



Equipment:

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



Timings:

This material within the session is timed to run for around 60 minutes to leave plenty of time for informal discussion at the beginning of the session to help people relax and feel at ease in the group.



Session Aims:

- Understand more about how the local church is financed
- See the church as an extended family, supporting one another and there is additional help and support from outside
- Ways to communicate church finances in a clear and accessible way
- Overall course summary



Welcome: (10 minutes)

Welcome people to the session and welcome those who are joining the group for the first time. Explain that this session is the final one and will draw together information from the previous 4 weeks.

Encourage group members to share an example of an April Fools' story that's been convincing.



Prayer: (1 minute)

Hand out the course members' sheets and invite everyone to join in praying:

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.
All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you. Amen.**



DVD 5.1 (1 minute)

Watch the first part of the Session 5 DVD. Don't forget that there is a subtitle option on the DVD if that would be useful to members of the group. Pause the DVD when the screen goes black.

DVD content

Conspiracy theories and fake news stories



True or False Quiz (10 minutes)

Explain that fake news is common these days and sometimes we hear things that we later discover to be false.

Ask the members of the group to look at the 'True or False Quiz' in the members booklets (Supplementary Sheet 1 to this week's Leaders' Guide). This will help to sort out the truth about church finances from all the false understandings.



Bible: Matthew 12: 46-50 (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!

Matthew 12: 46-50 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

⁴⁶ While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. ⁴⁷ Someone told him, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.'

⁴⁸ He replied to him, 'Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?' ⁴⁹ Pointing to his disciples, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.'

After the passage has been read, ask the group for any immediate comments or thoughts about the passage.

Then consider the following questions:

- How does Jesus describe those who do God's will?
- Why is this surprising?
- What might this passage show us about our relationship to other Christians? How does this affect our attitudes to them?



DVD 5.2 (9 minutes)

Watch the second part of the Session 5 DVD. Pause the DVD when the screen goes black as there are 3 film clips in this final session

DVD content

- We are interdependent like a flock or a vine
- Wider church finance



We are Family (9 minutes)

Though we can function well as individual churches, there are times when we might welcome some additional help or advice.

Ask the members of the group to look at the exercise 'We are Family' in the members booklets (Supplementary Sheet 2 to this week's Leaders' Guide).



DVD 5.3 (2 minutes 30 seconds)

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

Film 3 – Summary and challenge

DVD content - Summary of the course and encouragement to live it out

- Generous God – All things come from you
- Generous people – serving God with our time and talents
- Generous Giving – serving God through our use of money
- Generosity towards others – letting our faith shape our lives
- The bigger picture – sharing and supporting



Prayer: (3 minutes)

Finish with a leader reading aloud these words from 2 Chronicles 29:29

²⁹ When the offerings were finished, the king and everyone present with him knelt down and worshipped. 2 Chronicles 29:29

We've seen over the last few weeks how God generously provides for us and asks us to live generously for him, but our first response is to worship Him.

We pray together

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.
All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you. Amen.**



Having used these last five sessions to reflect on God's generosity and how we can use our time, talents and money to serve him, look back at the Take it Away sessions and ask God to guide you as you try to live a life of generosity, gift and grace, giving generously of your time, talents and money to the cause of Christ.

True or False Quiz



Below are a series of statements. Some of them are true, some are false, and some are opinions that people may hold but you might not agree with.

As a group, see what you know about how the Church of England and your local church are financed and why money matters.

1. It's the Church of England so English Heritage pay for the upkeep of all church buildings and the government pays the clergy like civil servants (F)
2. The Church of England is a large landowner and the income from that should be enough to provide a good income to pay for all our clergy (F)
3. Cathedrals are not funded from Parish Share (T)
4. Jesus talked about money more than he talked about prayer. (T)
5. I don't mind paying for things in my local church, but we have to pay parish share to the diocese, and we don't see anything back in the parish in respect of the payments we make to the diocese (F)
6. Parish share helps maintain the parish system which put a Christian presence from the Church of England into every community (T)
7. If churches don't have enough income, it's more appropriate to try to do some fundraising than to teach about giving because talking about giving will upset people and drive them away. (O)
8. I am a hardworking church officer, giving loads of time to my church and therefore do not feel that I should be asked to give money as well (O)

We are Family



Though we can function well as individual churches, there are times when we need some additional help or advice

Below is a list of just some of the support and advice that can be obtained from Diocesan Offices. This list is not exhaustive – there is a wide range of help and advice available from the team at Diocesan Offices and from the Diocesan Website.

Underline the ones you knew about and put a * next to all those you think your church has used in the last 2 years.

Advertised an event in the 'What's On' section of the website

Churchwarden Training

Diocesan Advisory Committee/Faculty advice for buildings

Diocesan Children's Advisor

Diocesan Registry

Diocesan Vision Course

Diocesan Website

Diocesan Youth Advisor

GDPR training

Graveyard advice

Mission/Vision Action Planning

Parish Finance and Mission Returns

Parish Resources Website

PCC secretary handbook

Publications

Reader Training

Routes of Faith

Safeguarding training for lay people

Safeguarding training for clergy

Seen what's happening in the 'What's On' pages of the website

Small Group Training

Stewardship advice

Training and study courses

Treasurer Training

Vocations support (lay and ordained)

As a group, have a conversation about anything on the list that you were unaware of