

# LIBERATING THE SANCTUARY

BEYOND MARGINALIZATION, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND INCLUSION TO REACH LIBERATION

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A liberated church recognizes that it cannot include people who refuse to change; it cannot “be nice” in the face of “good people” who are “set in their ways” when those ways are racist, transphobic, anti-queer, sexist, ableist, classist, or otherwise discriminatory. A liberated church recognizes and condemns the violence of marginalization and refuses to give it sanctuary.

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## SETTING THE TABLE

We now invite you, our reader, to imagine a liberated church for yourself. Liberation will look and feel different depending on your own position in our world and in the church. Will liberation look like you taking a step back to let others be heard, or will it look like opportunities for leadership and involvement that were previously unavailable? Imagining a liberated church requires a close consideration of where you stand and who you are.

If it's hard to imagine, don't worry. It's hard for us too. Start with how you imagine it would feel. Not just to you, but to those around you. Would you act the same as you always do in a liberated church? Would you be the same? Imagine yourself in the pews, imagine your fellow congregants, and allow those thoughts to sustain you even when you are brought back to the reality of our current church.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Share what you imagined with your group. What does it feel like? What is different about it? What stays the same?
2. Think about a time when you felt radically accepted and loved. What was that experience? How could it be replicated for yourself and others?
3. What does inclusion mean to you? How has it been used—or misused—in your church or community?
4. How does the mythical norm affect you? How does it show up in your congregation?
5. Think of the ways you have influence in your context and relationships. What tangible steps could you take that would move your community closer to a vision of liberation?

## CLOSING

What is the “low-hanging fruit” step you could take for yourself and/or your congregation in response to this discussion today?

*A low hanging fruit is something you could easily do this coming week.*

Given this theme and your context; what is one “moonshot” you could imagine?

*A moon shot is a giant leap into relationship and connection that would require monumental effort but be totally amazing.*