

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 20.1-31

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The Son Is Up!

John 20:1–31

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)**

The story circulated for days in the hospital where my brother worked. An orderly was told to take a body to the morgue. Simply out of habit, the orderly felt the man's wrist for a pulse. When he realized his mistake, the orderly quickly dropped the arm, but not before his sensitive fingers told him something his mind struggled to believe. There was a pulse! The doctors were called, and the man revived.

- ♦ How would you react if a friend told you he had seen someone raised from the dead?

The hospital story my brother told me may or may not be true. But I know of one account of a man coming back to life that is true. The man lived for years after the event. In fact, he is still alive! **Read John 20:1–31.**

1. John identifies three witnesses to the empty tomb: Mary Magdalene, Peter and “the other disciple” (John himself). What important details do we learn from each one (vv. 1–9)?

2. Why is it important to prove the tomb was empty?

3. John also records three appearances of the risen Christ: to Mary Magdalene, to his disciples and to Thomas. Why do you think Mary Magdalene doesn't immediately recognize Jesus (vv. 10–15)?

After she does recognize him, what impresses you most about their encounter (vv. 16–18)?

4. When Jesus appears to his disciples, what specific gifts and promises does he give them (vv. 19–23)?

What is the significance of each gift or promise?

5. Finally, Jesus appears to Thomas (vv. 24–29). How does Thomas's attitude—both before and after Jesus appears to him—add credibility to the resurrection?

6. How does Thomas's exclamation “My Lord and my God” (v. 28) provide a fitting climax to John's Gospel?

7. What can we learn from Jesus' encounter with Thomas about dealing with people who have doubts about Christianity?

8. On what evidence do you base your belief that Jesus rose from the dead?