



The Welcoming Church Video Leader Guide

Read Romans 15:1-7 (NRSV): *“We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor. For Christ did not please himself, but, as it is written, ‘The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.’ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”*

Describe a time in your life when you truly felt welcomed. What did this moment teach you about welcoming?

The Welcoming Church Invites Us To...

Be in the Moment

A simplified and more focused worship service provides space for being in the moment with God

- Does the worship service have a consistent thematic flow with an overall message that is clear from beginning to end? If so, describe a service when this was done well.
- Is the worship service current, reflecting what is happening in the world, and relevant to the present audience and community beyond the church? If so, provide examples from recent worship services. What topics or illustrations may help the service be more current and relevant to your community?
- Are the bulletin and announcements focused? What can be simplified? Review a recent bulletin and see what might be changed, what might be overwhelming or difficult to understand for guests.



LEADERSHIP

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Be the Church Wherever We Are

Opportunities for discipleship and being in a community are accessible to those not in the physical space

- Describe the evolution of online/digital ministry in the local church.
- What are some additional concrete ways you can further engage and connect digitally?

Be on the Journey

Everyone is on a faith journey

- In the life of the congregation, where can individuals wrestle with their questions?
- What forums are provided for dialogue on timely and relevant topics?
- Describe specific ways you see the church on a journey, seeking to grow, be more Christ-like, and be a healthy and sustainable entity in its community?

Be in Community

Ministry is both in-person and online, at the church and in new places throughout the community

- List all the ways your church is connecting with the community. Then ask a few questions:
 - What is the target demographic for each of the initiatives/programs/events?
 - What demographics may you not yet be reaching?
 - Which of these listed activities build energy and discipleship? How so?
 - Which of these are no longer as relevant? Why?

What are the two next steps your congregation will take toward being a more welcoming church?

Resources on The Welcoming Church: *From Social Media to Social Ministry* by Nona Jones, *The Post-Quarantine Church* by Thom Rainer, *Wide Welcome* by Jessicah Krey Duckworth