

Journey to Inclusion

Facilitator's Guide

*A Framework for Fully Engaging Women Clergy
in the USA/Canada Church of the Nazarene*

Duration: 60 Minutes

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Personal Note

Thank you for tackling a difficult topic. As you begin to prepare, it is important to ready your own heart and mind. Some participants may feel threatened by the topic, but others may find the discussions difficult because the experiences will resonate with them. It can be a complicated space to be in. Only the Holy Spirit can truly convince some that these kinds of changes are imperative; nonetheless, it is in the continued conversation where ultimately new understanding begins to dawn.

Because of how challenging and potentially triggering discussions around gender and inclusion can be, please make sure to have some supportive persons you can debrief with after the workshop. In the writing and preparation of these tools, much prayer was offered on your behalf. It is my prayer for you that the experience will be empowering and inspiring to participant and facilitator alike.

This guide, the slides, the video, and the participant guide were created as artifacts in conjunction with my dissertation of the same name, which contains the supporting research for this approach along with the statistical background (request a copy by emailing [here](#)). It was a privilege to write knowing it might provide someone with tools to have difficult conversations – leading ultimately to new perspectives or at least a new appreciation for the obstacles female clergy face in the USA/Canada Church of the Nazarene. So again, thank you – your work in presenting this workshop is a continuation of the long legacy of collaborative encouragement and engagement of women clergy in the denomination.

May you be blessed in all your efforts!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Jensen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "J" being particularly large and stylized.

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Workshop Overview

Purpose: This workshop is a training artifact designed to transform organizational culture from exclusion to full integration. It moves beyond the concept of "eliminating bias" to practicing active inclusion through a framework of Acceptance, Acknowledgment, Action, and Accountability.

Target Audience: District Superintendents, Church Boards, Clergy, and Lay Leadership within the Church of the Nazarene.

Pre-Workshop Preparation

- **Room Setup:** Arrange chairs in small circles (4-6 people) to facilitate discussion. Place numbered cards on seats prior to arrival for the icebreaker.
- **Tech Check:** Ensure audio/video capabilities for the "Line Video" presentation.
- **Materials:** Print participant guides, one-pagers, and scenario slips.
- **Personal Prep:** Review the *Jesus Smashes the Patriarchy* scriptural notes to ensure comfort with the theological arguments.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this 60-minute session, participants will be able to:

1. **Understand the Inclusion Model:** Define and distinguish between Acceptance, Acknowledgment, Action, and Accountability.
2. **Identify Exclusionary Behaviors:** Recognize the "Not-Inclusion" states (Observer, Token, Issue) and the Exclusion Model (Ignorance, Inaction, Rejection, Apathy).
3. **Analyze Scriptural Models:** Articulate how Jesus dismantled patriarchal norms in his interactions with women.
4. **Apply Frameworks:** Use the Inclusion Model to propose concrete solutions to real-world exclusionary scenarios.
5. **Commit to Action:** Formulate one specific, measurable goal to promote inclusion in their local context.

60-Minute Timeline Summary

Time	Activity	Key Focus
0:00 - 0:03	Introduction	Welcome, Ground Rules, Psychological Safety
0:03 - 0:08	Icebreaker	Seating Assignment & "Feeling" Word Cloud
0:08 - 0:10	Objectives	Connecting goals to context
0:10 - 0:17	Framework Intro	"Line Video," Inclusion Venn Diagram
0:17 - 0:32	Scriptural Study	"Jesus Smashes the Patriarchy" (3 Stories)
0:32 - 0:47	Small Group Scenarios	Applying the model to 5 real-world cases
0:47 - 0:55	Share Back	Large group insights
0:55 - 1:00	Closing & Goal	Personal commitment and reflection

Detailed Session Plan

Facilitator Introduction (3 Minutes)

Goal: Establish psychological safety. We are entering a space of motivating discomfort.

"Welcome to the Journey to Inclusion. Today isn't about guilt or accusation; it's about growth. We are going to talk about behaviors, not people. We use anonymized stories to protect privacy while exposing patterns. I ask that we hold this space with respect, curiosity, and a willingness to be uncomfortable for the sake of the Kingdom."

Facilitator Tip: Ground Rules

Remind participants: "What is shared here stays here; what is learned here leaves here." Emphasize that we are attacking *patriarchy* (the system), not *men*.

Icebreaker: Seating Assignment (5 Minutes)

Activity Instructions

Setup: Before participants enter, place numbered cards on every seat.

The Trigger: Ask everyone to sit. Once seated, announce: "If you have a number ending in 5, please stand up. You get a chocolate/prize. Everyone else, please remain seated."

The Twist: Then announce, "Actually, if you are in the back row, you cannot participate in the discussion for the first 5 minutes." (Do not actually enforce this, but pause to let the feeling sink in).

Word Cloud: Ask participants: "In one word, how did that arbitrary rule make you feel?" Use a digital polling tool or whiteboard to capture words (e.g., confused, annoyed, excluded, unseen).

Video & Framework Introduction (7 Minutes)

The Line Video: Introduce the video about the Hairless Town (Majority Group) and the Hairy Person (Outsider).

- **Key Concept:** Explain the 6 Stages of the journey.
 - **Observer:** Acceptance without voice (Ignorance/Inaction).
 - **Token:** Acknowledgment without belonging (Rejection/Inaction).
 - **Issue:** Action that fixes the person, not the system (Rejection/Ignorance).
 - **Integrated Community:** The goal—where Acceptance, Acknowledgment, and Action overlap.

Scriptural Study: Jesus Smashes the Patriarchy (15 Minutes)

Divide the room or guide the whole group through three quick case studies of Jesus. Ask: "Where do we see *Acceptance, Acknowledgment, and Action*?"

1. The Woman at the Well (John 4)

Jesus breaks social taboos (gender/ethnicity). He **Accepts** her presence, **Acknowledges** her theological mind, and takes **Action** by revealing his identity to her first.

2. The Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15)

She pushes back. Jesus **Acknowledges** her argument ("Even the dogs eat the crumbs"). He takes **Action** by healing her daughter. He models **Accountability** by allowing his stance to be publicly shifted by a marginalized voice.

3. The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8)

The leaders saw an "Issue." Jesus saw a person. He **Accepted** her (stood with her), **Acknowledged** her humanity ("Neither do I condemn you"), and empowered her **Action** ("Go and sin no more").

Small Group Scenarios (15 Minutes)

Activity Instructions

Distribute one scenario card to each small group. Ask them to:

Identify the **Exclusionary Behavior** (Ignorance, Inaction, Rejection, Apathy).

Identify which inclusion element is missing (Acceptance, Acknowledgment, Action).

Propose an **Inclusive Alternative**.

Large Group Share Back (8 Minutes)

Ask for 1-2 groups to share their scenario and solution. Focus on the "Aha!" moments regarding *systemic* barriers versus individual intentions.

Personal Reflection & Goal Setting (5 Minutes)

Direct participants to the "My One Commitment" section of their handout. Ask them to write down one specific change they will make in the next 30 days.

"Inclusion is a commute, not a destination. What is one step you will take this week to move from being an Observer or Tokenizer to creating an Integrated Community?"

The Inclusion Model Explained

Use this section to deepen your explanation during the *Framework Introduction*.

The 4 Pillars

1. Acceptance (The Welcome):

The reception of another into an existing space. It is the "seat at the table." Without action/acknowledgment, this is just observation.

2. Acknowledgment (The Voice):

Giving the floor to the marginalized person. Listening to their lived experience without defense. Without acceptance, this is tokenism.

3. Action (The Engagement):

Tangible deeds done by, to, or for the excluded person. Changing policies, hiring practices, or structures. Without acceptance/acknowledgment, this treats the person as an "Issue" to be fixed.

4. Accountability (The Standard):

The overarching circle that holds the other three together. It is the practice of noticing exclusion and requiring a return to the standard of love.

The Exclusion Model Explained

Help participants recognize the converse model—these are the enemies of inclusion.

- **Ignorance:** Failing to know or understand the reality of the outsider. *"I didn't know women felt that way."*
- **Inaction:** Knowing the problem but refusing to change behavior. *"We know it's hard, but that's just how the policy is."*
- **Rejection:** Actively pushing the outsider away or keeping them on the periphery. *"She doesn't fit our culture."*
- **Apathy:** A lack of care that leads to the dissolution of inclusion efforts over time. *"We tried that diversity thing last year."*

Scriptural Analysis Guide (Facilitator Notes)

Passage	The Barrier (Patriarchy)	Jesus's Response (Inclusion)	Takeaway for Today
Woman at the Well (John 4)	Gender: Men don't speak to women. Ethnicity: Jews don't speak to Samaritans. Moral: She had a "reputation."	Acceptance: He initiated conversation. Acknowledgment: He engaged her theological questions seriously. Action: He revealed his Messiahship to her.	Do we avoid women in ministry because of "appearances" or social norms? Jesus prioritized the person over the propriety.
Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15)	Disciples urged Jesus to "Send her away." She was a foreigner and a woman making a loud scene.	Accountability: He listened when she challenged him. Action: He granted her request based on her faith, not her status.	Are we willing to be challenged by those on the margins? Do we listen to "loud" women or label them "troublemakers"?
Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8)	She was used as a pawn (an "Issue") to trap Jesus. She was dehumanized and silenced.	Acceptance: He stood with her against the mob. Acknowledgment: He spoke directly to her. Action: He saved her life and restored her agency.	When systems try to use women as political pawns, do we stand with them or join the mob?

Scenario Facilitation Guide

Use these notes to guide the feedback during the small group session.

Scenario 1: The Excluded Resume

Situation: A church board refuses to consider a female pastor's resume despite her experience.

The Fix:

- *Structural:* Implement "blind resumes" (remove names/gender).
- *Educational:* Teach the scriptural basis for women clergy *before* a search begins.
- *Policy:* Objective criteria grids (must score X points to get an interview).

Scenario 2: The Forced Chaperone

Situation: Two married pastors (male/female) are forced by a DS to take a chaperone on a drive, preventing professional confidential talk.

The Fix:

- *Trust:* Trust clergy to set their own boundaries.
- *Consent:* Ask the individuals what they are comfortable with.
- *Reframing:* Treat them as colleagues, not sexual threats.

Scenario 3: The Pigeonholed Board Member

Situation: A woman is appointed to a board but warned not to "rock the boat" and assigned to be secretary.

The Fix:

- *Rotation:* Rotate administrative roles among all members.
- *Voice:* Explicitly invite her input on strategy, not just note-taking.
- *Term Limits:* Open space for new voices regularly.

Scenario 4: The Family Question

Situation: An ordination candidate is asked what her plans are once she marries and/or starts a family.

The Fix:

- *Standardization:* All candidates get the same questions based on gifts/graces.
- *Correction:* Immediate accountability from others in the room to flag the question as inappropriate.

Scenario 5: The "Troubled Church" Trap

Situation: Women are only assigned to dying churches because placing them in those kinds of situations is easier. They are not offered or suggested to growing/larger churches.

The Fix:

- *Data:* Track placements by church size and gender (Accountability).
- *Support:* Circuit rotations for small churches with district funding.
- *Opportunity:* Objective criteria for open pulpits at large churches.

Handling Difficult Conversations

Response Strategies

"We just couldn't find any qualified women."

Response: "Let's look at how resumes are brought in and managed. Where are we keeping tabs on qualifications of all district clergy? Are we using blind resumes (no names or gender or pictures) until the board agrees to interviews? Often, 'qualified' is coded language for 'familiar'. Also, often the most recent resumes are the ones presented. Perhaps a monthly or quarterly review of the status of persons who have submitted a resume is one way to keep current on available clergy."

"Our church just isn't ready for a woman."

Response: "That is an opportunity for leadership. Just as we lead a congregation through financial changes or building projects, we shepherd them through theological growth. The goal is faithfulness to the call, not comfort."

"This feels like reverse discrimination against men."

Response: "These options are more likely to lead to the best qualified candidate in a particular setting *regardless of gender*. This means it is not holding men back or taking their seats, it is making the table bigger."

Materials & Preparation Checklist

For the Facilitator

- [] **Numbered Cards:** Index cards numbered 1-50 (depending on group size).
- [] **Presentation Slides:** Including the Inclusion Venn Diagram and "Line Video."
- [] **Timer:** Essential for keeping the 60-minute pace.

For Participants

- [] **Participant Guide:** Including the "My One Action" worksheet.
- [] **One-Pager:** A laminated or cardstock summary of the Inclusion Model.
- [] **Scenario Slips:** Printed copies of the 5 scenarios for small groups.

Additional Resources

Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald

Research from Harvard on Implicit Bias and how the Implicit Association Test was created.

Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation by Kristin Kobes Du Mez

Historical understanding of 'maleness' and some of the toxic behaviors associated improperly with Christianity

Journey to Inclusion: A Theoretical Framework to Fully Engage Women Clergy in the Church of the Nazarene in the USA and Canada by Jennifer R. Jensen

Dissertation basis for workshop framework.

The Making of Biblical Womanhood by Beth Alison Barr

Historical analysis of the history of patriarchy in the Church

Ordained Women in the Church of the Nazarene: The First Generation by Rebecca Laird

Historical overview of women clergy in the Church of the Nazarene (through the 20th century)

She Leads: God's Intent for Women in the Church by Robbie Cansler

An accessible examination of the scriptural witness of biblical women

Women Preachers: Who Gave Thee the Authority? by Fannie McDowell Hunter

A treatise from 1903 serving as both an apologia and introduction to women who were preaching the gospel in the early Holiness movement.

<https://didache.nazarene.org/index.php/volume-23-number-1>

This resource includes articles by Julie D. Cheney and Kathryn Lewis Mowry which helped create the scenarios used for discussion.