

How did Jesus offer welcome?

Watch Video 1: An interview with Jeniya Gwendu <https://youtu.be/rkuk45TQPIU>

MONDAY – Welcoming racial diversity

In Jeniya's video she talks about church for her being like 'entering a welcoming sanctuary'.

The word 'welcoming' brings up connections of being received with open arms, going where you are always invited and a sense of when you are there, you will be received and accepted for who you are.

The word 'sanctuary' speaks of a place to run to when you are under attack or frightened, it speaks of safety and a place where you will fully be cared for.

This is how Jeniya describes church for her.

A key note in her message is for people of colour or of different ethnicity to be accepted for who they are and especially Jeniya emphasises that we learn to love one another as expressed in John 13:34:

'...love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'

For Reflection

When Jesus was asked 'who is my neighbour', he responded with the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Read the Parable of the Good Samaritan together (Luke 10:30-37) and with this fresh reading imagine that the victim is of white British ethnicity and that the Samaritan is of a different ethnicity, African, Asian, Southeast Asian, Eastern European or any other who may be your neighbour. At the time of the parable the tensions were running high between the Judeans and the Samaritans, we may not be in this place of racial tension with our neighbours, but nonetheless ask yourself these questions:

Questions for discussion

1. What does it look like, where I live, to reach across the ethnic lines and care for those who are ethnically different from myself?
2. The Samaritan is taken to a place of safety, a sanctuary, where would be a place of safety for those in your community who do not feel loved or accepted by our society?
3. How could your church be a 'welcoming sanctuary' to those from differing ethnic backgrounds?

Pray

- If this is relevant for you, repent of past attitudes, which were more exclusive than inclusive.
- Pray for the refugees from Afghanistan and other places in the world seeking sanctuary in our country.
- Honestly seek God to understand better what it means to 'welcome' those who have a different ethnic background from ourselves.