



TELEPHONE CALL WORD TRACK

*Encouraging Members Who Have Been Absent
to Attend Welcome Home Sunday*

SUMMARY

The goal to have 100 percent of members in worship on *Welcome Home* Sunday has been clearly articulated. So, every member will receive mailings and e-mails encouraging them to set aside that day. This encouragement will be reinforced in the weekly church bulletin, in the church newsletter, and on the church website and social media page.

However, members who have been drifting from the congregation, who perhaps have not attended church in some time—the members that are really the target of *Welcome Home*—will probably need more than those printed encouragements. As part of the planning for *Welcome Home*, the pastor(s) and elders create a list of members who have been absent, so that they might receive a personal phone call encouraging them to attend *Welcome Home* Sunday. On the reverse side of this page, you have the word track for that call.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ❑ If possible, print this document in color. It will make following the word track easier.
- ❑ Familiarize yourself with the possible flow of the conversation. A word track is not meant to be read. (You have had telemarketers read canned dialogue to you. It comes across as inauthentic.) Rather, a word track is meant to give you a mental outline of the possible directions the conversation may go.
- ❑ Note the parts of the word track that need customization:
 - The name of your congregation
 - The date when your congregation will hold *Welcome Home* Sunday
 - The fellowship events that your congregation may be planning in conjunction with *Welcome Home* Sunday
- ❑ Understand what you are being asked to do...and *not* asked to do. You are being asked to encourage the individual to plan to attend *Welcome Home* Sunday. However, if during the course of the conversation the individual shares grievances that he has with the church, you are *not* being asked to attempt to answer those grievances. For example, if the individual says, “I don’t agree with what our church teaches about sexuality,” you do *not* need to have a theological discussion with the person. You listen. You briefly share why gathering around God’s Word and sacrament is important to you. Then you end the conversation and share the grievance with the pastor, so he can contact that person to discuss their grievance.
- ❑ Note that there are circumstances where it may be wise to schedule a second call. For example, if the individual states they are uncertain if they can attend on *Welcome Home* Sunday, at that time you might say, “Well, I hope you can make it.” But you might then make a note for yourself to call that individual again in a week or two, offering a second encouragement.

WELCOME HOME WORD TRACK

"Hi. This is _____ calling from church. Is this _____?"

"Yes."

"No."

"Great! Good to talk to you, _____. I'm one of the volunteers calling our members about our *Welcome Home* Sunday which will be held on _____. Have you heard about that?"

"Sorry! Wrong number. Have a good day."
END OF CALL

"Yes."

"No."

"Excellent! Part of the reason for the call is to help us plan for that Sunday. We are hoping to get a rough count. Are you (possibly: "and your family") able to make it on that day?"

"That's ok. The goal is to have a Sunday where we bring our entire church family together for worship...to pack the house. We don't even get that for Christmas or Easter, as people go out of town to see family."

(If your church has additional events for that day planned—a cookout, games for kids, etc.—briefly share that here.)

"So, we are asking our members to do everything possible to avoid going out of town that weekend so they can be here for *Welcome Home* Sunday. Do you think you could make it?"

"Yes."

"Not sure"

"No."

"Not sure"

"No."

"Fantastic! If you have any questions about *Welcome Home* Sunday, you can find all the information at _____."
(e.g. church web page, church Facebook page.)
END OF CALL

"I understand. Schedules get busy! We are really hoping to have 100% of our members there on that Sunday. I know I will have things to do that day, but I am just going to plan to do them later in the afternoon. It would be wonderful if you could make it too."
after final exchanges...
END OF CALL
SCHEDULE FOLLOW-UP CALL

"Sorry to hear that!
Do you already have plans for that day?"

"Yes."

Caller explains he has a grievance with church

"I understand. Schedules get busy! Well, if your plans change or you are able to pull free, it would be great to see you. If not, I hope we can meet some other time."
after final exchanges...
END OF CALL

Listen respectfully
"I'm sorry to hear that. I know that no church is perfect. I also know that personally, I need what Christ does for me there. I hope you could try it again sometime."
After final exchanges...
END OF CALL
SHARE CONVO WITH PASTOR