

Lunch and Learn #4  
March 22, 2023 for Website

## DON'T PUT PEOPLE IN BOXES

L & L 4

### LABELS!

“When you put labels on someone, it’s like sticking them in a box with no air holes until they slowly suffocate. People aren’t just one thing. They’re many things.”

— Sadie Allen

“ When we know better, we do better.” - Maya Angelou

The L & L sessions are a major component of our process in becoming an Affirming Congregation. In fact, it is required by Affirm United that we make available education opportunities on a range of bias and unconscious bias topics.

#### Our Goal

....to respond with positive action to people of all:

Ages	Family diversity
health conditions	Ability
Races	Economic Circumstances
Genders	Religion
Gender identity	Spiritual and Ethnic
Background	
Sexual Orientation	

Opening Prayer

- Priscilla

Video “Inclusion Starts With I” <https://youtu.be/QDna1RV-tYo>

See **Appendix** for phrases that on cards in this video as they fly by very quickly!



### **Boxes activity using 3 groups**

At our March Lunch and Learn we experienced and discussed the notion of putting people in boxes. We put ourselves in boxes according to how we perceive our interests, occupation, activities or inner thoughts. For instance if you like curling and know others who like to curl then you can put yourself in the box of curling enthusiasts.

### **Discussion**

However, putting someone else into a box, particularly a person you don't know well, is to judge the individual broadly and unfairly based on very few factors. In effect we are assigning the person a box when knowing nothing about them.

We live in a very diverse society, and it is natural to lump others into boxes as we cope with the complexities of good and bad information, that assaults us constantly. The problem is, in our minds, we form the parameters for those boxes through what we hear, read or watch without taking into account that we likely know quite little about the individuals within them.

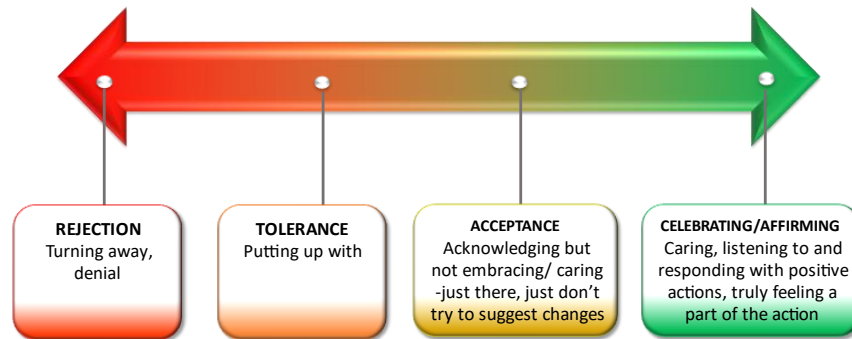
**Video “Don’t Put People In Boxes”** <https://youtu.be/zRwt25M5nGw>

### **Summery**

Our Church Vision Statement identifies 12 boxes that really should not be boxes at all. Instead, those we tend to lump within those boxes need to be seen as individual and unique children of God. We should be welcoming and interacting with these individuals through a celebration of their diversity. Our Vision Statement goes on to support this and suggests the various pathways we as a congregation can follow to remove the assigning of boxes from our thoughts when we encounter someone new.

AFFIRMING  
CONTINUUM:

## How Do We Perceive Others?



Closing Prayer

-Priscilla

Lunch and discussion

### APPENDIX:

#### Inclusion Starts With I

1. It's the unease of walking into a meeting where no-one else looks like me... and the unease of being judged when I leave early to pick-up my children.
2. It's the frustration when I am not asked for my opinion or talked over in meetings...and the frustration of asserting my opinion, only to be labeled aggressive or angry.
3. It's the annoyance when people presume I am less committed to my family life, because I am a man...and the annoyance when people presume I am less committed to my work, because I am a mother.
4. It's the pressure to be super-human and not talk about how I'm really feeling...and it's the pressure to fit in.

5. It's the anxiety of sharing my personal life, because most people around me are heterosexual...and the anxiety of how others will react to my disability.
6. It's the awkwardness when I get mistaken for someone else of the same ethnicity...and the awkwardness when my client assumes that my white male colleague is in charge.
7. It's the strain of feeling I am expected to do more, simply because I don't have children...and the strain when conversations aren't in my first language.
8. It's the exasperation of being labeled entitled and lacking drive...and the exasperation when people assume I don't have relevant skills or ambition anymore.
9. It's the indignation of feeling that my promotion is not celebrated as much as others...and the indignation when you think I was promoted just because I am a woman.
10. It's about the everyday. It's about the big and the small.
11. It's about the fact that...for every \$100 a woman makes, a man makes \$258...women of colour hold 3% of C-Suite positions...7 in 10 working fathers want to work more flexibly...disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people...transgender people are twice as likely to be unemployed and are four times as likely to live in poverty...1 in 4 of us will experience a mental health issue each year...and team performance improves by 50% when everyone feels included.
12. Inclusion is not just about...Gender. Ethnicity. Sexual Orientation. Background. Disability. Culture. Age. Mental Health.

13.It's about you. It's about me. It's about all of us.

14.We are all unique. And we all just want a chance.

15.A chance to feel valued and respected for who we are...and our differences to be embraced as strengths.

16.Inclusion promotes belonging purpose and wellbeing.

17.Diversity ignited creativity, problem solving, and innovation.

18.It's about the type of world we want to live in and the choices we make every day.

19.It's the vision of a better world for our children.

20.One person to care one commitment to act.

21.Be the one. Join the conversation.

22.#InclusionStartsWith I

# Inclusion Starts With I