

## **WITNESS – Reaching out to others** *(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)*

### **Ffald-y-Brenin Blessings**

Heavenly Father we take upon ourselves the mantle of authority that Jesus delegates to us and in His name we speak to every household in Hungerford and say to you:-

#### **1 Relationships**

We bless you in the Name of the Lord. We bless your marriages that they may be strong and whole. We bless the relationship between each marriage partner that it may be loving, forgiving, merciful and strong. We bless every intergenerational relationship within each household that there may be peace and love and understanding flowing between each one.

In Jesus' name we bless every network of wholesome and supportive friendship.

#### **2 Health**

We bless your health that you may be strong and well. In Jesus' name we resist any sickness or disease which seeks to invade this parish and to every person in the parish we say, be well, be strong, be healthy. To any who are sick right now we say we bless you in Jesus' name with a speedy recovery.

#### **3 Wealth**

We bless your wealth that you may have plenty to replace poverty. We bless you to have enough to live and enough to give. We bless the work of your hands that whatever you turn your hand to which is wholesome may be profitable. We bless every wholesome enterprise that is conducted by you that it may prosper and be successful. We bless the local businesses that they may be successful and profitable.

#### **4 Education**

We bless the local schools that they may be secure, safe places for teachers and pupils alike. We bless the children's capacity to learn and develop relationships and we bless their simple trust in Jesus that their trust may grow and become enriched.

#### **5 Church**

We speak to the Church and we say we bless you in the Name of the Lord that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God may flow out from you in power. We bless the hearts of all who live in the parish that they may be quickened to hear and respond to the Voice of the Living God. We bless all who live and work here, that the overflow of the blessings of the presence of the kingdom of God may fall upon you.

# **LUKE'S GOSPEL GOSPEL FOR THE OUTSIDER**

## **5 Women as Outsiders**

### **WELCOME – Breaking the ice** *(Aim for 10 minutes)*

What do you most like about your role in society? What do you find challenging about your role?

### **WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord** *(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)*

1 We invite the Holy Spirit in prayer to open our ears, hearts and minds.

2 We listen to a passage of scripture, today 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 verses 4–7 read out loud and notice where our attention is drawn – a verse, phrase or single word.

3 We then remain in silence for a minute or two, staying with the place in the passage that stood out for us.

4 The passage is then read again.

5 We share what has stood out for us in the passage, a particular verse, phrase or even single word.

Pray for your meeting

**WORD – Applying the truth**  
**(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)**

If you have read the chapter in the book, would you go as far as saying that there is feminine spirituality in St Luke's gospel? You may say, what is a feminine spirituality? My answer would be that it is comprised of characteristics true of women in the Gospel which make their response identifiably different from that of men. In the course of the Gospel I identified five distinguishing features of women's responses to either Jesus or the Father.

The five stories from the Gospel comprised: Mary (attentive listening; Luke 10:38-42), the widow in the parable of the Unjust Judge (Persistence; 18:1-8), the widow at the Temple treasury (sacrificial giving; 21:1-2), the woman with the jar of perfume in Simon's house (extravagant love; 7:36-50), and the obedient faith of Mary (1:26-38). If there is time, members of the group might read each of these five stories and then discuss their characteristics.

1 What does this group of women have in common?

2 What can men learn from them?

3 Why, in general terms, do the men have a worse press in the Gospel? e.g. dispute amongst the disciples as to which is the greatest (22:24-29), the denial by Peter (22:54-62), and the initial unbelief by Zachariah (1:5-25). Why do men find it so difficult? There are some glorious exceptions, e.g. the Centurion and John the Baptist (see 7:1-10 and 7:18-35).

4 Why is it generally true that men like arranging structures, controlling the finances, and speaking from the front, and women caring for weak, praying for the Kingdom to come, and offering their time, energy, and money in service?

5 How do you think Luke regarded women in his Gospel?

Taken from  
Whitworth, P., (2014) *Gospel for the Outsider*, Durham: Sacristy Press