



## Piloting the Suffolk Fresh Expressions Community

### Session Six:

#### **Aim**

To help potential leaders understand the process of leading a small missional group in evangelism - and anticipated any factors which might hinder this. This evaluation should lead into a discussion about the need for a strategy for growth which is owned by the whole group and to which they are held accountable by an outside mission accompanier such as the leader of the church to which the group relates or the Suffolk Fresh Expressions Community Leader.

#### **WELCOME (10 mins)**

Who influenced you most as you became a Christian and how?

#### **WORSHIP (15 mins)**

Read Genesis 6.5-6

"The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart."

Gather together a group of objects around a theme of outreach/growth (eg. Net, seeds, soil, torch, candle...) Ask the group to reflect in prayer on how the objects remind them of God's heart for the lost and use these reflections as the basis for worship.

#### **WORD 1 (20-25 mins)**

Read Jesus' mission statements from Luke 4.18-19 and Luke 19.10 and remind the group of how they interpreted these in session two when we looked at establishing a vision for a small group.

Read Acts 1.8

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

1. From this verse what was to be the result of the Holy Spirit coming on the disciples?
2. Where do you need the power of the Holy Spirit to help you to become a witness?
3. What are the next steps for you personally – in attitude – in faith – in action?

#### **WORD 2 (20 mins)**

Pray for each other to receive the power of the Holy Spirit to become more effective witnesses.

#### **WITNESS (20 mins)**

Share the progress which has been made since the start of the course:

- a) with anyone you have been praying for to come to faith
- b) With any missional small group or fresh expression of Church which you hope to develop

## Key points to remember

1. **The purpose of the Witness Section** is to:

a) focus the group on helping others to discover Christ's love.

b) pray for:

- workers in the harvest field (Luke 10.2)
- God's Kingdom to come in your spheres of influence
- individuals to take the next step forward towards a relationship with Jesus
- opportunities to be a blessing to the wider community of which you are a part
- plan events and activities to serve, create community and/or share faith - This can be a huge variety of events depending on what is appropriate for your small group eg. a bonfire night, a day learning to kayak with families, helping a neighbour
- with trimming a hedge, leading a cafe church session, running an alpha course....

2. **The character of the Witness Section** within a larger small group meeting should therefore

- be specific
- be encouraging
- encourage accountability.

3. **The development of witness** is something which happens throughout the life of a small group and goes beyond a section in a meeting. It is about developing your values.

Do not worry if some weeks your whole agenda is taken over by praying and planning for witness and other weeks it is just a short time of prayer... but make sure that you are not side-lining the value of Doing Evangelism together.

Over time, you should look for and encourage these developments:

a) **LOVE** As we grow in the love we have for other people our motivation for blessing them and helping them to discover Jesus will increase. "Jesus came to seek and to save the lost" Luke 9.10.

b) **PRAYER** Praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' for our spheres of influence and praying for God to bless individuals and draw them to faith will become normative

c) **ACCOUNTABILITY** Talking about your witness leads to strengthened resold and people feeling that their witness is supported and valued

d) **RELATIONSHIPS** The small group will get to have a wider community involving relationships with people who may not have Christian faith but who join in with the groups social activities or are blessed by the group in some way through their witness

e) **PLAN** You will plan together ways in which you can bless and serve the local community and give the people you care about opportunities to take steps forward in discovering faith.

**A resource which may help you think through this process is the booklet 'Evangelism through Cell' by Laurence Singlehurst and Liz West available from [www.celluk.org](http://www.celluk.org)**

## Growing in God

This initiative is the result of the partnership of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich with Rural Ministries. It is open to Christians of any denomination or stream.



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