

Looking around: *in prayer*

10 mins

Briefly, share particular prayer requests you may have.

With Isaiah 42:1-9 open in front of you...

- give thanks to God for the signs of his life evident in the life of God's people across the world (not least in our mission projects).
- Give thanks to God for the signs of his life evident in the life of God's people here in Ripon and in Holy Trinity.
- Pray that we as a church may have a vision big enough to express God's glorious purposes for all that is.
- Be open to the Spirit's leading as you pray about what it is that God longs for His church here at Holy Trinity.
- Pray for our leaders, including the PCC (and especially for any members in the group) that we may be wise and clear in discerning God's call on our life together

Closing Prayer

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth
the fruit of good works,
may by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Preparing for next time

(to be taken home)

Talk about these things with each other in the coming week, and pray on your own and with one or two others that God will lead us clearly to discover his loving purposes in and through the life of the church.

holy trinity ripon

“vision groups”

session six: *what is God calling us to do*
[part one]

aim: to explore our priorities for action as a church

Looking to God: *in worship*

10 mins

Just as worship begins in holy expectancy it ends in holy obedience.
Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, p.148

Place a good-sized icon/picture of creation/artistic arrangement in the visual centre of the group.

Play the track of a meditative song (e.g. a Taizé chant) or sing a familiar song, or single verse of a hymn that people will know.

Explain that the reading is a prophecy in Isaiah about the Spirit-filled Messiah whom God is sending. Being in mind that the church is called to be a community filled with the same spirit, invite people to focus, in their listening, on just one of the following three aspects:

- The character (being) of the Messiah
- The actions (doing) of the Messiah
- The impact (on the world around) of the Messiah

Have someone read, in a reflective way, Isaiah 11:1-9

Pause for a full minute then give praise to God for these three aspects of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ

Gather up your prayers by saying together

**Eternal God and Father,
you create us by your power
and redeem us by your love:
guide and strengthen us by your Spirit,
that we may give ourselves in love and service
to one another and to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Looking to God: *through the scriptures* 20 mins

Read: Isaiah 42:1-9

Consider together:

- What sort of character does God want us to reflect in our dealings with one another and those in the community around us?
- What sort of actions matter to God?
- What kind of actions can we expect God to inspire us to?

Looking around: *from another angle*

20 mins

To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love towards people, since God is a fountain of sending love.

Mission is...the good news of God's love, incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world.

David Bosch, Transforming Mission.

As a group, ask God to speak to you by His Holy Spirit and then be quiet for at least a minute and dream dreams about the future. Imaging it is now July 2012, what would you love...

- newspaper headlines to say about Ripon or Holy Trinity
- people around would be saying about 'that church is...'?
- new groups of people who, by now, are part of the life and witness of the church to see as the most conspicuous characteristics of Holy Trinity
- to be involved in

You might like to write your thoughts down.

Take time for everyone to share their response to any of those.

Then identify what are the key 'dreams' you as a group have for the church. Make a list of three or four, then work out the order of priority, and put that list on the top half of your next flipchart sheet.

(You may like to come back to this list and re-write or re-order it after you have had some time over the summer to reflect upon these questions)