



EQUALLY DIFFERENT

The materials in EQUALLY DIFFERENT are here to support you and your church/Christian community as you seek ways of being an inclusive community.

Who is EQUALLY DIFFERENT for?

- People who do not feel included in a local Christian community, or within the wider institution of the Church. Hopefully EQUALLY DIFFERENT will provide voices of others in similar situations, as well as ways to enabling more voices to be heard.
- People who feel that talk of equalities is a lot of fuss being made over nothing, and that in the Church there are more pressing matters to attend to. Hopefully, EQUALLY DIFFERENT can be seen in the context of Our Calling, making clear that an inclusive Church can help us in our evangelism, learning and caring, worship and service.
- People who feel included and welcome in a local Christian community and within the wider institution of the Church. EQUALLY DIFFERENT can help all to be support others who do not feel so included.

How to use EQUALLY DIFFERENT

The recommended way to use EQUALLY DIFFERENT is to dedicate a period of time to explore the issues of inclusion. This could be over a series of four consecutive weeks or maybe a church/community weekend away.

It is recommended that everyone in your local church/community is invited to do at least one of the following:

- Use the personal daily reflections
- Use the homegroup material in an existing homegroup, or study group
- Set up short-term groups to use these materials
- Use the children's and young people's materials (available soon)
- Use the worship materials as a series of themed services (available soon)
- Use the 'thought for the day' materials as epi-

logues etc at church connected groups (available soon).

Arrange for facilitators of the groups using the resource to meet together

It is recommended that all those who will be facilitating groups using EQUALLY DIFFERENT meet together to share thoughts, fears, expectations and methods of supporting people in their groups.

Facilitators should be aware that exploring matters of inclusion often raises very personal issues for people. Some people will become angry, others will become withdrawn and others will be confused.

At times the materials in EQUALLY DIFFERENT may alienate some people who might feel that a lot of fuss is being made over nothing, and that the Church has more pressing matters to attend to. Sometimes, people may be unable to see how the materials in EQUALLY DIFFERENT relate to them.

Therefore facilitators are encouraged to:

- Hold times of prayer together (some devotions are provided)
- Ensure the sessions with groups begin and end with prayer
- When a group first meet to use EQUALLY DIFFERENT they agree rules of confidentiality
- Each times a group meets they recap the confidentiality rules they have made.

It may be helpful to put EQUALLY DIFFERENT into the whole context of Our Calling, making clear that an inclusive Church can help in our evangelism, learning and caring, worship and service.

It is important to stress that to be an inclusive Church is to include all, not to make those

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already fully involved feel guilty. There is exciting work ahead for those who feel included in becoming good allies with those who feel excluded.

Agree a date for whole community/church to come together to share

Advertise a 'gathering' event at the beginning, so people know they are a part of something bigger. It is vital that everyone involved in the campaign and using the resources is aware of how their experience/learning etc can influence possible decisions and plans for the future, so holding a 'gathering' at the end or in the middle of the campaign is really important. How you facilitate the final event will also impact on where the church/community move on to next.

What if we don't want to/are not in a position to dedicate a whole series to EQUALLY DIFFERENT?

The materials for EQUALLY DIFFERENT can be used as stand-alone items.

It may be that you are the only person in your church/community keen to explore issues of inclusion. Use the personal reflections for your own use. If you want to involve others slowly and gently, maybe you could download the homegroup materials for one group to use – word of mouth is a great method of communication.

Where to next?

You may decide as a church/community that you want to develop and implement an equal opportunities policy. EQUALLY DIFFERENT will contain session plans, ideas and support to do this, so please keep checking the website to see what has been added.