



# Hosting Guide

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## Welcome

We are so excited and thankful that you are taking this bold step! Women of Welcome is a community dedicated to diving into the whole of scripture to understand God's heart for the immigrant and refugee. We believe God calls us to a deep love for the vulnerable, the marginalized, and the forgotten. Together we're on a journey to understand biblical hospitality in an authentic way. Therefore we seek to learn, engage, and grow to be more like Christ in our welcome toward the sojourner.



## Invite Women to Join You

### Invite Women to Join You

There's so many ways to invite women to join you in a group. If you aren't already plugged into a small group at your church, make sure you're part of our private Women of Welcome Facebook page so you can connect with other women who are likely doing the very same thing you are in this venture. You're welcome to invite other women in the group to join you, or simply ask your current local small group if they'd like to try a new study.

Ideas to start: Invite friends personally or by phone, or through your social media (message ladies or make a post on your page).

- We suggest that your group be between 2 and 12 people. When the group is small, everyone gets a chance to share.
- If your group is open, other women will be able to find it and request to join by emailing you.
- If it is closed, you will be able to meet privately with just your friends.
- The choice to make your group open or closed is on the sign up form. If you want to change your mind, let us know by e-mailing [info@womenofwelcome.com](mailto:info@womenofwelcome.com).



## The Role of a Host

Just by signing up to host, you have already done so much! There can't be a group without a host; your leading in this way gives other women the possibility and inspiration to follow. There are four parts of hosting; 1) doing a bit of planning 2) sending out info 3) guiding the meeting and 4) letting us know how it went so we can help with questions and support.

## Preparation

1. We recommend that you first look over the study to familiarize yourself with its cadence and content.
2. Decide where/how you will meet. If you choose virtually, you can use either zoom or google hangouts (both free). If needed, we have included links (below) to tutorial videos and additional tips for online meetings.
3. Decide how long you want to meet for. If you meet in person, you may want to spend a couple of hours together to make time for snacks and mingling. If you meet online, you might want to make it shorter. Have an agenda/plan for your time but be flexible if the meeting doesn't follow your plan exactly. Here is an example:
  - Open in prayer
  - Share a key quote, verse, or the week's video (not all studies have a video).
  - Discuss the week's content and study questions
  - Take testimonies and prayer requests (if time allows)
  - Close in prayer
  - Snacks and fellowship

Remember, you do not have to follow this model. Feel free to do it your own way!

4. If you do choose to meet in person, you may want to create a sign-up sheet so that the women in your group can take turns providing refreshments.
5. Pray! We expect the Holy Spirit to be involved, He is the only one who can bring revelation through his word and change our hearts. Ask him to guide the conversations and protect the unity of the group.

## Sending Information to your Group:

1. Choose how you will communicate with the other women in your group. Email, group text, a private FB message, or WhatsApp are all great depending on what your friends feel comfortable with.
2. Important: Before the study starts, send out the day/time/location or virtual platform, and the "Getting Ready to Meet" document as well as a link to download the study that you have chosen.
3. Let your women know that they should do the first week's reading on their own and that you will discuss it when you get together.
4. You can continue to send reminders of which pages of the study to fill out in between meetings if there are any questions going forward (usually not necessary but it can help people who missed a week or got confused).
5. It can be helpful to regularly post or send out one or two of the week's questions to get people thinking ahead of time and remind them of the week's reading.



## Guide Each Meeting

1. If meeting online, ask all participants to keep themselves on mute unless speaking. This will cut down on background noise.
2. Ask open ended questions. What stood out to you? What impacted you the most? What did you like about this week's reading? Did anything surprise you? You may want to have one woman share what she liked most about Day 1, the next woman what stood out to her from Day 2, etc.
3. Create a safe place by committing to confidentiality. Group members need to know that what they share will stay in the group unless they say that they are fine with it being shared.
4. Welcome questions and don't feel pressure to have all the answers. Listening well always gives a good indication of where people are and what they need to hear. If possible, validate and empathize with your friends' feelings and concerns. If it has to do with immigration, it's fine to say, "That is a nuanced and complicated issue and we don't really have the time to dive into it right now, but I will see what resources I can find." Remember that our ambassadors, the private FB Study Hosts Group and the private Women of Welcome group are available to ask help for finding good resources and answers.
5. Most arguments can be curtailed by listening first and finding the common ground to build on. Do your best to keep the unity in the group and keep everyone on track with the discussion questions in the guide.

Remember: James 1:19 admonishes us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. James 3:17 says "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."

It's important to model the attitude that all are welcome in the group even though there may be differences of opinion on certain aspects of immigration. We want women to feel comfortable and safe.

6. It can be helpful to end the discussion time with a question that is focused on application. Some example questions would be: What do you feel like the Lord is speaking to you personally? How should this change the way we live? What will you do differently now that you know this? Who can you share this with?
7. If your group is small enough, try to encourage everyone to speak up at least once. You can do this by specifically calling on someone when they haven't yet participated.
8. If you are not able to attend for any reason, choose someone in the group who can lead in your place.

## Let us know how it went

We'd love to know how your study went and how we can best support you!

We have a very simple feedback form that you can fill out when your study is finished.

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## What if I need help?

Most questions can be asked in the private Study Hosts group. If you feel like the question is of more personal nature, feel free to address a Women of Welcome ambassador directly by emailing [amy@womenofwelcome.com](mailto:amy@womenofwelcome.com) or by contacting an ambassador that you are already in contact with.

## What's Next?

### What's Next?

You may find that your group of women bonds together, gets enthusiastic about God's heart for the sojourner, and desires to move forward.

What's next?

#### Why not do another study?

The Women of Welcome website has film studies and bible studies. Check out the resource page to find your next study!

#### Become a prayer group

You might not be ready to start another study, but what about a prayer group? These groups will officially be offered/listed through our website on the Connect page in the summer of 2021. When you switch your group designation (from a bible study group to a prayer group) you'll start to receive prayer point emails that you can use with your group to pray for specific needs in the U.S. immigration space. (Coming soon- so stay tuned)

#### Become an advocacy group

Maybe your group is ready to take action and start engaging with elected officials that shape immigration related policies and laws. These groups will officially be offered/listed through our website on the Connect page in the summer of 2021. When you switch your group designation (from a bible study group to an advocacy group) you'll start to receive monthly advocacy emails that you will help your group know when and how to use your voice to advocate for the most pressing issues that are affecting immigrants and refugees in our communities. (Coming soon- so stay tuned!)

#### Start a Reading Group

Sometimes reading a book together about immigration is easier than talking about it. Check out our recommended reading list on our website (resources page) and ask your girlfriends or other ladies in our private Women of Welcome FB group to start reading a book together. (Reading groups are not currently listed on the website and we encourage you to share and/or meet other women in the private FB group to start a group).

## Additional Resources

### Important Links & Additional Resources

#### Getting Ready to Meet Document

Study Links:

- **Ruth + Naomi** | 5 week study with weekly readings
- **Who is Welcome Here?** | 7 week video series (4 to 6 min each) with discussion guide
- **In Pursuit of Peace** | 4 week study with daily readings
- **Bold + Brave** | 4 week study with daily readings

#### Hosts only private messenger group

#### Beginner Zoom Tutorial

#### Beginner Google Hangouts Tutorial

#### Some Tips For Meeting Online