

NPN OVERVIEW

WHAT IS THE NEW PEOPLE NETWORK?

The New People Network looks specifically at connecting people who are new to church into our family, with a specific focus on ensuring they have the opportunity to lay solid foundations for their faith through Discovering Christianity and Water Baptism, as well as providing opportunities for them to meet other people within church, and get to know the heartbeat and vision of who we are (Welcome to Church Parties).

WHY THE NEW PEOPLE NETWORK?

As a church, we are all about loving God and loving people. One of the ways that we can outwork this is through our care and embrace of those who are new to our church or new to Christianity. While this is part of our culture as a whole, it is beneficial to have an area of specific focus on it, as this allows for focused training and increased effectiveness.

Overall the heart of the new people network is that we are creating a warm, welcoming, embracing culture, placing value on people, and walking the journey with them, and this is outworked practically through many different areas of church life.

It is through the activities of our New People Network that we can work to retain those who are new to Hillsong church, and minimise the likelihood of people 'slipping through the cracks'.

HOW IS IT OUTWORKED?

We outwork the New People Network through a variety of ministries and programs across the life of our church, across all our age group programs and weekend services:

CONCIERGE

The concierge team is the "first visit" team. No matter what brings a person to Hillsong Church – whether they are visiting short term, or looking at making Hillsong home – we host their FIRST WEEKEND, discover the purpose of their visit, identify needs and connect them with their Next Step.

How Potential Visitors Can Contact Us

- Via the webform: [Hillsong.com/\[yourcampus name i.e. hills, city\]](https://Hillsong.com/[yourcampus name i.e. hills, city]). The completed webform then gets sent directly to the concierge inbox.
- Via email: concierge@hillsong.com
- Mid-week enquires: i.e. Internal referral emails/phone calls from other departments
- Weekend enquiries: i.e. Referral from pastors meet and greet team / info desk / service teams, pastors

Services We Offer

- Reserved car spots with door to door service on arrival
- Seat reservation
- Welcome pack on arrival

- Campus tours
- Department/pastoral connections (give guests a 'behind the scenes' look at what we do – for example, our kids' program or TV control room)

CARPARK

The car park team, while not directly linked to the New People Network, assist in creating this warm and welcoming culture as the very first point of contact when people come to church. They are a friendly face, and also assist people with finding a place for their car, thereby removing some of the distraction that can come through trying to find a place to park.

GREETERS

On all our doors before and after a service, we have a team of greeters welcoming people as they arrive, and wishing them a great day/evening as they leave. These people are among the first people that are encountered when people come to church, and set the atmosphere of a warm and friendly environment.

We also encourage our service pastors to be on the doors/in the foyers after a service to meet the people as they leave.

ROW CONNECTORS

Row connectors are volunteers who look after a particular row(s) each week. We find that generally people sit in the same areas each week, and therefore these connectors are able to build relationship with them, creating a level of community in their area, but also are then more easily able to identify someone who is new to church, as they already know those who regularly sit in their row or section. They are then able to host the new person, and help connect them more into the life of the church.

Row connectors are also able to connect these new people with the teams that are relevant to their age group or demographic.

WELCOME LOUNGE

At all our weekend services we have a welcome lounge where we are able to host anyone who is new or visiting Hillsong Church. We provide coffee and light refreshments at tables so that people can sit and chat with some of our team. We make sure to give everyone a welcome pack as well, which has information about who we are as a church, as well as some of the ministries and programs that are available.

At our welcome lounge our team also have cards that can be filled in by anyone who is new or visiting, allowing us the opportunity to either stay connected with them about conferences and events (those visiting from other churches/outside the area) or to keep in touch with them and help them connect in and make Hillsong their home. This involves a 3 month [follow up process](#), and incorporates other areas, such as connect groups (mid-week small groups, for more information see the Connect Groups section on the Network) & [Next Steps](#).

NEW CHRISTIANS

At the end of every service in Hillsong Church we have an altar call where the pastor preaching gives anyone who doesn't already know Christ, or who is out of relationship with Him, an opportunity to receive Him, or re-

dedicate their lives to Him, and to pray the sinner's prayer. While this is taking place we have volunteers at the back of the building identifying the people who raise their hands.

After people have prayed the sinner's prayer, our volunteers then go up to those that have raised their hands, or meet people down the front (dependent upon the direction given in the altar call) to give them a New Testament copy of the Bible along with a card so they can fill in their personal details and our team can call them during the week to follow them up and to also invite them to do our "Discovering Christianity" course.

DISCOVERING CHRISTIANITY

Discovering Christianity is a 6 week course our church has developed to help New Christians learn more about God, and build foundations for their faith. It covers topics such as sin, salvation, the Holy Spirit, baptism, developing a relationship with God through prayer & Bible reading, and the importance of being planted in a local church. We hold our Discovering Christianity course directly after each weekend service and also on our [Next Step](#) nights. For more information on the course, please refer to the Discovering Christianity documents, or alternatively the course may be seen online at www.discoveringchristianity.org

WELCOME TO CHURCH PARTIES

Our Welcome to Church Parties run once every 6-8 weeks, after each of our weekend services. The purpose of these parties is to create an environment where people can meet the team from their service in a relaxed atmosphere, and to connect anyone who is new to church, or just looking to get more involved, into the next step of their journey here at Hillsong.

At these parties we provide light refreshments, such as cakes and slices, and tea & coffee. There is an assortment of team from our various areas of church, including Connect Group leaders, volunteer team leaders, age groups & service connection teams.

FOLLOW UP PROCESS

For anyone who is new to church, or who is a New Christian, we have a 3 month follow up process. This follow up process is undertaken by a team of volunteers, who contact those who are new approximately 4 times over a 3 month window. The follow-up process involves contacting them and helping them to get more connected into church through connect groups. We offer connect groups across all age groups, as they provide intimate fellowship, support, and relationships.

Another area where we would encourage people to find friendships within church is through serving. While not everyone will be able to be involved during the week due to work & study commitments, they could possibly be involved in the weekends. While they may not always take on a leadership role, we believe anyone can serve alongside other team members as a way of integrating and building relationship.

For those who are new Christians as well, during this time we would also encourage them to be a part of our [Discovering Christianity](#) course, which will help them establish solid foundations for their faith.

BAPTISM:

hillsong.com/australia – choose your local campus for more information - short video clip with teaching on baptism by Joel A'Bell as well as a registration form for people to express interest.

Water Baptisms are held approximately every 4-6 weeks, during our evening services.

Associated documents:

- Water baptism explained (a brief explanation of the significance and symbolism of baptism)
- WATER BAPTISM (verses on water baptism)

Associated Artwork Files:

- Card – a registration card where people can express their interest in being water baptised
- Certificate – the certificate they receive when they have been baptised
- Invite – invitations that the people getting baptised can give to friends/family to invite them to the service
 - o We also hold refreshments/a light supper in the welcome lounge for friends & families of those being baptised.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEAM?

As the New People Network teams all involve connecting with people and making them feel welcome and at home, it is best to have people on team who have a warm, engaging nature, and an ability to put people at ease.

These teams are in a sense the front line, they may be some of the first people encountered by someone who is new to church, therefore it is important to build around really great people, as the saying goes 'you only get one chance to make a first impression'. If people come to our church for the first time have a friendly and welcoming experience, this gives further opportunity to reach and connect with these people.

Teams don't come ready made, and culture is not built overnight, so it is important to have regular training. These trainings are a great opportunity to inspire the teams, to develop skills, and celebrate the wins experienced as a team.

Build, develop and release your team. As your team grows, bring new members in alongside someone who is experienced, releasing them to train the new team member.

Training can be both information and practice. Make sure to convey the heart and the vision – the "why" behind what we do. Make sure to not neglect the small stuff, the importance of a friendly smiling face, and welcoming body language, for example. It may also be helpful to 'role play' different scenarios, to help teams to develop confidence in how to approach a new person, or someone who has responded to an altar call.

Most of this training for our teams is done 'on-the-job' and through team meetings that happen at our pre-service prayer meetings held one hour prior to each of our weekend services.

THE JOURNEY

The Journey is an outline which reflects the pathways that a person can come into our church, and a progression throughout various areas of connection and involvement. For more on this please refer to the Journey document.

WHAT IS NEXT STEPS?

Next Steps is the umbrella under which pretty much any activity/area of involvement in church life falls. It is aimed at the entire church, as everyone has a next step they can take – whether they are new, looking to get more connected, grow in the walk with God/knowledge of the Bible, lead, or serve. Next Steps nights run mid-week and have a variety of classes, training sessions and information on various areas of involvement.

New People Network is in a sense a component within and a partner alongside next steps. We run our Welcome to Church parties on the weekend, helping people connect with our teams & connect group leaders, and these are also a means of introducing and pointing people towards a Next Steps night, as well as letting them know some of the options that are within Next Steps. We facilitate Discovering Christianity during our Next Steps night as an alternative for those who are not able to attend on a weekend, and also run info sessions on Water Baptism, in the lead up to our next baptism services, which gives people a greater opportunity to discover the significance and importance of this step.

PRACTICAL TIPS

It is essential to have ready access to the materials needed to connect with new people effectively. For us this includes Bibles, welcome packs (contains information about what regularly is happening in church life – artwork available online), contact cards, as well as computers available to add their details on the spot.