**Hospitality**

**Opening Activity**

1. Describe a time when someone threw a party for you. What did they do to make you feel loved and celebrated? What was it about the party that made you feel happy?
2. If you had to define the word “hospitality” in your own words, what definition would you use?

Consider a time when you had to enter a space, place or group you had never been connected to before. Maybe it was joining your first rec soccer team as a kid. Perhaps it was traveling to another country with your family. Or possibly starting at a new school when you moved to a new town. 3. What were some of the things people did to help you feel welcomed into those spaces, places, or groups? How was Jesus honored in your experience of welcome? Now consider a time when you didn’t feel welcomed into a space, place, or group. (As you are comfortable sharing) What were some of the things people did that made you feel unwelcomed?

The words “hospitality” and “hospital” come from the same Latin word “*hospes*” which means both guest and host. 4. What are some things we can learn about hospitality from what we know about hospitals? (notice they share the same root word)

Hospitality is about both the host AND the guest. Imagine being a guest in someone’s house for a week, but they never ask you what you want or need. When you tell them that you have a peanut allergy, they tell you that they’re unwilling to change their meal plan to accommodate your dietary restriction. When you decide to relax a little and watch the Phillies game, they just grab the remote at the bottom of the third inning and change it to C-SPAN. Or if they turn down your request to show you around their town because they just don’t want to waste the gas. You kind of get the picture – hospitality is not just about the desires of the host, but ALSO the needs and desires of the guest.

Hospitality also shares similarities with the practice of generosity. Being hospitable would require a person to be generous with their time, their possessions, their money, their resources, etc. Being a person who is hospitable and generous might require that we see the world as full of abundance (ie. there is enough time, love and resources for everyone) rather than scarcity (ie. there’s only enough time, love and resources for a few). Watch this brief video on, [scarcity and abundance, generosity and hospitality](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62CliEkRCso) and write reflections to the questions below:

1. What role does hospitality play in your relationship with God? How has God shown generosity/hospitality to you?
2. How can your faith inspire you to radically welcome others? How might God want you to open your heart, time, and home to “the least of these?”

Read Romans 12:9-17. This is a letter written to a church in Rome from the Apostle Paul. Paul wrote many letters to early churches (many of which are in your Bible ☺) celebrating the ways they are living like Jesus as a community, encouraging them to share God’s love, and even reprimanding them when they are *not* living as a loving Christ-centered community. If you were to write to the community of Christians at Westminster Presbyterian Church, what would you write to your community about radical hospitality? Write things that celebrate the ways that Westminster is practicing radical hospitality well. Encourage the church’s leaders and congregants to seek ways to improve. Perhaps even share some words to rebuke a practice in our chur community is the opposite of radical hospitality. Based on the video [Radical Hospitality for the Rest of Us](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ-ztamQa5Q), what are some things you think the community of Christians at Westminster does well? What do you wish our community did better or more? Now go ahead – write a letter 😊 After you’ve done so, respond to the questions below. If you’re having trouble coming up with some answers, check out this [short video on radical hospitality](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJev_KcsJ9U):

1. What do you think is required from us live into radical hospitality?
2. How do you imagine Jesus calling you to open your heart and your time to “the least of these”?

“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect o show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” -Hebrews 13:1-2 (NRSV version)

“Keep loving each other like family. Don’t neglect to open up your homes to guests, because by doing this some have been hosts to angels without knowing it.” -Hebrews 13:1-2 (CEB version)

1. Which of these versions of Hebrews 13:1-2 resonates with you?
2. How might you have “been host to angels without knowing it”?

The West Chester Food Cupboard is an organization that practices radical hospitality by making food available for those who don’t have the financial access to groceries. Go to either the West Chester Food Cupboard or Chester County Foodbank websites. See if you can find what items they are looking for this Christmas season. Talk with your family about how you might help the West Chester Food Cupboard.

**Closing Breath Prayer**

IN: God, open my heart

OUT: to be welcoming to all

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3. What were some of the things people did to help you feel welcomed into those spaces, places, or groups? How was Jesus honored in your experience of welcome? Now consider a time when you didn’t feel welcomed into a space, place, or group. (As you are comfortable sharing) What were some of the things people did that made you feel unwelcomed?
4. What are some things we can learn about hospitality from what we know about hospitals?
5. What role does hospitality play in your relationship with God? How has God shown generosity/hospitality to you?
6. How can your faith inspire you to radically welcome others? How might God want you to open your heart, time, and home to “the least of these?”
7. What do you think is required from us live into radical hospitality?
8. How do you imagine Jesus calling you to open your heart and your time to “the least of these”?
9. Which of these versions of Hebrews 13:1-2 resonates with you?
10. How might you have “been host to angels without knowing it”?