

WITNESS – Reaching out to others

(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)

Five people volunteer to do one topic each. Read the set words and then pray an extempore prayer about your topic. With luck it will take 10 mins!

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 overspill of the blessings of the presence of the kingdom of God may fall upon you.

JOHN 15.12-16.4

4

The Cost of Friendship

John 15:12–16:4

WELCOME – Breaking the ice

(Aim for 10 minutes)

When have you seen God at work over the last week?

OR

When have you felt closest to God this week?

WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord

(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)

The Examen

Think about what has been the best thing and what has been the worst thing which has happened over the last week.

Each say a “Thank you” prayer for the best thing that has happened.

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

During his life on earth, Jesus did not surround himself with a group of students or even a group of followers. He placed himself in the company of friends. I used to think it was a sign of spiritual strength when someone said “I don’t really need other people. I just need the Lord”. Now I see it as a sign of immaturity. Close personal relationships are Christlike!

- ♦ What are some of the most important qualities in a friend?

As Jesus continues his conversation with his disciples. Jesus shows us what friendship with him is really like. There’s both comfort and cost.

Read John 15:12–17.

1. Jesus already told his disciples to love each other (John 13:34-35). How does his instruction in verse 12 raise the standard of our love.

2. What are the requirements and benefits of friendship with Christ (vv. 14–17)?

3. Is being a friend of Jesus the same as being a believer in Jesus? Explain.

4. **Read John 15:26–16:4.** In what ways will the Counselor and the disciples themselves continue the ministry begun by Jesus (vv. 26–27)?

5. What kind of treatment can the disciples expect from those who do not know Christ (16:1–4)?

6. What kinds of persecution are most probable for us in our society? Explain your answer.

7. If we as Christians are not persecuted in some way, what might that imply about our spiritual commitment?

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