

MAKE ROOM AT THE INN



A practical guide to having a
more **inclusive**, accessible and
diverse ~~Christmas~~ **Church**

Bite-size conversation starters from
Inclusive Church

 **Inclusivity is for life, not
just for Christmas.**

Please note, all illustrations in this guide are included purely for decorative purposes.

These infographics are intended to support considerations of how inclusive and accessible our churches are. Each page and topic has an accompanying short video available on our website and YouTube channel. Please search 'make room'.

There is also a full transcript available as a free download to accompany the (captioned) videos.



**Inclusive
Church**

Mental Health and Anxiety

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn



Acknowledge reality

The pressure to be 'happy' can be overwhelming and uncomfortable

Feelings of grief or loneliness can be more dominant

It's ok to be sad



Quiet Space

Offer quiet spaces where people can simply 'just be'.

Explore resources for holding a gentle 'Blue Christmas' service

Blue Christmas

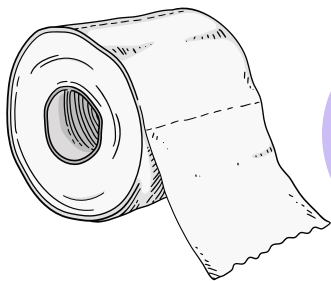


Manage Expectations

Provide information so people know what to expect at events e.g. how long will it last?

Look round your site with visitors in mind, are your toilets, parking and entrance clearly marked?

Signpost clearly



Above & beyond

Provide extra toilet rolls, nappies, sanitary protection and covered bins in all toilets.

Be clear if you are an alcohol-free site and, if not, make sure there are alternatives available

Addiction aware



External Support

Provide details of organisations who can be contacted for specialist support

See www.inclusive-church.org for more details





Disabilities + Accessibility

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn



Be aware

So those who have hearing impairments can be fully included

Dramatic readings can be challenging for those who rely on lip-reading

Provide a transcript

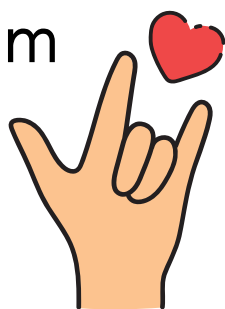


Print clearly

Use simple fonts, plain backgrounds and no smaller than font size 14

Using a microphone is helpful for those using the loop system

Use the mics!



Sign Language

Refer to Christian BSL.com for BSL resources you can incorporate into your events

Make sure accessible doors are unlocked & available

Unlock doors



Prepare space

Have space reserved for buggies, scooters & wheelchairs

Keep the aisles and walkways clear of trip hazards

Clear access



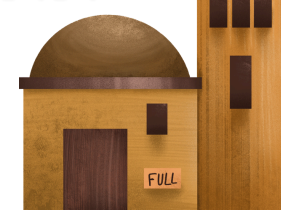
Welcomers

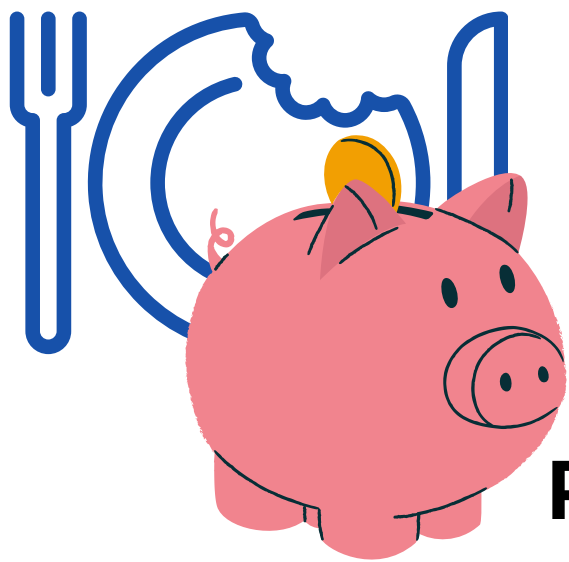
Have folk ready to help, guide and welcome visitors



See www.inclusive-church.org
for more details

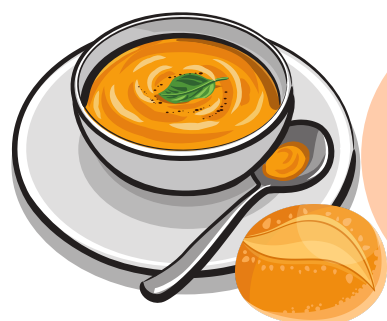
**MAKE
ROOM
AT THE
INN**





Scran & Brass (food and money)

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn

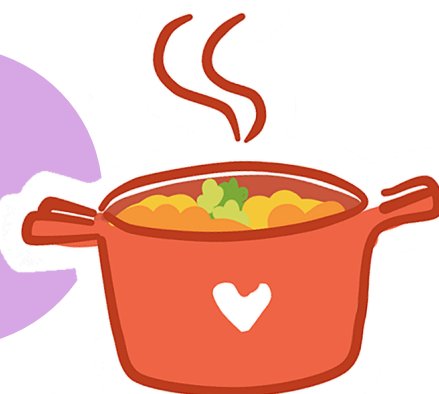


Be aware

You may have more visitors who are cold and hungry. Can you offer more than a cuppa?

Might local shops or community members like to contribute or cook

Community Connection



Be Clear

Is there a cost or expected donation?

Allow someone to decide and choose for themselves what they can afford

Don't Disempower

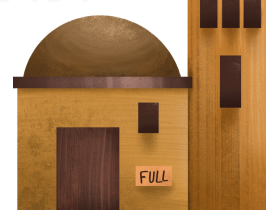


Value Offerings

What contributions can be made that aren't financial?

Do your service times allow people to travel using public transport?

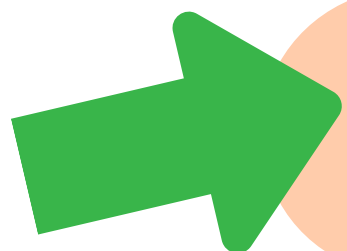
Transport Info





Buildings & Facilities

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn

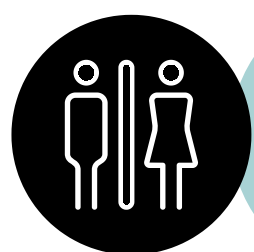


Way In

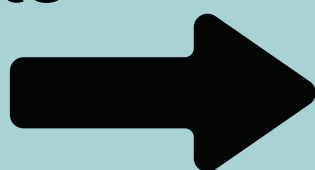
Is the correct door to get in to your building easily found and signposted?

Can you add additional (festive) lighting around your entrance?

Light the Way



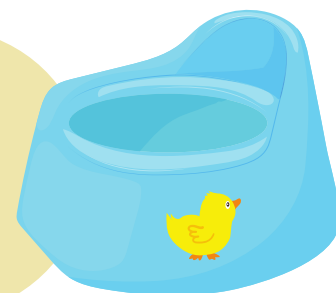
Toilets



Label the toilets clearly and signpost to them. Can you also have potties?

Can they be gender-neutral? All equipped with additional supplies.

Gender-Neutral



Not Storage Space

Don't allow random storage of items to block access, or make toilets too cramped.

Record and send voice memos to enable a diversity of readers to be used

Voice Memos



Record Services

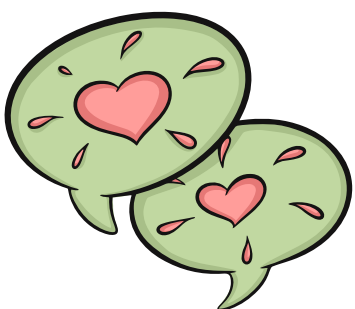
Record or stream services so those unable to attend on site can still participate





Language + Labels

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn



Words Matter

Just like names, how we address people & relate to them demonstrates our care.

Avoid making assumptions about marital status, sexuality or parental responsibilities

Explicit Awareness



The care taken in how spaces are kept, embodies the value we place on others.



Implicit Message

Have a quiet space available for anyone who becomes overwhelmed

Space to Regulate



Provision

If you have groups and activities for children and young people, ensure the details are clear.

Ensure that you look and listen to what people **need** and **adapt as needed**

Openness to adapting

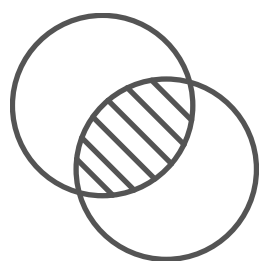


Smile as Default

Remind helpers & regulars that offering a genuine welcome requires action.

Including pronoun badges and information suggests open-minded attitudes

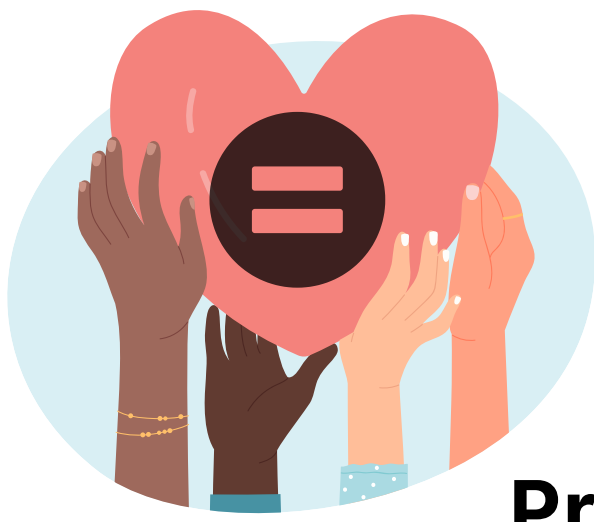
Pronouns



Love Wins

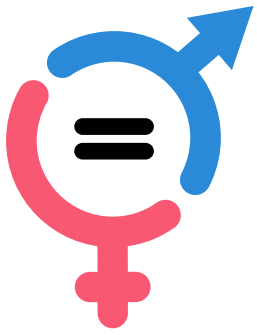
Love, not blood, defines our relationships & sense of family.





Race, Gender + Representation

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn



Break the Bias

Avoid binary language of black/dark as bad & white/light as good.



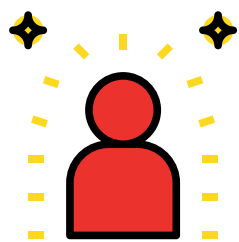
Exclusionary Language

Take the opportunity to update words used on print-outs or projections



Don't Whitewash

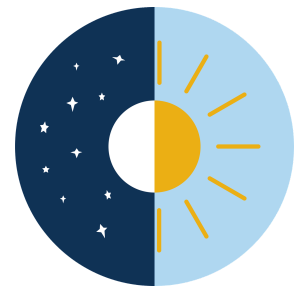
The images and language you use demonstrate who and what you value



Embodied Theology

Broaden the voices and faces that are invited to share in leadership

Ensure your team isn't limited by narrow societal expectations of gendered roles.



Baggage Aware

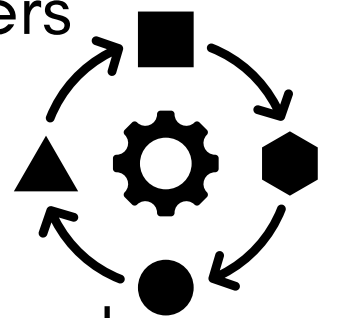
Don't exclusively use male-dominated language in songs, preaching and prayers.

Update Words



Seek to use realistic imagery and ethnicities for your pictures and nativity characters

Value



Are your community and context represented in your diversity of leadership?

Voices and Faces





Think Differently

Practical ways to #MakeRoomAtTheInn



Look for the Lonely

Try organising meals and opportunities for gathering

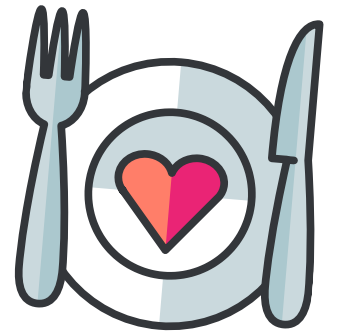
Some folk might feel especially isolated over the festive period. Can you ensure they're included?



Validity in Variance

Headphones, crafting or phone usage can help some people concentrate or manage pain.

Community Care



There are different, equally valid, ways to listen, learn, pray and worship



Broaden Understanding

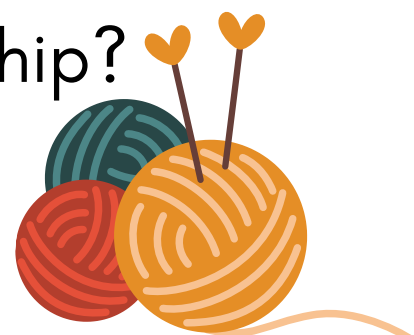
Can you offer sensory prayer aids and interactive opportunities in worship?



Sensory Supplies

Providing colouring sheets and simple crafts can engage people differently

Craftivism



Consider Expectations

Include alerts for the use of bells, incense, flashing lights or loud noises.

Are expected body postures and movements **actually** necessary?

Provide Warning



Review & Update

Little changes can make a big difference, there's **always** more you can do.



Links to individual Make Room videos

1. Mental Health & Anxiety



2. Disabilities & Accessibility



3. Scran & Brass



4. Building & Facilities



5. Language & Labels



6. Race, Gender & Representation



7. Think Differently:



Neurodivergence & Learning Styles





Inclusive Church

For more resources and ideas head over to www.inclusive-church.org

Are you in?



MAKE ROOM AT THE INN ★



Inclusive Church

November 2024

MAKE
ROOM
AT THE
IN



For more resources and ideas,
to become a member or donate
towards our work, please head
over to www.inclusive-church.org

Little changes can make a
big difference

