

# Why Should They Come?

RECENTLY I ASKED A YOUNG WOMAN WHY SHE DID NOT attend church. Her answer startled me: “It’s like going to someone else’s family reunion. Why would I go?”

I asked what she meant. She replied, “No one knows my name. They don’t know my story, and I don’t know theirs. They smile as they welcome me, but their eyes look through me toward someone they already know. It’s just intimidating, and I don’t want to be intimidated when I’m searching for meaning or for that matter when I’m searching for God.”

Why would she go, indeed? That’s a question to ponder as you read through the articles found in this issue of *Circuit Rider*. At the 2008 General Conference, our church embraced as one of the *Four Areas of Focus* “New Places for New People.” As a church, we committed ourselves to reaching people who have yet to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For anyone who is not “part of us” already, coming through the doorway of a local church or engaging in the ministry of our church is an arduous task. It takes courage to enter a place where one may not be known. It is easier by far to enter a new place where most everyone else is new as well.

As you read further, consider my friend or someone else who does not attend our churches. Find stories, images, thoughts, clues, and ideas about how you might engage these and other new people through offering new places—new churches or faith communities, or new small groups, mission, or outreach opportunities.

Discover your own new thoughts and ideas, and consider how you might open the doorways for others as you offer “New Places for New People.”

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