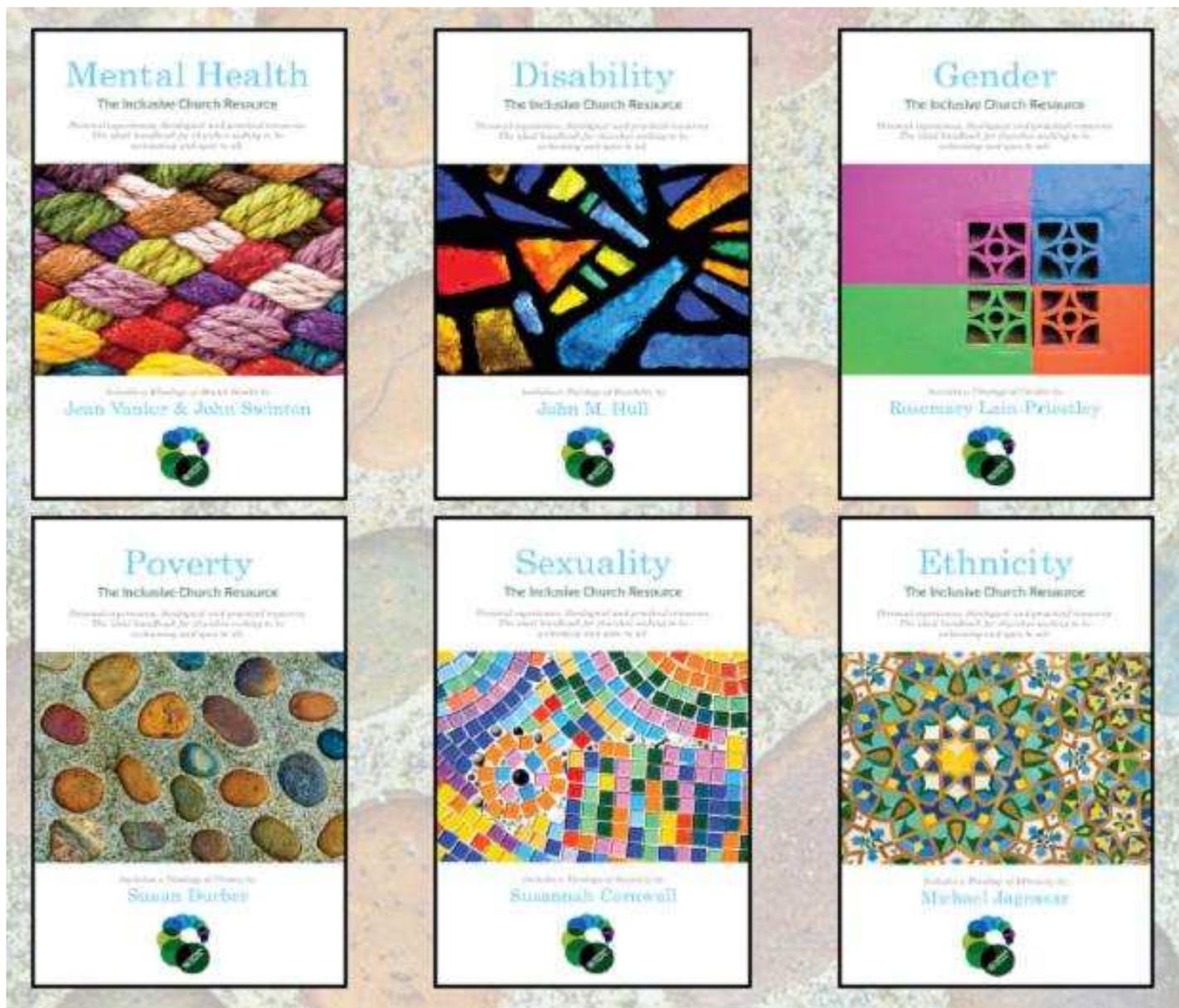




Inclusive Church

Small Group Study

Resources: Ethnicity



DARTON · LONGMAN + TODD *The Jerusalem Trust*

Small Group Study Resources



Outline & Acknowledgements

Outline

The Inclusive Church Resource series is published by Darton, Longman & Todd. The series comprises 6 titles: Disability, Mental Health, Gender, Poverty, Sexuality and Ethnicity.

Each book contains stories from lived experience, a theological reflection and resources for further information. We recommend that each church/group using these study resources obtains a set of the Resource Books.

These small group study resources provide additional material to supplement the books. They have emerged as a result of churches using the books creatively for small group study. These study resources can be used in any order. Each study guide contains the outline, introduction, protocols, and liturgies, as well as the core study material

Acknowledgments

Inclusive Church is grateful to the generosity of the Jerusalem Trust for a grant that has enabled these materials to be drawn together. This grant was match-funded by Inclusive Church supporters and members.

Inclusive Church would like to express its gratitude to Darton, Longman & Todd for its continued support of the Inclusive Church Resource Series.

The material has been written and compiled by Jeremy Pemberton.

Jeremy has been a priest of the Church of England for thirty-four years. He has worked in parishes in the North and East of England, as a Mission partner in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in theological education. Latterly, he has been Senior Chaplain and Bereavement Services Manager for a large NHS Trust in Lincolnshire. He now works as a cathedral lay clerk, a civil celebrant and a consultant specialising in spiritual care and equality and diversity relating to sexuality and religion. He is married to Laurence Cunnington, and they live in Southwell.

Small Group Study Resources

Introduction & Protocols



Introduction

These study materials are designed for use by a group of up to twelve or so people. If you have more people who want to use them, we recommend that you split into two groups.

Each session is designed to last for an hour and a half - but you can shorten or extend that as you choose.

The sessions have deliberately been designed to be very simple. They do not require extensive preparation by "leaders"; anyone can lead each session. It can be shared by two people if that helps, with different people leading different sections.

The aim of the material is:

- to provide enough material on each topic to stimulate people's thinking
- to structure the time so that everyone has a chance to speak and express themselves
- to link to Bible material that may be helpful in considering each topic
- to encourage reflection on how the group/church may better include the subject of the study
- to frame the time with prayers that can be led by anyone

To use these materials with a group you will need:

- A place to meet and enough chairs or cushions for everyone to sit comfortably
- A candle which is lit at the beginning of each meeting and extinguished at the end (this is not essential - if you don't have one it doesn't matter)
- Copies of the opening/closing liturgy for people to share in. In addition to being included in the study material, the liturgies have also been included as separate pages at the end of the study material for ease of printing.

- Bibles for everyone (or printed off copies of the Bible resource passages for each session)
- And that is it!

These are the skills that the person/people leading needs:

- Confidence to be able to draw the group together and help people find their way through the material
- An eye to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak and be heard
- The ability to discourage those who talk too much and encourage those who are reticent
- The ability to keep an eye on the clock and to work out roughly how to move from section to section so that you finish on time

If someone would like to try leading but has not done so before, why not let them try sharing the leadership that week with someone more experienced.

It should be noted that, as with all group work of this kind, there are no right answers. This is not about finding answers, it is about expanding our thinking, and listening for God's voice. We support one another in a group and hope that we can learn to be better disciples together. When we approach sessions prayerfully and thoughtfully, ready to learn, then we find that we are surprised by the new things that we discover working together.

Please remember too, that not everyone may be very comfortable doing lots of reading silently or aloud. You may need to find some people in your group who would be happy to read some of the materials aloud to the group, so that everyone can participate equally having listened to the material under discussion. Be careful of asking someone in front of the group if they would read aloud. Better to ask for volunteers.

Sessions include links to short YouTube videos. These can really make an impact if you have access to a computer and the internet so that you can play them to the group. If you have the capacity to link up to a TV or a larger screen that is very helpful, but even playing them on a laptop is very helpful. But the sessions work without them; they are not essential.

In particular, we hope these sessions can make us long for God's church to become a place of greater awareness and greater action towards including everyone. If they help us notice where people have been invisible, or where

their gifts have lain unused because they did not fit a particular mould, or where their needs have been ignored, then they will have fulfilled their purpose.

Jeremy Pemberton

Group Protocols

You will need to agree these at the start of the first session. Some people like to write these up and display them so that they are there for future reference. The best way to get a group to agree to protocols is to ask them to devise them themselves. Here are some suggestions of the kinds of things that you might like to consider including:

- Commitment to meeting - groups work best when everyone agrees to come to the sessions
- Commitment to participating - groups also work best when everyone there contributes
- Not interrupting or speaking over people - it helps everyone participate if their contributions are listened to by all
- No side conversations - people agree not to have whispered conversations with their neighbour while others are talking
- Confidentiality - what is said in the group stays in the group. We want people to feel safe. Some people will never have disclosed anything personal in a group before; confidentiality helps them feel safe
- Consideration in speaking - people who are confident about speaking in groups should not hog the time by talking too much
- Respecting people - there may be many different views expressed. It helps our learning if we don't rush to judgement.
- Gentleness in challenge - if someone says something we disagree with, then we agree to find a way of expressing that without aggression. "I don't see it quite that way...", "I look at that differently...", "I wonder if you have thought about..." can all be ways to do this
- Keeping to time - a group that always overruns can be off-putting for people who have to get home, catch a bus, get to something else etc. Good time-keeping is important in maintaining group loyalty
- Praying for each other - a group whose members commit to praying for each other through the week quickly builds a sense of group solidarity and care

Small Group Study Resources



Ethnicity

1. *The welcome*

Welcome everyone to the venue. If you are offering refreshments, then the beginning of the meeting is a good place to do so. When everyone has settled you can begin. Timings against the different sections are only suggestions.

2. *The Opening Liturgy (3 minutes)*

Use the opening liturgy to start your meeting. You will have decided whether or not you wish to light a candle, and if so, have that ready.

In addition to being included here, the opening and closing liturgies have been included as separate pages at the end of the study material for ease of printing

[One voice leads the liturgy. The parts in bold are for everyone to say together. Don't be afraid to hold the opening silence for a minute or two.]

A candle is lit.

May the light and peace of Jesus Christ
be with you.

May the divine Presence bless you.

We say together:

**In silence we come to God.
We lay aside the burdens of the day,
the demands of others,
and our own preoccupations;
we ask forgiveness for our sins and omissions;
we long for God, and we listen:-**

We keep silence

Come to us, liberating Love,
forgive us and free us to hear your life-giving voice.

Send your Spirit to lead us into all truth,
for the sake of your wonderful name. **Amen.**

(We say together a version of the Lord's Prayer)

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin
against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are
yours.
Now and for ever.
Amen.**

**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the
power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

3. What do we understand by...? (15/20 minutes)

Some definitions to start with:

Ethnicity: An **ethnic** group or **ethnicity** is a socially defined category of people who identify with each other based on common ancestral, social, cultural or national experience.

Race: **Race**, as a **social construct**, is a **group** of people who share similar and distinct physical characteristics. Since the second half of the 20th century, the associations of race with the ideologies and theories that grew out of the work of 19th-century anthropologists and physiologists has led to the use of the word **race** itself becoming problematic. Although still used in general contexts, **race** has often been replaced by other words which are less ambiguous and emotionally charged, such as **populations, people(s), ethnic groups, or communities**, depending on context.

Discuss together. Do people understand these definitions? Do they agree with them? What do they think about words like 'race'? What language do they use?

4. Quick Questions (5 minutes)

What percentage of the UK population was **not** white in the 2011 census?

How had that changed in the ten years since 2001? and 1991? (see note on page 10)

Does it matter?

5. Our Experience (25 minutes)

If you have access to a computer and the internet, we recommend that you play the group this very powerful YouTube video - it lasts 5 minutes 16 seconds:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fw7FhU-G1_Q

What do ethnicity and race mean to you?

How do you understand the words?

What is your own self-understanding in relation to these ideas?

Who are you? Does colour matter?

"Illegal immigrants", "Migrants", "Refugees", "Hordes", "Flood": these words are all over our media.

How do we react to the stories we are hearing and reading about?

How do our understanding of ethnicity and race interact with the events unfolding around us?

6. A story (10 minutes)

This short extract from the Inclusive Church Resource give a flavour of how Mukti Barton experienced racial discrimination. Read this aloud and then consider the questions below.

"One evening Stephen and I were at a party given by a British diplomat. At that gathering, somehow an inner circle developed which excluded me. A white British doctor, a rather quiet and shy person, also found himself excluded from the inner circle. Standing on the margin of the group we found each other and engaged in a conversation. After a while the host came to us and said to the doctor: "Sorry to have left you all alone here." I was shocked: all alone? What about me: was I invisible? The host managed to insult both of us. The doctor said, "I am fine here talking with Mrs Barton" and we remained where we were. The diplomat, who could not see me, was a member of our church. I was his vicar's wife. We regularly worshipped together. I was really surprised that this diplomat could not see me."

The vicar's wife is of Indian descent, married to a white Englishman.

How do you respond to the story?

7. Bible resources (15 minutes)

Look up and read aloud Acts 2: 5-17. How might this story shape our attitudes to ethnicity and race? How does ethnicity affect our access to the grace of God?

Acts: 2: 43-47. This was a multi-ethnic community living in a united and harmonious way. Is this possible or, indeed, desirable?

What other Bible material can you think of that speaks to this issue?

8. Ethnicity and inclusion in the church (8 minutes)

Think about your own church, and about the church more widely.

How much does ethnicity make a difference, locally speaking? Does it affect how you are regarded? Does it affect what you can do? Does it affect whether you are listened to?

Ethnically speaking, what does our church look like nationally? Does that matter?

9. Silence and the Closing Liturgy (4 minutes)

Draw your discussions to a close and allow yourselves to fall silent for several minutes. Ask God to speak to you through what you have heard.

We bring before God all we have heard,
Our thinking and speaking,
Those about whom we have talked,
The things that have challenged us,
And the ways in which we have heard the still small voice of the Divine:

(short pause for silent reflection)

Grant us, loving Father,
grace to entrust to you
all that we have done.
Send your Spirit
to stir up in us
a passion for justice
a longing for equity
and a determination to include all.
For the sake of Jesus our Saviour.
Amen.

The sentences below can be used as a sending out and closing affirmation:

LITANY OF JUSTICE

Reader: Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave me food". Made in the Image of God,

All: We see the face of Christ in all.

Reader: Jesus said, "I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink". Made in the Image of God,

All: We see the face of Christ in all.

Reader: Jesus said, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me". Made in the Image of God,

All: We see the face of Christ in all.

Reader: Jesus said, "I was naked and you gave me clothing". Made in the Image of God,

We see the face of Christ in all.

Reader: Jesus said, "I was sick and you took care of me". Made in the Image of God,

All: We see the face of Christ in all.

Reader: Jesus said, "I was in prison and you visited me". Made in the Image of God,

All: We see the face of Christ in all.

Reader: Jesus said, "In as much as you did to one of those considered to the least important, you did it to me". Made in the Image of God,

All: We see the face of Christ in all. We go from here to see and serve Christ in all.

Amen.

Information for Quick Questions: Non-white population: 1991 - 6%; 2001- 9%; 2011 - 14%

Small Group Study Resources

Opening and Closing Liturgy: Ethnicity



The Opening Liturgy

[One voice leads the liturgy. The parts in bold are for everyone to say together. Don't be afraid to hold the opening silence for a minute or two.]

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May the light and peace of Jesus Christ
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May the divine Presence bless you.

We say together:

In silence we come to God.

**We lay aside the burdens of the day,
the demands of others,
and our own preoccupations;
we ask forgiveness for our sins and omissions;
we long for God, and we listen:-**

We keep silence

Come to us, liberating Love,
forgive us and free us to hear your life-giving voice.
Send your Spirit to lead us into all truth,
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(We say together a version of the Lord's Prayer)

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin
against us.**

**Our Father who art in heaven,
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Thy will be done
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Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us,**

**Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are
yours.
Now and for ever.
Amen.**

**and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the
power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Closing Liturgy

Draw your discussions to a close and allow yourselves to fall silent for several minutes. Ask God to speak to you through what you have heard.

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All: We see the face of Christ in all. We go from here to see and serve Christ in all.

Amen.