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# *Followship*

BEING FORMED AS  
DISCIPLES OF JESUS

WEEK 1:  
WHAT IS FOLLOWSHIP?

1. SET THE SCENE
2. ICEBREAKER
3. INITIAL RESPONSE
4. WHAT IS FOLLOWSHIP?
5. DIGGING DEEPER
6. FOLLOWING ON

## 1. SET THE SCENE

### ***Light a candle:***

We light a candle today to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world and in him there is no darkness. In our following, in our falling, in our faithfulness, in our failing, may we know the light of Christ showing us the way ahead.

### ***Begin with prayer:***

Holy One – you walk among us, in our homes and neighbourhoods, in our work places and community gatherings. You see us as we are – broken and fearful, curious and hopeful, hungry and faithful. You love us – not for what we have done, or even who we might become – but for who we are – children of God. And you call us to follow. To follow you through the alleyways and valley ways and desert places and mountain tops, to follow you to churches and temples and pubs and coffee shops, to follow you to sandy beaches and concrete jungles and to football fields and dance halls, to art galleries and movie theatres, and night clubs and rotary clubs, to board rooms and courtrooms and lounge rooms and emergency rooms, to kitchens and verandahs and parking lots and office blocks, to retirement villages and child care centres, and rehab centres and city centres. You call us to follow. Help us to follow.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving for the traditional custodians of the land:***

Let us pray. We give you thanks Creator God for the land on which we meet. From time beyond our reckoning, the traditional custodians of this land (*please mention the name/s of the traditional custodians of the land on which you are meeting*) have lived in harmony with their environment and nurtured this land and its waterways, and its fauna and flora, with a deep and abiding care. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Help us O God to live together in fellowship, to share our stories of hope and justice and peace, and to further the work of reconciliation in this land. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

2. ICEBREAKER

***Where is your  
ideal holiday  
destination  
and why?***

Go around the group  
and share your answers!

***Looking for more icebreaker ideas?***

***Click Here***

for 26 great icebreakers for your small group!

### 3. INITIAL RESPONSE

**Watch the video together as a group.**

Think of the following as you watch and listen, then discuss your notes with the group.



Is there a 'lightbulb' moment for you? An 'aha' moment when the light goes on and you see things in a new way?

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Do you have any questions arising from the video?

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Is there something here that has hit the target? Something to take with you and apply to your life?

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What did you really love about the video?

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What did you find difficult or challenging about the video?

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## 4. WHAT IS FOLLOWSHIP?

***Do you find the language of followship rather than discipleship helpful? Why / why not?***

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***In Mark 8:29, Jesus asked Peter:  
'who do you say that I am?'  
How would you answer that question?***

Try not to use religious language.  
Explain your answer.

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### ***Using words:***

In the book *Snow Friends*, we discover that words find new meaning in the way that we use them. We also learned that the words we use help shape the world we live in.

In what ways do our use of the following words change our view of the world:

Neighbour / Forgiveness / Love / Grace

What are some other important words for followers of Jesus that help shape our understanding of the world?

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## 5. DIGGING DEEPER

### ***Read Mark 1:14-20 & Mark 2:13-17***

There is a pattern with these two passages.

We read these common words:

***Jesus walks, Jesus sees and Jesus calls.***

***Jesus walks*** along the Sea of Galilee

***Jesus sees*** Simon and Andrew, James and John

***Jesus calls*** these fishermen to follow him.

Then ***Jesus walks*** along and ***Jesus sees*** Levi, a tax-collector and

***Jesus calls*** him to follow.

What would happen if Jesus walked into your workplace? What would happen if Jesus saw you as you really are? Not the 'you' you show the world, but the real 'you', warts and all? What would happen if Jesus called you to follow? What would you do? What would your colleagues do?

Discuss.

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There is another common word in these passages: ***immediately*** (or at once). The response of the people Jesus calls is immediate and life-changing. Is this realistic? Is this what Jesus requires of us today? Is this how you have responded to the call of Jesus? Why / why not?

Discuss.

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The fishermen left their nets, the tax-collector left his tax-booth – what have you left behind in order to follow Jesus? What are you still dragging with you that you need to let go?

Discuss.

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The scriptures tell us that Jesus called sinners and tax-collectors; in other words, the broken and the lost, the unwelcome and the marginalized. Do we still have room for sinners and tax-collectors in our church today? Why / why not?

Discuss.

---

### 6. FOLLOWING ON

#### *Closing Prayer*

**Pray for one another:**

Holy One,

We give thanks that you continue to call us to follow.

Help us to listen.

Help us to respond.

Help us to take hold of the things that will help us to follow.

Help us to let go of the things that hinder our journey.

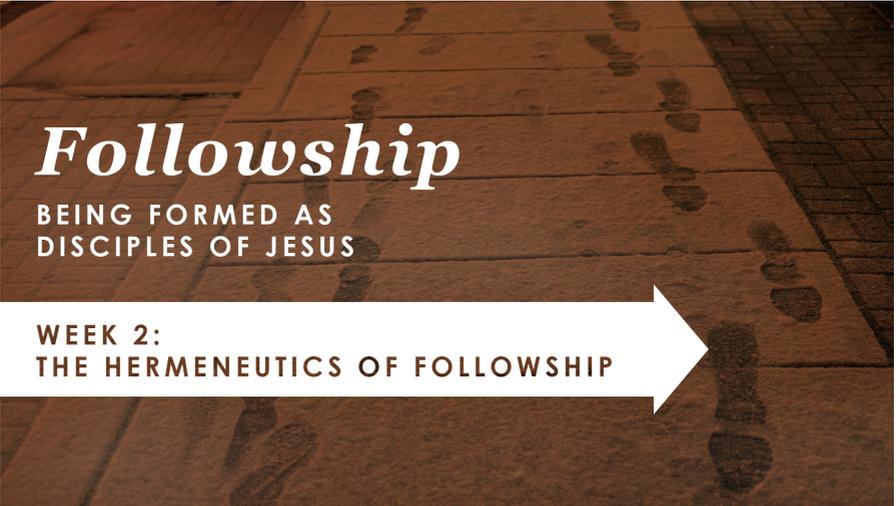
God help us to always make room for sinners and tax-collectors in our community.

Help us to make sure that no one gets left behind.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

(You may also wish to have an open prayer for people in the group)





# *Followship*

BEING FORMED AS  
DISCIPLES OF JESUS

WEEK 2:  
THE HERMENEUTICS OF FOLLOWSHIP

1. SET THE SCENE
2. ICEBREAKER
3. INITIAL RESPONSE
4. THE HERMENEUTICS OF FOLLOWSHIP
5. DIGGING DEEPER
6. FOLLOWING ON

## 1. SET THE SCENE

### ***Light a candle:***

We light a candle today to remind us that in the midst of our questions and our doubts, and our fears and our hopes, the light of God's love shines ever brightly.

### ***Begin with prayer:***

God of faith and doubt, miracles and mayhem, surprises and expectations – we open our hearts and indeed our very lives to the possibility of your presence. May this time together be shaped by your love for us. May this gathering be filled with truth and wonder, forgiveness and grace.

Amen.

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving for the traditional custodians of the land:***

Let us pray. We give you thanks Creator God for the land on which we meet. From time beyond our reckoning, the traditional custodians of this land (*please mention the name/s of the traditional custodians of the land on which you are meeting*) have lived in harmony with their environment and nurtured this land and its waterways, and its fauna and flora, with a deep and abiding care. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Help us O God to live together in fellowship, to share our stories of hope and justice and peace, and to further the work of reconciliation in this land. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

2. ICEBREAKER

***What is your  
favorite / least  
favorite movie  
and why?***

Go around the group  
and share your answers!

***Looking for more icebreaker ideas?***

***Click Here***

for 26 great icebreakers for your small group!

### 3. INITIAL RESPONSE

**Watch the video together as a group.**

Think of the following as you watch and listen, then discuss your notes with the group.



Is there a 'lightbulb' moment for you? An 'aha' moment when the light goes on and you see things in a new way?

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What did you really love about the video?

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What did you find difficult or challenging about the video?

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### 4. THE HERMENEUTICS OF FOLLOWSHIP

#### ***Followship as a performance of faith***

This week's video talked about followship as a performance of faith. Do you find this analogy helpful or unhelpful? Explain your answer.

What is your favorite Bible passage and why?

What is your least favorite Bible passage and why?

What book of the Bible do you love the most and why?

What Book of the Bible do you tend to ignore and why?

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#### ***Seven reading principles***

Of the seven reading principles from the video, are there any that are particularly surprising or challenging for you? Discuss.

1. The Bible is not without human error.
2. It is important to understand the historical context of each book in the Bible.
3. Scripture is best interpreted in community with others.
4. The life and mission of Jesus Christ provides the most faithful hermeneutic lens for the interpretation of scripture.
5. It's ok to critique scripture. In fact, it is our responsibility.
6. We should read scripture each time as if it is the first, expecting something new.
7. Reading scripture can be a wonderful spiritual discipline. We encourage you to do so prayerfully with the faithful hope that God might speak.

Do any of these reading principles particularly resonate with you? Discuss.

Are there any other reading principles you would add? Discuss.

## ***The Word of God:***

The Bible is not the Word of God. Instead, the Bible tells us that Jesus is the Word of God (John 1). However, Christians believe that the written word can become God's Word for us when it faithfully testifies to the presence of Christ in our context.

Can you recall a time where the written Word became real for you?

Share your story.

### 5. DIGGING DEEPER

#### ***Read Hebrews 4:12***

Is this how you would describe the written word?

Can you think of a passage of scripture that:

Is living and active in your life?

Is sharper than a two-edged sword?

Judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart?

Discuss – share your story.

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#### ***Read James 1:19-27***

James tells us that disciples are called to be doers of the word (performers of faith). If we don't enact what we learn from scripture, we are wasting our time, like someone who stares into a mirror and then walks away and forgets what they saw.

If scripture held up a mirror to your life, what would you see?

James described 'true religion' as 'caring for widows and orphans, and remaining unstained by the world' (1:27).

Is this a helpful hermeneutic for our context?

Is there a different definition or hermeneutic you would use?

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#### ***Read Psalm 119:105***

In what ways has scripture guided your life?

Is there a particular passage that has helped you to see the world differently?

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## 6. FOLLOWING ON

### *Closing Prayer*

Holy One,

we pray that the word we read in Holy Scripture may indeed become the Living Word for our community as your Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.

Help us to read the Bible with love and care.

Open our eyes to see the world differently.

Open our ears to hear the cry of the hurting.

Open our mouths to proclaim God's truth.

And open our hearts that we may learn to live life abundantly.

Amen.

# *Followship*

BEING FORMED AS  
DISCIPLES OF JESUS

WEEK 3:  
THE INCARNATED ONE



1. SET THE SCENE
2. ICEBREAKER
3. INITIAL RESPONSE
4. THE INCARNATED ONE
5. DIGGING DEEPER
6. FOLLOWING ON

## 1. SET THE SCENE

### ***Light a candle:***

We light a candle today to remind us that you are as present to us as light and warmth. As a moth is drawn to the flame, so too are we drawn to your loving kindness and your courageous care.

### ***Begin with prayer:***

Incarnated One, come to us as the homeless person on the street and the lonely one in aged care. Come to us as the small child lost in the crowd and the prophet crying in the wilderness. Come to us as the artist and the agitator, the carer and the fool. Come to us as the priest and the mystic, the magician and the midwife. Come to us as the asylum seeker, and the sex worker, the addicted and the disabled. Come to us as the teacher and the learner, the healer and the broken. Come to us as a First Nations person, and a migrant, a transgender person and a single parent. Come to us as the frightened one and the compassionate one, the communist and the capitalist. Come. That we might see you, and hear you, and follow you, and learn to love you more.

Amen.

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving for the traditional custodians of the land:***

Let us pray. We give you thanks Creator God for the land on which we meet. From time beyond our reckoning, the traditional custodians of this land *(please mention the name/s of the traditional custodians of the land on which you are meeting)* have lived in harmony with their environment and nurtured this land and its waterways, and its fauna and flora, with a deep and abiding care. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Help us O God to live together in fellowship, to share our stories of hope and justice and peace, and to further the work of reconciliation in this land. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

2. ICEBREAKER

***Have you ever been lost?  
Have you ever given  
directions to someone  
else who was lost?***

Maybe you were on a bushwalk,  
or in a city, or in the car,  
or in another country.

Share your story with the group.

***Looking for more icebreaker ideas?***

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for 26 great icebreakers for your small group!

### 3. INITIAL RESPONSE

**Watch the video together as a group.**

Think of the following as you watch and listen, then discuss your notes with the group.



Is there a 'lightbulb' moment for you? An 'aha' moment when the light goes on and you see things in a new way?

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What did you really love about the video?

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What did you find difficult or challenging about the video?

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### 4. THE INCARNATED ONE

#### ***God With Us:***

In the video we learned that God is 'with us' through the presence of Jesus Christ as the Incarnated One. In other words, God's 'with-ness' reveals Jesus' character to us. We can discover God's 'withness' in the stories of love, compassion, peace and justice that are being told all around us.

Some of these stories come to us through scripture. What is a story or passage from the Bible that speaks to you about God's love for the world? Share with the group.

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#### ***Some stories of the Incarnated One come from our culture.***

What is a story of God's love for the world that you know from a book, or movie, song, or even personal experience? Share with the group.

### 5. DIGGING DEEPER

#### ***Read John 1:1-18***

John 1:14 tells us that the Word of God came to dwell among us. The phrase in the original Greek literally says that God has pitched a tent among us.

If God came to live in our part of the world, what would God's house look like? What would be the colour of God's skin? What language would God speak at home? What gender would God be? What clothes would God wear? What food would God like? What music would God listen to?

How we answer these questions says a lot about whom we understand God to be in our context.

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## ***Read Philippians 2: 1-11***

This is a beautiful passage that describes some of the Apostle Paul's understanding of the incarnation. To help us learn more from this text we are going to use the hermeneutical method we learned about last week: Behind, Within, In Front.

### ***Behind the Text:***

Paul is writing this letter to the church in Philippi while in prison awaiting possible execution.

How does Paul's theology of the incarnation influence his writing?

Does Paul believe that Jesus comes to rescue us from our struggles, or join us in our struggles?

### ***Within the Text:***

Scholars think verses 6-11 are part of an ancient hymn.

What are the attributes of Christ that this song highlights?

What are the similarities and differences to the hymns/songs that we sing in church today?

### ***In Front of the Text:***

Does this description of Jesus encourage your faith? Why / why not?

What do you need to change in your life so that you can become more like the Jesus described in this song?

### 6. FOLLOWING ON

#### *Closing Prayer*

##### **A Franciscan Blessing:**

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen.





# *Followship*

BEING FORMED AS  
DISCIPLES OF JESUS

WEEK 4:  
THE CRUCIFIED ONE

1. SET THE SCENE
2. ICEBREAKER
3. INITIAL RESPONSE
4. THE CRUCIFIED ONE
5. DIGGING DEEPER
6. FOLLOWING ON

## 1. SET THE SCENE

### ***Light a candle:***

We light a candle today to remind us that you have come to shine light in dark places and to reveal all that would prefer to remain hidden. May your light of compassion chase away the shadows of indifference and become a beacon of hope to the world.

### ***Begin with prayer:***

Crucified One, you come to us as the whistle blower, who reveals injustice and corruption. You come to us as the teenager who refuses to be bullied. You come to us as the battered partner, the abuse survivor, the marginalized one who demands the attention of the centre. You return insult with blessing. You return violence with non-violence. You return animosity with forgiveness and hatred with love. You are despised by those in power. You are belittled by those in control. You are the little child who is blamed for declaring the emperor has no clothes. You are the pest and the pesterer and the inconvenient truth. You are the spanner in the works, and the dripping tap, and a gift from God. And you are a constant reminder that grace is costly.

Amen.

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving for the traditional custodians of the land:***

Let us pray. We give you thanks Creator God for the land on which we meet. From time beyond our reckoning, the traditional custodians of this land (*please mention the name/s of the traditional custodians of the land on which you are meeting*) have lived in harmony with their environment and nurtured this land and its waterways, and its fauna and flora, with a deep and abiding care. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Help us O God to live together in fellowship, to share our stories of hope and justice and peace, and to further the work of reconciliation in this land. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

2. ICEBREAKER

***A good  
icebreaker for  
this week: two  
truths and a lie.***

Go around the group  
and share your answers!

***Looking for more icebreaker ideas?***

***Click Here***

for 26 great icebreakers for your small group!

### 3. INITIAL RESPONSE

**Watch the video together as a group.**

Think of the following as you watch and listen, then discuss your notes with the group.



Is there a 'lightbulb' moment for you? An 'aha' moment when the light goes on and you see things in a new way?

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Do you have any questions arising from the video?

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Is there something here that has hit the target? Something to take with you and apply to your life?

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What did you really love about the video?

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What did you find difficult or challenging about the video?

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### 4. THE CRUCIFIED ONE

***Has your journey of faith ever taken you outside your comfort zone?***

Were you scared?

What did you learn about yourself?

How did this experience change your understanding of faith and discipleship?

Share your story with others in your group.

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***In our video this week we learned that Jesus, the Crucified One, is all around us, if only we had eyes to see and ears to hear.***

In your community, who are the 'crucified ones' and why?

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## 5. DIGGING DEEPER

### ***Read Acts 12:1-19***

This is a difficult story filled with much suffering. But, if we only celebrate the miracle of Peter's rescue from prison, we misunderstand the trauma and grief that is being shared.

If God was able to rescue Peter, why not James as well (12:2)? And what about the prison guards who were put to death (12:18)? If the disciples were praying for Peter (12:5), why were they so shocked that he was set free (12:15)? What role does prayer play in times of trauma and tragedy?

The Crucified One prays for the persecuted and the persecutors (Luke 23:34). Does this seem fair to you?

Many of the stories we celebrate also have a shadow side. Can you think of other stories in the Bible, or in our culture, where the Crucified One may be present and goes unrecognized?

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This story in Acts 12 tells the persecution of the early church. There are many places in the world today where people are still persecuted for their religious or political beliefs, or their culture, or the colour of their skin. Sometimes the people being persecuted are disciples of Jesus. Sometimes the ones persecuting call themselves Christians. How does this make you feel?

Have you ever been persecuted for your faith, beliefs, culture etc?

Have you ever persecuted someone else?

Share your story with the group.

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### 6. FOLLOWING ON

#### *Closing Prayer*

We pray for all who live in fear.

For those who are afraid of the system.

For those who are part of the system.

For those who work against the system.

For those who are lost within the system.

For those who are broken by the system.

We pray for all who have found courage.

Courage to speak.

Courage to be silent.

Courage to act.

Courage to be still.

Courage to love.

Courage to forgive.

Courage to follow the way of Christ.

Amen.





# *Followship*

BEING FORMED AS  
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**WEEK 5:  
THE RESURRECTED ONE**

1. SET THE SCENE
2. ICEBREAKER
3. INITIAL RESPONSE
4. THE RESURRECTED ONE
5. DIGGING DEEPER
6. FOLLOWING ON

## 1. SET THE SCENE

### ***Light a candle:***

We light a candle to remind us that, just as the sun rises each day to bring light and life to the world, so too the light of Christ's love births a new creation, filled with wonder and hope and abundant joy.

### ***Begin with prayer:***

Resurrected One, you come to us with love and laughter and wonder and awe. You are the question that goes unanswered and yet lingers on with a tantalizing promise yet-to-be-fulfilled. You are the glimpse that escapes our gaze, the hint that something amazing is about to happen. You are the ear-worm that compels us to sing and the music that excites us to dance. You are the joke that provokes us to giggle, and the smile that melts the ice. You are the waiting room news that heralds a celebration of praise, and the judge's verdict that brings tears of joy. You are the empty tomb that is full of hope. You are the invitation. You are the wedding banquet. You are the flower bloom. You are the new creation. You are the phoenix. You rise from the ashes of disappointment and defeat and remind us that despite the heartache and the brokenness and the thorns and the nails – that in the end Love Wins!

Amen.

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving for the traditional custodians of the land:***

Let us pray. We give you thanks Creator God for the land on which we meet. From time beyond our reckoning, the traditional custodians of this land (*please mention the name/s of the traditional custodians of the land on which you are meeting*) have lived in harmony with their environment and nurtured this land and its waterways, and its fauna and flora, with a deep and abiding care. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Help us O God to live together in fellowship, to share our stories of hope and justice and peace, and to further the work of reconciliation in this land. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**2. ICEBREAKER**

***What would  
you take with  
you to a desert  
island?***

Name 3 things and  
explain why you would  
take them!

***Looking for more icebreaker ideas?***

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for 26 great icebreakers for your small group!

### 3. INITIAL RESPONSE

**Watch the video together as a group.**

Think of the following as you watch and listen, then discuss your notes with the group.



Is there a 'lightbulb' moment for you? An 'aha' moment when the light goes on and you see things in a new way?

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Do you have any questions arising from the video?

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Is there something here that has hit the target? Something to take with you and apply to your life?

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What did you really love about the video?

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What did you find difficult or challenging about the video?

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### 4. THE CRUCIFIED ONE

#### *In the video we encountered the story of the two daughters in Mark chapter 5:21-43.*

Which of the following characters do you relate to most?

**Perhaps we are like Jairus:** a person of power and privilege willing to risk our reputation so that Jesus might help the person we love.

**Perhaps we are like the disciples:** gathering around Jesus, trying to protect him, trying to make sure there is order amidst the chaos, trying to make sure that everyone sticks to the plan. Getting frustrated by how easily Jesus is distracted by the unsavoury and the unclean.

**Perhaps we are like the menstruating woman:** marginalised, lonely – desperate for love and compassion.

**Maybe some of us have an affinity with those who are mourning:** so busy advocating for justice that we have missed the hope before us.

---

#### *We also read about Jairus' daughter, the one who was sleeping. Jesus called her to 'rise up' (Mark 5:41)*

Do you think Jesus is asking the same thing of you?

What have you been sleeping through?

What would the church look like if it awakened from its slumber?

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## 5. DIGGING DEEPER

### ***Read Acts Chapter 9:1-19***

In this story, the Resurrected One appears to Paul in a most surprising way. In other gospel stories we hear of Jesus giving sight to the blind, but in this story, we read of someone who is blinded by the presence of Christ.

Imagine Christ met you on the road to Damascus. How would Jesus get your attention? Would he blind you to stop you seeing, or deafen you to stop you hearing, or take away your power of speech, or your ability to walk? Or something else?

When Paul gets his sight back, what do you think he sees differently?

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### ***Read Luke 24: 13-35***

In this story, Jesus the Resurrected One appears to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and yet 'their eyes were kept from recognizing him' (24:16). But, as we read more closely, we discover that perhaps these disciples never recognized Jesus as the Incarnated One, either because they were hoping that Jesus was going to restore Israel to its former glory. Jesus then explains to them how the scriptures are to be understood. Jesus becomes the hermeneutic lens for the reading of scripture.

Share about a time when your eyes were opened to see Jesus differently.

Later in the story, we read that Jesus breaks bread with disciples and their eyes are opened and they recognize him. This is a Eucharistic moment.

Have you ever met with Christ the Resurrected One when breaking bread with others, or when sharing the Eucharist?

The story tells us that as soon as they recognize Jesus, he vanishes...

Why does Jesus vanish? What is the story telling us?

---

## 6. FOLLOWING ON

### *Closing Prayer*

Holy One,

We pray for your church that we might be blinded by Christ in order to see...

We pray for your church that we might break bread with the hungry and meet Christ at our table...

We pray for your church that we might learn that we do not own the Resurrected One; that Jesus Christ is God's gift for a world in need...

Amen



# *Followship*

BEING FORMED AS  
DISCIPLES OF JESUS

WEEK 6:  
WHAT COMES NEXT?

1. SET THE SCENE
2. ICEBREAKER
3. INITIAL RESPONSE
4. WHAT COMES NEXT?
5. DIGGING DEEPER
6. REFLECT
7. FOLLOWING ON

## 1. SET THE SCENE

### ***Light a candle:***

We light a candle to remind us that new light comes into the world each and every moment – each and every day.

Help us to strike the match. Help us to fan the flame. Help us to become the light of the world.

### ***Begin with prayer:***

Holy One, help us to be alert to all that you are doing in the world.

Help us to be still.

Help us to love you with humility and fidelity and curiosity and courage.

Help us to love our neighbours with care and commitment.

Help us to love our enemies with forgiveness and grace.

Help us to read your word, and live your word, and become your word for a world in need.

Holy one, help us to be faithful, help us to follow whatever comes next.

Amen.

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving for the traditional custodians of the land:***

Let us pray. We give you thanks Creator God for the land on which we meet. From time beyond our reckoning, the traditional custodians of this land (*please mention the name/s of the traditional custodians of the land on which you are meeting*) have lived in harmony with their environment and nurtured this land and its waterways, and its fauna and flora, with a deep and abiding care. We give thanks for their stewardship, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Help us O God to live together in fellowship, to share our stories of hope and justice and peace, and to further the work of reconciliation in this land. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

2. ICEBREAKER

***If you could  
interview anyone  
in history, who  
would you choose  
and why?***

What one or two questions  
would you ask?

***Looking for more icebreaker ideas?***

***Click Here***

for 26 great icebreakers for your small group!

### 3. INITIAL RESPONSE

**Watch the video together as a group.**

Think of the following as you watch and listen, then discuss your notes with the group.



Is there a 'lightbulb' moment for you? An 'aha' moment when the light goes on and you see things in a new way?

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Do you have any questions arising from the video?

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Is there something here that has hit the target? Something to take with you and apply to your life?

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What did you really love about the video?

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What did you find difficult or challenging about the video?

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### 4. WHAT COMES NEXT?

***In the video, we heard a number of questions that the Bible asks of us:***

- Who do you say that I am?
- Am I my brother's keeper?
- How long will you hide your face from me O God?
- Were you there when I laid the foundation of the world?
- Whom then will I send?
- How many times should I forgive?
- What good is it for a person to gain the whole world and yet forfeit their soul?
- What must I do to inherit eternal life?
- Who is my neighbour?
- Why have you forsaken me?
- Who will roll away the stone?
- If God is for us – who can be against us?

**Are there any other questions you can think of?**

**Is there a particular question that keeps messing with you?**

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## ***What is Christianity?***

Do you tend to think of Christianity as:

- a set of rules to be followed
- liberating and adventurous
- a puzzle to be solved
- a goal to attain
- a song to be sung

Or something else entirely?

Explain your answer.

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## ***Living our faith***

How has your faith impacted the way you live in a practical way?

Name something that you have started doing, or stopped doing, or changed since you have become a disciple of Jesus. Maybe it is something that others have noticed.

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### 5. DIGGING DEEPER

#### *Read Acts 10*

This is an amazing story. God is doing something completely new. How prepared are we for God to do something completely new in our lives?

#### *Behind the Text:*

Ritual purity was a cornerstone of first century Judaism. Jewish people were only allowed to eat certain kinds of food and were not allowed to associate with Gentiles (non-Jews). These restrictions were not optional extras, they were faith-dependent and community-defining. People who broke these rules were often kicked out of the synagogue and ostracized by their community.

What are some of the purity rules that Churches can often insist on?

#### *Within the Text:*

This passage has a lot of contrasting motion words: **up/down; in/out; coming/going; sent/arriving...** Count how many times these sorts of movements and contrasts are mentioned.

This story seeks to build a case for the eradication of theological and spiritual divisions in the early church.

The **up/down divide** between heaven and earth. (That which was previously considered unclean comes down from heaven).

The **in/out divide** of membership in the community. (Peter is called into fellowship with Gentiles).

The **coming/going divide** of who is called to be at mission. (Cornelius is called to bring God's invitation to Peter).

Are there divisions in your church community that need to be confronted?

Divisions about what is considered spiritual and holy? (Hymns, rituals, traditions, furniture).

Divisions about who is included and who is excluded?  
(Is your church welcoming to all people regardless of age, gender, wealth, sexuality, culture etc?).

Divisions about leadership and missional roles and responsibilities?  
(Are there restrictions in your church about who can lead etc?).

### ***In Front of the Text:***

What new thing is God doing in your church and community?

How inclusive is your church community?

Are LGBTIQ+ people welcomed and affirmed?

Are First Nations People welcomed and affirmed?

Are CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) people welcomed and affirmed?

Are homeless people welcomed and affirmed?

Are young people welcomed and affirmed?

Are people with disabilities welcomed and affirmed?

Are the elderly welcomed and affirmed?

Is there social and economic diversity in your community?

Are there other demographics you can identify that need to be welcomed and affirmed?

A good measure of how welcoming and affirming your church is in relation to these different groups is by identifying how many are part of your worshipping community.

What does your church need to do to be more welcoming and affirming towards these different demographics?

What do you need to do?

### 6. REFLECT

***As we conclude this 6 week journey of Fellowship, take a moment to reflect on the journey with your Life Group:***

What has impacted your understanding of discipleship and faith?

How has your theology and spiritual practice changed / matured over the years?

What has brought about that change?

What are you doing now to proactively grow and mature in your faith?

What mission is God calling you to?

## 7. FOLLOWING ON

### *Closing Prayer*

#### **The Romero Prayer**

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.

The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts; it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water the seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something and to do it well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.

# Followship Extra



There are four essentials of discipleship  
that we would like to share with you:

## ***1. Conversion (Repentance)***

People become disciples of Jesus through an act of conversion. Conversion means to 'transition' or 'turn around' from one form or direction to another. In relation to the Christian faith, conversion is what happens when the meaning and purpose of our life changes to align with the call of Jesus Christ.

We come to know God by the unreserved giving of our lives to Jesus. Christians believe that this act of conversion is a gift of grace from God, but it is also a costly one. Conversion involves a continual dying to self in order to come alive in Christ. Through the awakening work of the Holy Spirit, we become "converted" and won to Jesus' way and purpose. Conversion is not only an event; it is a lifelong process of submission to the Lordship of Jesus.

### ***Read the following passages:***

**Mark 1:15; John 3:16; Mark 1:15; 2Corinthians 15:17; Galatians 2:20**

Share with others in the group about a conversion moment in your life where you turned to follow Christ. How did your life change? What did you leave behind? What became new for you? What areas of your life still need conversion to the way of Christ? What do you need to do to make this happen?

## ***2. Commitment (Responsibility)***

Commitment, like conversion, is an ongoing process, a daily hungering and a desire to become more like Jesus. Regular commitments and disciplines of the Christian faith include participating in worship, reading scripture, praying, tithing, serving the poor, loving one another, and forgiving one another. What other commitments can you think of?

### ***Read the following passages:***

**Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 9: 57-62; John 8: 31-32;  
1 Thessalonians 5:12-22**

What are the daily commitments and disciplines of faith that you maintain as a disciple of Jesus?

Where is joy for you in this journey? What do you find most difficult?

Have there been times and contexts when your commitment to discipleship was easier or harder? What were the reasons for this?

### ***3. Cruciformity (Resistance)***

Cruciformity comes from two words, "cruciform" (cross-shaped) and "conformity". Essentially, it is being conformed to the way of Jesus – the Incarnated One, the Crucified One and the Resurrected One. Being shaped by the way of the cross requires us to daily die to our own selfish ambitions and agendas in order for God's Holy Spirit to nurture our faith and bear good fruit.

#### ***Read the following passages:***

**Mark 8:34-36; Romans 12: 1-2; Galatians 5:16-26; 1 John 2:6**

What does 'take up your cross' mean in today's world?

How does taking up the cross 'shape us' as disciples of Jesus?

What does it mean to 'not conform to the patterns of this world'?

What fruit of the Spirit do you see active and evident in your own life?

What fruit of the Spirit are not as evident? Why is that? What can you do about that?

## ***4. Community (Resilience)***

Disciples of Jesus are called to be the Body of Christ; taking up space in the world. What we can't do alone or sustain by ourselves, we can do together. As a family of the Spirit, being in intentional community enables encouragement and joyful celebration, truth-telling and confessing and forgiving, accountability for our actions and commitments, and learning and equipping for the journey ahead.

### ***Read the following passages:***

**1 Corinthians 12: 12-13: 13; Galatians 3:20; Hebrews 10: 23-25**

What particular gift / skill / passion / experience do you bring to the Body of Christ (it may be one that is not actually listed in scripture)?

Why is community important to you? What do you love most about your church community? Discuss a time when your church community was able to love you or support you through a difficult time.

How would your life be different without your church community? What would you miss the most?

