



MINORITY ETHNIC
ANGLICAN CONCERNS

Diversity in Dialogue:

Building Bridges for the Future

Diversity Education and Training Programme

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Foreword

“All are one in Christ Jesus!” we proclaim, and for most of the time most of us mean it. Yet our responses to difference, and especially the ways in which we perceive, communicate with and relate to those of different ethnic backgrounds, are conditioned by factors from our individual upbringing and the influence of the mass media on us. And most of the time we are quite unaware of it.

It has been my privilege, with my colleague Revd Garth Nathaniel, to lead a pilot of this short group course in the Diocese of Worcester. Very gently, underpinned with prayer and biblical reflection, and without burdening us with guilt, it allowed us to understand better how to build the bridges to relate to each other and to respond to the forces within both church and society that seek to hold us apart.

As you follow this course you will hear one another's stories and share your own experiences. You will learn helpful ways of analysing practical and pastoral situations and through that be able to engage more effectively and sensitively in the mission and ministry to which God is calling his church. Above all you will discover, or reaffirm, that diversity is not a problem to be overcome but a richness to be enjoyed and celebrated; a part of God's will for us and his gift to us.

David Walker

Bishop of Dudley

Introduction

“So the Lord scattered them abroad from there [Babel] over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.” Genesis 11.8

This familiar passage from the Genesis story credits our omnipotent God with dispersing human beings throughout the world. It also affirms God’s creative genius revealed in the rich diversity of his people. Today, the Church of England and the Anglican Communion represents an intricately diverse human tapestry that offers an incredible array of gifts and talents to be celebrated and shared. If only we would be receptive to God’s generous offering. What hinders us?

Undoubtedly, we all harbour biases that frequently influence our personal perceptions, interactions and decision making. And yet, acknowledging this is just the first step towards learning more about *ourselves*. The next, is to understand how our perceptions are formed. This is where the real challenge begins as we work towards becoming more sensitive to and appreciative of those who are different from us. This happens not because we begin to see others differently; rather we come to see *ourselves* through *their* eyes. This too is God’s amazing handiwork – an interconnectedness and interdependency that reminds us that we are all part of one race of people – the human race. This course **Diversity in Dialogue – Building Bridges for the Future** is designed to emphasise cultural and social ‘uniqueness’ and foster an appreciation for and better understanding of diversity in all its various forms.

We are so privileged to be part of a Church that willingly desires to provide a ‘safe environment’ that facilitates candid discussion on such a difficult topic as diversity. My hope is that the course will challenge, encourage and stimulate every participant who engages in this vital conversation. And, if during this course you find your awareness heightened and your thinking sensitively provoked as to the various ways ‘otherness’ exists today – then this course has been successful!

It has been a pleasure to work with such a creative and stimulating team that formed the Diversity Materials Task Group, for the Committee of Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns: Canon Linda Ali, CMEAC Member; Joanna Cox, National Adviser in Lay Discipleship and Shared Ministry; Tim Ling, National CMD Officer, Marc Wolverson, CMEAC Member and Sonia Barron, National Adviser for Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns. Also, this team has been encouraged and challenged by the feedback received from the dioceses of Truro and Worcester that piloted the course. Hopefully, **Diversity in Dialogue – Building Bridges for the Future** will help us become a Church that embraces difference and works towards achieving the Christian ethos that “all are one in Christ Jesus!”

The Revd Dr Rosalyn F T Murphy

Chair of Task Group

Key Reminders for Facilitators throughout the course

- Facilitators need to communicate the purpose of the event, as well as 'hold' the sessions in terms of ethos, content and process. Listening to others and valuing all needs to be modeled, and participants should be encouraged to do the same.
- The sessions work well with two facilitators who are themselves visibly different (e.g. male/female or black/white).
- Facilitators can draw attention to the need for participants to agree guidelines on confidentiality: A suggestion that they may be appropriate is that any comments shared by participants will not be shared outside the session unless an individual gives permission.
- Plenary discussions are central in helping ensure that people are hearing diverse experiences, and that issues are explored. The questions suggested may help the facilitator develop or expand the discussion, and sum up.
- Facilitators may plan to adjust some procedures according to the total size of the group. In groups of up to 10–12, more work can be done in the plenary group. Where there are more participants it is particularly important to ensure that people have plenty of opportunities to discuss in smaller units (pairs, 3s and small groups of 4-5), to enable everyone to participate fully.
- Some exercises may raise powerful emotions or memories for some participants. Course organisers and facilitators should plan in advance how to address pastoral needs that may arise – e.g. by possibly appointing a course chaplain, or offering opportunities for individual discussion.
- Books marked with an asterisk (*) are useful for those with limited time for reading and provides concise, basic information

Key Reminders for Facilitators

Facilitators need to communicate the purpose of the session and encourage participants to contribute. They need to clearly communicate the sensitivity of the materials being analysed and discussed, and it will help participants if they introduce agreed guidelines or ground rules for confidentiality. A brief background of this session is provided (see p.5), or facilitators may choose to develop their own drawing from the background materials in the Suggested Readings provided, but also drawing upon local or regional examples, issues and concerns.

Within this session, participants will work primarily in small groups, so it is important that the groups be as diverse as possible. During plenary sessions when feedback from small groups is shared, participants might need to be encouraged to openly express personal experiences and feelings. Facilitators will need to balance encouragement with sensitivity, ensuring that balanced discussions occur, but also that equal time is given to those who want to share.

It might be helpful for facilitators to introduce participants to any set of rules concerning courtesy, confidentiality, and mutual appreciation for the experiences of all.

During certain aspects of the sessions (particularly **1.B**, **1.C** and **1.D**) facilitators might want to act as 'listening' participants within the various groups. The overall number of participants in the Session will determine the number of groups required. The Coffee Break serves as a convenient opportunity for facilitators to check the setup of any additional audio visual equipment which might be used during exercise **1.D**.

SESSION 1:

Discerning Media Stereotypes

Session Aim

To assist participants in recognising the ability of the media to create or reinforce misconceptions and stereotypes of people from minority groups.

Objectives

1. To explore ways in which stereotypes of racial and minority groups can be created and perpetuated, particularly by the media.
2. To explore various ways in which this cycle can be broken and more positive attitudes towards minority groups be reinforced.

Background to the session

Today mass media plays a crucial role in forming and reflecting public opinion, while analysing and disseminating information to the world. It is through its projection of images – of cultures or social environments that are otherwise unknown – that public opinion is formed. It goes without saying that the media, in all its various forms, are a primary source of information, education and entertainment. Conservative estimates suggest that the average adult is exposed to over 3,500 messages each day, with approximately 600 related to product advertising and marketing. Along with this constant bombardment of external messages comes the increased propensity to skew or misrepresent the messages being conveyed.

This session gives participants an opportunity to explore the persuasive powers of the media by examining how it is used (inadvertently or otherwise) to reinforce misconceptions or develop negative images through the proliferation of stereotypes of persons or groups perceived as 'other.' While examining various forms of international, national, regional, and local media (television, print, film) and the messages they disseminate, participants will be encouraged to analyse and discuss the message content within small groups and plenary sessions.

During this session, participants will gain the ability to prepare and review messages with an eye towards identifying content that might be damaging. Participants will also learn how to construct messages that convey inclusion at the 'grassroots' level.

The Session has three sections, with the second section being divided into three parts:

1. The first introductory section offers participants an opportunity to introduce themselves to each other and acknowledge some diversity in the group, while also developing awareness of ways in which more hidden messages may be communicated.
2. The second section – *Media in Review* has three parts beginning with a brief introduction followed by three exercises where print, television, and film media will be reviewed and discussed. Work will be done in small groups, with a brief plenary following each exercise.
3. The third section – *Images, images, images* offers a follow up exercise which will hopefully move group discussions in the direction of strategic thinking and practical ‘grass roots’ application.

Time: 3 hours

Sample Session (Outline and Timetable)

5-10 mins	Welcome, introduction to the session, and opening prayer
10 mins	Exercise 1.A(i) – Introductory Exercise
15 mins	Group work on Exercise 1.A(ii) and biblical reflection
15 mins	Introduction to Section 2 – Session Background
30 mins	Group Work on Exercise 1.B(i) , with brief plenary
30 mins	Group Work on Exercise 1.B(ii) , with brief plenary
20 mins	Coffee Break
35 mins	Group Work on Exercise 1.B(iii) , with closing plenary
15 mins	Follow up exercise 1.E

Timings allow for introducing the purpose and procedures of each exercise, and for plenary discussions where suggested. Note that the Coffee Break comes after the second exercise in Section 2. This will allow facilitators time to make any adjustments to audio visual equipment or clips being used in the next part.

Resources Required (and Prior Preparation Needed)

- A collection of newspaper/magazines etc containing advertisements for the introductory exercise
- Handouts for each participant for exercises **1.A(ii)**, **1.B(i)**, **1.B(ii)**, **1.B(iii)**
- Pens or pencils for use in exercises
- Flip chart sheets/and marking pens for groups during exercise **1.B**
- Bibles for **1.A(i)** (the text on photocopied sheets, or projected on a screen)
- Audio-visual equipment for playing and projecting video tapes or DVDs
- A variety of printed literature from which groups can select for use with **1.C**. This can include items such as Diocesan newsletters, church flyers or notice sheets, mission adverts or printed appeals, children and youth instructional material, programme recruitment booklets or brochures, etc. (*The exercise will also work if secular material is used, but it can be helpful at this stage of the session to recognise implications for churches, rather than distancing the problem*)

PROGRAMME FOR SESSION 1:

Discerning Media Stereotypes

Welcome:

Introduction to Session and Aims

Opening Prayer

Section One: Introduction

1.A(i) Introductory Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is:

- (a) To offer an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves to each other.
- (b) To begin to help recognise ways in which hidden values and messages may be communicated.
- (c) To acknowledge some diversity in the group in a non-threatening way (as participants are invited to select the advertisement they share), or have the freedom to say why there isn't one for them.

Time: Approximately 5-20 minutes (depending on size of group).

Materials: A pile of magazines, newspapers, advertising flyers etc. (Make sure they are not all designed for the same group)

Procedure

- ◆ The facilitator invites participants to find an advertisement with a picture that they think is designed to appeal to a person like them (you may think it helps to narrow down the request to an advertisement that includes a picture of a person/people).
- ◆ Invite each person to introduce themselves by name, and say (briefly) what was included in the advertisement that may have been intended to appeal to/attract them. The facilitators could introduce themselves in this way to model the process. It would be good to do this drawing attention to hidden stereotypes (e.g. wants me to think this is for people who are healthy/have nice kitchens/beautiful black skin/etc.)
- ◆ Facilitator sums up, drawing attention to the significance of how easily stereotypes are created and/or hidden messages communicated.

1.A(ii) Biblical reflection: [Exercise]

The purpose of the exercise is:

- (a) To reflect on God's creation of individuals in diversity and affirms each person's individual God-created identity.
- (b) To begin to look at the extent to which this positive vision is reflected by the Church and in different media.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Bibles, or have the passage duplicated – handout **1.A(ii)**. Alternatively, the passage can be read aloud.

Procedure

- ◆ Read the passage aloud. Plan to read the passage more than once if Bibles or printed copies of the passage are not made available.

1.B Session Background and Media Stereotyping

The purpose of the exercise is:

- (a) To explore examples of the messages of three mass mediums we encounter each day
- (b) To help participants understand how media messages shape public opinion
- (c) To examine how the media influences our personal perceptions about those who are 'other.'

Time: 10-15 minutes (Part 1)

Materials: Exercise background (Part 1) or similar input
Questionnaire true/false sheets (handout **1.B(i)**)

Procedure

- ◆ Distribute the sheets, and ask participants to complete the 'true or false' section.
- ◆ Afterwards share the information below (some may wish to prepare their own).

Exercise Background (Part 1)

Each day various forms of media are used as a primary source of information. In 1999, the UK's Office of National Statistics reported that people aged four and over viewed nearly 26 hours of television each week and spent at least 19 hours listening to the radio. By 2009, the number of hours spent viewing television had risen to an average of 5 hours per day (or 35 hours per week). When we add television viewing and radio listening to the number of people that read newspapers or magazines weekly (96%), or watch films on DVD or video (22%), it is easy to see the significance mass media has in our daily lives.

With mass media being used as our primary source of information, education and entertainment, we become increasingly susceptible to the media's ability to influence and shape our opinions. This includes the way we understand and view other cultures and traditions different from our own, as well as people who are 'other' – be it nationality, gender, age, ethnicity or socio-economic status.

This means that we must learn to become more discriminating of the information we receive concerning others, negative or positive. For instance, in 2004 The European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations at Utrecht University, conducted a European Day of Media Monitoring. This quantitative analysis including assessment of information reported in the daily press and on television in 15 EU member states – a study in which the UK participated. The findings were astounding!

For example, explicit negative reports on items such as crime and deviance, fundamentalism/extremism, racial violence and illegal immigration accounted for 40% of all newspaper stories with an ethnic dimension, and 50% of those stories in 'popular' or tabloid newspapers. Further, combined with other controversial subjects such as integration/segregation, asylum and immigration policies and control, conflict-laden topics accounted

for 60% of all newspaper stories with an ethnic dimension, and 74% of those in 'popular' tabloid newspapers. In addition, the study found that:

Even though ethnic minorities were more represented in negative news, there was less participation by ethnic minorities in presenting their views and opinions

And, when their views were presented, they were more frequently depicted in a negative light and their credibility was represented as being suspect or questionable

This poses questions to us – are there issues where majority groups are more frequently represented, e.g. culture, politics, arts, entertainments?

Whether we're at home viewing the local news or listening to the radio while driving our cars or travelling on the train, we often don't take time to discriminate and analyse the various messages we hear, see or read. Nor, do we ask ourselves how much public opinion, or our own personal perceptions have been influenced by the messages we receive from the mass media.

1.B(i) Media Stereotyping – The Press: [Exercise]

Time: 30 minutes (Part 2)

Materials: Completed handout **1.B(i)**, pens/pencils, note paper, flip chart sheet

Procedure

- ◆ Ask the participants to break into two groups. Depending on the number of participants, three groups might be necessary, with a facilitator as observer (see earlier facilitators notes).
- ◆ Once the groups are set, facilitators should inform participants that they will be working within the same group for all three exercises.
- ◆ Instruct the group to identify at least one person in the group to record comments for feedback during the plenary session. As some might use similar examples during discussions, comments can be recorded on notepaper and then transferred to the flip chart sheet for posting later.
- ◆ After this has been completed by all, assign each group at least one of the discussion points listed below as a topic for their group to consider and analyse. Make sure the topics are distributed after everyone has completed the 'true or false' exercise handout.
- ◆ Ask participants to answer the following questions in relation to the discussion topic:
 - (a) *In what ways has this topic been reinforced or weakened the print media?*
 - (b) *In what ways may you have been influenced personally by what you have read in the newspaper, tabloid, or magazine?*
- ◆ During plenary ask each group to provide input on discussions and post flip chart sheets.
- ◆ The facilitator should sum up the exercise by noting that all of the statements presented in **1.B** are true. The exercise can be concluded by drawing attention to similarities in the feedback provided from the different groups.

1.B(ii) Media Stereotyping – Television: [Exercise]

Time: 30 minutes (Part 3)

Materials: Handout **1.B(ii)**, pens/pencils, note paper, flip chart sheet, video or DVD clips (used at the facilitators' discretion), audio-visual play and projection system.

Procedure

- ◆ Facilitators may desire to show a brief video clip or segment from a personal DVD to help stimulate discussions that will take place in the groups. For instance:

Working class British blacks (Desmond, East Enders), or

Humour as a way of confronting the subject by stealth (Alf Garnett, Shappi Khorsandi, Chris Rock, etc.)

Minority groups restricted to selective work communities, such as Asian shopkeepers or black drug dealers or domestic workers. (Popular American shows like Grey's Anatomy or CSI Miami are examples of how this trend is being challenged.)

- ◆ Distribute Handout **1.B(ii)** and ask the group to discuss the topics in relation to popular television programming in British culture, and their own personal viewing habits.

- ◆ Ask participants to consider the following questions:

- Which popular programmes in British television culture reinforce these stereotypes?*
- Has it changed over the years? If so, how? Be specific!*
- How may you have been influenced personally by your television viewing (as a child, as a teen or young adult, or even today)?*

- ◆ Remind groups that their responses should be recorded on flip chart paper for posting. Their responses when recorded should fall into one of four boxes (see handout below):

- The specific programmes identified,
- The stereotypes depicted or reinforced in the programmes,
- Specific programmes that defy stereotypical images,
- Identify how this is accomplished (what images or depictions are used).

In plenary ask each group to provide feedback. Encourage individuals from the group to share any personal experiences where they believe their perceptions have been influenced or challenged by television viewing.

Facilitator sums up the exercise by identifying any distinctive parallels or differences.

1.B(iii) Media Stereotyping – Film: [Exercise]

Time: 35 minutes (Part 4)

Materials: Handout **1.B(iii)**, pens/pencils, note paper, flip chart sheet, video or DVD clips (used at the facilitators' discretion), audio-visual play and projection system.

Procedure

Please note: We realise that not all venues are CVL licensed, for those who are we would recommend extracts from films such as: *Mississippi Burning*, *Billy Elliot*, *To Kill a Mocking Bird*, *Rabbit-proof Fence*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *Imitation of Life*

- ◆ Facilitators will need to decide in advance which brief movie clip or segment from a personal DVD they would like to use to set the tone for discussions that will take place in the groups. For instance:

Minority actors are often 'type cast' in roles that have negative portrayals of their group (i.e. miners in *Billy Elliott*, or David Suchet as an Asian terrorist in *Executive Action*, black men in *Hustle and Flow* or *The Color Purple*, or women in *Charlie Wilson's War*, etc.)
- ◆ Before showing the clip give some background to the story line of the film to help setup the clip that will be shown, especially if it may not be particularly well known. Show the film clip.
- ◆ Then ask participants to use one word to describe their feeling or mood after viewing the clip. Record the descriptive terms used and post the flip chart sheet in the centre of the room.
- ◆ Ask participants to think about a film they have recently watched that portrayed minorities in less than favourable terms or in stereotypical roles. The film need not be a modern one (produced within the last 10 years), but can be cherished black and white.
- ◆ Distribute handout **1.B(iii)** and ask participants to again give one word that describes their feelings or mood after viewing the film they have identified.
- ◆ The words should be recorded on flip chart paper during each group's discussion for posting during plenary.
- ◆ In plenary ask each group for feedback. Encourage participants to discuss how their feelings towards the negative images viewed in the film clip shown at the start of the session differ or support the feelings they experienced when viewing movies they have seen on television, in theatres, or watched on DVDs or video. (They might want to refer back to the movie they discussed with the group.)
- ◆ The facilitator brings the session to a close by drawing attention to the various phrases, and words used to describe images and topics discussed within the Section (press, television, and film).
- ◆ The facilitator could conclude the Section with a brief statement on the growing influence of the internet. If time remains, one or two participants can be encouraged to comment briefly on how the internet differs from other mass mediums (i.e. inaccurate information can be quickly verified through research, chat rooms and notice boards allow individuals to voice their opinions with others who share them, etc.).

1.C Images, Images, Images [Exercise]

The purpose of the exercise is:

- (a) To examine a variety of printed materials used in churches with a view to identifying images that may be unhelpful.
- (b) To help people develop sensitive and appropriately inclusive materials in future.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: A variety of printed materials, used in christian and church contexts. Suggested items include Diocesan newsletters, church brochures or notice sheets, mission brochures or youth and children teaching booklets.

The exercise will also work if secular material is used. However it can be helpful at this stage of the session to recognise practical implications for churches

Procedure

- ◆ In pairs, provide each person with several items to review.
- ◆ Ask them to review the items in order to:
 - (a) *Identify which groups are missing in the images or copy (i.e. young people, ethnic groups, elderly, etc.), as well as depicted negatively or positively.*
 - (b) *Describe what is needed to make the piece more inclusive to those who might be perceived as 'other' (i.e. as inclusive language, additional photographs, etc.)*
- ◆ Ask participants, in their small groups, to discuss their findings and share how the items might impact: Mission, youth and children's groups, community outreach, or vocation.

Final exercise or homework task

Compose a prayer that emphasises our differences and how we can be made one in Christ.

Suggested Reading (for facilitation)

(Books)

Marie Gillespie, *Television, Ethnicity and Cultural Change* (London: Routledge, 1995).

John D.H. Downing and Charles Husband, *Representing Race: Racisms, Ethnicity and the Media* (London: Sage Publications, 2005).

Sarita Malik, *Representing Black Britain: A History of Black and Asian Images on Television* (London: Sage, 2002).

Stephen Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006).

Ethnicity and the Media: An Analysis of Media Reporting in the United Kingdom, Canada and Ireland (Unesco Report, 1977).

* Clint C. Wilson, Felix Gutierrez, and Lena Chao, *Racism, Sexism and the Media* (London: Sage, 2003).

Jessika ter Wal, *European Day of Media Monitoring: A Quantitative Analysis of Daily Press and TV Contents in the 15 EU Member States*, European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (Utrecht: Utrecht University, 2004).

(Articles)

Richard L. Allen and David E. Clark, 'Ethnicity and Mass Media Behaviour: A Study of Blacks and Latinos' in *Journal of Broadcasting*, Vol.24, No.1, (1980), pp.23-34.

Annabelle Sreberay, 'Media and Diasporic Consciousness: An Exploration Among Iranians in London,' in Simon Cottle, ed., *Ethnic Minorities and the Media*, Issues in Cultural and Media Studies (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), pp.179-196.

Thomas K. Fitzgerald, 'Media and Changing Metaphors of Ethnicity and Identity' in *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol.13, No.2 (1991), pp.193-214.

Diana T. Sanchez and Courtney M. Bonam, 'To Disclose or Not to Disclose Biracial Identity: The Effect of Biracial Disclosure on Perceiver Evaluations and Target Responses,' in the *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol.65, No.1 (2009), pp.129-149.

* R.M. Entman and A. Rojecki, 'Minorities in Mass Media: A Status Report' in Amy Korzik Garmer, *Investing in Diversity: Advancing Opportunities for Minorities and Media* (Washington: Aspen Institute, 1998), pp.67-85

Background reading is not essential, but facilitators who desire a broader grasp of this topic may find one or two of the above books or articles helpful. In many instances the readings will assist facilitators as they reflect on how the training can be more relevant to participants, by placing it within a local or regional context.

- ◆ In small groups of 2 or 3 people discuss the following:
 - (a) *What does this passage tell us about all those we think of as 'other'?*
 - (b) *In what ways does the Church:*
 - (i) *Successfully witness to Paul's vision in v:28?*
 - (ii) *Fail to witness to Paul's vision in v:28?*
 - (c) *In what way does a newspaper you have selected from those available*
 - (i) *Successfully witness to Paul's vision in v:28?*
 - (ii) *Fail to witness to Paul's vision in v:28?*

Galatians 3:6-9, 26-29

6 Consider Abraham: He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.

7 Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham.

8 The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: All nations will be blessed through you.

9 So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

26 You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus,

27 for all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.



True	False	Do you believe the following statement is 'true' or 'false'?
		1. Crimes against black victims are under-reported compared to crimes against white victims.
		2. Tabloids especially play on prejudice of general public for the purpose of selling newspapers.
		3. Prejudice is socio-economic as well as racial.
		4. Newsrooms tend to be predominantly white.
		5. There is a vicious circle of the media exploiting public fears and the public responding to media exploitation.
		6. Black mental health patients are far more likely to be restrained and medicated simply because they are black.
		7. The British Press are reluctant to portray black adult males as victims of crime.

Media Stereotyping – Television

1.B (ii)

In the UK, there has been a history of stereotyping minorities in television programming. For instance, British blacks are frequently portrayed as being working class, illegal immigrants, or criminals, while Asians are depicted as shopkeepers, religious fanatics or terrorists. Further, Eastern Europeans are most often portrayed as migrant workers or illiterate, speaking English with broken, unintelligible accents. Often these stereotypes are confronted and challenged covertly by members of these groups through humour. However, more recently, some contemporary programmes, are openly defying this long-held trend to ‘pigeon hole’ minorities into stereotypical roles.

Using the chart below discuss the following:

Which popular programmes in British television culture portray these or other stereotypes?

Has it changed over the years? If so, how? Be specific!

In what ways may you have been influenced personally by your television viewing (as a child, as a teen or young adult, or even today)?

List popular British programming depicting or reinforcing stereotypes.	Identify the specific stereotypes depicted or reinforced.
List contemporary British programming that defies stereotyping trends.	How is this being done?

Minority film actors often feel that they are forced to play stereotypical roles in order to apply their craft. For instance, the Iranian actor, Maz Jobrani complained that he is often cast as a criminal or terrorist. Female actors also note that their acting careers shorten with age, while their male counterparts continue to act well past retirement age and are usually cast in films with much younger females (i.e., Harrison Ford and Anne Heche in *Seven Days and Seven Nights*, or Sean Connery and Michelle Pfeiffer in *The Russia House*, or Mel Gibson with Sophie Marceau and Catherine McCormack in *Braveheart*).

Consider a film or movie you have recently viewed at home, in theatre, on DVD or video. (*It does not need to be a modern film, but can be an old favourite.*) After everyone in the group has completed the above, discuss the following:

1. **What negative stereotypes were portrayed in the film?**
2. **Using one word, describe how you felt while viewing this particular part of the film?**

When everyone in the group has completed the above, discuss the following:

1. **What effects do these images have on the wider society and culture?**
2. **What can this medium (film) do to encourage more positive attitudes towards diversity?**

Key Reminders for Facilitators

- ◆ Facilitators play a particularly key role in this session of the course. Almost all the ‘content’ of the session lies in the diversity and experience of the participants: it is important to draw this out and affirm the value of contributions. It is important that people are helped to recognise that they have experiences that relate to the theme. The facilitator needs to encourage and affirm these varied experiences, and help people identify the importance of individual feelings, perceptions, and responses to difference.
- ◆ This session works best with two facilitators who are themselves visibly different (e.g. male/female or black/white). The facilitators can, if appropriate, offer the introductory narratives in part 2 from their own experiences.
- ◆ Facilitators can remind participants of agreed guidelines on confidentiality (e.g. information will not be shared outside the session unless an individual gives permission.) This is particularly important for the group work following exercise **2.C**.
- ◆ For the Section 2 introductory narratives careful advance preparation is needed, with a couple of people (facilitators or others) lined up in advance to describe their own memories of finding out about who is ‘different’. A couple of contrasting stories from very different contexts is ideal, and can help avoid the group thinking of ‘otherness’ in single-issue or geographic terms. (Moving stories that have been used include reflections on childhood amidst different tribal groups in Africa, different Christian denominations in Ireland, or people who attended different schools). A ‘reserve’ narrative is suggested for use if these are not available.
- ◆ Some exercises may raise powerful emotions or memories for some participants (e.g. exercise **2.C**). Course organizers and facilitators should plan in advance how to address pastoral needs that may arise – e.g. by possibly appointing a course chaplain, or offering opportunities for individual discussion.

Timings allow for introducing the purpose and procedures of each exercise, and for plenary discussion where suggested. However when there are many participants, plenary sessions will take longer. If short of time, you might leave out an exercise in Section Three (**2.D** or **2.E**).

Note that the ‘coffee break’ is purposely placed at the end time of individual reflection exercise **2.C** – so that people can have some flexibility in their time of reflection, plus a break.

SESSION 2: Destroying the Myth

Session Aim

To help participants recognize how we are not all the same, even though we are “one in Christ”.

Objectives

1. To help participants recognise many ways in which we may be different, and in which difference may be experienced.
2. To encourage participants to reflect on ways in which individuals may absorb assumptions and attitudes relating to other groups of people.
3. To enable participants to discuss issues of difference and ‘otherness.’

Background to the Session

The session invites an exploration of identity, otherness, and a range of experiences of difference. The session purposely avoids any pre-determined interpretation of what particular features of identity or difference will be mentioned or explored by individuals or the group, and is not about people being told what to believe or how to act. It is a session that could ideally be used with a very mixed group (in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, social background, or faith affiliation). The more diverse the group, the more interesting the session can be!

The session is divided into 3 sections:

1. The first introductory section – ‘*Identity*’, starts with a non-threatening exercise which not only enables participants to get to know each other but also helps recognise that we can have very complex individual responses to a simple part of our identity.
2. The second section focuses on ‘*The Other*’. It is the key section, and takes longest. This section is best introduced with input of personal stories. The session then invites an extended time of structured individual reflection on each person’s own past and experiences.
3. ‘*Follow up Exercises*’ offer some additional resources with a choice of possibilities that could be used to follow up the ideas raised or draw the session to a close.

Time: 3 hours

Sample Session (Outline and Timetable)

5-10 mins	Welcome, introduction to the event and opening prayer
20 mins	Exercise 2.A – Introductory exercise
20 mins	Exercise 2.B – Key aspects of Identity

20 mins	Introduction to Section 2 – narratives of experience
20 mins	Exercise 2.C (Personal reflection)
20 mins	Coffee Break
40 mins	Group work on 2.C and closing plenary
15 mins	An optional follow-up exercise (2.D or 2.E)
15 mins	Exercise 2.E – Biblical Reflection

N.B. There is no handout 2.A

Resources Required (and Prior Preparation Needed)

- Handouts for each participant for exercises **2.B** and **2.C**
- Flip chart sheets/pens for groups (end of **2.C**)
- (if used) Handouts or paper for exercise **2.D** or **2.E**
- Bibles for **2.E** (alternatively, verses may be read aloud or duplicated)
- *Advance preparation:* Either arrange for people to tell narratives to introduce Part 2 (see facilitators notes), or decide to use the reserve narratives supplied/other materials.

PROGRAMME FOR SESSION 2:

Destroying the Myth

Welcome:

Introduction to the session and aims

Opening Prayer

2.A Introductory Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to help participants recognise that we can have complex individual responses to a simple part of our identity.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: None

Procedure

- ◆ The facilitator asks participants to work in pairs to talk about their name. DO NOT give them any other instructions but leave it up to them to say whatever they feel about their name.

Note: Quite often people will raise many of the issues below themselves. The following questions may be useful if the facilitator feels the group needs help or wants to move the group on. If the group is very large it may be helpful to use questions to help structure the discussion, but with a smaller group the facilitator may continue to respond interactively (e.g. asking if there is anyone for whom this has been an issue, or referring to an example which came up in the exercise).

- (a) *Did anyone talk about why they were given their name?*
 - (b) *Who has a name with a particular meaning? Is that important to you?*
 - (c) *Do you like your name to be shortened? Who has permission to shorten it/use a nickname?*
 - (d) *What is your reaction to someone with an unusual or different kind of name from the one you are used to? How much effort do you make to learn to pronounce it right?*
 - (e) *How do you feel if someone mispronounces or misspells your name? Why do you think that is?*
- ◆ Facilitator sums up, drawing attention to the importance of someone's name as an important part of their identity.

2.B Key aspects of identity: [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is to help participants explore further what factors contribute most significantly to identity, both for themselves and for other people.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Handout 2.B

Procedure

- ◆ Distribute handout 2.B.
- ◆ Each person to select FIVE factors that are most important to them as an individual in describing their identity (individuals can be invited to add other words to their list too).
- ◆ Share in pairs or small groups before moving into plenary. (Small groups may each be invited to offer one observation to the plenary.)
- ◆ The facilitator may use some of the questions below to help facilitate plenary discussion:

Were there other words any of you used to describe identity that were not on the list?

How many of you included a word that described your family relationships?

How many included your gender? (Then look if there a difference between men and women: if so invite comment on why.)

Did any of you include your racial/ethnic group? (Note if there is a pattern in those who have or haven't – sometimes a 'majority' group will see their common characteristic so much as 'the norm' that it isn't a distinguishing feature in terms of identity.)

Have any of you ever lived/worked in a different country? Would you have selected the same 5 words to describe your identity when you were there?

Did any of you select (or add) a word that described your occupation or activity?

Section Two: The Other

The purpose of this section is to help people reflect individually on how they learned some things about their identity, and about who was seen as being ‘different’ or from another group. The exercise encourages people to relate factual stories, and also to recognise reactions and feelings are involved when people are “the other” or ‘outsiders.’

Facilitator Notes:

The section is introduced with narratives illustrating how some individuals learned about their identity and how they came to understand who was seen as part of a different group. *Careful preparation is needed, with a couple of people (facilitators or others) lined up in advance to describe their own memories of finding out about who is ‘different’.* A couple of contrasting stories from very different contexts is ideal, and can help avoid the group thinking of ‘otherness’ in single-issue or geographic terms. (Moving stories that have been heard in this respect include those looking back at childhood amidst different tribal groups in Africa, different Christian Denominations in Ireland, or people who attended different schools). A sample narrative is below (other examples may be longer).

It will help encourage individual reflection if the facilitator models the process.

After the stories, the use of the handout **2.B** provided is recommended, as it gives space to make notes, and those who wish can move elsewhere to find personal space for reflection.

The Other – Small Island People

English people may not think of Jamaica as a large island, but when I was brought up there we certainly did. In fact we thought it was the ‘bees knees’, and certainly not only bigger but also better than many other smaller Caribbean Islands. It was clear to me as a child that the smaller islands – places like St Kitts or Antigua – didn’t have the advantages we had, and at that time I was quite certain that people who lived there were backward and not up to scratch. There was a sense that people from the small islands didn’t have as much as us and had very limited experience so they couldn’t possibly be as good.

It’s hard to remember how I came to believe this – it was what everybody seemed to think so I just picked it up. I remember my mother’s comments about “small island people”. She was in charge of supervising the cleaners in a hospital, so she had a lot of people working under her from across the Caribbean. I suppose I picked up loads of casual comments she made about work – comments about lazy small island people, comments about small island people who were no good at particular tasks. Always there was an implication that small island people couldn’t do things well. As a child I would be encouraged to behave and do things in particular ways that were “not like those small island people”.

It must have been a general attitude, and not just my mum’s. I remember what happened at school if you really wanted to get at someone or wind them up. The weapon we used was to taunt someone by saying they were “only a small island person”. That would cause fights, though of course we had the advantage of being in the majority – and on superior Jamaican soil!

2.C Images of Otherness: [Reflection Exercise]

Time: 20 mins: (*Part 1 – Includes individual reflection time*)

A coffee break can conveniently be timed between the 2 parts.

40 mins: (*Part 2 – Includes group work and plenary*)

Materials: Handout **2.C**, sheet of flip chart paper, pens/pencils for final part of group work.

Procedure

- ◆ (Part 1) Distribute Handout **2.C**. Each person spends at least 20 minutes reflecting on their own experience of the questions. (It is important to give sufficient time to think about this so that memories can surface)
- ◆ Then ask each participant to think back to their childhood and complete handout **2.C**.

Think back to your childhood:

- (a) What groups were seen as “different from us”?
- (b) How did you learn who was “one of us” and who was not?
- (c) Were there particular people (or situations) that left you feeling “not one of them”?
What was done that made you feel like this?
- (d) List any words that describe the feelings/attitudes that:
 - (i) You had about the other group.
 - (ii) They may have had about your group.
- (e) Are there things you learned as a child about attitudes to other people that
 - (i) You continue to value?
 - (ii) You now question?
- ◆ (Part 2) In groups of 4–5 people, share your stories/responses to the questions. Organise the time so that each person knows they have 5 minutes each to share without being interrupted, followed by about 2 or 3 minutes for others in the group to offer responses/questions. The facilitator can act as timekeeper.
- ◆ Give each group flip chart paper and pens. Invite groups to make a composite list of the words/phrases used describing what it felt like to be ‘not one of them’.
- ◆ In plenary, each group shares their list (or displays the lists for people to look at).

A closing discussion can note any words/feelings that recur.

Section Three: Follow Up Exercises

Facilitator notes:

Depending on the time available, one or both of these exercises can be used, or other alternative material inserted.

The final exercise (2.E) can offer a particularly suitable ending for this session.

2.D Assessing my own experience of diversity: [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is to encourage participants to look at their own current experience of diversity.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Handout 2.D – or invite people to draw their own

Procedure

Ask participants to:

- ◆ Think of the different groups of people who they come into contact with (e.g. neighbours, colleagues, parishioners, family, members of various societies / clubs, college friends, people in their geographical area, parents at child's school etc.).
- ◆ Use the diagram Handout 2.D and begin with the smallest circle. Make a list of the people who are closest there. Work outwards, and in the next circle list those fairly close, working outwards ending with those who are seen as having least impact on your life. Give approx 3 minutes to work individually.
- ◆ Ask participants to work in pairs to reflect on what this shows about their experiences of diversity.

2.E Biblical Reflection: [Exercise]

The purpose of the exercise is to reflect on biblical imagery that positively influences diversity. It is an appropriate closing exercise in that it portrays God's desire and plan to extend salvation to all indiscriminately.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: A printed version of the text or Bibles to be shared in groups of two

Procedure

- ◆ In small groups of two, participants with Bibles to share or the handout **2.E**.
- ◆ After reading Acts 10 ask participants to discuss the following:
 - (a) *What was Peter's attitude to the 'other' at the beginning of the passage?*
 - (b) *How does Peter's attitude change towards those who are 'other' in the story?*
 - (c) *What messages does the reading convey about diversity?*
- ◆ Facilitator concludes by inviting one or two groups to give feedback.
- ◆ *Plenary session concludes with prayer.*

Facilitator Notes:

Facilitators may like to discuss with participants anything they have read that relates to the theme of the session. The session relates to experiences of diversity, and biography, travel writings and fiction can frequently reflect this. The following are a few examples, and participants may enjoy reading these:

Nadine Gordimer, *July's People*, Penguin 1982

Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*, HarperCollins 1998

David Lodge, *Nice Work*, Seker and Warburg 1998

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, Heinemann 1958

Vincent Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered*

Select five words that are key to describing your identity, adding any words that are not included on the list if you wish

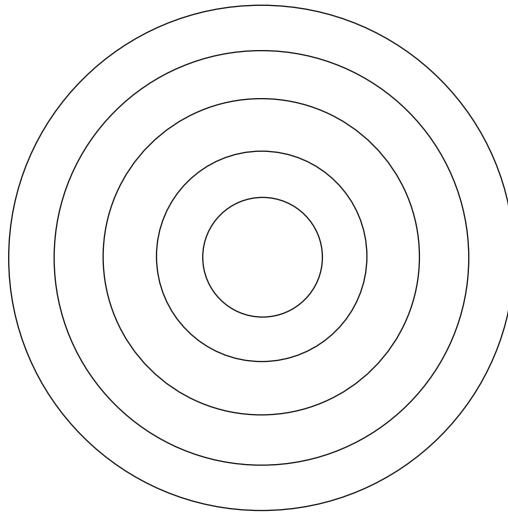
- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Able-bodied | Introvert |
| Adult | Man |
| African | Married |
| American | Middle-aged |
| Asian | Mother |
| Black | Parent |
| British | Partner |
| Carer | Pensioner |
| Caribbean | Religious |
| Child | Senior Citizen |
| Child of God | Short |
| Christian | Sibling |
| Daughter | Single |
| Disabled | Son |
| Divorced | Tall |
| Elderly | Unemployed |
| Engaged | Volunteer |
| European | Wage earner |
| Extrovert | White |
| Father | Widowed |
| Grandparent | Wife |
| Healthy | Woman |
| Husband | Young |

Think back to your childhood:

- [a] What groups were seen as 'different from us'?
- [b] How did you learn who was 'one of us' and who was not?
- [c] Were there particular people (or situations) that left you feeling 'not one of them'?
What was done that made you feel like this?
- [d] List any words that describe the feelings/attitudes that:
- (i) you had about the other group.
 - (ii) they may have had about your group.
- [e] Are there things you learned as a child about attitudes to other people that:
- (i) you continue to value?
 - (ii) you now question?

Working individually:

- ◆ Think of the different groups of people who you come into contact with (e.g. neighbours, colleagues, parishioners, family, members of various societies/clubs, college friends, people in your geographical area, parents at child's school etc.).
- ◆ Use the diagram and begin with the smallest circle. Make a list of the people who are closest there. Work outwards, and in the next circle list those fairly close, working outwards ending with those who you regard as having least impact on your life. Give approx 3 minutes to work individually.



- ◆ In pairs or small groups: invite people to reflect on what this shows about their experiences of diversity.

Read the following Bible message and then discuss the following:

How does Peter's attitude change towards those who are 'other' in the story?

What messages does the reading convey about diversity?

If Peter was living in the 21st century what stereotypes might be in his tablecloth?

Acts 10

Cornelius Calls for Peter

1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.

2 He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. **3** One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"

4 Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked.

The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. **5** Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. **6** He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea."

7 When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. **8** He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

9 About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. **10** He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. **11** He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. **12** It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

16 This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

17 While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. **18** They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there.

19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three "See footnote a" a] men are looking for you. **20** So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

21 Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?"

22 The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." **23** Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

Peter at Cornelius' House

The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went along. **24** The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. **25** As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. **26** But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

27 Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. **28** He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. **29** So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"

30 Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me **31** and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. **32** Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' **33** So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism **35** but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.

Suggested Background Reading (for facilitation)

(Books)

* *Seeds of Hope, Report of a Survey on Instruments for Combating Racism in the Dioceses of the Church of England by the Committee on Black Anglican Concerns* (London: General Synod of the Church of England, 1991).

The Passing Winter: A Sequel to Seeds of Hope (London: Church House Publishing, 1996).

Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966).

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Myra Bergman Ramos, trans. (London, Penguin, 1972)

Kathy Daniels and Lynda Macdonald, *Equality, Diversity and Discrimination* (London: CIPD Enterprises Limited, 2009).

Rutledge M. Dennis, *Biculturalism: Self Identify and Societal Transformation*, Vol.15, Research in Race and Ethnic Relations (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing, 2008).

Kendra R. Wallace, *Relative/Outsider: The Art and Politics of Identity Among Mixed Heritage Students* (Westport: Ablex Publishing, 2001).

(Articles)

S.O. Abogunrin, 'Revisiting the Story of Jesus and the Adulteress in the Context of the Church Life in Africa,' in *African Journal of Biblical Studies*, Vol. XV, No.1 (2000), pp. 1-31.

Paula M. Coeey, 'Bad Women: The Limits of Theory and Theology,' in Rebecca S. Chopp and Sheila Greeve Davaney, eds., *Horizons in Feminist Theology: Identity, Tradition, and Norms* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), pp.137-153.

Richard Garner, 'Prejudiced Teachers Too Quick to Brand Children 'Naughty': Youngsters Whose Parents are Seen as Neglectful or Interfering are Often Unfairly Tagged as a Problem,' in *The Independent on Sunday*, 20 September 2009, p.12.

* John Hall, 'Race and Racism: Killing the Conversation' in *Just So*, Vol.6 (2007), published jointly by the Diocese of Worcester and the Diocese of Coventry, pp.1-27.

Ursula King, 'Introduction' in *Feminist Theology from the Third World: A Reader*, edited by Ursula King (London: SPCK, 1996), pp.1-20.

Benjamin Todd Jealous, 'House Arrest: The New Racism Behind Racial Profiling' in *Ebony*, Vol.LXIV, No.11, October 2009, Johnson Publishing 2009, p.38.

SESSION 3:

Discerning the Difference

Session Aim

To help participants recognize the range of factors which communicate diversity and consider how perceptions, both negative and positive are acquired.

Objectives

1. To help participants explore the various ways in which human messages are communicated and interpreted.
2. To enable participants in their understanding of how experience and culture shape our perception and response to 'otherness'.

Background to this session

This session offers participants an opportunity to explore the various ways we communicate using our human senses (sight, touch, and sound) and how our attitudes and behaviours are formed. It will also examine how perceptions are acquired, whether cultural, experiential or institutional and should encourage dialogue concerning the same.

It is important to remember that 'otherness' is a very sensitive topic. Facilitators are encouraged to 'guide' participants in their discussions, encouraging all of them to be candid, yet sensitive and appreciative of the thoughts and experiences of others. Also, as with Session Two, this session will work exceptionally well within a mixed group (based on age, gender, ethnicity, social background, and faith affiliation).

This session is divided into 2 sections:

1. The opening section deals with 'Communication' and is divided into three parts. It begins with an easy opening exercise that allows participants a further opportunity to get to know one another, while helping them understand how simple communication can get a bit 'muddled.' Part 2 uses small group work to assess personal experiences of the exercise, while in Part 3 participants gather in plenary to explore 'how we communicate'. It is followed by both small group and plenary discussions on individual/group communications – personal and cultural.
2. The second section focuses on 'Attitude and Behaviour' while challenging participants to look more closely at how personal views and responses to 'otherness' can be shaped by culture, individual experiences, or affiliated institutions. Closing prayer concludes this session.

Time: 3 hours

Sample Session Timetable

15 mins	Welcome, Introduction to the event, opening prayer
15 mins	3.A(i) – Opening [Exercise], including explanation (Part 1)
25 mins	3.A(ii) – Small Group Work (Part 2)
25 mins	3.A(iii) – Analysing Non-verbal Communication (Part 3) [Plenary Exercise]
20 mins	Coffee Break
5 mins	3.B – Session Background
40 mins	3.B(i) – Attitude and Behaviour group work [Exercise], Closing plenary
20 mins	3.C – Biblical Reflection
15 mins	Closing Prayer

The **Sample Timetable** allows time for introducing the purpose and aims of each section and outlining the procedures for each exercise. The non-verbal exercise will require a large, open-space area, so time has been given to accommodate moving chairs, tables, etc. or relocating to another space nearby. Time has also been allocated for giving a brief background statement prior to group exercise (**3.B(i)**). One has been provided, or another one can be developed from the suggested reading materials.

Resources Required (and Prior Preparation needed)

- Two facilitators (visibly different – male, female, ethnicity, age)
- Handouts for each participant (*Diagram **3.B(i)**, – Case Studies **3.B(ii)**, Biblical Reflection **3.C**)
- Diagram **3.B(i)** is ideally suited for data/overhead projection if equipment is available.
- Bibles (for Biblical Reflection portion, or text may be photocopied)
- Pens, paper, flip chart paper (for small group and plenary)
- A large open space, inside or out, for non-verbal exercise
- Review of Session Background

*Non-verbal communication 3.A

Key Reminders for Facilitators

Facilitators will have a more fluid role in this session. They will need to clearly communicate the purpose of the session, read (and/or prepare) the Session Background, closely monitor time and potentially act as mediator. Throughout this session, participants will be expected to be more vocal and candid about ideas, experiences, and feelings. This should be encouraged!

However, facilitators will also need to be more sensitive to the possibility of 'rising temperatures,' during certain aspects of this session, and '*hold in tension*' candid expression along with mutual respect. It will be important to remind participants from the outset any rules (previously agreed) about courtesy, confidentiality, and mutual appreciation for the experiences of all.

During certain aspects of the session (particularly **3.B**) facilitators will need to be specially diligent and supportive of one another. For instance, one could lead the group exercise (**3.A(i)**) while the other acts as an observer making certain that care is taken to avoid potential accidents.

Also, team work will be needed to ensure that preparations are made (in advance) for group work that might immediately follow. This might mean having flip chart paper already separated and available to hand out, or having diagram sheets and case studies distributed and on tables or desks after the coffee break. This will help maximise time and keep the session flowing seamlessly.

PROGRAMME FOR SESSION 3:

Discerning the difference

Welcome:

Introduction to the event and aims

Opening Prayer

Section One: Communication

3.A Non-verbal Communication

The purpose of this exercise and reading is:

- (a) To help energise participants while helping them focus on the subject matter starting at an easy 'point of reference',
- (b) To explore how we communicate non-verbally,
- (c) To assist participants in appreciating the social implications of non-verbal communications,
- (d) To creatively consider 'otherness' and how it might influence the way we communicate.

3.A(i) Non-verbal Communication: [Exercise]

Time: 15 minutes (Part 1)

Materials: Large, cleared space (outside, weather permitting) for moving about.

Procedure

- ◆ Ensure there is ample space for participants to move about safely. (Weather permitting, this exercise is best done out of doors. A cleared space is essential to reduce the risk of bumping.) Ask all participants to join together in forming one very large circle, allowing one arm's length of space for movement.
- ◆ Explain to participants that there can be no talking during this exercise. This is essential! Explain that they will be required, at your signal to make 'eye contact' with another member in the circle. When eye contact has been made, the participants should change places within the circle – maintaining eye contact throughout their movement. When they have changed places they should immediately make contact with another person and repeat the exercise.
- ◆ Remind the group that several people will be moving at the same time, so caution is needed. However eye contact, once made is to be maintained throughout the movement.

- ◆ When the facilitator is comfortable that everyone is clear about how the exercise will work, ask the participants to lower their heads and look at the floor/ground in silence and wait for your signal. After a brief pause (10-15 seconds) signal the exercise to begin. Allow the exercise to continue for approximately 3-4 minutes once it has started. Then call 'stop.'
- ◆ Ask participants to form small groups of 3 or 4 (in silence).

3.A(ii) Non-verbal Communication: [Group Work Exercise]

Time: 25 minutes (Part 2)

Materials: Pens or pencils, flip chart paper, note paper, Handout **3.A**

Procedure

- ◆ In small groups of 4 or 5 persons, the facilitator invites participants to take turns discussing their experience of the exercise. The following questions can be used as discussion points:

What did you think of this exercise?

Was making eye contact (and holding it) easy or difficult? What does this suggest about you?

Did you find that you avoided certain people? (Be honest – and explain why.)

Discuss a past experience when eye contact was difficult for you or someone you know.

- ◆ Ask each person in the small group to give at least two words to describe their experience of the exercise. Have these words recorded on the flip chart paper. It would be helpful to post these around the room in preparation for the plenary discussion.

3.A(iii) Analysing Non-Verbal Communication: [Plenary Exercise]

Time: 25 minutes (Part 3)

Materials: Pens or pencils, flip chart paper, Handout **3.A**

Procedure

- ◆ In this session it will be important for participants to discuss which element of the exercise was most difficult – making eye contact or holding eye contact. The physical movement may offer some explanation. However, during this plenary it is important to encourage participants to openly discuss what they perceive to be the significance of eye contact.

- ◆ The following questions might help stimulate discussion:

What do you think making prolonged 'eye contact' suggests? How might this differ in other countries or cultures?

How can eye contact as 'communication' be misinterpreted?

In the exercise, did you find that you were quick or slow in making eye contact with others? Why do you think this happened?

Did any of you find that you made eye contact only with – someone you knew? Someone you like? Someone you felt you had something in common with?

How might 'otherness' impact someone's ability to communicate in this manner?

- ◆ This next task involves charting participants responses and drawing correlations. This exercise works best if the facilitator guides the participants in discovery, rather than tells them the answers.
- ◆ Ask participants to give one word to describe why someone may be unable to make eye contact. Make a list of the responses, which may include words such as bashful, shame, hurt, fear, etc.
- ◆ Then draw a line down the centre of the flip chart paper. Using the following question, compile a different list (opposite the words already listed) of one word responses from participants.

In thinking of 'difference', use one word to describe how someone you perceived as 'different' reacted to you during your first encounter. (Meeting suggestions can include examples like 'passing on the street' or 'waiting at the bus stop/train station' or 'during coffee after church,' or 'at a party or reception,' etc.)

- ◆ Draw parallels to any words that are used.
- ◆ The facilitator concludes the session by informing participants that often people who are perceived as being 'other' – realise that they are considered 'different' by various sorts of non-verbal communication.

Examples can include: (1) The way people avoid looking at them, or (2) staring intensely without speaking, or (3) by avoiding conversation, or (4) avoiding close proximity or contact, or (5) showing evasive behaviour, i.e. changing a seat on the train or bus, crossing the street, leaving a community green space when they arrive, etc.

Section Two: Attitude and Behaviour

Session Background

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Part 1 – None.

Procedure: Part 1 – Read Session Background (below)

3.B Session Background

While every human being is created in the image of God, each one is unique because we all carry within us the experiences and culture of our daily lives from birth, to childhood, through adolescence into adulthood. Communication, like human maturation is a process.

Communication scientists often study the interaction of people from different cultures because just as culture is not static, communication broadens when diverse elements come in to play. For instance, today we recognize the historical practice of separating boys and girls as being a social or cultural element unique to a certain time, for example in ancient biblical times, or today in certain geographical locations (Middle East, Asia or Africa). However, we might not be aware that the practice of gender separation impacts communication. Yet, several anthropological and cultural studies identify language as a cultural difference between men and women, girls and boys, within various societies. This difference in communication increases when additional factors are placed 'with the mix,' such as age, social background, or ethnicity.

Consider this. While English is the official language of the United Kingdom, there are many ways of speaking it and numerous regions within England's own borders where culture influences terminology, definition, and even pronunciation of English words. Further, in modern-day England there are some localities where other languages are dominant, and English is spoken only as a second language. Within these communities, the native culture not only influences English terminology, definition, and pronunciation, but also redefines the language itself through cultural filters.

We create culture in every context (home, community, work, religious worship, recreation, and business). And, as individuals we redefine what our native culture actually is – it is what is most comfortable and most familiar to us. In your home church do you have a favourite place or section where you sit during worship? Are there certain hymns you prefer singing? Or certain instruments you enjoy over others, such as the organ rather than piano or keyboard?

We rarely consider that what is comfortable and familiar to us may appear or be perceived as 'otherness' to someone else. It is only when we come into contact with a person whose culture is so obviously separate or different from our own that we need to engage in intercultural communication, and forge a synthesis of 'otherness' – both theirs to ours and ours to theirs.

3.B(i) Analysing Attitude and Behaviour [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is:

- (a) To help participants understand how *attitudes* and *behaviour* are formed,
- (b) To explore why *attitudes* towards 'otherness' are reinforced by behaviour,
- (c) To stimulate interest and a desire to learn and understand more.

Time: 40 minutes.

Materials: Diagram sheets, pens or pencils, photocopies of case studies

Procedure

- ◆ This exercise will require explanation of **Diagram 3.B(i)** by the facilitator. It might be helpful for the facilitator to refer back to the personal story telling in Session Two reminding people of the various ways in which attitudes and actions affect us. The facilitator should review how some of the attitudes and behaviour that we learn are assumptions or cultural, some may be ones applied unconsciously, while others may be more deliberate, conscious choices.

- ◆ Facilitator should encourage participants to make notes on their copy of the diagram for future reference during the group exercise.
- ◆ After explaining **Diagram 3.B(i)**, the facilitator asks participants to form small groups of 4 to 5 people. Then give each group at least one case study to review (Handout **3.B(ii)**). If there are a smaller number of groups, and time permits, groups could review two of the studies.
- ◆ Ask participants to choose a member of their group to act as the group note taker. Then they should read the assigned case studies and identify points at which particular individual or collective *attitudes* (conscious or unconscious) or individual or collective *behaviour* (conscious or unconscious) may be occurring. Encourage them to discuss to what extent the response to diversity may be principally cultural, institutional, or individual.
- ◆ The facilitator should allow ample time for participants to complete the exercise – giving time for quality discussions and feedback in plenary.

Background

This diagram will be used to help us recognise and reflect on some of the complexity of the responses we ourselves, and others, whether as individuals or groups, have towards difference (or diversity, or ‘otherness’). It is important to understand that the responses we observe in both ourselves and others are the product of both *attitude* and *behaviour*.

Responses to difference may be displayed by *individuals* based on a personal encounter, interaction with someone, or a difficult memorable experience. Alternatively, some *attitudes* or *behaviour* towards diversity may be formed into particular practices that occur routinely within a whole group. As we’ve already learned today culture is transferrable and is created and ‘recreated’ within every context of our lives (from home, to community, to the workplace, or even within our religious organisations). So, it stands to reason that we might find *attitudes* or *behaviour* towards diversity commonly practiced by entire institutions. Whether it has been adopted by habit or design, these attitudes and behaviour are communicated throughout the institution and condoned, forming a common practice. And, of course, these same *attitudes* and *behaviour* towards diversity are generally practiced even more widely – within whole communities, villages, or cities. When this happens, an entire *culture* assumes a particular practice and attitude towards those who are ‘other.’

Some of our *attitudes* may be more or less unconscious (participants may be able to remember how in the previous section, non-verbal communication used simple ‘eye contact’ to convey a message or intent; or participants may recall *attitudes* of superiority discussed in the Session Two). Other attitudes are ones we are conscious of – such as those we hold as part of our Christian faith, or beliefs concerning the intrinsic value of all people, or biblical teachings that acknowledge that in Christ there is “no Jew nor Greek, no slave nor free”.

To add to the complexity of this issue, it is important to acknowledge that some *attitudes* express those of both the individual and a collective group, while in other cases the prevailing *attitude* of a group does not express those held by the individual.

Behaviour can also be conscious or unconscious. On the diagram we see the lines between 'conscious' and 'unconscious' is dotted not solid. As it is not a fixed line, this means that both *attitudes* and *behaviour* that have been unconscious can become conscious. (Perhaps you are able to think of a *behaviour* or *attitudes* that you have consciously adopted after recognising a previously unconscious *attitude* or *behaviour*, such as only talking to people from 'their group' over coffee after church).

The diagram offers a framework for beginning to discern the complexity of some of our responses to diversity and 'otherness'. It also helps us see how some unfortunate, negative or discriminatory responses to particular differences may not be avoided just because of the beliefs or attitudes of individuals. We should also remember that legislation can regulate behaviour to some extent, but even when this happens it does not necessarily mean that it affects or alters attitudes.

For instance, a policeman may believe that all people are equal. However, research figures show that the collective behaviour of the police is to 'stop and search' more people of colour than white people. This can be seen as an example of an 'institutional' response to diversity.

Facilitators' Notes:

The diagram at **3.B(i)** offers a framework that can be used as a way to look at responses to difference in a particular situation, and recognise some of the factors that may be involved. Like any model, it will offer a simplified picture. But it can help draw attention to more dimensions of the issue, and ways in which some factors that are not so immediately obvious may be involved (for example, sometimes we can note there may be unconscious attitudes at play, but there will be guesswork involved)

Responses to difference are rarely simple, and may involve a complex combination of conscious and unconscious forces that influence the attitudes and behaviours – some at an individual and some at a collective level.

It will help if the facilitator can work through a couple of examples with the group and have the diagram visible to all so everyone can relate the commentary to it. This can be done by PowerPoint slide or an alternative form of overhead projection (OHP).

Example:

You are told by an African lady in the congregation that the church didn't support her when her relation died, and she thinks they would have done so if she had been English. You know that she was prayed for along with other bereaved or needy people in the intercessions, and contacted by the bereavement visiting team which has been set up to link with all members of the church known to have experienced loss.

1. What were the responses we know about? Relate these to the diagram.

The CONSCIOUS, COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOUR of the church appears to have been non discriminatory and reacted supportively. The bereaved lady perceives behaviour that treated her differently (we may not be sure how much this attitude is individual or collective)

2. What other factors may have resulted in the ‘response to difference’? Look at possibilities in each sector of the diagram

What might have been CULTURAL? E.g. There might not have been an understanding of the importance of the extended family, so what one group see as a distant relation is not seen in the same way elsewhere? Might there have been assumptions about when a person wants privacy/visits?

What might have been INSTITUTIONAL? E.g. Might the church have an inflexible (or non-functional) standard system of dealing with bereavements (be it team visitors/cards/prayers etc).

What might have been INDIVIDUAL? E.g. Might one individual's attempt to help have been insensitive? Was there a one-to-one breakdown of communication?

What ATTITUDES behind these are likely to be CONSCIOUS and which UNCONSCIOUS? Which are likely to be COLLECTIVE and which INDIVIDUAL?

Note that most individuals in the church will wish to adopt a CONSCIOUS ATTITUDE to difference that is very positive – but that this may not always result in – for example – COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOUR that matches. (The diagram may help identify some things that could be addressed).

Suggested Reading (for facilitation)

(Books)

James and Lillian Breckenridge, *What Color is Your God? Multicultural Education in the Church: Examining Christ and Culture in Light of the Changing Face of the Church* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995).

Norman K. Denzin, ed., *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, Vol. 28 (Oxford: Exsevier Ltd, 2005).

H Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967).

Fred E. Jandt, *An Introduction to Intercultural Communications: Identities in a Global Community* (London: Sage Publications, 2007).

Anna de Fina, Deborah Schiffrin, and Michael Bamberg, *Discourse and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

* Anthony G. Reddie, *Nobodies to Somebodies: A Practical Theology for Education and Liberation* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2003).

C. Roberts, E. Davies, TC Jupp, *Language and Discrimination: A Study of Communication in Multi-Ethnic Workplaces* (London: Longman, 1992).

Deborah Tannen, *Perspectives on Silence* (Norwood: Ablex, 1995).

Gender and Conversational Interaction (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (London: Virago/Time Warner Books, 1991).

Brian Wren, *What Language Shall I Borrow?* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1993).

(Articles)

Mary Douglas, 'Do Dogs Laugh: A Cross-Cultural Approach to Body Symbolism' in *Implicit Meanings: Selected Articles in Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 2nd ed., 1999), pp.165-169.

'Jokes' in *Implicit Meanings: Selected Essays in Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 2nd ed., 1999), pp.146-163.

Deborah A. Ramirez, 'Multi-Racial Identity in a Color Conscious World,' in Maria P.P. Root, ed., *The Multiracial Experience: Racial Borders as the New Frontier* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), pp.49-62.

Background reading is not essential, but facilitators who desire a broader grasp of the topic may find one or two of the above books or articles helpful, particularly those with an asterisk. In many instances the readings will assist facilitators as they reflect on how the training can be more relevant to participants, by placing it within a local or regional context.

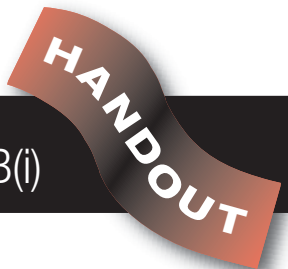
Discussion questions (group work)

- ◆ What did you think of this exercise?
- ◆ Was making eye contact (and holding it) easy or difficult? What does this suggest about you?
- ◆ Did you find that you avoided certain people? (Be honest – and explain why.)
- ◆ Discuss a past experience when eye contact was difficult for you or someone you know.

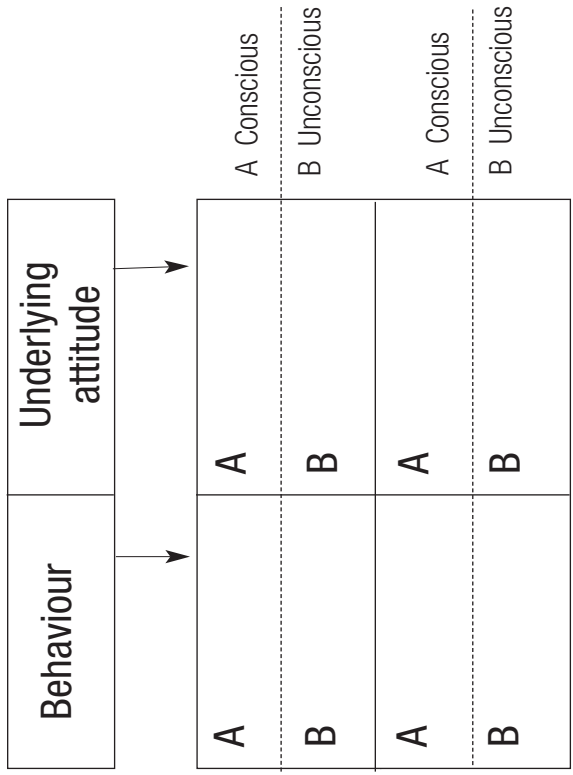
Discussion questions (plenary):

- ◆ What do you think making prolonged 'eye contact' suggests? How might this differ in other countries or cultures?
- ◆ How can eye contact as 'communication' be misinterpreted?
- ◆ In the exercise, did you find that you were quick or slow in making eye contact with others? Why do you think this happened?
- ◆ Did any of you find that you made eye contact only with – someone you knew? Someone you like? Someone you felt you had something in common with?
- ◆ How might 'otherness' impact someone's ability to communicate in this manner?

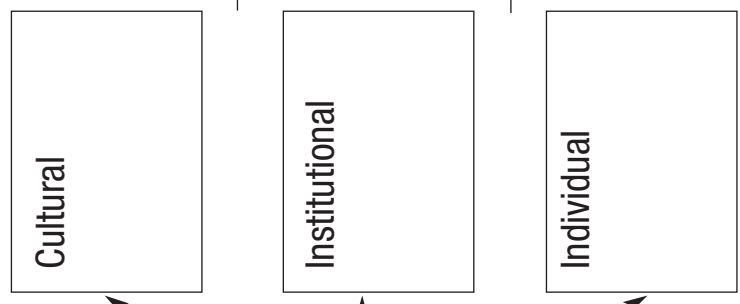
Each person in the small group should give at least two words to describe their experience of the exercise. Have these words recorded on the flip chart paper. It would be helpful to post these around the room in preparation for the plenary discussion.



3. Reflecting on the response



2. What is going on?



1. Case Study

Case Studies exercise (for use with diagram 3.B(i)) 3.B(ii)

In the light of the Handout 3.B(ii) look at these case studies and see where there may be conscious and unconscious attitudes and behaviour both collectively and individually. What cultural, institutional and individual factual responses might be involved?

1. Holy Trinity Church has a lively racially mixed congregation. The electoral role reveals that 28% of the current members are white, and 72% are from other ethnic groups.

The PCC has 11 white members, and 5 from other ethnic groups. One church warden is white British, and the other originally came from Barbados. Most of those listed in the parish magazine as having particular church responsibilities are also white, with the exception of the Mother's Union Enrolling Member, and the co-ordinator of the Sunday school.

2. Members of the Youth Group at All Saints Church wanted more opportunities to be given active roles in the life of the church. They felt they wanted to be treated as capable adults! A small group of the youth gave a presentation to the church council, asking for opportunities for young people to be given positions of responsibility, suggesting that the youth group could run an evening service, and expressing their frustration with some aspects of the church.

After the presentation a member of the council said, "I'm sorry you feel like that. What would you like us to do for you?"

3. St Mildred's Church is proud of its multi-racial congregation, and has a strap-line of "God's Diverse People for God's Diverse world". Several people in the congregation have said they want to have social events that bring everybody together to enjoy themselves, though the social committee is aware that most Caribbean members tend to stay away from many social occasions, including the free events. They think it could help to have someone from this community on the social committee, but nobody they have approached will agree to serve.

4. St Paul's Church has always had an all-male leadership team, which they believe to be the Biblical model. Two and a half years ago they employed a young woman youth worker on a three year contract. She has developed the work done with young people in the church: when she came there were 10 young people regularly associated with the church, now there are over 70 involved in various groups and activities.

The youth worker would like to renew her contract, but the church has said that they think the nature of the job has changed and there will be a new job description and the job advertised. The vicar has not encouraged her to apply.

3.C Biblical Reflection: [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is to reflect on difference being God ordained, and as such part of his created plan for unity. This exercise brings the session to a close, quite appropriately, by focusing on how attitudes towards difference can be overcome through mutual concern and care for others.

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: Handout sheet or Bibles

Procedure

- ◆ The facilitator should read the passage aloud, or select one or several participants to read sections in order to present this aspect of communication through multiple and diverse speaking voices.
- ◆ The biblical reading fits nicely into segments. Or, a dramatic version of the reading can be utilised for greater impact.

1 Corinthians 12.12-27

12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

14 Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

19 If they were all one part, where would the body be?

20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

23 and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unrepresentable are treated with special modesty,

24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it,

25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.

27 Now *we* are the body of Christ, and each one of *us* is a part of it.

Word change from *you* to *we* to allow inclusion and emphasise the collective *you* (all).

Word change from *you* to *we* to allow inclusion and emphasise the collective *you* (all).

SESSION 4:

Delving deeper – where do we go from here?

Session aim

To reinforce Christ-like conduct

Objectives

1. To examine ways in which our church or faith community model the 'kingdom of heaven'.
2. Identify and discuss existing obstacles and barriers.
3. Consider how individual participants' perceptions may have been changed during this course.

Background to the session

In this final session participants will be encouraged to reflect on ways in which their church or faith communities model the 'kingdom of heaven'. It also seeks to enable Christian leaders and members of Christian communities to discuss challenges and experiences from their own contexts. There are fewer new concepts introduced in this session as it is particularly addressed to those who will have experiences to draw on. This two part session which begins with a Case Study, and also includes a Reflective writing exercise and some theological reflection allows participants to go deeper. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own perceptions, attitudes and behaviours and that of their church or faith community and how this models the 'kingdom of heaven'.

Time: 3 hours

Sample session (Outline and timetable)

5-10 mins	Welcome, introduction to session and opening prayer
20 mins	Exercise 4.A – Case Study
5-10 mins	Brief plenary discussion
35 mins	Group work on Exercise 4.B , with brief plenary
20 mins	Coffee break
35 mins	Individual reflection and writing exercise 4.C
30 mins	Group work on Exercise 4.D with brief plenary
15 mins	Course evaluation

Resources Required (and Prior Preparation Needed)

- Handouts for each participant for exercises **4.A, 4.B, 4.C, 4.D** and **4.E**
- Pens or pencils, and writing paper for use in exercise **4.C** and **4.D**
- Flipchart sheets/and marking pens for groups during exercise **4B, 4C** and **4.D**
- Bibles for **4.B, 4.C,** and **4.D** (or the text on photocopied sheets, or projected on a screen)
- Audio-visual equipment for projection if needed

PROGRAMME FOR SESSION 4:

Delving deeper...where do we go from here?

Welcome:

Introduction to the event and aims

Opening Prayer

Section One

4.A Case Study: [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is:

- (a) To encourage reflective thinking in review of a possible experience.
- (b) To invite participants to assess their own perceptions, attitude and behaviours within a 'real-life' situation.
- (c) To have participants explore any impact the course may have had on them.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Handout 4.A – Case Study, pens and paper for writing

Procedure:

- ◆ The facilitator invites participants to read the Case Study provided in Handout 4.A. Facilitators should encourage participants to read the Case Study thoroughly (more than once) before writing their response.
- ◆ Invite each person to select one of the following questions and provide a written response.

While reading the study what perceptions and images immediately came to mind? Explain why.

What cultural differences does the story allow for? How could attitude and behaviour impact the outcome?

How might this scenario further 'cultural' exchange between two people?

Imagine how you might have responded to this situation a week ago?

Would your response be the same? Explain.

- ◆ Facilitator invites three or four people to share their responses. This works best when those participants sharing their responses did not answer the same questions.
- ◆ Facilitator sums up by sharing a similar personal experience that reveals how immediate perceptions may not always be accurate.

4.B Theological reflection (i): [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is to challenge participants to reflect on whether their church or faith community models the 'kingdom of heaven'

Time: 35 minutes (depending on size of group)

Materials: Bibles or copies of Handout 4.B, pen and paper for making notes, flipchart for plenary discussions

Procedure

- ◆ The facilitator asks participants to break into small groups of two or three people (identify someone to make notes for feedback in plenary) and read the following Bible passage together (Matthew 13:31-32)

"He (Jesus) put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and makes nests in its branches.'"

- ◆ Ask participants to read the brief background provided on Handout 4.B before answering the following questions:
- ◆ Does your Church or faith community model this image of the 'kingdom of heaven'? Who is present? Who is missing? Why?
- ◆ Record responses on flipchart noting any similarities and/or difference

Section Two

4.C Reflection and writing: [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is to challenge participants into action by having them consider how they might play a role in defending or responding to the needs of someone who is considered 'other'.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Handout 4.C, pens or pencils, writing paper

Procedure

- ◆ The facilitator invites each participant to read the passage from Paul's letter to Philemon on Handout 4.C.
- ◆ Encourage participants to reflect on the setting, culture and historical differences to the modern day before completing the writing exercise.
- ◆ Participants should also read the brief background provided before responding to the questions.
- ◆ Participants should consider and complete the following:

Imagine a situation today where they (the participant) might advise a person to return or assist in their return (or not) to a potentially 'life threatening' environment.

Ask participants to briefly write down the scenario they envisage.

Identify the person, describe them – what do they look like? Age? Background? etc.

Reflect and prepare a brief letter interceding on the person's behalf.

- ◆ Ask participants to be prepared to share their thoughts with the group.
- ◆ Facilitators can encourage creative thinking by providing some suggestions, such as persons involved in an abusive relationship, an immigrant living in the country illegally and seeking asylum, a young teenager that might be experiencing sexual abuse, a criminal who confesses to committing a crime etc.
- ◆ The facilitator should invite two or three people to share their responses

4.D Theological reflection (ii): [Exercise]

The purpose of this exercise is to encourage participants to reflect on their church or faith community and identify any obstacles or barriers, which may exist and which have a negative impact on individuals or groups who might be considered 'other'

Time: 35 minutes

Materials: Bibles or copies of Handout 4.D, pen and paper for making notes, flipchart for plenary discussions

Procedure

- ◆ The facilitator ask participants to break into small groups of two or three persons (identify someone to make notes for feedback in plenary) and read the following Bible passage together (Matthew 23:13)

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.”

- ◆ Ask participants to read the brief background provided on Handout **4.D**. *The facilitator should note to participants that this reading is one of seven 'Woe' statements spoken by Jesus*. Bibles can be provided (if available) to each group for use by participants who wish to answer the questions relating to the passage in context with the other passages.

- ◆ Ask participants to answer the following questions in small groups

How might we be 'keeping others out' of our church or faith community?

What obstacles or barriers might need to be removed first to make those who are 'other' feel more comfortable?

What preparation will be needed to assist those who are already present make the transition?

Suggest how occasional offices might be adapted to make them more reflective of cultural traditions.

- ◆ During plenary record responses on flipchart noting any similarities and/or differences
- ◆ Facilitators can encourage creative thinking by providing some suggestions, such as a traditional African naming ceremony prior to infant baptism, how might a service of baptism be adapted to accommodate people who are physically impaired, how might Holy Communion be distributed to those who are mentally or physically impaired etc.

4.E Course Evaluation

Time: 10 minutes

Material: Evaluation sheet

Procedure

- ◆ Facilitators should ask the participants to complete the evaluation sheet (handout **4.E**) and collect them before concluding the course.

Suggested Reading (for facilitation)

(Books)

James and Lillian Breckenridge, *What Color is Your God? Multicultural Education in the Church: Examining Christ and Culture in Light of the Changing Face of the Church* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995).

Norman K. Denzin, ed., *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, Vol. 28 (Oxford: Exsevier Ltd, 2005).

Anna de Fina, Deborah Schiffrin, and Michael Bamberg, *Discourse and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

(Books)

John Hall, 'Race and Racism: Killing the Conversation' in *Just So*, Vol 6 (2007), published jointly by the Diocese of Worcester and the Diocese of Coventry, pp1-27.

Read the scenario first, take a moment to reflect upon it, and what has been covered in the preceding sessions. (You may find it helpful to read scenario a second time, this time perhaps making notes at particular sections). Record your thoughts and responses. Several questions are provided below the case study to prompt reflective thinking and writing.

Imagine that you have been sitting alone in church praying quietly. You sense the presence of someone else, and as you look up you notice a stranger has entered the church and is seated opposite to you, but several rows ahead. You regularly attend this church and don't recognise the individual. From the very moment you notice the person, you begin to make assessments. Who are they? What are they wearing? Do they have any noticeable markings on their skin? What color is their skin? Are they wearing jewelry of any kind? At the moment you see them your mind begins to form opinions – opinions based on your own culture and experience. This insight will help you make sense of the signs your senses perceive. Is there a particular smell attributed to the stranger? Can you hear them praying or reading the Bible? Is there a noticeable accent or language you recognise? When the signs our senses perceive are about another person, they become a form of communication that passes on information. For instance, is the person wearing a ring? Does this mean they are married? If you smell a hint of cologne or perfume, does it determine gender or express something about the stranger's personal hygiene? With each perception your brain attempts to identify with your native culture and experiences.

As you continue to look on, the stranger unwittingly turns and faces you. They now realise that you have been studying them. They stand, maintaining eye contact. Now they are making judgements about you. Soon one of you will attempt to communicate. But which one will be first and how will it occur? Until this point you've only been an observer, forming an attitude about this person, but behaviour will give you an opportunity to confirm some of your perceptions, whether conscious or unconsciously reached. From the very first moment you notice the other person has seen you, even more questions rush to your head. Will they acknowledge your presence? What are they thinking about 'catching' you watching them? What have they perceived about you? Is the look in their eyes a sign of compassion, curiosity, threat, or annoyance?

How you and the 'other' will develop this new acquaintance is uncertain. But, at some point you will communicate a message, whether verbally (a possible greeting) or nonverbally (a friendly smile, nod or extended hand). It is through communication – whether learned through life's experiences or cultural upbringing – that you and the 'other' will form a relationship. It may only be temporary, lasting for a moment, a few hours, or it may grow into something more meaningful. Reflect on what happens next.

Reflection and Response Questions

(Please select one for your written response.)

While reading the study what perceptions and images immediately came to mind? Explain why.

What cultural differences does the story allow for? How could attitude and behaviour impact the outcome?

How might this scenario further 'cultural' exchange between two people?

Imagine how you might have responded to this situation one week ago. Would your response be the same today? Explain.

Theological Reflection

(Exercise) 4.B

Read the following passage, take a moment for reflection and then be prepared to respond to the questions listed below.

Read the following – Matthew 13.31-32 (cf. Mark 4.30-32; Luke 13.18-19)

He (Jesus) put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Background:

This parable is included in all three of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). Some biblical scholars suggest it is significant because of its message of inclusion – that is, that in the 'kingdom of heaven' all will be welcomed. In the parable, Jesus doesn't bother to distinguish which birds will make nests. Rather, he leaves this open to the imagination of those to whom he is speaking. The assumption is that all birds who build their nests in trees will have access and be able to nest in the branches of the tree Jesus is speaking about.

Now, consider and discuss the following question:

Does your church or faith community model this image of the 'kingdom of heaven'?

Who is present? Who is missing? Why?

Read the following excerpt from Paul's letter to Philemon before completing the assignment given below.

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love-- and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment.

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced.

Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother – especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Background: Paul's letter to Philemon concerns the runaway slave Onesimus who Paul is returning to his master. First, be aware that slavery in the Greco-Roman world was most extreme, and often included the sale of children by impoverished parents. Romans had developed a 'slave society' where over 35 percent of the population were slaves. Thus, "Roman enslavement, whether by capture in war, birth to slave women, rescue of abandoned infants, purchase, self-sale, or kidnapping meant 'social death', cutting the slave off from family, former home, and property." Punishment to slaves who revolted or ran away was severe, and could include crucifixion. Onesimus has broken the law!

Consider and complete the following assignment:

Can you imagine any situation today whereby you would instruct a person to return (or facilitate their return) to a potentially 'life threatening' environment?

Briefly write down the scenario you envision.

Now, identify the person, describe them – what do they look like, age, background, etc.

After reflection, prepare a brief letter interceding on the person's behalf. Be prepared to share your thoughts with others

For more information

See S. Scott Bartchy, 'Slavery in the New Testament' in Paul J. Achtemeier, Gen. Ed., Bible Dictionary (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), pp.1030-1031.

Read the following – Matthew 23.13 (cf. Luke 11.52)

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.

Background:

Throughout Matthew 23, Jesus makes seven 'Woe' statements (vv.13-14, 15, 16-22, 23-24, 25-26, 27-28, and 29-36) where he rebukes the religious leaders of his day indiscriminately. This is one of those statements. Here Jesus chastises temple administrators/ecclesiastical lawyers (scribes) and leaders (Pharisees) for keeping others out of the 'kingdom of heaven.'

Keeping in mind what you have discussed above in 4.B earlier, consider and discuss the following:

How might we be 'keeping others out' of our church or faith community?

What obstacles or barriers will need to be removed first to make those who are 'other' feel more comfortable?

What preparation will be needed to assist those who are already present make the transition?

Evaluation Form

4.E

HANDOUT

Please use this opportunity to say what you think about the course. Your comments will help in future planning and preparation of courses.

What has been helpful?

What have you learned?

How could the course be improved?

Circle a number below to indicate how helpful you have found these things:

1 = unhelpful

5 = extremely helpful

Group activities	1	2	3	4	5
Facilitators input	1	2	3	4	5
Handouts	1	2	3	4	5
Length of sessions	1	2	3	4	5
Anything else?	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for taking the time to complete this