

**Handout for Healing Workshop – Healed or healing?**

“Acts of healing in the Gospels are intimately related to the restoring of individuals to a place of worth within the social order. (cf Mark 1.44; 5.15-20; 6.32-34; Luke 13.10-17). ‘By his wounds you have been healed’ (1 Peter 2.24) makes powerful links between human pain and vulnerability and the saving impact of Jesus’ own suffering. The same interconnectedness is present where Scripture speaks of God’s image in us to point to the way human life is marred and threatened by the impact of evil and is restored by the new creation in Christ (Romans 3.23; 2 Corinthians 3.18; Ephesians 2.13-16).

Healing, reconciliation and restoration are integral to the good news of Jesus Christ. For this reason prayer for individuals, focused through laying on of hands or anointing with oil, has a proper place within the public prayer of the Church. God’s gracious activity of healing is to be seen both as part of the proclaiming of the good news and as an outworking of the presence of the Spirit in the life of the Church.”

(Theological Introduction to Wholeness and Healing – Common Worship, Pastoral Services page 10)

**Dwelling in the word: John 9 verse 1-11**

**A Man Born Blind Receives Sight**

**9** As he walked along, Jesus saw a man blind from birth. **2** His disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ **3** Jesus answered, ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. **4** We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ **6** When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, **7** saying to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’ (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. **8** The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ **9** Some were saying, ‘It is he.’ Others were saying, ‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ **10** But they kept asking him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ **11** He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, “Go to Siloam and wash.” Then I went and washed and received my sight.’ **12** They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’

What strikes you or speaks to you in this passage about healing?

**What do we mean by the concepts of health, wholeness and healing?**

**World Health Organization (WHO)**

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO 1948)

**Church of England**

“Healing is the process through which the individual develops a physical, mental, spiritual, economic, political and social state of well-being, in harmony with God, with others and with the environment.” (A time to Heal 2013)

**Karl Barth**

“Christian flourishing is less about the pursuit of health at all costs, and more about fulfilling the purpose of our life. Health is having the strength for human life and the power to answer God’s call.”

(From: Human Flourishing: A Christian Theological Perspective Neil G. Messer 2021. <https://academic.oup.com/book/39523/chapter/339351218>)

**Theos think tank**

“Humans are created, material, dependent, interconnected beings. They are made to be creative, productive, responsible generous vice-regents of creation. They are (intended to be) “all members of one body”, (Ephesians 4.25), to relate to one another in such a way as will “build others up according to their needs.” (Ephesians 4.29).” (2017)

**The extent of healing**

From the Diocese of London website: “When ‘healing’ happens – whatever shape or form it takes – the Kingdom of God is breaking into our present world of time and space. In that God’s Kingdom will only be fulfilled in the life of the age to come, all healings now experienced within the church are anticipations of the final healing of resurrection life. Death can – and must – be part of the healing journey.”

There are authorised liturgies:

Celebration of wholeness and healing

Laying on of hands with prayer and anointing

Ministry to the sick

Prayers for protection and peace

### **Good practice in healing ministry**

Those involved in healing ministry should be aware that they are dealing with vulnerable people, whose needs may make them susceptible to emotional pressure or suggestion.

It is essential that all involved are aware of the limits of their competence; to recognize when medical or other referrals are indicated; and to have appropriate supervisory support in place. Based on the code of practice from the Guild of Health and St Raphael the following principles are suggested as the foundation of any ministry of healing:

1. Be clear about the theology of healing that underpins practice
2. That healing ministry is rooted in the prayer of the whole church
3. That it is done in partnership with health care professionals and those registered in counselling and psychological therapies, with a willingness to refer those requesting ministry as needs are identified and with their full permission.
4. That everyone requesting and offering ministry of healing is valued and treated with dignity and respect and their confidentiality is respected.
5. Everyone participating in the healing ministry complies with safeguarding procedures.
6. All involved act with integrity and not make promises or claims that cannot be validated or substantiated.
7. Those who undertake this ministry have appropriate training and are part of an appropriate accountable supervision network.
8. Everyone who offers healing ministry is pastorally sensitive, sensitive to discrimination and bias (both conscious and unconscious), good at listening and empathise well with the concerns of others.
9. The ministry is accessible to all and seeks to create an atmosphere of welcome, without judgement or blame.

**In the name of God and trusting in his might alone,  
receive Christ’s healing touch to make you whole.**

**May Christ bring you wholeness  
of body, mind and spirit,  
deliver you from every evil,  
and give you his peace.**

(Prayer for laying of hands from Common Worship – Pastoral Services)

### **Further useful resources**

#### **Acorn Christian Healing Foundation**

To encourage, equip and resource local churches and Christians from all walks of life to become agents of God’s healing, reconciliation and care in their homes, churches, workplaces and communities.

<https://acornchristian.org/>

#### **Guild of Health and St Raphael**

Promoting the church as a hub for **health** and healing · Learning from one another about how to promote human flourishing · Creating networks.

<https://gohealth.org.uk/>