



Everything we've got

Serve • Give • Receive

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Each year, we take a few weeks to talk about what following Jesus looks like at our church, and invite one another to commit to doing so together for the year ahead.

We call this Partnership – we follow Jesus not as passive people, but as a connected community.

God doesn't simply save us *from* something, He saves us *into* a family. Church Partnership is about more than attending a service or having your name on a membership list. It's choosing to play your part in the life and mission of God's people.

Over these three weeks we'll discover that every believer is invited to serve with humility, give with generosity, and receive with gratitude. When we embrace all three, we don't just strengthen the Church, we reflect the heart of Jesus.

Partnership therefore isn't joining an organisation, it's participating in God's family and His mission. Every believer is called to serve, give and receive.

Healthy churches are built when all three are present.

GUIDELINES FOR LEADING GROUP SESSIONS

TAKEAWAYS

We hope these takeaways sessions can help groups continue to grow and learn more together.

Groups work best when we are able to encourage one another to be 'doers of the word' and not just hearers or people who enjoy a good discussion! These takeaway sessions are designed so that anyone can give leading a go. Here's a little bit about of information each section and some guidance on how to lead them.

INTRODUCTION

Each session has an introduction that shares and explains a little about the teaching series/passage of scripture and theme. It can be read out and is helpful to keep this in mind when steering discussion.

SHARE

These are intentionally accessible questions (like icebreakers) so everyone has the opportunity to comment and share. They can be used in pairs to discuss together and then give feedback to the whole group (if enabling everyone to speak to the whole group is difficult).

READ

The passage/s we want to unpack. Read them together, preferably once aloud and then giving time for people read through themselves in quiet.

DISCUSS

People grow and change when they discover something for themselves – not when someone tells them. The aim of discussion questions is to help create conversation and for group members to discover and go deeper in their understanding of scriptural truths.

It's about encouraging moments of sharing and insight from others in a non-threatening environment that allows for doubts to be expressed, questions (nothing is too silly), and silence (not all will have anything to contribute to the discussion). Allow moments of openness and off-topic tangents to shape your group meeting.

Remember – we want groups to help everyone *know Jesus, love Jesus and copy Jesus* - That means moving beyond just giving information and sharing our opinions together and ultimately to helping others discover and apply the truth we find in scripture.

There are often more questions than you can cover in one group session, so feel free to pick and choose ones that are helpful or that flow with the natural discussion of the group.

TRY OUT

These are a list of ideas to help you carry out the teaching into your week. You can add your own or take the opportunity to ask the group how they might live out some of the learnings in their day-to-day life.

They are about:

- Inspiring curiosity, so it must not feel like a 'to do' list or pressured in any way.
- Being real and thinking about what's coming up in their lives that could be opportunities to put teaching into practice.
- Being accountable – encouraging people to name what they might try this week (even if they need prayer for it), and asking them to prepare to share their experiences at the next meeting.

Most 'Try Out' options will likely be for individuals to try on their own. But you may like to consider some options that are for the group to do service together.

PRAY & REFLECT

Prayer points around the sermon/session theme may be included to help you pray for one another, or there is space for the facilitator to lead:

- Feedback on answered prayer for praise items from your group
- Sharing stories for encouragement – more prayer and worship
- Praying for help into what they have committed to try. We want to encourage reliance on God's help to deepen discipleship relationship to Jesus.
- Prayer for personal needs

PART 1:

SERVE

JOHN 13:3-17

INTRODUCTION

Each year, we take a few weeks to talk about what following Jesus looks like at our church, and invite one another to commit to doing so together for the year ahead. We call this Partnership.

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In this session we're going to explore what it means to serve, unpacking the account where Jesus washes His disciples feet the night before His death.

SHARE

- When you hear the word 'serving', what immediately comes to mind?
- What kinds of things do you associate with serving in church?
- Can you think of a time when someone served you in a way that really affected you? What made it meaningful?

SHARE & REFLECT

You may find it helpful to watch (from 2:10-11:45 minutes) a dramatised version of this passage from *The Chosen* series:

youtu.be/p0H8sXNW2BA?si=UNXy309hYTNmIVVr



READ

John 13:3-17

REFLECT & SHARE

Give space for people to re-read the passage and share any initial observations. It's not necessarily about answering the group's questions at this stage, more an opportunity to share before working through the discussion questions.

- What stands out from the passage? Why?
- What do I find difficult in the passage? What questions does it raise?

DISCUSS

Jesus knew He had '*all authority*' (verse 3), yet He took the position of a slave. What does this suggest about the relationship between greatness and humility?

Why do you think Jesus' act of serving was so uncomfortable for Peter? Do we ever have similar reactions to allowing others—or God—to serve us?

Jesus uses strong language to say we have 'no part' of him unless he serves you first. What does it look like to let him serve you first?

What does healthy serving look like? What are the tell-tale signs that serving has moved from joyful generosity into people-pleasing, guilt, control, or burnout?

What are some ways we might accidentally turn Christianity into "I need to do things for God so that I'm a good Christian"? How do we avoid this happening?

Jesus washed Judas' feet despite knowing Judas would betray Him. What does that raise for you about serving people who disappoint, frustrate, or oppose us?

If every person at MCC genuinely lived out "I have come not just to receive but to serve," what would change about the church?

Jesus had all authority, and deserved to be served, yet chose humility. He served people who would fail Him. He served before going to the cross. He didn't simply command service—He modelled it. There's no such thing as following Jesus without serving sacrificially.

What practical ways might you go about seeking to sacrificially serve others in the weeks ahead?

Discuss the 'Try outs' and share how you might go about living out some of the challenges that have been discussed.

TRY OUTS

- Reflect on the people who you find easiest to serve? Who do you find hardest to serve? Why do you think that is? Pray and reflect on how could you serve them over the next few weeks?
- Volunteer for something at church you wouldn't normally do, get in touch with the Staff Team about current serving gaps – email ***info@maybridge.org.uk*** or fill in the form ***maybridge.org.uk/get-stuck-in***
- Serve in your own community – help a neighbour, offer practical support to someone in need, volunteer for the task no-one likes to do at work.

PRAY & REFLECT

Pray together that God would transform us to be more like Jesus as we seek to serve. Ask for the Holy Spirit's help with the things that came up in discussion. You may find it helpful to share a prayer, scripture, or to listen to a worship song that helps you reflect and pray:

**The Servant King –
Graham Kendrick**

***youtu.be/A0FSZ_iSY08?
si=ZOBVS9d6BCOs01aD***

