

¹⁷ Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon's house and were standing by the gate. ¹⁸They called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was staying there. ¹⁹While Peter was still thinking about the vision, **the Spirit said to him, 'Look, three men are searching for you. ²⁰Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them.'** ²¹So Peter went down to the men and said, 'I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming?' ²²They answered, 'Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.' ²³So Peter invited them in and gave them lodging. The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the believers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴The following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshipped him. ²⁶But Peter made him get up, saying, 'Stand up; I am only a mortal.' ²⁷And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled; ²⁸and he said to them, **'You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.'** ²⁹So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?' ³⁰ Cornelius replied, 'Four days ago at this very hour, at three o'clock, I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling clothes stood before me. ³¹He said, "Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. ³²Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is called Peter; he is staying in the home of Simon, a tanner, by the sea." ³³Therefore I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say.'

SESSION TWO: "UNEXPECTED AND UNWELCOME ARRIVALS"

TEXT: ACTS 10:17-33

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

When and where have you had an experience of disruption or rupture to the things you have taken to be fixed, non-negotiable, and perhaps of God or divinely ordered?

What perplexes you? What seems to you, like it did to Peter, to not be of God? Where and why do we hesitate?

What does this story mirror back to us about our interior lives and also our communal life?

What individual experiences of hesitation are brought to mind by this session?