

Let your life speak of faithfulness.

Jesus takes a big risk on who he chooses to be his friends. Judas is about to betray him because he thinks Jesus needs to act faster. Jesus keeps going with his mission, even when he knows that he is being betrayed.

Group facilitator welcomes everyone. Each person introduces themselves. Leader reminds people of the guidelines. Leader begins by reading out the session title and two sentence explanation.



Connect (10 minutes)

Share experiences of giving/receiving to and from others as you lived with attention to God this week. Was there a particular time when you recognised God speaking to you?

Share your experience of your intentional risky mission venture. What have you learnt?



Contemplate (5–8 minutes)

Begin by singing or saying together this verse from Timothy Dudley Smith's hymn. (StF 470)

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided,
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Two minutes of silence

Relive in your mind's eye in as much vivid detail as possible an occasion where someone showed you an act of love which really touched you and was unexpected. When did it happen? What happened? What did they do? How did you react? How did you feel afterwards? How do you think God was loving you through the experience? Now spend some time in deep thanks to God for this experience and this person or persons.

End by saying together the verse from Timothy Dudley Smith's hymn which you began with.



Consider (15 minutes)

John 13:31-35 or the Gospel passage just used in worship.

Someone reads the setting. Two people read the passage slowly one after the other.

Setting

During the final meal that Jesus shares with his disciples, he predicts that one of them (Judas) will betray him. Judas leaves at this point to do what he has been planning. Perhaps he thinks he can force Jesus' hand to act faster. Jesus meanwhile gives the rest of his disciples a new commandment. They are to love one another, as he has loved them. In this way everyone will know that they are his disciples. This is a love which continues despite betrayals and many mistakes that they will make. It is an unconditional love.

John 13:31-35 (NRSV)

When [Judas] had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come." I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Three minute silences' to think about the passage individually. Guard this time of silence for personal reflection. Each person has the opportunity to share a word, phrase or idea which lights up for them or a question raised for them. You may want to do this in twos or threes, rather than as a whole group. Listen carefully without comment to each person's contribution.

Only when everyone has had the opportunity to share, let a conversation develop. The conversation may develop from the contributions or a focus for the conversation might be:

What is the nature of tough love and how does it point to God?



Commit (5 minutes)

How are you going to pay more attention to God so that you live with intentional generosity this week?

What next step are you taking on your risky venture?

Close with the series prayer.

*God of amazing grace,
you entrust to us the gift of your life.
You invite us to notice and treasure you.
May the threads of our lives,
mundane and spectacular,
speak of you, that your love may overflow to others
and the whole world.
Amen.*