WADDIE WELCOME AND THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

Giving voice to the story:

Several readers can read the story in turn. We have done this with 3 readers and recently with 8 or 9. Our approach has been invitation. We’ve said we’re looking for people who enjoy and would like to read aloud and let the group know how many people we are asking to read. (We have mentioned that readers should be able to read clearly so everyone can hear).

Our recent experiences are that just reading; plain, simple, low-tech, reading to one another is elegant in its own right. So, no slides are necessary. Less is more. We think there’s a nicer flow in listening to the story read aloud without the reader holding up photos as they read. We’ve enjoyed unhurried reading to one another.

All the text in the book is read aloud. We do not read the captions under the pictures or the newspaper clippings inserted.

If Citizen Advocacy is unfamiliar, The Introduction, p 7, offers a definition of citizen advocacy.

We find it helpful to read aloud the title page of each chapter and the author, e.g. “Born of the 4th of July - Tom Kohler” as a way to set the ‘voice’.

We’ve used post-it notes in the book to mark the shift to the next reader.

Guide for reading aloud:
Begin with reading the Jim Lawson quote at the beginning of the book about the beloved community.

With three (3) readers:

Reader 1: ‘Born on the 4th of July’
           pages 11-23 (text: 11,13,19, 21, 23)

Reader 2: ‘The Storytellers’ /’Keeping the Social in Social Change’/ ‘Connect Savannah’

Reader 3: ‘Go on Soldier..’ /’Homegoing’ / ‘Eulogy for Mr. Welcome’/ ‘Mrs. Reeves’
           Phone Book’
           pages 57-77 (text: 57 58, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 72, 73, 75, 77)
With more readers:

The 8 chapters could just be read in turn. Some are 4-5 pages of text. Several chapters are only 1-2 pages.

With 9-10 people, the reading could be:

Reader 1: ‘Born on the 4th of July’ - text: 11,13,19, 21, 23
Reader 2: ‘The Storytellers’- text: 27, 29, 31
Reader 3: ‘The Storytellers’- text: 33, 35, 37
Reader 4: ‘Keeping the Social in Social Change’- text: 39, 41
Reader 5: ‘Connect Savannah’- text: 51, 53
Reader 6: ‘Go on Soldier..’- text: 57, 58, 59
Reader 7: ‘Homegoing’- text: 61, 63, 65, 67, 69 (this could also be two readers: the next reader beginning on p. 67-69 after the Obituary is read.)
Reader 8: ‘Eulogy for Mr. Welcome’- text: 71, 72, 73
Reader 9: ‘Mrs. Reeves’ Phone Book’- text: 75, 77

Following the reading:

We have opened it to the group gathered and asked some variation of:

Reflections?
What struck you? What resonated with you?
What’s it make you think about?
How does the story make you feel?
With more time, we’ve explored:

**Question 1: Find the character in the story that ‘spoke to us’**

**In small groups (3-4 people):** each person, in turn: Name the character that spoke to you and speak the wisdom that character holds.
What does that person know or understand? What wisdom that person convey?

**To the whole group** after trios have 6-8 minutes:
What’s standing out as you took time to reflect on the characters?
What did you notice about the characters and their wisdom from your conversations?

**Question 2:** Returning to small groups of 3 or 4
Reflecting on the Beloved Community and Waddie Welcome, what possibilities does it create for you for action?

What do I choose to declare is possible from inspiration of the beloved community?
What declaration do I want to make out loud? There may be several false starts, as you don’t know what you’re thinking until you hear yourself say it. Let each person think out loud. Give over our most powerful listening as our support.

**Whole group discussion:**

What possibilities are you imagining for hosting a reading of Waddie Welcome and the Beloved Community?

What questions can you imagine asking at your reading?
A few ideas - a bit more high tech:

Jack and I have played the very short video clip of Tom Kohler that's available on the inclusion networking site: inclusionnetwork.ning.com (click the Marketplace tab, video drop down menu “Tom Kohler talk about Waddy Welcome”

If it works from here, this is the clip we used.

**Tom Kohler talks about Waddy Welcome**

The photos from the book could be shown on a screen from a Keynote or Powerpoint, before the book is read.
Tom has posted a few of these on Facebook.

At the Toronto Summer Institute Anne Mitchell played James Taylor’s song “Shine a Little Light” as she showed some of the slides from the book.

Anne also crafted World Café slides and questions and engaged people in a World Café.

Ideas for readings, blogs and suggestions for gathering and notes about people’s experiences will be available on the web site:

www.waddiewelcome.com

We are hoping for 5000 readings globally between September 1 – December 31, 2010 and a world-wide reading on January 21, 2011, Martin Luther King Day.