

Community Building Practices

Creating Sacred Community

15-20 min

Sit in circle (preferably on the floor). This practice calls attention to what we seek to create during our time together. As a community we notice our position in the circle - as equal. Each of us belongs – no one is more important. There is no one that does not belong – no one who is unacceptable. What we say and how we say it matter greatly. How we treat each other – how we engage or avoid each other makes a huge difference. We form community in Christ as we release our self-importance and give ourselves to each other. What happens when Jesus enters the room? Where do you find yourself?

Touch Someone Who

20-30 min

Divide group in half. Seated half closes eyes. Standing half responds to leader's prompts.

"Touch someone who..."

You respect

Want to know better

Has helped you through a difficult time

You love to be around

Needs to know they are loved

Does not call attention to themselves

Is Spirit filled

Speaks words of encouragement

Etc

If You Really Knew Me

30-40 min

[Ifyoureallyknewme.mtv.com](http://ifyoureallyknewme.mtv.com)

Leader tells a very personal story – a struggle or shame or devastation in life

Asks group to close eyes.

What's it like to be you? How does it feel?

Does anybody really know what its like to be you?

Share in quads – go around circle – “If you REALLY knew me, you would know...”

Let each person's statement stand without interruption or comments.

NO FIXING or TOPPING or comments. Hugs or the “I Love You” sign as a show of support.

This may continue for 2-3 rounds depending on depth of sharing. Less rounds with deeper sharing is better.

Power Shuffle

10-15 min

This needs to follow If You Really Knew Me.

Group stands on line. When statements are read that are true for you – cross the line. When you cross the line- turn and face those who did not cross. Receive their support (I Love You sign) silently.

Sample statements:

“Cross the line if you have ever been teased, ridiculed, bullied because of your appearance”

“Cross the line if you've ever lost a friend because you or someone you love is gay”

Shout Out

10-15 min

This exercise follows Power Shuffle.

An opportunity to express publically how things people shared affected you. Or how you felt about someone when they crossed the line. This is a way to name the words that had power for you.

Centering Prayer/ Meditation

10-15 min

Leader guides group process.

Sit upright, feet flat on floor, back straight. Close eyes and begin by observing the breath as it enters and travels to your center and as it exits and travels out into the world. Just observe, without striving or controlling. As thoughts arise, with loving kindness simply dismiss them and

return to observing the breath. After a few moments you will begin to notice a peaceful calm beginning to descend upon you.

Now as you breathe in, silently say to yourself, "Fill me". As you breathe out say whatever name for God resonates with you in this moment. "Holy One"; "Eternal One"; "Creator"; "I AM", etc. Continue this for whatever time the group's attention will support. You may also read a short passage of scripture or inspired writing as a close to the experience.