips churches to turn first-time guests into active members, volunteers, givers, and evangelists.



**“A new command I give you:
Love one another. As I have loved you,
so you must love one another.”
John 13:34**

This verse perfectly reflects the heart of the Nurture stage. Because of Christ’s perfect example of love for us, we have been commanded to show Christ-like love and care to others (guests). Being intentional helps build meaningful relationships where guests feel valued, seen, and encouraged to return, fostering a true sense of belonging.

**Want more information on the full
IGNITE Model? [Click here!](https://go.textinchurch.com/ignite-model)**

<https://go.textinchurch.com/ignite-model>



The Guest Follow-Up Formula

This formula is designed to help churches avoid common mistakes to build lasting connections. By following a strategy that leads to real connection, churches can build trust, nurture relationships, and ensure every guest feels seen, valued, and eager to return.

The 4 Biggest Mistakes in Guest Follow-Up:

Insufficient - Sending one or two messages after a guest visits isn't enough to make them feel like they belong and reinforce a new habit of coming to your church.

Inconsistent - Sporadic and unintentional follow-up creates weak connections or no connection at all.

Irrelevant - Disregarding communication preferences and missing personal details can leave guests feeling unvalued and disconnected.

Impersonal - Sending generic messages instead of personal, meaningful ones.

Reliable + Rhythm + Relevant + Rapport = Effective Guest Follow-Up

Reliable: A structured approach with at least 6 weeks of guest follow-up creates trust and fosters relationships.

Rhythm: Guests need consistent check-ins at key intervals. *Automated workflows* ensure messages are sent on time and nothing slips through the cracks of a busy schedule. <https://textin.church/workflows>

Relevant: Sending the right message to the right people makes guests feel seen and valued.

Rapport: Personalized messages and asking questions build lasting connections. *Message variables* ensure that personalized details are automatically inserted into your messages. They also prevent name misspellings or autocorrect issues by using the name from the Connect Card.



Types of Messages That Matter



Care

"We're glad you visited! It was great to meet you & your family."



Inform

"Here's what's happening at church this week."



Pray

"How can we be praying for you?"



Invite

"We'd love to see you again this Sunday!"



Multi-Channel Follow-Up



Using different channels for follow-up appeals to different preferences and ensures each guest feels valued. This variety not only increases meaningful engagement but also shows your church's thoughtful and intentional commitment to welcoming others.



The Best Ways to Connect with Guests

Texting - Short, personal messages that guests actually read.

Bonus Tip: Try **video messages through texting! <https://textin.church/video-messaging>*

Calling - A warm, personal touch to deepen connections. Text In Church offers a Calling feature designed to make ministry communication seamless and efficient.

Email - Providing next steps, event invites, and helpful resources. Our system also sends emails along with text messages.

Gifts - Thoughtful tokens of appreciation for first-time guests.

Handwritten Notes - A personal way to make guests feel valued.

In-Person Connections - Team members should acknowledge and welcome returning guests.



🔥 Hot Take:

Golden Rule of Communication - If your message truly matters, then use all means necessary to communicate it. This principle ensures your message reaches people in the ways they prefer, helping guests feel valued and encouraging them to return.

Pro Tip - It's important to also set up staff reminders or tasks to confirm if guests returned for another visit. This helps track their engagement patterns and ensures thoughtful, timely follow-up. (Tasks** is a Text In Church feature for setting reminders or assigning follow-ups to teammates. Add details like category, due date, and priority to stay organized!)*



GUEST FOLLOW-UP CALENDAR

By combining the Formula with Multi-Channel Follow-Up, we created a Guest Follow-Up calendar that's been utilized by over 80,000 church leaders.

Click [HERE](https://textin.church/gfucalendar) to create your own Follow-Up calendar
<https://textin.church/gfucalendar>

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Week 1	 Text + Email 90 min / 3h after visiting Thank you + Prayer						 Text 9:18 am Service Reminder
Week 2		 Task 9:00 am Personal reach out		 Text + Email 9:55am / 10:04am More Info & Details			 Text 10:38 am Service Reminder
Week 3			 Text 11:48 am Note (address ask)	 Task 9:00 am Note + Gift			 Text 9:09 am Reminder + Prayer
Week 4				 Text 1:13 pm Social Media Invite			 Text 11:15 am Service Reminder
Week 5			 Text 2:19 pm Prayer Request				 Text 10:12 am Service Reminder
Week 6	 Text 3:53 pm Encouragement		 Task 9:00 am Follow-Up Finished				

**We Were
Wrong:
6 Weeks
Works!**

Holly Howard
Testimonial

 **TextInChurch**



<https://textin.church/wrong>

The Guest Follow-Up Template Toolkit

This toolkit includes ready-to-use templates that help team members communicate with guests through messages, calls, and notes to build meaningful connections.

Text Message Templates

Quick, friendly messages that are easy for guests to read and respond to.

Hey FIRST NAME! Thanks for choosing CHURCH NAME for worship this weekend! We loved having you. Is there anything we can be lifting up in prayer for you?
- LEADER NAME

Email Templates

Emails allow for more detail, invitations, and next steps.

Hey FIRST NAME,

It was such a joy having you at CHURCH NAME this past Sunday! We hope you felt right at home. I know coming to a church the first time can leave you wondering about secret rules or whether there's something you SHOULD know that you don't.

So, I wanted to give you a space to ask any questions you have about our services, our church or our leadership. What questions do you have for me?

Also, if you'd like to grab coffee and chat, let me know! Hope to see you at CHURCH NAME again soon!

Blessings,
LEADER NAME

Tool Tip: You can replace variables in these messages with your own details or Text In Church's personalized message variables will do this for you.



Phone Call Scripts

A phone call adds a warm, personal touch that helps deepen relationships and makes guests feel truly valued.

Hi FIRST NAME! This is LEADER NAME from CHURCH NAME, and I just wanted to thank you for joining us during our service on Sunday! I wanted to see if you had any questions and invite you to join us again this weekend. Have a great day!



Handwritten Note Templates

A thoughtful, personal gesture that shows guests they are remembered and appreciated.

Hey FIRST NAME!

Thanks so much for spending time worshipping with us. We would love to have you join us again. Please know that if you have any prayer requests or questions, we want to hear them.

Have a great day!
LEADER NAME
CHURCH NAME

Click [HERE](https://textin.church/nurture_templates) for a full listing of templates.

https://textin.church/nurture_templates



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Congratulations

As you get to the end of our guide, we hope you now understand how to effectively apply The Nurture Equation™ to your ministry.

Mastering these concepts can revolutionize your approach to nurturing first-time guests. By recognizing the nuanced elements that inspire your people to feel known, noticed, and loved, you're equipped to help them find the fulfillment, family, and faith they are desperately craving.

The tools provided in this guide - from creating a consistent guest follow-up system, to building meaningful relationships, to ultimately growing your church - offer a comprehensive plan for propelling your ministry forward.

Implement these strategies, adapt them to your church's unique context, and watch as sustained growth and a connected community are not just goals but a reality.

Thank you for taking this journey with us. Here's to your continued success!

Ready to accelerate your church's growth and build a connected community through intentional discipleship?

Put our easy-to-use software and years of experience to work for you and speed up your church's ability to share the Gospel and transform your first-time guests into active members, volunteers, givers, and evangelists for Jesus and your church.

SCHEDULE A DEMO

https://textin.church/nurture_demo

ATTEND IGNITE COACHING

<https://textin.church/ignite-coaching>

START YOUR FREE TRIAL

<https://textin.church/nurture14>



ALREADY A TEXT IN CHURCH MEMBER?

Check out the next page to install the Easy Button!

Free Resources



Nurture: Six Week Guest Follow-up

<https://textin.church/nurture>

EASY BUTTON

TUTORIAL



Follow-Up Templates

https://textin.church/nurture_templates

COPY & PASTE



The Art of Increasing Guest Retention

<https://textinchurch.com/blog-posts/guest-retention>

READ IT NOW



Guest Follow-Up Playlist

<https://textin.church/YouTube-nurture>

WATCH NOW



Nurture Workshop

https://textin.church/nurture_workshop

REGISTER NOW