

**EXERCISE OF THE WEEK:**

Consider what stirred you regarding this week's content and decide on your own exercise for the week

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**RHYTHM OF LIFE - ORDER OF MEETING**

*Inclusion Rhythm Week 2 – Affirming the Faith of the Outsider*

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**BECOMING FULLY PRESENT (I-III)**

**I. OPENING WORDS**

We gather with one purpose—to grow together in love as we learn to follow the way of Jesus with all of our lives. This is a space where every voice matters and where everyone has something valuable to contribute. We celebrate with those who are celebrating and mourn with those who are mourning. Through sincere listening, support and open questions we honour each other.

**II. AWARENESS PRAYER**

**III. PRAYER OF GRATITUDE**

Take a few minutes to consider the past week and then do a prayer of thanksgiving together for the things that stirs in your hearts. Use whichever prayer method you desire (small groups, silence, larger group, written down, etc)

**IV. EXAMEN**

- Where in the past week did you sense God's involvement or closeness?
- Where in the past week did you sense God's absence or felt disconnected?

**V. TAKING IT DEEPER**

- What do you remember about our time together last week?
- Is there any new insight you've gathered during the rest of the week regarding the topic of our discussion?
- How did you experience the exercise?

*I. Read the Opening Words aloud*

*II. The leader encourages the group to be silent together for 2 minutes and to become aware of God's loving near presence and to express their own desire to meet with God.*

*III. The leader leads the group in a chosen prayer of gratitude.*

*IV. The leader reads the questions out loud and each person gets an opportunity to respond to them. The purpose of these questions is for us to become aware of God's movement in our lives this past week.*

*V. The leader reads the questions out loud and each person gets an opportunity to respond to them. The purpose of these questions is for us to reflect on the learning of the past week.*

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## **VI. WE RE-READ**

Scripture reading:

Invite people to follow in their own Bibles and get someone to read the following story:

### **The Faith of a Roman Officer (Matthew 8:5-13)**

When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, "Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain."

Jesus said, "I will come and heal him."

But the officer said, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed.

I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, 'Go,' and they go, or 'Come,' and they come. And if I say to my slaves, 'Do this,' they do it."

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, "I tell you the truth, I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel!

And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven.

But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, "Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened." And the young servant was healed that same hour.

## **VII. WHAT DID YOU HEAR?**

- Have you had a similar experience to Jesus? Have you been amazed by the faith of someone from another denomination or religion from you?
- How do you keep your heart and mind open to people with faith that is different to yours?
- Are you able to see 'affirming the faith of the outsider' as a sign of faith or does it feel like it in opposition to your faith?
- What does Jesus mean when he says, "And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven."

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**VIII. INTERACTION**

**IX. REFLECTION TIME**

What stood out for you about the conversation? Did you have any insights? Is there anything practical you would like to do this week as a response? Is there any support that you would like this week?

**X. BLESSING**

*May we have courage to affirm the good in those whose faith is different to ours. May we be humble enough to learn from them and accept the gifts that God wants to give to us through them.*

*Amen*

IV. Read the scripture together, allow some silence, and read it again.

Then read the quotes

V. Every person gets an opportunity to share for 1minute what did they hear when Scriptures/quotes were read. What stirred them. Encourage I-statements and no-preaching

VI. The facilitator reads the set of questions out loud and each member gets an opportunity to respond to 1/more of the questions.

VII. The facilitator reads the set of questions out loud and each member gets an opportunity to respond to 1/more of the questions.

IX. As closing the group can pray together as comfortable. Facilitator reads blessing at the end

