

# Radical Welcome Session 4



## The journey to Radical Welcome – what type of congregation are we?

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- **Purpose:**

To help people consider whether the church is inviting, inclusive or radically welcoming.

**Session Outline and Timings: Session Total 1 ½ hrs.**

Up to 30 minutes	<b>Setting up the space.</b> Ensure that the room you are using is thoroughly prepared. Ensure that the washing line from session 1 is available. Set up data projector or flip chart. Make sure you have copies of printed material for everyone. Pegs and sheets of blank pastel coloured paper.
5 minutes	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
5 minutes	Worship
10 minutes	Introduction
20 minutes	Group activity – what type of congregation are we?
20 minutes	Paired discussion
15 minutes	Circle time
15 minutes	Closing prayer

- **Preparation (30 minutes)**

Print off enough copies of the PowerPoint slides for everyone in the group. (See appendix pages 8-10)

Print copies of the questions for the paired discussion.

Print copies of the responsive closing prayer.

You may want to use a data projector for this session and / or a flip pad and marker pen to record feedback.

Set up the washing line and table (as outlined above)

- **Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)**

Welcome everyone back to the fourth and final session of Radical Welcome.

Give an opportunity for people to catch-up with each other.

Explain the structure of this session, it has a group activity and group and paired discussions.

Give time for people to ask questions, or raise issues resulting in the previous sessions.

- **Opening Worship (5 minutes)**

Use a format that is appropriate to your group and tradition.

Use silence and either sing or listen to a piece of music. Song suggestions are on the Inclusive Church website in the resources section.

Include: **Reading:** Luke 4:18-19.

**Prayer:**

Come to the living God,

Come to struggle with those who seek freedom.

Come to resist all that offends God's justice.

Come to the living, disturbing God (Jan Berry, Sheffield, 1990)

**Amen.**

- **Introduction (10 minutes)**

The group leader will go through the PowerPoint presentation explaining the different types of welcome to the group. (Welcoming, Inclusive, Radically Welcoming). These may be used with a data projector or printed and given out to each participant.

- **Group Activity – what type of congregation are we? (20 minutes)**

- 1) Give out copies of PowerPoint slides 2, 3 and 4.
- 2) Group forms a line across the room with those who think the congregation is an inviting congregation at one end and those who think it is radically welcoming at the other end with some who think it is an inclusive congregation in the middle (those who are not sure can go in between these points closest to where they feel moved).
- 3) When everyone has decided to be where they want to be invite someone to justify why they are at that chosen place (maximum 2 minutes to speak).
- 4) After speech people can move to a new position on the line as influenced by what the speaker has said.
- 5) Repeat process with new speaker until the whole group feels satisfied with the description of their congregation.
- 6) The leader might want to photograph the end positioning with people holding three labels on A4 sheet (Inviting, Including, Radically Welcoming) at each cluster.

- **Paired discussion (20 minutes)**

- 1) Look again at the signs of radical welcome associated with each part of congregational life (see copies of slides below). Have you seen or heard about churches that demonstrate these signs of radical welcome?
- 2) Imagine/recall what it would be like to be in such a community? Did they welcome in some areas and not in others? Did they welcome some groups and not others? What was the story behind their willingness to welcome?
- 3) Have you seen communities that do not demonstrate signs of radical welcome? Imagine/recall what it would be like to be in such a community? Did they welcome in some areas and not in others? Did they welcome some groups and not others? What was the story behind their lack of welcome?

4) If this congregation wanted to become radically welcoming, what could you do to help your congregation to shift gears and deepen its commitment?

- **Circle time (15 minutes)**

Pairs come back into whole circle and share conversations.

### **Closing the session (20 minutes).**

This is the final session of Radical Welcome.

Thank everyone for their contributions and participation.

Give each person in the group a piece of paper, similar in size used for the washing line exercise in Session 1. Choose pastel coloured paper for this.

Ask each member to write or draw on their paper –

1 thing I have discovered on Radical Welcome

1 hope I have for our church from Radical Welcome

Give people 5 minutes for this – when they have finished, in their own time ask them to peg their sheet on to the washing line. They can be encouraged to peak out what they have written, so that people can share.

When all have placed their paper on to the line, ask the group to gather around the washing line.

End with the reading again (Luke 4:18-19)

Because the passage may be familiar – it may be helpful to use a different translation than the one you usually use, for example Word on the Street or The Message

- **Closing prayer and blessing.**

Use the Lord's Prayer in the version that you would normally use followed by:

Exuberant Spirit of God, bursting with the brightness of flame into the coldness of our lives to warm us with a passion for justice and beauty  
**we praise you.**

Exuberant Spirit of God, sweeping us out of the dusty corners of our apathy to breathe vitality into our struggles for change,

**we praise you.**

Exuberant Spirit of God, speaking words that leap over barriers of mistrust to convey messages of truth and new understanding,

**we praise you.**

Exuberant Spirit of God, flame wind speech, burn, breathe, speak in us;

**fill your world with justice and with joy.**

(Jan Berry, Sheffield 1990)

May the outrageous welcome of the loving God accept us for who we are;

may the incarnation of the Word touch and hold us close;

may the wandering of the Spirit help us risk ourselves for love;

may the blessing of God be among us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go to the new opportunities, experiences and adventures that God has for you.

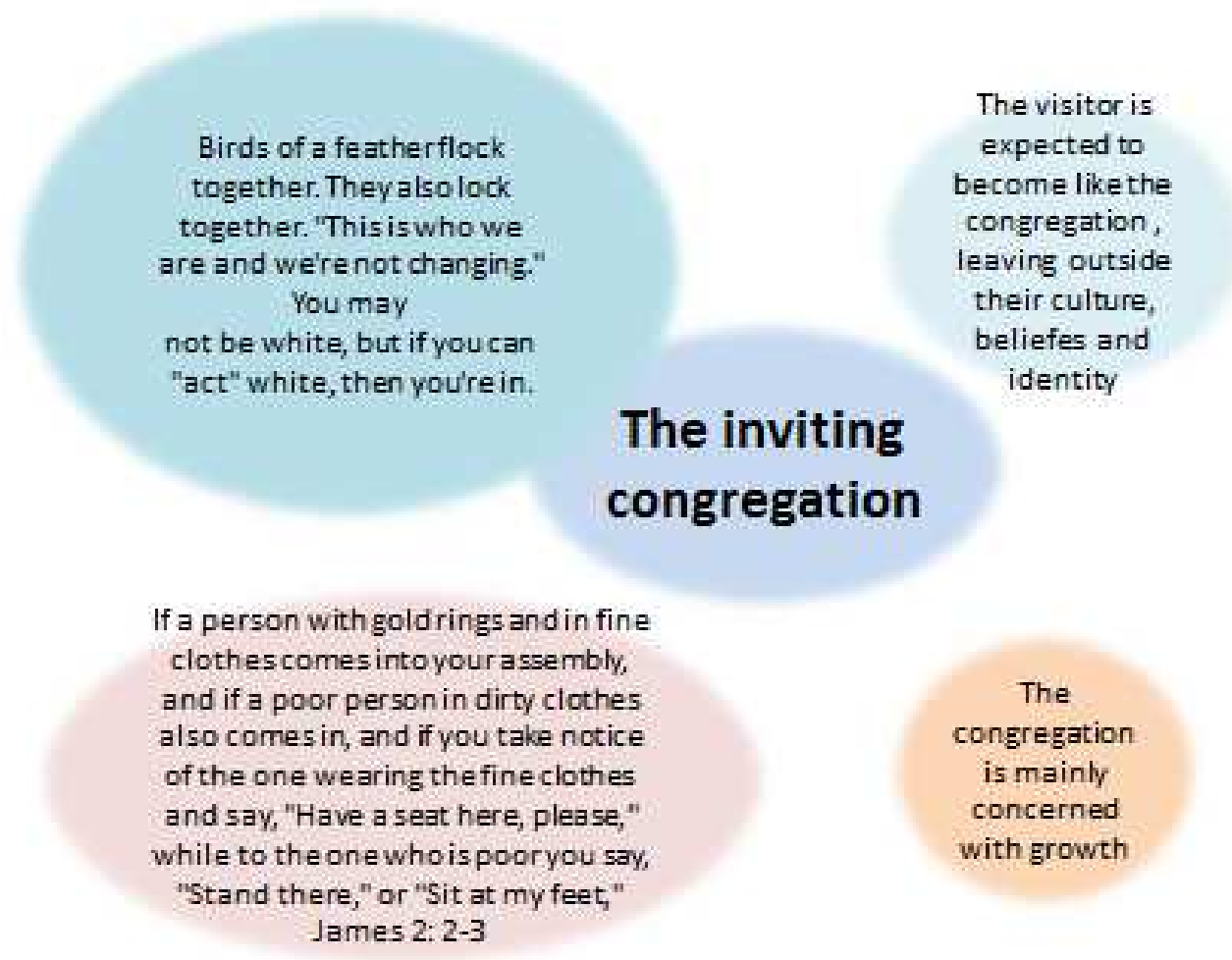
**In the name of Christ Amen.**

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## Appendix: PowerPoint slides for Group Activity

### The inviting congregation



## The inclusive congregation



## The Radically Welcoming congregation

