

The Week

week starting 10 9 17

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Connecting the Sunday Sparkle at Hearsall Baptist with the Daily Dust of Life

Welcome

- Share a story about a time when someone 'played god' and judged you, or a time when you 'played god' and judged someone else.
- Share a story about a person who has reflected God to you in some special way.
- Briefly share any other reflections you may have from reading chapter 2 of *We Make the Road by Walking*.

Worship

- Read Psalm 8 together.
- Praise God for our position in creation.

Word

Ideally, read all of Acts 10 either before or during the meeting.

Read Acts 10: 30 - 43

- Discuss what Peter and Cornelius might each have been expecting at the end of verse 33.
- If Peter's speech had to be reduced to bullet points, what would each bullet point say?

Read Acts 10: 44 - 48

- Describe Peter's likely feelings (plural!) at the response to his sermon.
- Why were the circumcised believers *astonished* in verse 45?
- What does this story do to the old divisions between Jews and Gentiles?
- Then how come such divisions, and many other divisions, are so strong still today in our world?
- Before this incident, Gentiles would not have been baptised. Church practice had to change to catch up with the spiritual reality of God's full inclusion of Gentiles. Can you think of situations today where official church practice needs to catch up with spiritual reality?

Response

To be **passively inclusive** is to be friendly to people we randomly encounter and to be willing to let them into our world. To be **actively inclusive** is to go out of our way to meet people who are very different from us, and to be willing to change our world to suit newcomers as well as ourselves.

- To what extent is our church passively inclusive and to what extent is it actively inclusive? In a gentle and humble way, give examples.
- Is it enough to be passively inclusive?
- Explore one way of making your personal life more actively inclusive.
- Explore one way of making our church more actively inclusive.