



## **Recommendations for Faith-Based Issues When Hosting**

Because each Affiliate is supported by religious congregations, topics of faith may arise in conversations between volunteers and guests. Recognizing that Family Promise claims no religious affiliation and serves guests of all backgrounds, the following guidelines and suggestions for approaching issues of faith.

1. Hosts may invite guests to services and activities at the congregation in a respectful manner. This is with the understanding that the guest does not have to accept the invitation.
2. Grace and other prayers may be offered. However, people leading prayer should be mindful that they are speaking for everyone in the group and be respectful for varied faith backgrounds.
3. A host or volunteer should not initiate a discussion about religion with a guest; however, a guest may do so. Any conversation on faith should be handled with mutual compassion and respect.
4. If guests are going to participate in congregational activities, their presence should not be highlighted, and the member of the congregation who extended the invitation should make accommodations in order to make the guests comfortable with any level of participation.
5. A congregation should make reasonable accommodations for a guest family to observe their religious traditions. If the family has special religious requirements (such as dietary or observational needs), open communication and respect between guests and congregation is expected. Affiliate directors or case managers will communicate known guest requirements to host beforehand, and other accommodations may arise by guests directly during orientation or over the course of their stay.
6. Guests will be requested to neither proselytize nor criticize the religious practices of hosts. Some leeway may be granted (for example, open conversation between two parties in a nonjudgmental manner), but if this becomes problematic, inform the coordinator and network director.