



Radical Hospitality

We hear God's call to authentic community, as Jesus paints a picture of an open table where all are invited and where there is enough for all.

This week...

Ecumenical prayer calendar

Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal

As listed in *Pilgrim Prayer: The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle*, edited by Ester Pudjo Widiastih and Karen L. Bloomquist. (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2018). <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle> offers valuable aids for intercessory prayers, prayer on behalf of and in solidarity with others.

Personal reflection

"When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind."

At a dinner party, Jesus watches guests jostling to get the best seats in the house and talks about the need for humility. God's reign is not about who comes first; it's about a gracious response to being invited. Jesus then speaks to those issuing invitations. Going against the accepted norms of the day, he challenges his disciples to invite those who cannot pay them back. We are all guests at God's table, not by right or because we deserve it, but by gracious invitation.

- **What does hospitality mean to you?**
- **Who are some people you know who demonstrate authentic hospitality?**

The planning page is provided in text format for copying, adapting, and adding to your bulletin or online worship resources or website or social media (see Text folder, Worship Outline).

Online Resources

Lection Connection

Essays and discussion prompts linking current events with this week's scriptures. Use for sermon preparation, Bible studies, and small groups or share on social media at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/10/>.

Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home

An easy-to-share, weekly online resource supports the spiritual lives and faith formation of individuals and families at home. It is provided in the [Faith at Home](#) folder.

August 28, 2022

12th Sunday after Pentecost
Proper 17 (22)
22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Revised Common Lectionary (Year C)

Jeremiah 2:4–13
Psalm 81:1, 10–16
Hebrews 13:1–8, 15–16

Luke 14:1, 7–14

the focus in age-level materials



Seasons of the Spirit™ is based on the semi-continuous readings of the *Revised Common Lectionary*.

Liturgical colour green

Each week during Pentecost 1, we are invited to pause for a contemplative moment. See "[Pay Attention](#)" on p. 10. This week's [focus](#) is radical hospitality (p. 151).





Jeremiah 2:4–13
Psalm 81:1, 10–16
Hebrews 13:1–8, 15–16
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Seasons of the Spirit™ is based on the semi-continuous readings of the *Revised Common Lectionary*.

Christ, our loving host, open our hearts to accept your invitation to true community in God's reign. Assure us of our place at God's open table, and help us make sure that no one is excluded from dining there. Amen.

Radical Hospitality

How do we live out the hospitality that God models? With no expectation of payback, God welcomes and feeds all who humbly come to the banquet table seeking to satisfy their hungry hearts.

God is the host in **Jeremiah 2:4–13**, having invited the people “into a plentiful land to eat its fruits” (2:7). It seems that the people have not been good guests, however. This section of Jeremiah is labelled a “covenant lawsuit” because God is bringing a suit against Israel for breaking the Mosaic covenant. Instead of worshipping God and upholding the covenant, the people have defiled God's land and are accused of turning from God, their source of living water.

As in Jeremiah, **Psalm 81:1, 10–16** contrasts God's gracious hospitality with the people's rebelliousness and unwillingness to listen. God's hospitality, seen in verse 16, needs to be read through the lens of the Exodus. The people grumbled in the wilderness, demanding proof of God's presence. God generously fed them manna (Exodus 16). They wanted water, and water flowed from the rock (Exodus 17). In Psalm 81, God the host goes beyond the people's request for sustenance; they are promised the finest wheat and honey from the rock. How will they respond?

The writer of Hebrews concludes with several “do's and don'ts” appropriate in God's reign. In **Hebrews 13:1–8, 15–16**, brothers and sisters in the faith community show hospitality to fellow Christians coming from other places. The writer also calls for sharing out of love for one another.

Luke 14:1, 7–14 Luke's record of Jesus eating dinner at the Pharisee's home assumes knowledge of table fellowship that his community would have readily understood. Dinners were not simply meals but social events that bonded people of similar status together. The seating arrangement was cru-

cial because people expected to eat with their social equals. Being seated next to a diner considered socially inferior disgraced the more prominent guest. Moreover, according to ancient records, people could find out who had been invited before accepting an invitation. If the “wrong” people would be there, many potential guests made excuses and declined the invitation (see Luke 14:18–20). Others declined the invitation if they felt that they could not reciprocate the hospitality. When invitations were issued and accepted, guests knew that they were obligating themselves to host a dinner that would measure up to the standards of the one they had attended. To offer less was shameful.

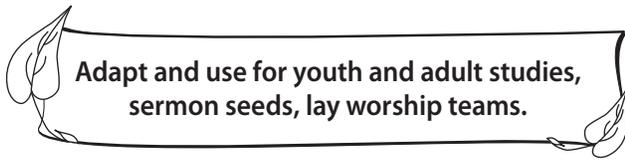
Jesus uses this occasion to describe the reign of God. As usual in the gospel of Luke, reversals and twists in the story make the point. God's reign is not about “measuring up” but about being invited by God. Jesus tells the host to invite people of low social status who cannot reciprocate the invitation. He also admonishes the host to invite those who could not possibly return the favour. The reign of God is marked by true generosity, like the generosity God pours out on all. While we can respond to God's compassion and mercy like the woman who washed Jesus' feet at another dinner party recounted in Luke 7:36–50, we cannot even begin to repay it.

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Jesus paints a picture of the reign of God as an open table where we are all invited and where there is enough for all, forever. Christ calls us to set such an open table, to invite all people to experience life shaped by God's inclusive and compassionate love. What does it mean to be invited to live in God's reign, not because of what we have or what we do for a living but simply because we are God's children? In what ways do our lives demonstrate our response to this invitation?



Reflecting on the Word



Connecting with life

- When you have an important event in your community, how do you determine who gets invited, who takes priority, and who sits in the reserved seats?
- How have you felt when you were excluded from an event you especially wanted to attend?

Scripture

Jeremiah 2:4–13 Jeremiah calls the people of Judah to return to the bountiful, open community that God provides.

- What emotions do you hear expressed in this passage?
- What is your reaction to this?
- What response do you think Jeremiah is calling for?
- When have you searched for things that did not matter (such as the broken cisterns), and failed to notice or acknowledge that God was offering living water?

Psalms 81:1, 10–16

- When in your life or that of your church have you not listened to God, as in the case of the people in Psalm 81?

Hebrews 13:1–8, 15–16 reads like the wisdom sayings in Proverbs.

- What verse speaks to you most clearly at this time?
- How might you enact this wisdom more fully in your life?

The writer urges Christians to establish an open table around which we live in generous, humble, inviting, and hospitable ways.

- From the writer's viewpoint, how does faith transform our human behaviour and our ability to extend hospitality?

Materials "[Contemplative Moment](#)" (p. 151)

- Biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann has said, "The reign of God is public life re-organized toward neighbourliness."
- In what ways does this definition expand your understanding of God's reign?
- In what ways does it limit your understanding?

Luke 14:1, 7–14 speaks of social and cultural protocols.

- What social protocols in your faith community might Jesus challenge? Why?

Many organizations and corporations have protocol officers responsible for being aware of customs, traditions, and manners in other cultures. They educate members of the organization or government leaders on appropriate behaviours when in international settings.

- What might be the job description of a protocol officer in the reign of God?
- What sort of person could fill that position? What skills would they need?

If Jesus were telling this wisdom story in your community, who are the specific categories of people that might be named in vv. 12–14?

- How does your church reach out to and welcome those who cannot materially contribute to its ministries?
- When, in the life of the church, do we put a fence around the table?

Connecting scripture and life

Jesus calls us to radical hospitality – to go against the accepted cultural norms.

- In what ways is it risky to respond to Jesus' call to radical hospitality in our present time?

Reflect on the quote from biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann.

- To what extent do you, individually and as the church, need to reorganize your life toward neighbourliness?
- What is required for this reorganization?

Today or during the week, use the "Contemplative Moment" as you pause for a moment of reflection.

Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

After Jesus challenges the rules about healing on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10–17 and Luke 14:1–6), he challenges the way people exalt themselves (14:7–11) and then gives instructions about who to invite to a banquet (Luke 14:12–14).

Jesus' words about exalting and humbling and being invited can lead to an us/them dichotomy in worship. It is easy to conclude that those in the church, "we," are the holders of God's love and grace with the power to welcome and extend these gifts to those outside the church, "them." How can you use language and visual images to

communicate that those gathered and those "outside" are equally the receivers and the givers of God's love?

Through ritual, prayers, and the celebration of Communion, pray that all encounter the boundlessness of God's reign.

Each week during Pentecost 1, we are encouraged to spend time reflecting on ways we might respond to God's call to discipleship. See "[Pay Attention](#)" (p. 10).



Radical Hospitality

Prepare

NOTE: All of these suggestions are mere starting points; adapt, delete, and add according to your local needs.

- ❑ Recruit volunteers needed for worship: three for the call to worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Luke 14:1, 7–14. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “[The Invitation](#)” on p. 152, or “[Welcome Everyone!](#)” in “Exploring Our Faith” at the end of this week’s materials. For the dramatic reading, arrange for three people (narrator, Jesus, and religious leader) to present the reading from *The Message*.
- ❑ Bring items for setting the worship space.
- ❑ You might choose to print [Seeing by Heart](#) on or in your bulletin (in the Images to Project and Print folder). For background to the art and artist, see “[Connecting with the Art](#)” on p. 8.
- ❑ Bring song such as “At the Table of the World” (*Seasons Songbook, vol. 8 #4* on *Seasons Music CD, vol. 8*. Printed music and recording also available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads, www.seasonsonline.ca*).
- ❑ Set [stations](#) as described on pp. 153–154.



Music Suggestions

At the Table of the World

Brian Arthur Wren; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 8*

Let the People of God

Ken Medema; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*

Highways and Byways

Sandra Sears; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*

We Come to the Hungry Feast

Ray Makeever; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 6*

A Circle of Love

Felicia Sandler; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 5*

For Everyone Born (A Place at the Table)

Shirley Erena Murry; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 4*

How Then Shall I Live?

Linnea Good; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 1*



A chart that shows the licence holder(s) for each song in each of the 9 *Seasons of the Spirit* Music Volumes can be found at www.seasonsonline.ca. Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

Gather

Call to worship

Arrange for three people to stand at the Communion table for this call to worship.

ONE: We who have risen to embrace this day,

TWO: we who are weary in body and spirit,

THREE: all are welcome in this sacred place.

ONE: We who know the abundance of life,

TWO: we who are left impoverished by harsh realities,

THREE: all receive a sustaining measure of God’s love.

ONE: We who are strong in mind and soul,

TWO: we who are challenged by illnesses of many kinds,

THREE: all are whole in the Spirit of God.

ONE: We who have a voice and the strength to use it,

TWO: we who whisper prayers in our hearts,

THREE: all are invited to worship the God we love.

ONE, TWO, THREE: Come, for you have a place of honour in the heart of God.

Opening prayer

We give you thanks,

Gracious God,

that you invite us and all people

into your presence,

to feast at your table,

to share together as equals,

and to welcome one another.

keep us ever mindful that it is by your grace

that we are welcomed here.

May we never do anything

to suggest that others of your children

are any less worthy of your grace. Amen.

Prayer of confession

ONE: Sacred Spirit who moves within and between,

through you, we are assured of Love

that gathers us in and renews us with worship.

We are quick to receive your boundless welcome,

and with eager hands,

we accept the sacramental gift of your grace.



Worship Outline • August 28, 2022

But we are aware
of the times we become satisfied
with our own inclusion
and we do not enact the divine hospitality
planted deep within our very nature.

When we do not look beyond our institutional walls,

RESPONSE: forgive us, O God.

ONE: When we withhold and restrict the grace of the
sacraments,

RESPONSE: forgive us, O God.

ONE: When we imagine ourselves to be more valuable
than others,

RESPONSE: forgive us, O God.

ONE: When we think only of self-maintenance,

RESPONSE: forgive us, O God.

ONE: When we do not live as your people,

RESPONSE: forgive us, O God.

Words of affirmation

In the soul of God,
we each have a place of honour
where the Spirit nourishes us.
Then filled with the abundant love of God,
we can extend ourselves
in new and life-giving ways.
Receive forgiveness
and live the love of God.

Engage

Opening the word

Hebrews 13:1–8, 15–16

Group reflection Invite those gathered to quietly reflect on the characteristics of a loving community and be prepared to share their suggestions aloud at the appropriate time in the reading.

- **What does mutual love and interdependence look like practically?**
- **What shape would it take in our actions and attitudes, especially as a community of faith?**

Read Hebrews 13:1. Have people read or say their ideas of what mutual love might look like. When all who would like have participated, continue with the reading from Hebrews.

Luke 14:1, 7–14 *the focus scripture for age-level materials in ENCORE*

Choose from the following.

Bible story Have a storyteller present the story “[The Invitation](#)” on p. 152. Alternatively, for younger children, tell the story “[Welcome, Everyone!](#)” (in Exploring Our Faith” at the end of this week’s materials).

Dramatic reading from *The Message* translation by Eugene Petersen. Two people, the “religious leader” and “Jesus,” will take their special reserved seats at the table. “Jesus” will speak. It may be unnecessary to have a narrator but allow the movement to the places and visual actions to provide the setting. It would be most helpful if “Jesus” did not look as if “reading” the words.

Invite children, young people, and all who wish to move to the stations. Others will remain seated for proclaiming the word.

Respond

After proclaiming the word, you might invite those who have not already done so to move to or around the stations, taking ten minutes or so with a chosen practice.

Sing or listen to a song such as “At the Table of the World” as people gather together again (*Seasons Songbook, vol. 8, #4* on *Seasons Music CD, vol. 8*. Printed music and recording also available at *Seasons MP3 Downloads, www.seasonsonline.ca*).

Prayers of the people

For two voices or call and response

ONE: Gracious God,
each of us is a part of a larger whole:
we’re members of an extended family,
residents of suburbs and towns,
citizens and subjects of nations,
and beings in your good creation.



Worship Outline • August 28, 2022

By your Spirit, we are linked together
and through spirited compassion
we share a common joy and suffering.
May we be mindful of the fullness of life's experience:
that which is ours and, especially in this time of prayer,
that which makes up the day-to-day existence of
others.

We pray for the suffering that comes from
inhospitality
manifested in prejudice, racism, misunderstanding,
and fear
(silence or voice specific situations).

With hearts open to compassion, we pray:

RESPONSE: let mutual love prevail.

ONE: We are aware of the painful realities resulting from
an imbalance of power and wealth in our nation and
world
(silence or voice specific situations).

With hearts open to compassion, we pray:

RESPONSE: let mutual love prevail.

ONE: We open our hearts now to the gathered community
and allow ourselves to feel the joys and concerns of
one another

(silence or voice specific situations).

With hearts open to compassion, we pray:

RESPONSE: let mutual love prevail.

Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

Based on Hebrews 13:1–8 and 15–16.

This is our place to learn and practice the way of Christ.

Here we will cultivate mutual love;

remember those whose place is here,

yet they are not yet free to be in their place.

Here we will honour relationships that nurture faithfulness
and fullness.

Through the gifts we bring and the lives we live
we will hold loosely to our worldly wealth
and share what we have
to do the good we can.

Go out to offer hospitality.

Bless

Live always as an offering of praise.
Remember always to do good in this world,
and share what you have with others.
So we become the blessing we receive,
from God our Maker, Healer, and Guide.

Amen.



Contemplative Moment • August 28, 2022

Radical hospitality will require that we move toward a time when one might say:

- I am seen.
- I am heard.
- I am not forgotten and left to drift through the system.
- I am a person with worth and plans and purpose.
- I am equal. My relationships with people who provide service are horizontal, not hierarchical.
- I am part of the community.
- I have a place to live where I feel safe.

Kerry H. Morrison

<https://www.accoglienza.us/can-radical-hospitality-change-our-mental-health-system/>

The term “radical hospitality can be defined as a practice of putting extraordinary effort and emphasis on making people feel welcome...and focuses on breaking down barriers that prevent people from participating in an effort, campaign, or community.”

<https://metro council.org/Handbook/Files/Community-Engagement/PEP-Toolbox-RadicalHospitality.aspx>

Radical Hospitality

Write or doodle your thoughts here.



Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

~ Hebrews 13:2 (NRSV)



The Invitation

Based on Luke 14:1, 7–14

You might invite everyone to join the “chorus” that is in **bold**.

One day, a religious leader, called a Pharisee, invited Jesus to dinner. Jesus could see that many of the people who were invited thought they were very important. Jesus looked around and then decided to tell everyone a story.

Once there was a large party. It was just about to begin. The table was set, and all was ready.

The hosts stood at the head table and greeted all their guests, saying, **“Welcome! Welcome! Come in and sit down.”**

The mothers and fathers arrived.

The grandmothers and grandfathers arrived.

The uncles and aunts and other family arrived.

The hosts greeted each of them, saying, **“Welcome! Welcome! Come in and sit down.”**

Now some of the guests thought that they were very important people.

They let everyone know how important they were. They sat at the head table right beside the hosts. But there was not enough room for everyone to sit there. When the hosts politely asked them to take a seat at a different table, they were very embarrassed. They felt very silly about the fuss they had made.

When Jesus had finished the story, he looked around at everyone. **“Can you not be happy sitting anywhere? Don’t look for ways to show off.”**

And when you are inviting others to your home, don’t just invite family and friends. They will pay you back by asking you to come to dinner at their house. Instead, invite people who cannot pay you back.

Invite the people who have no money and greet them by saying, **“Welcome! Welcome! Come in and sit down.”**

Invite the people who are sick and greet them by saying, **“Welcome! Welcome! Come in and sit down.”**

Invite the people who are ignored by others by saying, **“Welcome! Welcome! Come in and sit down.”**

Invite all the lonely people who do not have friends or family by saying, **“Welcome! Welcome! Come in and sit down.”** When you do this, God is glad!

A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



Bible story

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Paper or drawing pads
- Recording of today’s story “[The Invitation](#)”
- Alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

The practice of storytelling

Directions

1. Listen to the story “The Invitation.”
2. Use art supplies to write or draw your response to the story.



Living, Learning, Growing as Disciples

The following stations might be set up around your worship space, or in other places around the church, in your home, or outdoors. Choose one or more practices, depending on your space and numbers. Display the [directions](#) for all to see. Adapt stations for use when physically distancing and above all, follow the safe practices of your congregation and local health officials.

For your convenience, directions are formatted for printing and available in the Stations folder.

Health and Safety Practices



Basic supplies pens, pencils, markers, crayons, white glue/glue sticks, scissors, hand sanitizer, wipes placed in a basket or bin, two containers marked “clean” and “used”



Setting the space Utilize large spaces where people can maintain a safe physical distance. Spread out chairs around a large table or use tape to mark off the space around stand alone chairs.



Keep it clean Wipe down and disinfect places used for stations. Provide enough arts and crafts supplies to reduce sharing and mark containers “clean” and “used.” Remind people to use hand sanitizer as they begin and as they end stations.

Welcome banner

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Mural paper
- Construction paper
- People patterns/templates (see *Virtual Resource Booklet* at the library at www.seasonsonline.ca)



Suitable for all ages

The practice of welcome

Directions

1. Make a welcoming banner for your church.
2. Trace around the people pattern/template on construction paper.
3. Add features, so the figure represents you.
4. Glue to the mural paper.
5. Draw a speech balloon from each figure.
6. Decide what you would say to welcome others to the church.
7. Display the banner on the bulletin board.

Welcoming ways graffiti wall

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Re-usable adhesive or masking tape (whatever is allowed for fixing posters and so on to the wall)
- Long, long sheet of newsprint to cover the table with these categories written on it: When people arrive at the church building, we can welcome them by...; In worship, we can welcome people by...; During fellowship time, we can welcome people by... (leave space for writing suggestions).



Suitable for all ages

The practice of welcome

Directions

1. Just as the people were welcomed to God’s table, we can welcome people to our church.
2. Look at the sheet of newsprint and think of something you can do to welcome others.
3. Write or draw it with a marker.
4. Move the graffiti sheet to a place where the congregation will see it. Fix it to the wall (if possible).



Discovering cultural diversity in the community

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Large sheet of poster board
- Local council literature on the demographics of your community (often available via the Internet)



**Suitable for all ages
working together**

The practice of welcome

Directions

“Let mutual love continue” (Hebrews 13:1).

1. On a large sheet of card, draw either a cross or a building with a cross on it.
2. Brainstorm the cultural diversity of your community and record your thoughts on the chart.
3. Think about ways people from different cultures are welcomed/included and experience love.

Clay/play dough modelling

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Bibles
- Copies of this week’s story “[The Invitation](#)” (p. 152)
- Modelling clay
- Small boards for models to sit on



**Suitable for all ages
working together**

The practice of creativity

Directions

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:2).

1. Reflect on this week’s story “The Invitation,” which is based on Luke 14:1, 7–14.
2. Using play dough, modelling clay, or a similar product, create the meal scene that is recorded in the gospel. You may like to label the characters.
3. Share your creation with others.

Discussion

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Magazines
- Local newspapers



**Suitable for
ages 12-adult**

The practice of discerning “voices” within your community

Directions

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God” (Hebrews 13:16).

1. Talk about “voices” that are heard/not heard within your community.
2. Using resources provided, find examples of people sharing and doing good.
3. Together discuss:
 - **Are they responding to a “voice” within your community, or do you discern another motivation – if so, which one?**
 - **In what ways may your church respond to a “voice” that is not being heard?**

The article “[Connecting with the Art](#)” on page 8 provides background to this season’s posters and art engagement ideas for individuals and groups. You might add an Art station and select one of the art engagement ideas.



Welcome, Everyone!

A story based on Luke 14:1, 7-14

One day, Jesus was invited to a meal at the home of an important leader in town. Many people were invited. This was going to be a big banquet!

The table was filled with delicious food. As the people arrived, they rushed to get the best seats. They wanted to be close to the delicious food, and they wanted to be close to the important leader who had invited them.

When Jesus entered the room, the people watched carefully. What would Jesus teach them about living in God's way? Would Jesus notice the important people sitting in the best seats?

Jesus looked around and then said something surprising.

"When you are invited to share a meal, don't rush to get a good seat. Look around, make sure your friend has a seat. Make sure everyone has a seat. And, be sure to welcome everyone..."

People who are lonely and don't have friends.

People who are poor and don't have enough to eat.

People who are different from you.

Welcome all people to the table, for God loves each one of us. We are all special.

When you welcome everyone, God is very, very happy."

A breadbasket cloth to welcome people to your table

You will need

- A square of plain cotton cloth (35 cm/14 in)
- One or two spring-type clothespins/clothes pegs
- Sponge
- One or more colours of acrylic paint
- Shallow dishes
- Fine-tipped permanent marker
- Paint smock
- Clean-up supplies

Instructions

1. Wash the cloth, cut the sponge into small pieces, clip a piece of sponge to the end of each clothespin/clothes peg handle.
2. Use a permanent marker to print a message such as "Welcome friends" on the edge of the square.
3. Using the clothes-peg handle, dip the sponge into the paint, and then dab patterns onto the cloth. Use one or more paints.
4. Hang the cloth to dry.
5. Use the cloth to line a bread basket.

Alternatively, use fabric markers to decorate the cloth.



Banquet Guest

Jesus said something surprising: "When you are invited to share a meal, look around and make sure everyone has a seat, and be sure to welcome everyone. People who are lonely, people who don't have friends, people who are poor, and rich, people who are different from you."

Instructions Trace this pattern onto sheets of paper. Make as many as you like. Write "God welcomes everyone" on each pattern, cut them out, fold and staple as in the illustration. You might cover a small box with fabric to create a table. Stand the people around the table.

