



## Equipment:

You will need - DVD player, TV, pens, leaders' guide and course members' sheets for everyone in the group.



## Timings:

This session is timed to run for 75 minutes.



## Session Aims:

- Church as a place of welcome and hospitality where people are encouraged to 'come and see'
- The importance of running enquirers' courses
- Being prepared to have a go and breaking the 'sound barrier'



## Welcome and introduce the theme: (6 minutes)

Welcome people to the session and briefly recap what was covered in Session Four.

You might like to gather feedback from the group to see if:

- People are still praying regularly for 3-5 people
- Group members have tried dropping 'faith bait' into conversations
- Anyone has used questions to open up faith conversations
- Group members are considering inviting anyone to an outreach event

Introduce the theme which is 'Come and See' focusing on discipleship, welcome and hospitality.



## Prayer: (1 minute)

Hand out the course members' sheets and invite everyone to join together in praying the Blackburn Diocese Vision 2026 prayer or another suitable prayer.

*Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses and to grow leaders. Give us the eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*



## Exercise: You're Welcome! (5 minutes)

Share together as a group experiences of good welcome and hospitality, quality customer service, or examples of bad welcome, customer service etc.



## Bible: John 1:35-39 (10 minutes)

Ask a member of the group to read out the passage, you may like to ask someone in advance to avoid putting someone on the spot!

After the passage has been read, ask the group for any immediate comments or thoughts about the passage. Then consider the following questions:

- Why do you think the two disciples decided to follow Jesus?
- Why did the two followers ask “Where are you staying?”? What do you think lay behind their question?
- Why do you think Jesus made the invitation to “come and see”?



## DVD 5:1 (5 minutes)

Watch the first of the DVD programmes. Remember a subtitles menu is available on the DVD. ***Pause the DVD when the screen goes black.***

DVD content

- Jesus' invitation to come and see
- The importance of enquirers' courses
- People to invite
- Experiences of being part of an enquirers' course
- Helping people grow in their faith



## Exercise: Come and See (12 minutes)

What does your church currently do to help people grow in their Christian Faith? What activities and groups does the church run and is there more that the church could be doing?

Suggest that people label the stepping stones on the course members' materials with the different activities and groups available through the church to help people grow in their faith.

Ask if any of the group members have been on an enquirers' course like Start!, Alpha, Christianity Explored, Life Explored or Pilgrim. Invite people to share their experiences of being on these courses. When did their churches last run an enquirers' course? Is this something that could be planned into the churches calendar?



## DVD 5:2 (2 minutes 30 seconds)

Watch the second of the DVD programmes for session 5. ***Pause the DVD when the screen goes black.***

DVD content

- The importance of welcome
- A friendly church?



**Bible: Luke 7:36-50 (8 minutes)**

Explore together as a group the following questions

- Why has Simon the Pharisee failed to show hospitality to Jesus?
- Why did people react badly to the actions of the woman who anointed Jesus?
- Does knowing how much we need to be forgiven make a difference to how we relate to other people?
- How lavish are our churches when it comes to welcome and hospitality?



**Exercise: Mood Faces (8 minutes)**

Using the mood faces picture on the course members' materials, invite people to record what reactions new people might have to coming to an event or service organised by their churches.

Discuss together

- Most churches believe themselves to be friendly but that isn't always the experience of visitors. Have any of the group had negative experiences visiting other churches?
- What can churches do to make sure they are genuinely welcoming and hospitable to guests and visitors?



**DVD 5:3 (3 minutes 20 seconds)**

Watch the last section of the DVD and then turn off the DVD.

DVD content

- The problems of starting to share faith
- Having a go
- It gets easier the more we do it
- Recap of the course
- Encouragement to give it a go

**Exercise: I don't speak French! (10 minutes)**

Following on from the story about learning to speak French, discuss together peoples' reactions to being part of the course.

- What has been helpful about the course?
- What have they found most challenging?
- Do group members feel more encouraged to share their faith?
- How big a barrier is "the sound barrier" – how hard, or easy, is it have faith based conversations?

Thank people for coming on the course.

**Prayer: (2 minutes)**

Spend some moments in silence praying for the people on your prayer list. Playing quiet music in the background might be helpful. Invite people to pray together the 'Being Witnesses' prayer on the course members' handout.

*Lord, help us to be witnesses through our actions and our words.*

*May we be faithful in prayer, gracious in service and more confident in speaking.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen*

**Take away activity: Being Witnesses (2 minutes)**

Encourage the group to

- Pray for 3-5 people who are not yet followers of Jesus.
- Be willing to share their faith story and drop bits of 'Faith bait' into conversation.
- Continue to use questions as a way of opening up faith conversations.
- Connect with people outside the life of the church and invite people to outreach activities.
- Encourage the church to run enquirers' courses and other outreach activities.
- Work hard to make church a place of welcome and hospitality.