

In the name of...

Notes on the Bible readings

- The disciples have been sent out 'in the name of Jesus', proclaiming the same good news and performing the same good works as him. They share in his poverty and are called to go out into new places, taking no extras with them; no clothes, shoes or food – they have to rely solely on the hospitality of others.
- This call to be welcoming and to be welcomed is incredibly significant, as in those days, the identity of a person was very much tied into family and community. In showing hospitality to one person, you were in fact welcoming the whole family or whole community they were a part of. So, welcoming someone who had come 'in the name of Jesus' was actually extending welcome and hospitality to Jesus himself.
- It can be difficult sometimes to be welcoming or to accept hospitality from others, especially when we've never met them before. How welcoming are we to those we come across?

Breakfast

Together with other households – and using social media – plan a 'church breakfast' (e.g. for next Sunday before whatever 'at home' worship plans you or your church may have. Clearly each household taking part will have to do its own thing, but place a particular emphasis on how you will interact with each other through social media, how you will make sure that every single person taking part is welcomed and feels welcomed. If you can, invite friends and neighbours from outside church too.

If you can make this work well, think how much easier it will be after lockdown!

Questions for reflection

- ▶ How do you feel when someone knocks on your door and you're not sure who it is?
- ▶ What do you do to welcome newcomers to your church?
- ▶ Describe the best welcome you have ever received in someone's home.



A prayer of approach

O God, your Spirit draws us into your presence, and so we come – drawn by love, upheld by grace – to encounter Jesus, our Saviour. We know him as our master. We know him as our friend. In him we see the Father, whose love sent Jesus to us. Spirit, Son and Father, we draw close in faith to offer our praise and worship. Amen.

A prayer for others

We pray for those on the fringes of society; for those who feel rejected; for those who are overlooked; for those whom others avoid. May they know they are welcome in your kingdom. May they know the welcome of your love. We pray for those who are lonely. We pray for those in prison; especially those kept in isolation. We pray for children excluded from school; for their families and those with responsibility for their education. Loving God, as you welcome us, may we welcome others with warmth and steadfast love. Amen.

A personal prayer

Lord, thank you for all the welcomes I receive. Help me always to be welcoming. Amen.

Live your faith

Make an effort to engage someone new in conversation, remembering that you are God's representative to them.