

# Session details & running order

## 1. God's Call

God can transform relationships in a conflicted world. God's call and equipping make that possible.

God is at work to renew and reconcile all things and he calls us to be caught up in what he is doing. We live in between the wholeness that God intended in the beginning and the ultimate restoration of all things, of heaven and earth, which we are promised. We have a calling in the here and now to bring hope and to be hope in a messy and complex world. Following Jesus means really loving our neighbours and our enemies. And it means letting God lead us, one step at a time, into the heart of the divides which he can transform.

This session includes:

- The biblical call to Christians in a divided and complex world: Matthew 5:5–9
- Setting parameters for group culture: encouraging honesty, sensitivity and ways of relating well to one another
- Interactive exercise to explore the 3 habits and the stories we bring

## 2. Crossing Divides

God invites us to see where difference or prejudice divide us from others and offers us opportunities to see them as he does.

It is easy to distrust and feel wary of those who are different from us. We often find ourselves in echo chambers, drawn to voices that reinforce our own perspective or experience. It is increasingly easy to avoid or shut out those who make us uncomfortable or fearful, creating a dividing wall between us. This session is about responding to God's invitation to know ourselves better by seeing our walls and the people on the other side.

This session includes:

- The story of Sami from Bethlehem about overcoming walls between Israelis and Palestinians
- The account of Jesus meeting a Samaritan woman: John 4:1–30
- Interactive exercise about building and dismantling walls of prejudice

### 3. Navigating Disagreement

God is with us as we face the challenge of disagreement, which can become an opportunity for stronger relationships if handled well.

We all encounter conflict and it rarely feels comfortable, but we don't need to be overwhelmed by it. Jesus' example shows us that we can respond to disagreement with curiosity and generosity without compromising our convictions. In fact, sometimes conflict can be an opportunity to deepen and strengthen relationships in ways we have never imagined.

This session includes:

- The story of Mariam from London about handling a family disagreement
- The account of the woman who washes Jesus' feet: Luke 7:36–50
- Interactive exercise about disagreement and empathy

### 4. Practising Forgiveness

God is with us in the mess and complexity of trying to put forgiveness into practice in our relationships.

Jesus teaches again and again about forgiveness in the Gospels. This suggests two things: firstly, that it is a crucial part of finding life in all its fullness; secondly, that forgiveness is pretty hard to get our heads around and even harder to live out every day. This session is about allowing ourselves to be open to the possibilities of forgiveness in our relationships, while being honest about the places we get stuck.

This session includes:

- The story of Craig from Cape Town about taking steps to ask for forgiveness from colleagues and friends
- The account of Jesus and Peter on the beach from John 21:1–19
- Guided reflection, 'stepping into' the Bible passage

## 5. Risking Hope

Doing relationships God's way will sometimes be risky and resisted, but the hope it brings is transformative.

Pursuing healed, restored relationships can be risky, costly and complex. It's easy to be overwhelmed when we struggle with forgiveness, feel powerless, or meet resistance in ourselves and others. But these aren't signs that we should give up. We can expect to encounter difficulties when we are living out a new way which interrupts the values and power structures that surround us. This session is about finding ways to keep going as we try to live this out day by day.

This session includes:

- The stories of Guvna B from London and Tom from Gloucester about communities that enable them to see change where there was brokenness
- The account of Jesus washing the disciples' feet from John 13:1-17
- Interactive exercise about how the habits enable us to embody hope