

Welcomer tips:

1. Zoom on early enough to catch the first arrivals (20-15 mins before the service is good)
2. Rename yourself **“Welcomer - Your Name”** by clicking the three dots in the corner of your video box (or by clicking ‘participants’ and selecting ‘more’ beside your name, and choosing ‘rename’)
3. Try and welcome people by their names “welcome so-and-so, how are you going?” (it helps that most people name themselves in zoom on their devices – if they don’t and you don’t know their names then ask them using their device name – it’s O.K. you aren’t expected to know everyone!)
4. Being the welcomer involves a bit of self-emptying (prayer below) so try and keep the focus on the person you are welcoming rather than entering into conversation (two-sided dialogue) with sharing your own ‘stuff’. If they ask how you are, keep your response brief ‘well’, ‘not the best, but good to be here’ etc.
5. The aim is to make every person who zooms on feel seen, heard and valued. Inviting them to share briefly how they are helps to do that. That doesn’t mean we shut folk down if they share something big with us, but it does mean that we try not to let just one person monopolise the before space (the after space can be used for more in-depth reflection/discussion/sharing) and try and make sure that every participant has been named and welcomed before worship begins.
6. If there is a need for prayer identified in the welcoming space then this can be put into the intercessions by the broadcaster before worship commences.
7. Be gentle with yourself – you may not be able to welcome everyone by name (especially if some come at the last moment) that’s ok!

Prayer for self-emptying:

Lord Jesus, just as you emptied yourself and put your own needs aside to care for us, so I ask your assistance as I seek to empty myself and care for others. As I welcome all your children during our gatherings, may they hear your voice and feel your presence through my ministry. Holy Spirit, please fill me with your love, warmth and compassion. Amen.

Poem for self-emptying: Steve Garnaas-Holmes Unfolding Light www.unfoldinglight.net

Loving One,
free me from my self-enclosure,
to trust I am fully loved and heard,
so I can love and hear others.
Help me to be fully present, to be aware of myself,
my reactions, my wounds and fears and filters,
and to mindfully, lightly, hold them aside,
so I can be fully present for others,
truly listening, opening a space in me
for them to be safe, to be true, to be free.
May I be a spacious and welcoming presence,
to offer people the precious gift of being heard,
being seen, being witnessed.