

CONNECT

Greyfriars Church
Connect Cell Leadership

Connecting with God...
with each other...
with Reading ...

through:

Worship
Outreach
Relationship
Discipleship
Service

Hello and thanks for being a Connect Cell Leader! This pack is intended to give you some help in leading your cell group and is comprised of two main parts:

- Your role as a cell leader and how your cell fits into the Connect structure;
- Resources to give you ideas for leading your cell group;

YOUR ROLE AS A CELL LEADER...

The following is an ideal list of standards that Connect cell leaders should be striving to achieve when leading a cell group. The aim of this 'Charter' is meant as an encouragement rather than a reminder of how far short we often fall! Even if you are not doing all these things now, please use this list as a helpful aid to the brilliant work you are already doing.

- Lead by example! Cell leaders should be seeking to continuously grow their relationship with God through regular prayer, worship and through reading the bible.
- One of the driving forces behind leading a cell should be to see Christ glorified in Reading in line with Greyfriars wider vision "To know Christ Jesus and to make him known".
- An aim of Connect cell leadership is to seek to help one another to connect with God, connect with each other, and connect with our wider communities in Reading.
- Cell leaders should be seeking to rely on God's power as the source of their inspiration and strength in cell leadership.
- Cell leaders should be committed to praying for each member of their cell and their continued growth in Christ.
- Cell leaders should seek to support their cell member's pastoral needs and try to get alongside cell members in a variety of ways (such as one to one meetings outside of the usual cell environment).
- Cell leaders should seek to encourage and disciple cell members as the new Connect leaders of the future!
- Cell leaders should be an active part of Greyfriars and regularly attend church.
- Cell leaders should be planning and organising regular cell meetings for their members (this does not mean you have to lead each week!).
- Cell leaders should be seeking to encourage a balance of worship, outreach, relationship, and discipleship driven activities within their cell.
- A Connect cell leader should seek to attend and encourage their cell members to attend Connect events and follow the seven week Connect cycle.
- Cell leaders should try to attend cell leaders meetings and if they cannot attend, send someone from their cell in their place.

THE CONNECT STRUCTURE

The Connect leadership is structured over three tiers made up of volunteers from Greyfriars. Our aim is to provide opportunities for young adults who are roughly in their 20s and 30s to live out God's purposes in their lives.

The Connect leadership team is responsible for the stewardship of Connect through the support of the cell leaders, the organisation of Connect wide events and ensuring the maintenance of links with Greyfriars and its leadership.

Connect cell leaders are responsible for the leadership of each of the Connect cell groups, which meet on a weekly basis. These cell groups are nominally grouped into clusters of two or three cells, each of which is supported by cluster leaders from the Connect leadership team.

WELCOMING NEW CELL MEMBERS

When new cell group members arrive it will be great if you could provide them with some background information about Connect e.g.:

- Details about the website (www.connectgreyfriars.org.uk) and Connect Announce
- Details about the Connect structure so that they know they are part of a larger group within Greyfriars church;
- Details about how your cell is organised e.g. Four W's, who is the co-leader? And so on.

'WORD RESOURCES' - POTENTIAL CELL MATERIALS

Sometimes it can be difficult to find the right cell material for your group. This section provides a range of cell leading ideas that you can use or develop further. Most of them are taken from books or websites. You might also be able to find useful sources of your own and if you do, please let the Connect Leaders know so that they can be included in the future.

Some of these resources can be tried as they are, but most will simply give a helpful starting point for you to develop your own material relevant for your group and where it is at. Don't ever feel you have to start from scratch each time, but do try to make sure you have prayed through and tailored the material you use to suit your cell. The best material in any case is usually only a springboard to getting us sharing and exploring our faith together. It is there to encourage and facilitate our learning and growing in discipleship.

Connect cell groups are encouraged to structure evenings around the four W's of Welcome, Worship, Word and Witness. All cell leaders are encouraged to keep these in mind as you prepare and deliver (or simply facilitate) what happens week by week. One way of measuring whether the four W's are part of each cell group evening is to ask the following questions:

WELCOME – Do the Cell members feel less alone at the end of the meeting than they did at the beginning? Have we sensed that we have done some community building through our meeting together?

Building Community – with God and with each other – is central to what we are doing in cell.

WORSHIP – Do we have a sense that we have really engaged with and encountered the Living God? Did we seek and experience the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our time together? Were any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit evident / sought? Have we increased our sense of the unconditional love, majesty, power, mercy, purity, forgiveness..... (etc! – not each in equal measure each week!) of God through our meeting?

WORD – Have we encountered God through his Word, the Bible? Have we engaged with the alive and active Word of God? Have we wrestled with it, sought to understand what it is saying, allowed it to ask questions of us and our faith and our lifestyles? Have we heard God speak to us through what St Augustine called God's 'love letter from home'?

WITNESS – Have we encouraged each other in our Witness to Christ and what he has done in our lives, and to the unconditional love of God for all? Do we come away with a fresh sense of God's call to be his ambassadors and with practical encouragement about how we can do that individually day by day and corporately? Have we explored how, as a group, we can share God's love with our neighbours, friends, colleagues etc? (including 'Radical Pursuits' e.g. serving our community unconditionally?)

In all of this have we spent quality time in **prayer**? Communicating with God (both talking and listening to him) fits into each of these activities, as you will see throughout the cell outlines given below. Sometimes the focus of prayer will be in the Worship, sometimes in the Word element etc. What's important is that it is there and that we all model a simple and accessible prayer life. (Avoid Latin and too many long impressive prayers if you don't want your group to think 'I could never do that!').

A useful acronym to bear in mind when it comes to prayer is **ACTS** – Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication. Do lots of **asking** (God loves it!) for yourselves, for each other, for others, for our world etc – but also try and balance the supplication with the other three (adoration, confession and thanksgiving).

This all sounds a bit of a tall order. But don't be discouraged! You are unlikely to be able to say an emphatic yes to every question (or even most of them!) each week, but use them (or something like them) as a compass setting, which can help you to check that the cell is heading in the right direction.

Some useful websites include:

- www.celluk.org.uk;
- www.fish.co.uk/faith/actjustly - for a cell series on global justice issues

Hope this is helpful! Any comments gratefully received.

WRITING YOUR OWN CELL OUTLINES

The 'Word' Section of the meeting is the time for edification through interaction with Scripture, ministry and prayer. Here are a few suggestions to assist you as you write your own 'Word' outlines:

Sample passage: Philippians 3:7-14

But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus

- It is good to clearly state an objective or two for this portion of the meeting. For example, for the above passage you might have the objective:
Cell members will identify the things God is calling them to leave behind as they move forward. They will bring these things to Him in prayer as they focus anew on Christ and what He has in store for them.

- Cell group questions should be centred on life application. They must be clear and to the point. The focus must be on hearing and responding to God.
- Do not use questions that assume previous Bible knowledge if you want non-Christians and new Christians to feel at home. Questions like, “What other Bible passages say something similar to this one?” or “What is the cultural background to this passage?” are not appropriate unless you want to restrict your groups to well-established Christians.
- Here are four questions that can be used repeatedly with some variation:
 - What stands out to you in this passage?
 - What seems to be the main point of this passage?
 - Can you illustrate this truth from an experience in your own life? (This is a very powerful way to draw people in and help them see the relevance of a truth.)
 - What is God saying to you right now?
- For our sample passage and the objective stated above, you might offer the following suggestions for your cells:
 - Invite someone from the group to read Philippians 3:7-14 aloud.
 - Ask: “What stands out to you in this passage?”
 - Ask: “What is something that you gave up to follow Christ?”
 - Note that some people give up obvious and ugly sins to follow Christ, but other like Paul have to give up things like religious legalism and self-righteousness.
 - Have someone re-read verses 13 and 14.
 - Discuss: “What are some obstacles that hold Christians back from going on with God today?”
 - Move into smaller groups of three or four to share and pray together around the question: “What is God asking you to leave behind and instead calling you to reach for in the year ahead?”
 - Frequently instruct people to move into smaller groups. Even in a cell of 10 people, there is not enough time for everyone to minister and be ministered to if you stay together the entire time.
 - Notice that the sample instructions for the Word time given above are only 14 short lines and only include four questions. Do not ask numerous questions. It is better to include several quality questions with clear, simple instructions. If you include too many questions the groups can easily become centred on Bible study instead of focusing on responding to God in prayer.

LOVING THE LOST CELL MATERIAL

This is a 20 week series called 'Loving the Lost'. It is good for new groups to get to know each other and to focus on outreach. You might want to pick a few sessions or do the whole series.

Outline 1: Loving the lost - Responsibility

Welcome

Ask each person: If your house was burning down, what two things would you rescue and why?

Worship

Go around the group, each person saying something good that has happened to them or something God has said to them. Turn that into prayer and thanks.

Word

Read Romans 10:8-14.

What do we have to do to be saved?

Who can remember something that someone said or did that was significant in them becoming a Christian. How do you feel about what that person did or said?

Who has said something to someone about God and how did you feel before and after?

How does the idea that we are responsible for telling our friends about God make you feel?

What prevents you from talking to your friends about Jesus?

Turn that into ministry for each other that God would help you.

Witness

Put the names of all your friends you are praying for on a piece of paper. Pile the pieces of paper up in the middle of the group. All lay hands on the pile and pray that God will show himself to them and that you will have the courage to tell them about Jesus.

Outline 2: Loving the lost - God and our Friends

Welcome

Ask each person: when you were small children, what was something that you had that was very special to you (like a security blanket or a teddy) OR have you ever got lost? What happened and how did you feel?

Worship

Choose two songs that you have on mp3/ CD that are good for worship. Choose one that is about how God has got us to be Christians (e.g. 'I've Found Jesus' by Cutting Edge). Write out the words so that everyone can have a copy. Sing them through. At the end get everyone thanking God that 'We've found Jesus!'.

Word

Read a verse each, until you've read all of Acts 9:1-19.

What role does Ananias play in Saul becoming a Christian?

Ask the group 'Why would God want to speak to us about our non-Christian friends?

Who's heard God speak to them about a friend or the situation a friend is in?

What should you do about it when God does speak to you?

Pray for each other that God would give you some of His feelings for your friends.

Witness

Go around the group. Each person name one of their friends they are praying for and give a

brief description. Ask God to speak to you about them, spend a minute listening and then tell what you've heard.

Outline 3: Loving the lost - Taking Opportunities

Welcome

Each person say one thing you'd like to do before you die and why. OR
Each person tell a story of a missed opportunity that you regretted not taking, or an opportunity that you took and were glad of.

Worship

Each person tell of something that God has rescued them from and something that He's helped them to do. Worship God by thanking Him for the things you've talked about.

Word

Read Colossians 4:2-6 as a group.

Why should we be wise in the way we act towards those who don't know Jesus?

What opportunity have you had to show something of Jesus to a friend who doesn't know him yet? Help the group draw out of their experiences the ways of taking opportunities.

Who's found it hard or is having problems?

Pray for the problems that come up and for some of the ways we can make the most of situations.

Witness

Colossians 4:3 says to pray for 'doors of opportunity' to be opened' - Pray for your not-yet-Christian-friends for chances to tell them about Jesus. Break into groups of three, write the names of the three friends you are praying for and put them in the middle of the group.

Pray that each person would have opportunities with their friends and that they would make the most of them.

Outline 4: Loving the lost - Fears that Hold us Back

Welcome

Tell us about one person who used to scare you when you were younger! OR

Ask each person: Tell us when you were afraid of doing something and you either didn't do it, or did it anyway. What were you thinking and feeling?

Worship

Read Psalm 18 around the group, a verse at a time. At the end, think about the psalm for a minute and then feed back on things that struck you, that mean something in your life. Turn that into prayer and thanks.

Word

Read Matthew 26:69-75

Break the group into two. Each group spend two minutes converting the incident into a modern day setting at school. Ask each group to act out their story!

What fears might stop us telling others that we're with Jesus?

Has anyone been in a situation where you were scared of admitting you were a Christian?

OR knew you should do / say something as a Christian but were afraid to?

Who's broken through a fear?

Who has fears that stop them from being a Christian in front of their friends?

Who worries what their friends will think about them if they know that you are a Christian or if you talk about Christian things with them?

Pray. Don't forget to ask for forgiveness where you've given in to fear. Pray for boldness

Witness

Write your name and the names of your three friends on a piece of paper. All stand up and stand on your piece of paper (make sure you are roughly in a circle!). Move onto the next persons piece of paper. Pray for the person that they will be bold about Jesus with their three friends.

Outline 5: Everyone growing up - Learning to Please God

Welcome

Ask each person: what was something really dangerous that you did without realising when you were young? OR What did you do to try to please someone and they didn't like it, or it went horribly wrong?

Worship

Everyone think of something in God's creation that they really appreciate. Ask why do you appreciate it and what does it show you about God? Turn it into thanks to God.

Word

Read Romans 12:1-2.

What does it mean to 'offer your bodies as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God?

What stops you from doing this? What does it cost you?

Why is it important to renew your mind? How can you do this?

How can we help one another?

Who recently did something 'new', did something you hadn't done before, behaved in a new way and felt good that you'd pleased God and done what was right?

Did anyone feel they should do something, but didn't do it?

What situation are you facing where you need to please God at the moment?

Turn that into ministry

Witness

Get into threes. Each take one of the friends that you are praying for and explain what they think God is like? Take time together praying for your friends that they would learn more about who God really is.

Outline 6: Everyone growing up - Learning from the Bible

Welcome

Each person choose a verse from the bible that has meant a lot to you and say why.

Worship

Choose a worshipful song. Someone read the lyrics out. Everyone meditate on them for a while. Respond with your own words of worship. Now listen to the song and worship more.

Word

Read 2.Tim 3:10-17.

How did Timothy learn?

What does this bit say the bible is good for (verse 15 & 16)?

Read Psalm 119:97-112.

Is this your attitude to the word of God?

Lead a time of confessing and repenting if it is relevant.

Break into threes and ask: when was the last time that your life changed because of something that you read in the bible?

When/how can you read the bible more so that it changes your life more?

What problems are you experiencing with this?

Pray for each other.

Witness

2 Timothy 3:15 says that bible helps us see our need for God. Pick one of your friends, and pick a bit of the bible that you think they need to know (help each other if some find that hard). Go around, each praying for your friend that they'll understand what is in that bit of the bible. Pray that you might have a chance to show or tell them it!

Outline 7: Everyone growing up - Old out, new in

Welcome Ask each person: what was something sneaky, cheeky or horrible that you did when you were younger? OR what was something that you were glad you did when you were young?

Worship

Take two or three songs and play them fairly loud so that the group can sing along without being self-conscious. Make sure that you have the words on sheets of paper for people to see. Choose a final song that is about wanting God to change us (e.g. 'Obsession' by Cutting Edge).

Word

Read Ephesians 4:20-24

explain that the 'old self' is living with selfish attitudes and the 'new self' is living for God
Brainstorm on a large sheet of paper with two columns:

1. What are the old attitudes we need to 'take off'?
2. What are the new attitudes we need to 'put on'?

Now make your own personal list on your own bit of paper with the three attitudes that you most struggle with 'taking off' and the three attitudes that you most struggle with 'putting on'.

Each person explaining their sheet to the group. Ask the person how the group can help them to do this. Now get the group pray and minister to them.

Witness

Ask yourselves, what bad attitude do you most have towards your non-Christian friends. What is the good attitude that you should have. Break into twos and ask forgiveness together and pray for each other, ask that God would be in the way you are with your friends.

Outline 8: Everyone growing up - Passing it on

Welcome

Ask each person: When was the last time you stole something? What happened? OR what's the most embarrassing thing that you did to try to impress someone?

Worship

Each think of two people who really helped you grow as a Christian. Thank God for those people. Now spend some time thanking God for the cell group and what He's done in your life and given you through it.

Word

Read Hebrews 5:11-14

What do you think 'milk' and 'solid' food are?

What does it mean to be mature?

Look at verse 12, why should we be hungry to grow ourselves [so that we can teach others].

What have you learned in the last month or so?

How have you passed things on to others in the last month or so?

Break into twos and say what you think holds you back from 'maturing' as a Christian? Pray for this to change.

Witness

Put the names of all the friends you are praying for on a big sheet of paper in the middle.

Spend some time listening to God about what He wants to say or do for any of them and write it next to their name. Pray those things.

Outline 9: Everyone taking part - All Bring Something!

This session needs people to be told to do something before the group!

Read 1 Corinthians 14:26.

When we're worshipping God or helping each other grow, each of us can bring something, from the youngest Christian to the oldest. Get everyone to bring something to the meeting to give to the group. Give them some thoughts, e.g. a song, explaining why they've chosen it

A part of the bible that they really like and why they've chosen it

A bible verse they think that God wants to say to the group and why.

Something they have made/cooked for the group to express something to them.

Be creative! The only requirement is that it helps people to be stronger Christians! Tell people they can ring you if they have problems!

Welcome

Maybe someone will bring something that's good as a Welcome (like food etc.), but if not then ask the question...

What was your favourite toy when you were seven years old and why?

Word + Worship

When you get together...open the group up to people contributing. Explain that we're going to encourage people with what they bring no matter whether it's large or small!!! Have fun.

Witness

Maybe someone will have something to contribute in praying for your non-Christian friends.

If not, then put a 'hot seat' in the middle of the group and leave it empty. Get all the group praying that one of their friends will come and fill this seat, get to know Jesus and join the group.

Outline 10: Everyone taking part - Different Abilities or Gifts

Welcome

Each person: Who's your favourite TV/film character and why? OR

Tell us a time when you did really well in something.

Worship

Give each person an improvised instrument (like a tin of beans and a wooden spoon, a comb and paper, a vacuum hose etc...). Read Psalm 150. Try and make a 'joyful noise' to God using one of the groups favourite worship songs as a basis for the noise!

Now put the song on the CD player and sing along with the words. Go into thanking God for all that He's given to us.

Word

Get someone to read Romans 12:3-8 and Ephesians 4:11-12.

Write out on a large piece of paper in the middle of the group the gifts or abilities that are listed in these two passages.

Check that everyone understands what these gifts mean and ask people to identify which gifts they have.

You can often tell which is your gift because it is something you feel good about and you might have been complimented when you have used it. But it's OK not to know what your gift is (although everyone does have gifts).

When did you last have an opportunity to use your gift?

How can you use your gift more effectively?

Pray for each other for opportunities to use your gifts. Don't forget to pray for those who don't yet know their gift.

Witness

How can you use your gift to help your friends who don't yet know Jesus to come closer to him?

Make a commitment to Jesus and to each other to use your gifts to make God known in the world.

Outline 11: Everyone taking part - Respect

Welcome

Ask each person: If you could have a chat with someone dead or alive who would it be?

What would you ask them?

Each person tell us about someone from your past that you really respected and why.

Worship

Turn the lights down low, or even out and use candles. Read Psalm 145, one verse each, slowly (you could have atmospheric background music on if you like). Focus on God. After that, start going around the group (go around two or three times if you like) saying this prayer..."God, you have my respect because..." and each person fill in their own thoughts.

Word

Read 1 Peter 2:13-17

According to these verses, how should we live in order to please God?

In verse 17, what does 'respect' mean? How do we show respect to others?

What should our attitude be towards those who don't live as God would want them?

Who can tell us about a time when they were appreciated and respected for something they did or said?

Read James 2:1

Do we give more respect to what some say compared to others?

Turn it into repentance and or ministry.

What practical things can we do to make sure that we respect each other and the gifts each brings to this group? (e.g. drawing out the quieter people - not interrupting when others are speaking).

Witness

In threes ask each other how you are going to show respect to your non-Christian friends this week. Pray that you'll do that.

Outline 12: Everyone taking part - Servants

Welcome

Ask each person: What's the most horrible or embarrassing job or chore that you've had to do?

What's something that you did for someone that you felt good about?

Worship

Make a list of all the things that Jesus put up with/went through in becoming human, living amongst us and dying to rescue us. Turn that into thanks and prayer. Now put a song on about what Jesus went through for us, and focus on God during it (e.g. 'White Ribbon Day' by Delirious)

Word

Brainstorm a list of things that are done in the life of the cell (e.g. someone operates the music player; reads the bit out of the bible; organises the 'witness section'; does the washing up; rings up people to see how they are doing etc...).

Ask someone to read John 13:1-17.

Verse 1 says that Jesus showed the disciples the full extent of His love, how did He do that? If we are to be obedient to Jesus, what should we be doing?

What attitude should we have and are there limits to what we would be prepared to do?

In groups of three, be honest about where you are at with serving. Confess to one another and pray for forgiveness.

Ask the Lord to give you opportunities to serve.

Witness

Each person ask themselves are you shying away from doing or saying things to your friends so they can know about Jesus, because they're uncomfortable for you to do. Have some time thinking, listening to God, praying. Ask: what practical things are you going to do or say to your friends to help them see Jesus more? Pray for all your friends, out loud and at the same time.

Outline 13: Jesus at the centre - God's Love First

Welcome

Ask each person: tell us about an act of rebellion in your life. OR tell us a time when you had to say sorry for something.

Worship

Spend a few minutes writing your own Psalm, thanking God for forgiving you and accepting you to be His child. Read them to each other.

Word

Read Luke 15:11-32.

Why does God's love for you mean he lets you go and blow your life if you want?

How do you know that God loves you?

What stops us from receiving God's love?

Who wants to know God's love more in their life?

Turn that into ministry.

Witness

Who amongst all the friends you are praying for is being a prodigal and running away from God at the moment? Pick two or three and pray for them as a whole group.

Outline 14: Jesus at the centre - Doing the Right Thing

Welcome

Ask each person: what's the worst lie you've told / thing you've stolen and why? What were the consequences.

Worship

Prime two or three people in the group to bring one of their favourite songs that speaks about God and what He's done for us. Get them to speak for a minute on what the song means to them, then play it. Encourage people to worship as they listen to the songs.

Word

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

Who is this passage saying gets tempted?

What might be some of the ways out that God gives us?

Who's had an experience where they wanted to do or say something that wasn't what God wanted / wasn't right? What did you do and what were the consequences?

Is anyone facing a situation like that now? Pray for them.

Spend some time listening to God, asking Him to say anything into your own life that he wants you to do / not do. Feed back and then pray.

Witness

Everyone think about whether there is anything that their friends have done that you need to forgive them for. Ask God to show you any attitudes that you might have towards your friends that are bad. Listen for a minute. Feed back and pray for each other.

Outline 15: Jesus at the centre - He's in Charge

Welcome

Ask each person: who was your favourite teacher in school and why? OR

Tell us about a promise that you were unable to keep.

Worship

Put some meditative music on. Someone read Matthew 26:36-46. Think for a while about what Jesus went through. Still over the music, thank God.

Word

Read Matthew 7:21-23

How can we be sure that Jesus will 'know us'?

If we call Jesus 'Lord', what does that mean in reality, day by day, for us?

Is there any part of your life that you've held back from God, or that you are struggling to give to him, even if others think that you are a 'go for it' Christian? Turn that into ministry.

Spend some time silently thinking about the following prayer...

"You've shown me you're real. You've forgiven me the wrong things I've done. I ask you to be Lord of all my life. Teach me your ways of living in all parts of my life."

Then pray it all out loud together - if you mean it.

Witness

Spend some time asking God to give you His heart for your friends. If anyone gets any thoughts, words or bits of the bible let them share it. Ask God that He's show Himself powerfully amongst your friends.

Outline 16: Jesus at the centre - God of our Future

Welcome

Ask each person: what's something that you've always wanted to do but never had the chance to? OR what's something that you wanted to do and finally got a chance to do? Tell us about it.

Worship

Read Revelation 21 (using 'The Message' translation if you have it), explaining that it can be hard to understand bits of it, but it's a glimpse of heaven, where Jesus will one day take us. Read it, think about it, then talk about what this part of the bible shows us about what heaven will be like. Then stop and think - you'll be there! Thank God.

Word

Read Jeremiah 29:11-13

All spend some time quietly thinking about Jesus being involved in your future.

Now read Matthew 18:19-20.

Jesus is here. Spend a minute, quietly recognising that. Spend some time listening - He's in charge - does He want to say anything? Feed back - and respond if necessary.

Read verse 19 again. Is there any dreams that God has put in your heart that we can say 'Yes God, do it' to? Share dreams, visions, hopes, fears. Pray.

Witness

Break into threes and pray for your friends. Ask that God will show them what life and death is really all about. Pray against those things that would stop them seeing those truths.

Outline 17: Caring Community - Watch Your Tongue!

Welcome

Each person: What is one of the nicest things someone has ever said to you?

Tell of a time when you put your foot in it, by what you said.

Worship

Go around the group, each person saying something about God that they really appreciate.

Turn that into prayer.

Word

Someone read James 3:1-12.

What issues are brought out in this passage?

Tongues are powerful things! For good or bad.

Why is it so difficult to only say positive things with our tongues?

Who can remember a time when someone helped you or hurt you by what they said?

Are we prepared to say positive things and to challenge each other in the group when we say negative things?

Break into groups of three and pray for each other. The person being prayed for start off by confessing if they have hurt people by what they've said and commit themselves to say good things.

Witness

Think, what good things do our friends need to hear from us? What bad things do they not need to hear from us? Is there anything that we need to say sorry to them for saying? Pray for opportunities to say positive things.

Outline 18: Caring community - Don't envy one another

Welcome

Who was your hero or heroine when you were 12 years old?

Each person: Can you remember a time when you tried to show off and it went horribly wrong? Or can you remember a time when you took the credit for something you didn't do?

Worship

Put some atmospheric music on in the background. Get three people to read, everyone else focus on Jesus as they do.

First person: Matthew 27:27-44

Second person: Matthew 27: 45-54

Third person: Matthew 28:1-10

Ask people to pray out short prayers of thanks.

Word

Read Ephesians 4:25-5:1

What can we learn about God's ideas for relating to each other?

Make a list of the positive things that build relationships and the negative things that destroy relationships.

Can anyone tell us about a difficult relationship which got sorted out? What did you stop doing? What did you start to do?

Is anyone in a difficult relationship now? Pray for them.

Get into twos, share which aspects that you struggle with and pray for each other.

Witness

In twos, discuss what you have to offer your non-Christian friends when they tell you about problems they are having in relationships? Are you able to pray for them if they do? Ask God for opportunities to be a help to your friend in their relationships.

Outline 19: Caring community - Accept one another

Welcome

Ask each person: What did you have to have that everyone else had when you were 13? What over the top things have you done just to be "in" with the right crowd? OR what things did you do to be like everyone else, but you couldn't stand doing really?

Worship

Jesus forgives us and accepts us so we can admit to things we are ashamed of or know to be wrong. Everyone write down on a piece of paper something that you have done that is wrong. Fold or screw those pieces of paper up and put them on a baking tray. Set light to them (be careful!) at the same time ask someone to read Romans 5:8. Each thank Jesus that he forgave you and accepted you.

Word

Read Romans 15:5-7

Why, according to this passage, should we accept one another?

How can we do that? What is it that we can do that doesn't show acceptance? What does it feel like when you feel accepted? How do you behave? What about when you don't?

Go around each person, getting others to say things that they appreciate about that person. Feeling that you are on the outside/that you are on the fringe is a common feeling.

In threes talk about situations in this group or elsewhere where you have not felt accepted. Pray for healing for each other about this.

Witness

How are you showing acceptance and appreciation to the friends you are praying for?

How will we as a group make them feel accepted when they come to our socials/cell

meetings?

Get into threes and pray that your friends will feel accepted by you, your cell and God.

Outline 20: Caring community - Encourage One another Welcome

Each person: Tell of a time when you did something because someone else encouraged you. Something that you may not have done without that help.

Worship

Look at Psalm 23. Each person rewrite it in their own words - updating it to what happens in your life. When everyone has done it, read them out to each other. At the end, all thank God that He is our rescuer.

Word

Read Hebrews 10:24-25

According to the passage, why should we meet together?

What good things should we spur each other on to do?

How can we do that?

What areas are you struggling in where you need encouragement? Turn that into prayer, ministry and encouragement.

Witness

Think of one thing that one of your friends fears. Go around, each praying for their friend that God would set them free.

TEN COMMANDMENTS CELL MATERIAL

The following series on the Ten Commandments comes from the Carpenter's Arms Anglican Fellowship in Kent. They state their values as:

Values	We will focus on Jesus at the heart of our life together
	We will live in Christian community, honestly and with sacrificial love
	We will minister to others, Jesus-style
	We will grow to be like Jesus
	We will reach out to others with God's love

And in their introduction they note that:

Cells should live life together, not just have meetings. The only agenda for the group is to have Jesus in its midst. Take these ideas as a starting point and do what you need to do to achieve the aim.

INTRODUCTION TO THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	
Welcome	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Mixing & participating – FUN Starting communication	Divide the group into two teams with two rubber bands and two sets of old newspapers each. In ten minutes each team is to build the tallest free-standing structure they can, using only the materials provided.
Worship	25 minutes Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	It requires good teamwork and co-ordination to achieve the goal of building the tower. Every member of the team has a part to play, just as in a family all are important. God is the most important, the key person in the family. So as we prepare to worship the Lord, let us place Him as the most important person in our family, let us also uphold each member of our family and our group before God.
	Slowly read out the whole of Revelation 4. Get people to close their eyes and to imagine that they are there, seeing the sights, hearing the sounds. With eyes still closed, get people to put into words what they see and feel. Remind them that this is what's happening in heaven now and, as we worship, we join with heaven.
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. Pray for the equipping of the Holy Spirit, then pray for one another, asking God to meet each other's needs. Ask God to show cell group members Bible verses and pictures for one another...
Word	30 minutes Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To get an overview of the</i>	<i>What's it about?</i> If we read the newspapers, we read of events in the world, in our country and in Deal where people lie, steal

<p><i>Ten Commandments and to understand their relevance for today's world.</i></p>		<p>and cheat. When God brought his people out of Egypt, He established a covenant with them. They lived in tents not houses; they used an abacus, not a computer; they travelled by camel, not jet plane. But if you read the newspaper alongside the Bible, you discover that the things they did, the ways they lived, (without God) were no different from us. Read Exodus 20:1-17 for God's guidelines to them, and us.</p>
	<p><i>What does it mean?</i></p>	<p>How would you summarise the Ten Commandments? ('Love God + love others'; St Augustine said, 'Love God and do what you like' – what did he mean by this?) Read Mark 12:28-34 for Jesus' summary.</p>
	<p><i>So what about me?</i></p>	<p>Playing by the rules isn't popular today – why not? Do the Ten Commandments have any relevance for us today? (Not as a means of earning salvation, but by <i>demonstrating</i> that we have been saved through Christ.) Do the Ten Commandments have any relevance for the non-Christian? (They provide ethical and moral principles that are good for <i>everyone's</i> well-being.)</p>
<p>Witness</p>	<p>15 minutes</p>	<p>Target finish at _____</p>
<p>Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i></p>		<p>Everyone think of one person for whom you can pray that they will come to know the Lord by Christmas! The Lord can make that happen, can't he? Split into groups of two or three and pray for your friends.</p>

COMMANDMENT 1

<p>Preparation: <i>Pray!</i></p>		
<p>Welcome</p>	<p>15 minutes</p>	<p>Target finish at _____</p>
<p>Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication</p>		<p>If your house were to catch fire, what, other than people and pets, would you try to save? If a <i>religion</i> is 'that which gives life meaning or purpose', what are the main religions in the area? Where are the 'temples' and what demands of time and money are made? What are the religious rituals?</p>
<p>Worship</p>	<p>25 minutes</p>	<p>Target finish at _____</p>
<p><i>Transition to</i></p>		<p>God wants us to have no other god but Him. Play a song, quietly, that</p>

worship:	reflects this theme e.g. <i>I give you all the honour</i>	
	Light a single candle placed in the middle of the group and invite each person silently to pray. Spend the time in <i>listening</i> prayer, asking God what He wishes to say to you as an individual...	
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week? Share it, if it will build up (edify) or encourage others present.	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To understand the 1st commandment ("Do not worship any other gods")</i>	What's it about?	Read Exodus 20:1-3 Why can't God share worship with other gods? Should we see the commandments as rules to keep, or as the response of people loved & saved by God?
	What does it mean?	Read Isaiah 40:18-31 What does this have to say about our temptation to worship the things we make or have done?
	So what about me?	<p>What's the practical application of this teaching? (Isa. 40:27-31)</p> <p>Read Mark 12:28-30 What does it mean in practice to love God like this? (Heart = emotion; soul = eternal; mind = intellect; strength = body)</p> <p>What are the parts of our life that God has no control over?</p> <p>Do we lack faith that God fully cares, or that He's that important?</p> <p>If you had a 'spiritual healthcheck', what would the result be?</p> <p>How can we help each other to serve God more faithfully?</p>
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on evangelism to the group as well as its commitment to edification</i>	Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas. Plan a Christmas party, carol singing, or some other way to reach them.	

COMMANDMENT 2

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	
Welcome	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	<p>What do you do when you need cheering up? Reassuring? Guidance?</p> <p>What do you look forward to? [Holidays, weekends, Christmas parties...]</p>

Worship	25 minutes	Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	Praise is the best antidote to idolatry because it reminds us who God is.	
	Write a psalm of praise and thanksgiving together. (Use Psalm 31:14, 32:11, 40:5, 62:11-12 as inspiration!)	
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week?	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To understand the 2nd commandment ("Don't make idols")</i>	<i>What's it about?</i>	Read Exodus 20:4-6 and define an idol. Why would someone bow before something they had made? What can't idols do that God can? [Jeremiah 10:1-16]
	<i>What does it mean?</i>	In what human situations would we be "jealous for someone's affection"? Is that like God's relationship with us?
	<i>So what about me?</i>	Why does money make such a strong idol? [Matthew 6:24] When you have a spare moment, where does your mind drift? What do you spend money on? These point to where our heart lies and we may have to work at destroying idols! Who (or what) controls you? Unless the answer is God... Pray for and minister to one another.
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas. Pray against the idols that you see being worshipped in their lives.	

COMMANDMENT 3

Welcome	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	Ask everyone to choose a partner. Take it in turns to speak for 2 minutes on <i>any</i> subject <u>without</u> using the word 'I' – the partner is to keep silent and wait his turn.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How easy was it to talk without using the word 'I'? · If you didn't use the word 'I', how did you avoid it? 	

	Why do we find it hard? But how does it make us feel when we hear it?
Worship	25 minutes Target finish at _____
<p><i>Transition to worship:</i> The choosing of names had a greater significance in the Bible times than now. (Abraham = Father of a multitude; Esau = Hairy; Ichabod, of the nation = The glory has departed...)</p> <p>God's many Bible names accurately describe His character. They are powerful and, when used in faith, we are acknowledging God to be what His name says.</p>	<p>Write out the names of God, each on one slip of paper with its Bible reference. Get each person to read the name, look up and read the scripture. Discuss what the name tells us about God's character and work. Then encourage response with a short prayer of praise...</p> <p><i>El-Roi</i> – The God who sees me Gen. 16:13 <i>El-Shaddai</i> – Almighty (Gen. 17:1-2)</p> <p><i>Yahweh</i> – I AM that I AM (Exodus 3:14) <i>The Rock</i> – (Isaiah 26:4)</p> <p><i>Fortress</i> (Psalm 18:2) <i>Sun</i> (Psalm 84:11)</p> <p><i>Refiner</i> (Malachi 3:3) <i>Shepherd</i> (Psalm 23:1)</p> <p><i>Our Father</i> (Matthew 6:9) <i>Father of Compassion</i> (2 Cor. 1:3)</p> <p><i>Father of Glory</i> (Ephesians 1:17) <i>Abba Father</i> (Romans 8:15)</p> <p><i>Ancient of Days</i> (Daniel 7:9)</p> <p><i>Jehovah-Jireh</i> – The Lord will provide (Genesis 22:14)</p> <p><i>Jehovah-Shalom</i> – The Lord is peace (Judges 6:24)</p> <p><i>Jehovah-Tsidkenu</i> – The Lord our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:5-6; 33:16)</p>
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week?
Word	30 minutes Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To understand the 3rd commandment ("Don't misuse God's name...")</i>	<p><i>What's it about?</i> Read Exodus 3:1-15 Does God need us? Does He change?</p> <p>Read Matt. 6:9 What does it mean to honour God's name? How is this the opposite of misusing it? Why should we pray this?</p> <p>Read Phil. 2:9-11 How is the name of Jesus above every other? Do we treat the name of Jesus sacred now?</p> <p><i>What does it mean?</i> What's the difference between knowing someone by their title ("Sir", "Doctor") and being allowed to use their first name?</p> <p>How would Moses feel about being given God's own name?</p>

	So what about me?	Are the words you use/the way you say things okay to God? What changes do you need to make in your life after hearing or reading this? How does this encourage you?
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u>	If we are known to be Christians, we are bearing Christ's name. How can the way we behave bring glory and honour to Jesus? Is there a gap between your beliefs and your behaviour? What can you do to bridge it? Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas.	

COMMANDMENT 4

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>		
Welcome	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does your work control you, or do you control your work? What's the longest you've ever worked without taking a day off? Do you feel guilty when you relax? What were Sundays like 20 years ago? 	
Worship	25 minutes	Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	What's the difference between praise and worship? Why do we worship?	
	Read Psalm 92 (v.4 "You thrill me, Lord, with all you have done for me! I sing for joy because of what you have done.") Use this psalm to inspire prayers of thanksgiving, praise and worship...	
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week?	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: To understand the 4 th commandment ("Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy...")	What's it about?	Read Genesis 2:1-3 Why did God take a break from working? What does Exodus 16:13-30 teach as the purpose of Sabbath?
	What does it mean?	Read Luke 4:14-16 for Jesus' normal Sabbath practice What is the <i>principle</i> of Sabbath? How can we recover the idea of the Sabbath being a day of <u>rest</u> and a day of <u>joy</u> ? Read Hebrews 10:24-25 Does our freedom from Sabbath rules mean that we can do anything we want? Why should we meet together and what may happen if we don't?

	<i>So what about me?</i>	<p>What has challenged you most?</p> <p>What attitude or action do you need to change?</p> <p>What two things could you start (and two things you could stop) doing to make your day off a better Sabbath?</p>
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	<p>What would you say to someone thinking of becoming a Christian who wants to know what to do on a Sunday?</p> <p>Plan a cell group social event – and invite some not-yet Christians!</p> <p>Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas.</p>	

COMMANDMENT 5

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	How did you get on with forgiving those who wronged you last week?	
Welcome	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the best time you've ever had with your parents? • What makes it hard to be a parent? 	
Worship	25 minutes	Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	<p>Jesus used a powerful story to show what God's heart to us is like. Read the story of the loving father from Luke 15:11-32 and as a group, make a list firstly of the son's characteristics then of the father's.</p> <p>Change 'the son' to 'I' and 'the father' to 'God' and together read out the lists of characteristics. Thank God for his perfect fatherhood to each of us.</p>	
Ministry: <i>(1 Cor. 14:26)</i>	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week?	
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	<p>Plan a cell group social event – and invite some not-yet Christians!</p> <p>Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas.</p>	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____

Goal: <i>To understand the 5th commandment ("Honour your father and mother. Then you will live a long life in the land the Lord your God will give you.")</i>	<i>What's it about?</i>	Read Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4
	<i>What does it mean?</i>	How would you define 'honouring'? Is it the same as 'respecting' or 'obeying'? How could you <i>dishonour</i> parents? What are the limits to obedience?
	<i>So what about me?</i>	What changes do you need to make in your life after hearing/reading this? What do you need to repent of for Jesus to be able use you more? How does this encourage you?

COMMANDMENT 6

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>		
Welcome	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell us a story about when you were a victim or spectator of road rage, computer rage or something similar. What happened? Describe a situation when you, or someone you know, got really angry. What did the anger achieve? 	
Worship	25 minutes	Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	<p>God's mercy outweighs His judgement/anger – mercy is pity/compassion + <i>action</i>. God's mercy is just – it's not that we're "let off the hook", but that the full penalty for our sin was paid on the cross by Jesus.</p> <p>Have a cross, crown of thorns, lighted candle or similar object in the centre of the room. Perhaps choose some quiet music or a cross-centred song to listen to...</p> <p>Read Ephesians 4:31, 32 and Matthew 5:7. Thank God for His mercy</p>	
Ministry: <i>(1 Cor. 14:26)</i>	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week?	
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas. What does it mean in practice to 'love our enemies'? What might this mean for your relationships with not-yet Christians?	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To</i>	<i>What's it about?</i>	Read Genesis 1:26-27. What does it mean to be 'made in

understand the 6 th commandment (“Do not murder”)	What does it mean?	God’s image’? Why then is killing/damaging human beings so serious? Read Exodus 20:13 How might we express this positively, as “You shall...”? How does Jesus go further than the OT commandment? (Matthew 5:21-26) Why do right relationships take priority over worship? What rules on anger does Paul give? (Ephesians 4:25-32) What’s anger’s greatest danger? What’s the alternative? (31-32)
	So what about me?	Can we forgive and still be angry? (Matthew 6:14-15) What might God be saying to you through this? Pray together. Determine that you will forgive any wrongs done to you this week – and check each other out next week!

COMMANDMENT 7

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	
Welcome	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your favourite memory from childhood? • What are you looking forward to most about next week? • In which of the TV soaps is there a marriage on the rocks? Why is it failing?
Worship	25 minutes Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	One reason why relationships fail is that there is a breakdown of <i>communication</i> and <i>commitment</i> . God, however, is <u>faithful</u> – always communicating and always committed to us. What is faithfulness? (Constant like the sun, dependable like night following day, devoted like a best friend, unswerving like an arrow, unwavering solid like a mountain) Sing <i>Faithful one, Ascribe greatness</i>
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. What has God been saying to you this week?
Witness	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas. Pray that they will get to know a faithful God. How can you be part of the answer to that prayer?

Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: To understand the 7 th commandment ("You shall not commit adultery")	<i>What's it about?</i>	Read Genesis 2:18-25 What's Adam's need? How does Eve meet it? What are the three parts of marriage (v.24)? Read 2 Samuel 11:1-26 List the steps through which David descends in verses 2-4. Where is the start of the sin? How could it have been stopped?
	<i>What does it mean?</i>	Read Matthew 5:27-32 How does Jesus explain the problem? Why is the problem with thought not just action? Can anyone be innocent? Read John 8:1-11 What do we learn about God from this story? How can we reflect more of God's attitudes in the area of sex?
	<i>So what about me?</i>	In Matthew 5, Jesus offers a radical solution. What does that mean for us today? In silence, individually read Psalm 51 and ask the Lord to speak.

COMMANDMENT 8

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	You'll need paper and a pen for everyone. Also, a blindfold and a bunch of keys.	
Welcome	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Have fun! Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have someone sit, blindfolded, on a chair with a bunch of keys on the floor underneath. Get others to try to steal the keys without being heard and pointed at by the sitter. As soon as someone is pointed at, they're out! Give everyone a paper and a pen and ask them to make a list of everything that they have bought or used in the last 24 hours. Ask everyone to read some of their list (or the whole lot!) 	
Worship	25 minutes	Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	Read Matthew 6:26-34 and thank God that He provides for all of your physical needs.	
	Sing praise & thanksgiving (<i>God is good, Thanks be to God, Thank you Jesus, the Doxology, ...</i>)	
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. Pray for the equipping of the Holy Spirit, then pray for one another, asking God to meet each other's needs. Ask God to show cell group members Bible verses and pictures for one another...	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____

Goal: <i>To understand the importance of not stealing.</i>	<i>What's it about?</i>	Read Psalm 24:1 and Lev. 25:23 and work out who owns what. What's <u>bad</u> news & <u>good</u> news for thieves? (1 Co. 6:9-11)
	<i>What does it mean?</i>	What types of theft are condemned? Read the following: Exodus 22:25-27 Leviticus 19:13 Deuteronomy 19:14 Isaiah 10:1-2 Amos 5:10 Amos 8:4-6 What other things can be stolen? [e.g. Character/reputation Psalm 31:11-13; Psalm 38:12]
	<i>So what about me?</i>	How should Christians be different? (Eph. 4:28) What has challenged you most? In what areas do you find that you break this commandment? What can we pray for you right now? [Pray in twos or threes.]
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	In what ways can you be generous to those who aren't Christians this week? Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas.	

COMMANDMENT 9

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	Buy a bunch of flowers; gather glue and paper for a collage.
Welcome	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Mixing and participation Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give everyone one flower head and ask them to take it apart. Use the petals and so on with the glue and paper to make a collage picture of themselves. When all have finished, admire the pictures. Then ask if they could put the flowers back together again. Of course, that's not possible!

Worship	25 minutes	Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	Just as we can't reassemble a broken flower, so we can't take back our words once they've been spoken. Just like the flower, God's world is beautiful and delicate. It only takes a moment to break it, but then it's hard to mend.	
	Read John 1:1-5, 14 Thank Jesus for revealing the truth, showing what God is like, for creating & sustaining the world, for becoming the voice of the Father and speaking then and now, for shining His light in our hearts, ...	
Ministry: (1 Cor. 14:26)	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. Pray for the equipping of the Holy Spirit, then pray for one another, asking God to meet each other's needs. Ask God to show cell group members Bible verses and pictures for one another...	
Word	30 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To understand the importance of not telling lies.</i>	<i>What's it about?</i>	Read Exodus 20:16 In what situations today do we testify (Where are we a witness?)
	<i>What does it mean?</i>	Read John 14:6, 8:31-32 How do we find truth? Why should we? What effect does lying have on our relationship with God? With others? And our ability to assess ourselves? What does this commandment have to say about gossiping? Keeping secrets? Believing in Santa Claus? Pretending to forget a birthday in order to surprise someone? Hiding the wife of a drunken husband? Responding "Fine" to "How are you?" when in fact you feel terrible? When you've planned a quiet night in, the phone rings. As you go to answer, your spouse says, "If it's for me, tell them I'm not in". It is for your spouse, so how do you answer? Read James 3:1-12 Is it that hard to tame the tongue? Do we treat words too lightly?
	<i>So what about me?</i>	Should you as an individual become accountable to someone? Could the group commit to say nothing unless it passes THINK? T (True) H (Helpful) I (Inspiring) N (Necessary) K (Kind) Confess and pray for each other in pairs or groups of

	two/three.
Witness	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on evangelism to the group as well as its commitment to edification</i>	All Christians are called to be witnesses to the good news of Jesus. Are we, by our words and actions, faithful witnesses? If not, are we breaking this commandment? Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas.

COMMANDMENT 10

Preparation: <i>Pray!</i>	Buy a bag of small, wrapped, sweets – enough for all to have at least three.
Welcome	15 minutes Target finish at _____
Starting communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give everyone at least three sweets. Get them to mingle and to try to win a sweet off others by asking a question to which the answer is “No”. How much money would it take to get all you want?
Worship	25 minutes Target finish at _____
<i>Transition to worship:</i>	When Paul was in prison he wrote of how he’d learned the secret of always being contented: he learned to thank God for what he had, instead of complaining about what he thought he lacked. Go through the alphabet from A to Z thinking of things for which we can thank God, at least one thing for each letter. Humour and worship work together!
Ministry: <i>(1 Cor. 14:26)</i>	Read 1 Corinthians 14:26. Pray for the equipping of the Holy Spirit, then pray for one another, asking God to meet each other’s needs. Ask God to show cell group members Bible verses and pictures for one another...
Word	30 minutes Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>To understand the importance of not coveting.</i>	<p><i>What’s it about?</i> The desires of our heart. Read Psalm 37:4; Song of Songs 7:10; 1 Kings 8:57-58. What sorts of desire are here? Are they wrong? Exodus 20:17 If this were being written today, what sorts of examples would you give? Mark 7:14-23 shows where sin does and does <i>not</i> come from.</p> <p><i>What does it mean?</i> Read Luke 12:13-21 What do you think Jesus would say that true life consists of? What’s the rich man overlooking by focusing on wealth? How can we find contentment? (Philippians 4:11-13) What should our response to adverts be?</p>

	<i>So what about me?</i>	What is God saying to you through these scriptures? If you could ask God for anything right now, what would it be?
Witness	15 minutes	Target finish at _____
Goal: <i>Add a practical emphasis on <u>evangelism</u> to the group as well as its commitment to <u>edification</u></i>	How do we share the good news of Jesus to someone whose life revolves around possessions? Pray for your friends whom you wish to see get to know Jesus by Christmas.	

A CELL STUDY ON THE “ABC” OF UNITY: EPHESIANS 4:1-16

Aspects of unity

One body

Romans 12:5

So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Gal 6:2

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.

Question – what other images help here?

One spirit

1 Corinthians 12:13

For we were all baptized by [Or with; or in] one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Question – do you drink from the Spirit?

One hope

Galatians 5:5

But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.

Ephesians 1:18

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

1 Timothy 6:17

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

One Lord

Mark 12:29b

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. [Or the Lord our God is one Lord]

1 Corinthians 8:6

Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

Question – any one else struggle with that, mentally?

Question – what is the benefit of having one Lord?

One faith

Romans 4:12

And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

One baptism

Luke 3:3

He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Acts 19:2b-6

"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?"

"John's baptism," they replied. Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord

Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

One God

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

Benefits of unity

- Maturity
- Becoming fully Christ like
- Steadfastness
- Growth
- Establishment

Question – did you think this to be possible?

Question – on earth? in heaven?

Question – do you think growth is guaranteed, in life?

Conditions of unity

- Humble
- Gentle
- Patient
- Respond and bear in Love
- Peace

Question – which is most unnatural? why?

Question – do you feel 'joined'?

Question – do you feel 'held'?

Question – do you feel 'supported'?

USING FILMS IN CELL GROUPS

Hollywood can help us think theologically! As Christians we need to constantly be asking 'where is God in this situation' and films can help us think that through in some tough situations. Videos and DVDs can also be a great source of ideas and storylines that often resonate with the key themes of the Christian faith. They also provide a great 'bridge' between 'church culture' and the culture of most of 21st Century society – especially for people in their 20s and 30s group. BUT their use needs lots of preparation to work well..... although if it doesn't work too well it's not likely to be as boring as it might have been and you'll have enjoyed a film together!

Using film can take quite a bit of preparation and aren't something to use 'as is'. For a start, deciding how much of a film to show, and which clips, can take quite a bit of time. Also be aware that some in the group might be uncomfortable with some scenes. Don't assume everyone has your taste or your level of tolerance of violent or sex scenes (especially if you are using a 15 or an 18). Be especially careful with sex scenes – don't forget that there may well be people who are struggling hard with issues of pornography and the like in your cell.

Hollywood Cell Group?!



For ideas about good films that could help you lead a Hollywood Cell Group night, google 'Connect Bible Studies' (Not our Connect). You will find a list of bible studies that provide questions to lead you through particular films. Films like 'The Matrix', 'Lord of the Rings' etc. There are even bible studies on television programmes like 'Big Brother'. Another website to 'Google' for information on using TV and Film is 'Damaris'.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER CONNECT CELL LEADERS

Recently we asked for some recommendations from existing Connect Cell Leaders for ideas that had been successful in their group. Here are a few more ideas...

- **Christianity Explored** (great post Alpha or Alpha level video course based on Mark's gospel)
- **A life worth living** (post-alpha course that may suit some people) video based so easy to lead
- **Lifebuilder series on David** (some interesting discussions especially involving some of the OT vs. NT stuff)
- **Lifebuilder series on Acts** (some good challenges and interesting discussion topics)
- **Christianity and TV**
- How about '**Open Mic**' evenings? Ask one of your cell group to lead for 30 minutes on something they are passionate about e.g. Fair trade, a recent book they've read, Sport and Christianity, Worship... it can be absolutely anything. It can be run as a series so that everyone gets a turn - it is a great way of getting the cell to know each other better.
- **An Ordinary Day with Jesus** (recognizing how Jesus works in the everyday aspects of life)
- **The TIDE Course** – Training In Discipleship and Evangelism.
- **Nooma DVDs** – 10 contemporary short films that generate great discussions.

WORSHIP RESOURCES – POTENTIAL CELL MATERIALS

Some ideas from Phil Cooke

1. Prologue

To get worship in small groups right we need first a proper biblical understanding of WHAT WORSHIP REALLY IS. We need to get back to the basics.

WHY? Because, in practice, our understanding of worship is often (subconsciously) reduced/confined to *particular expressions* of worship – i.e. what we see on Sundays.

- not that this isn't worship, but that it is by no means the totality of worship...

Important: small groups often avoid 'worship' altogether because of an ASSUMPTION that they "can't do it", "it doesn't work with small numbers", "it's embarrassing". All too easy to come up with lists of things we can't do... BUT what we're actually saying is: "can't do it like that".

Don't forget Matt 18.20 - where 2 or 3 are gathered... Jesus present with us in small numbers too! So it is quite possible to worship 'in spirit and truth' (John 4.23-4).

We need to:

- identify things that will work in small groups
- think outside the box (i.e.: of our own experience so far)
- perhaps also think of things that work only in small groups and not in bigger ones...

Likely to be an ongoing process – a learning process. But in the end, has to be good for the church's spiritual diet.

2. What is worship really all about then?

a. Worship is about relationship

It is part of who we are, made in the image of God

- God made us to worship Him; it was His idea!
- To worship God is to be human; to be fully human is to worship God.
- Worship is fundamentally about being in relationship with God – a 2-way relationship.
 - David Peterson *Engaging with God* => worship is about God engaging with His people and his people encountering him.
 - From our perspective, worship is about returning God's love

- Not an equal relationship. Comes out strongly in the way different words are traced back to identical Hebrew and Greek roots:
 - *Hawah* – appears 290 times in OT. Translated (among other things) as both ‘worship’ and ‘bow down’;
 - *yare* – appears 332 times in OT. Translated mainly as ‘fear, awe, reverence’, but also ‘worship’;
 - *proskyneō* – appears 60 times in NT. Translated variously as ‘worship’, ‘kneel down’ ...to do with ‘inward attitude’.

IMPORTANT – lots of what we call worship can become ME-centred.... where ultimately it should be about focusing attention on God. “There’s only one person in the worship audience.”

Implication: principle must come before practice. Start with the principles rather than the (often limited) ways we commonly see those principles worked out in practice. Start with the essence, not the expressions of worship.

In other words, in asking “How can I develop worship in my small group?” the starting point is not one of practical form. The first question to ask - the bottom line - has to be: “How can we facilitate the nurturing of this relationship?”

So:

- It is not about, how can we sing xyz songs etc. but how we can help bring God and his people together.
- Get people to focus heart and mind on God - who he is and what he’s done for us. Do this and you’re well on the way to biblical worship.

b. Worship = lifestyle before liturgy

Another big biblical theme is that this ‘worship-based relationship’ applies not just on Sundays, but to WHOLE OF LIFE. No such thing as ‘sacred/secular split’ in Hebrew thinking: simply no concept of worship being confined to a purely liturgical activity.

Romans 12.1 - spiritual acts of worship = ‘offer bodies as living sacrifice.’

latreuo (26 times in NT) = ‘worship’ or ‘serve, minister’
abad (290 times in OT) = ‘worship’ or ‘work, serve’

It’s about the whole of our being – giving of ourselves to God in life of total service, surrender and adoration.

“worship = lifestyle of service, not a lifetime of services”

Without this, the services have no real meaning; they lack integrity, do not please God. (Amos 5.21ff; Mal 1.10; Isa 29.13; Matt 5.23-24)

• **Two implications here:**

(i) The whole of the small group meeting is worship

- how we do every aspect matters
- relationships matter

(ii) Potential to 'bridge' work and worship?

Is there a PARTICULAR role here for small groups in bridging the sacred/secular divide? For bringing the worlds of worship and work together? Is this not something which may (in practical terms) be easier (more effective) to do in the small group context than the larger gathering?

- important intimacy dynamic=> easier to minister to each other more personally
- deeper relationships, accountability, trust
- more capacity for honesty, vulnerability about what it's really like
- greater depth of understanding
- room to be more specific about things to pray for i.e. room for more reality in worship.

If so, this could well add significantly to the spiritual health of the church as a whole, certainly to a better understanding of worship. Adding a dimension that would not otherwise be there (certainly in quite the same way).

c. Worship = about the whole person

Another important theme: worship is about 'ALL of us' and 'all of US'.

• **(ALL of us) - a theological issue**

Multi-sensory worship: Mark 12.30 – 'worship the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, strength' - all of us, all our faculties!

Evangelicals have not always been good at this. Good on the words, the cerebral...but not always good at the other side of the brain. As much (more) influenced by Enlightenment rationalism than biblical understandings of how God has wired us up.

There are limits (Ex.20:4-5; Deut 4:15), but the baby has been long thrown out with the bathwater.

God has gifted us with sense of the numinous, aesthetic, mystery... potential to discover new aspects of worship. It's 'built in'.

John Drane, *Faith in a Changing Culture* (p.144):
“Authentic worship opens windows onto God’s glory and goodness, and provides a holistic context in which *the whole human can respond to all of who God is.*”

(all of US) – a pastoral issue

In groups, we also need to take personality difference seriously ... there will be different personalities in every small group. Not embracing different ‘learning styles’ inevitably excludes some. Need perhaps a more balanced approach.

It is true that things sensory will be new to some, perhaps threatening. But need to step out, be bold and try new things. Put ourselves in places where God can surprise us.

(Also: don’t miss the missiological factor here, that we won’t be able to truly engage with much of post-modern culture if we don’t use their language, language which is becoming increasingly symbolic and pictorial, less and less reliant on purely written ‘words’).

SOME PRACTICAL WORSHIP IDEAS...

MUSIC

- *Still important in small groups, because it’s important to our humanity. Don’t dismiss it... can still reach places other things can’t! But don’t try to recreate Sunday service. Dynamics are very different in small groups so need different approaches and different expectations.*

- **Guitarist/keys** – use them if you’ve got them
- **Other (solo) instruments**
 - not just to accompany... play prophetically... God can speak powerfully through music without words...
 - music in healing: **I Sam 16**
 - also: **Joshua 6; I Sam 10.5f ; II Kings 3: 14-15**
- **CDs** – (i) ‘sing along’ – can be useful
(ii) ‘listen with purpose’ – not just churchy stuff: classics, jazz too
(iii) lots of potential
- **Just SING!** Takes some guts, but can be very effective & liberating
 - can break the ice!
 - perhaps just a solo voice on occasion?
 - pitch low rather than high
- **Basic rhythm**
 - Unaccompanied singing often helped by simple rhythmic pulse e.g. small egg shaker, or simply tap out on table, or even knees, bunch keys; tap your foot... This helps particularly in the ‘gaps’ between phrases
 - keep it unobtrusive (and in time!)

- **Silence**
 - Rev 8:1 silence in heaven for ½ hour!
 - Zeph 3.17 listening to the “Father’s Song”
 - DO use silence. Learn to listen... give God space to speak.
 - start with a minute or two, then build up gradually... get used to it.
 - reassure people not to be embarrassed by pregnant silence... explain: “It’s deliberate, not because no-one can think of anything to say!”

SPOKEN WORDS

- **Speak scripture** - not just ‘do’ a reading.
 - raise expectancy... help people focus on Word, not just words
 - ‘be still’ before reading
 - set the scene, engage the senses
 - use music (CD or live) before or during reading - inc. classical (e.g. Beethoven 6 with Ps 23; Tallis *Spem in alium* with Rev 4)
 - use images (before or during) – video/TV/DVD - e.g. BBCs *Blue Planet* series with Genesis 1, 2 or Psalm 8.
 - Don’t forget smell... something bitter/sour with bits of (e.g.) Amos?
 - Read poems as poems– get inside the *genre*... identify the more creative readers
- **Speak song words (poetry)**
 - dig into the songbooks and hymnbooks.
 - don’t have to be sung – could just read them as poems.
 - again – identify the expressive readers.
- **Speak Psalms together**
- **Role-play**
 - can be powerful... Gospels a good place to start
 - reading the story through the eyes of different characters
- **Storytelling**
 - check out the Bible Society/Northumbria Community storytelling project
- **Formal liturgy**
 - Don’t miss out on this – be creative!
 - Book of Common Prayer, Common Worship etc. - some really good stuff in here.
 - Check out the Celtic resources too – very good, fresh material (e.g. Northumbria Community, Iona Community).

PRAYER & WORSHIP... dig deeper

- **Watch the news then pray**
 - record it at 6pm and show later
 - use local newspapers
- **Video (newsy) + sing**
 - watch images/ a video (muted) while listening to an evocative CD...
 - ... or while singing penitential/intercessory song
 - sometimes this is all it needs and it speaks for itself.
- **Posture**
 - kneel together in prayer
 - stand to pray – keeps us awake!
 - give 'permission' to do this... break the embarrassment barrier
 - not about ritual, but symbolism.
 - can be liberating.
 - new posture can add depth
- **Hot seat?**
 - when we pray for each other, sometimes use a hot-seat and lay hands
 - vulnerability and accountability important things to engender.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- **Small groups at an advantage here?**
 - I Cor 14 – probably a small group context!
- **What gifts do you have in your group?**
 - has anyone ever asked?
 - give 'permission' where appropriate

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Can transform a meeting, create a more worshipful atmosphere...**
- **Lighting / candles**
 - set it up before people arrive
- **Smell**
 - scented candles
 - flowers
 - furniture polish
 - various incenses

Don't use these just for the sake of it... but they can add a new dimension.
Reading John 21? Then cook some bacon/fish and notice the difference!

- **Which room?**
 - meet round a table for a change – different mindsets
 - perhaps the kitchen table - stimulating different senses
 - will have particular significance for those for whom the kitchen is the workplace – could be a powerful way of sharing ‘more of my whole life’ with group. Raising awareness of work and worship coming together?
- **Go outside – (summer!) - Ps.19**
 - meet in garden?
 - in the woods?
 - go for agape picnic
 - meet with other groups
 - let natural world speak of God’s glory (Ps 19) – take time to listen

SYMBOL

- **Candles**
 - be creative...
 - different sorts – floating, upright...
 - representative of suffering people
 - passing light from one to another...
- **Work symbols**
 - lay a work item on the table
 - make it a focus for prayer
 - or simply ‘lay it down’ while focus on God with others.. bringing the world of work and worship together

ART

- **Drawing/painting etc...**
 - can be a powerful form of expression for some
 - allow people to share pictures, drawings, other art forms and the story behind them
 - create a group picture/collage together in the meeting – something to express a particular worship response to a passage;
 - or give space and materials to create things individually
- **Create ‘sculptures’**
 - not just paintings on paper
 - use different materials
 - sculpting with clay? create something with kitchen artefacts
 - the world is your creative oyster
 - create something symbolic as an aid to prayer (remember the powerful effect of that rubble cross on Sept 11th)
 - needs some thinking and some preparation – but can be well worth it
 - also needs some courage for some... be sensitive

- **Ask around some 'arty' people for further ideas!**

EPILOGUE

Some of these ideas are more whacky than others. Some will be easier than others. Some involve a level of vulnerability

- they involve stepping out of comfort zones.
- getting beyond the superficial
- showing more of who we really are.

BUT – isn't this what real community is about? Step out! It might actually help the group develop its relationships to a deeper level...

It's a good idea to pass around responsibility for preparing these things within the group from week to week. One group mentioned how they'd done this and 'been surprised by people's creativity.' Quite apart from sharing the load, it's important to release the gifts and give people permission to be creative and 'think outside the box'.

Why not plan three 'different' things to do in your own group and then try them out? Feedback to other groups at the next leaders' meeting and share things that have worked or not.

The following books contain lots of other creative ideas:

1. Sue Wallace *Multi-Sensory Church (SU, 2002) (£7.99) –**

- a very good resource to dip into or take fully-worked ideas
- it will get you thinking of your own ideas too

2. Mike Ridell et al, *The Prodigal Project – (SPCK) esp. ch 4**

- some good creative principles in here too.
- other chapters more abstract and theoretical, at times based on questionable suppositions, but don't let this detract from the good creative thinking which can be applied in many different situations, ours included!

3. 50 Ideas for Small Group Worship

4. God 360°: 120 Experiential Devotionals – Andy Flannagan

And some hints for musicians...

- choose songs carefully
 - a. well known
 - b. not too complicated
 - c. singable tune
- keep to lower keys than normal (e.g. use capo chords without the capo on)
- keep songs flowing – have music ready rather than having to keep turning pages
- allow space
- sitting comfortably? Then encourage people to move – it will be easier to sing if sitting or standing up
- watch room layout, that everyone's included and not feeling like they're singing solo on their own!

(from paper by Phil Cooke November 02)