

# Radical Welcome

## Introduction



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- **Introduction and overview**

- Radical Welcome is a four session programme aimed at helping churches begin to look at what it might mean to go beyond being inclusive – to be Radically Welcoming.

Radical Welcome is a programme devised and produced originally for the United Reformed Church (UK). Copyright acknowledgement © United Reformed Church

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- **Who is the course aimed at?**

Radical Welcome is aimed at churches of any size and tradition. All churches think that they are welcoming and friendly; Radical Welcome encourages and enables your church to think through its welcome from the perspective of being inclusive.

It is appropriate for traditional models of church as well as those operating in a Fresh Expression model. The course is ideally suited to a whole church setting – but could also be used in a small group setting (e.g. home group, Lent group). It could form the basis of a church weekend away, or a leadership / PCC strategy day.

Inclusive Church is available to assist with thinking through with you how best to make use of this material. Please contact the National Coordinator [office@inclusive-church.org.uk](mailto:office@inclusive-church.org.uk)

- **Who should run the course?**

The course material is easy to use and can be accessed by anyone confident in leading group work. If Radical Welcome is to be used in a whole church setting it might be worth considering asking an external person to facilitate the sessions for your church. Consider asking someone from a neighbouring church or a regional / diocesan staff member. This would allow local church leaders to be involved in the sessions as members themselves.

- **Course sessions**

Sessions are designed to last 1.5 hours. It is appropriate at the start and end of the course to include refreshments (e.g. coffee and cake) or a meal.

**1: The Washing Line.** An activity based session – for people of all ages. An opportunity for people to get to know one another and to reflect on the nature and identity of their church – and begin to identify how inclusive it is.

**2: Remembering Exclusion.** Using reflective narrative, the session enables participants to use their own memories of exclusion as a basis for reflecting on “what does it mean to be welcomed?”

**3: How radical are we in our welcome?** To help people begin to see how being Radically Welcoming might impact in their context. The session uses images and small group discussion.

**4: The journey to Radical Welcome. What type of congregation are we?** To help people consider whether the church is inviting, inclusive or radically welcoming. The session uses group activity and discussion to explore this. The session draws together things that people have discovered and hope for as a result of taking part in Radical Welcome.

- **Purpose:**

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

- **Practicalities**

All that is necessary for each session is available as a download from the Inclusive Church website. These include notes for the leader, PowerPoints, and hand-outs.

Each session outlines other things that will be needed for each session.

- **Preparation.**

It may be helpful to read Radical Welcome by Stephanie Spellers. This book is a practical theological guide for congregations that want to move beyond mere inclusivity toward becoming a place where welcoming ‘The Other’ is taken seriously. Available from on-line suppliers.