

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE GREAT BANQUET TEAM

Team Preparation

Participate in Team Orientation and review all the general materials and role-specific information you are given. Speakers should begin writing their talks at least several weeks before their assigned preview date, as talks take time to come together.

Put all important dates including team meetings, gatherings and Banquet dates in your calendar as soon as possible. Your attendance at all scheduled meetings and events will help the overall team gel as well as provide you the necessary preparation for an amazing Banquet experience.

During the Great Banquet

Help with set-up if at all possible – Thursday of Great Banquet weekends at 1:30 pm. Meet upstairs, outside the Conference Room.

Team members should arrive at the church by 6:45 pm (or 7:00 pm latest if bringing a guest) on the Thursday of send-off. Mix with the others arriving just as if regular guests. Be aware of talking too much with other team members. Look for guests standing alone or who are not engaged in conversation. Concentrate your efforts on the guests' experience and do not show too much affection at the beginning.

Thursday Night

The three days have distinct phases. The first night is the spiritual retreat. It is meditative and intended to make the guests receptive to the message of the Great Banquet. After the guests are settled, there will be a team meeting on Thursday night where team members are prayed in, pairings of Table Leaders and Assistant Table Leaders are revealed and general announcements are made. One Spiritual Director (often the one who gives a Sunday talk) will be asked by the Head Spiritual Director to skip the meeting and stay in a visible spot upstairs in the hallway near the sleeping rooms to assist any guests who may need help.

First day of Great Banquet (Friday)

The first day of the Great Banquet focuses on God and His amazing grace. All talks on this day are directed toward living in grace.

The function of each team member is to create an environment where guests feel welcome, accepted and open to talk and share if they so choose. Do not over-react to statements or allow other guests to over-react. Be aware of the movement of thought positions of the guests. Concerns of a more serious nature should be discussed with a Spiritual Director.

Team members at the table should take profuse notes, encourage and model participation in every activity and be careful not to dominate. If you are "discovered" as a team member, be cautious that the guests don't overly lean on you. Encourage self-discovery for all guests and ask their opinions or thoughts during discussions. Remind guests to "participate, not anticipate."

Team members should spread out during Chapel visits and mealtimes, focusing their interactions on the guests. Limit extended conversation with community members who are serving meals. This banquet is about the guests.

Speakers must wait to return to their tables or the Conference Room after giving a talk until after the discussion of their talk is over. An ALD can assist you with this.

The poster party should be a very fun and positive experience. Avoid critical remarks about any table's work and do not foster a competitive spirit. Celebrate all the tables and the work they have done this day.

The team meeting on Friday night follows a similar format of praying in remaining team members and general announcements. One Spiritual Director (Friday talk) is asked to stay back upstairs by the sleeping areas in case guests need assistance.

Second day of Great Banquet (Saturday)

On Saturday, the talks shift their attention to Christ. They strive to teach us how to be an apostle, a leader for Christ. To begin to know Christ intimately is the theme of this day. You will notice the message of the Great Banquet stirring deep feelings in participants.

During candlelight, the team will be asked by the ALDs to spread out in line amongst the tables. Team members must remember to keep conversation with community members to a minimum, as this is meant to be a sacred time for the guests. Be careful of hugging community members in the line too much in front of guests, as many guests are uncomfortable with this and we do not want them to have the wrong idea that this behavior is expected of them. Above all, put the focus on the guests and their comfort and experience of candlelight.

There is no team meeting tonight due to candlelight and Sanctuary time.

Third day of Great Banquet (Sunday)

The theme of Sunday is to show a Christian community in action. Attention is now focused on the Holy Spirit. By this time, an enthusiastic spirit should prevail! The guests will naturally begin to think about their return home. Try to keep them focused on living in the moment and not anticipating.

The closing is a summation of the entire three days. The value of continued fellowship with other Christians, serving, prayer and sacrifice, as well as attendance at future candlelights and GB community events should be stressed by team members. Please remember the public sharing at the podium is limited to guests only and the two team members chosen to model it.

Fourth Day

All team members are highly encouraged to attend the Fourth Day meeting the Tuesday evening after their Banquet weekend in the conference room. Team members are asked to assist guests in getting into reunion or small groups as they move forward. We encourage team members to assist by prayerfully considering launching or leading a new reunion group of guests who just went through.

Final note: the Great Banquet is not a closed society, but a movement within Christianity. We devote these three days to our new brothers / sisters in Christ and in doing so, "work as if everything depends on us and pray as if everything depends on Christ."

God bless you!