



The following provides a framework for fruitful, participative conversation that begins with our current lived experience. More than an internal exercise, this provides an opportunity to look externally and listen to God and to the immediate community.

We hope these questions will offer a space for an honest and open response, holding space for the way in which the wider context of Covid-19 has affected us and the experience of what it means to be Church and recognising that everyone has been affected but not everyone has been affected in the same way.

As a framework, it could be implemented according to context – so can be done over as many sessions as helpful.

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## The Gathered Group

Gather your group together either via Zoom, or when restrictions allow, in person.  
Invite group members to bring a Bible to the session.

### Beginning Together

The idea is to begin with an opening question that looks back and reflects on the last 6 months, giving space for exploring what has emerged, encouraged and inspired whilst also giving space for the sharing of fears and lamenting what needs to be lamented.

- Looking back over the past 6 months what has emerged?
- What has energised/ inspired you? What has surprised you?
- What have you found most challenging and why?

### Read, listen and reflect together

#### Bible Passage Matthew 28: 16-20.

*Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. <sup>17</sup>When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." NIV version*

The gathered group opens this passage of scripture and reads this together.

Often it is helpful to read it from different versions, so encourage the group to bring their own bibles to the session.

The following questions allow some time and space to reflect on it and provides a lens through which to approach the next part of the framework.

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- **What jumps out to you in this story - what words or phrases strike you?**
- **What might this look like here in our community? (How might we this out in our community today? Or In what ways are we living this passage out today?)**

### **The Prayer Walk - God with us**

Invite group members embark upon a prayer walk around your local context, looking at where we have seen God with us in these past 6 months (and before!) as well as where he is at work now.

Getting out in the spaces to pray will help you identify others, practices, and places in the community. The old/ new practice of prayer walking has incredible potential when done in a posture of listening. This is a simple way to mobilise God's mission force and get people out in the community.

And the key is to keep it simple.

We suggest focussing on 3 basic practices: pray, observe, encounter.

- **Pray:** This is simply about putting shoes on your prayers. Walking around having a conversation with God. If you feel God nudging you to pray for a specific home, business, or school—do it! You might like to ask- “God, show me what’s breaking your heart in this space. What is sore here?” And then quietly listen.
- **Observe:** This is simply a form of listening. How many people do you notice in the space? What are they doing? What are the conditions of the neighbourhood where you are? What kinds of isolation do you see? What kind of practices are people participating in? Are people engaging each other in certain ways? How are they dressed? What is God up to here?
- **Encounter:** This one is the scariest for people who may not be strong extroverts. Here’s the good news: you don’t have to encounter anyone unless they engage with you or unless God tells you to! If someone enquires about your activity, let them know you are just out praying for the community and ask, “Is there anything I can pray for you?”

More information on creating a prayer can be found at <https://www.seedbed.com/the-first-stage-in-planting-fresh-expressions-is-listening/>

If Covid restrictions prevent a physical prayer walk, then picture/photos of places within the community or using social media and looking for the key gathering points for people within the community. Either way the key is looking and listening and being attentive to the local context.

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## Sharing

Find a time to come back together to share what has been heard, seen or noticed.

Having come back together the invitation would now be to think and discuss what you have seen in the light of:

- **What does it mean to be a Christian presence in your community?**
- **During the pandemic what has a Christian presence looked like in your Community and what have you learnt about this?**
- **What did you see on your walk that reflects a pastoral or a missional presence in your community?**

With these thoughts in mind:

- **How might you grow that Christian presence in your community?**
- **How might our 3 Diocesan Priorities and Commitments help you with this?**

These can be found at: <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/whos-who/renewing-hope/beyond-the-present>

**Holding all that has been shared, look for one action point for each priority that can be worked on, together for the next 6 months. Particularly thinking about the passage from Matthew.**

To conclude we encourage the group note what they hope will be different in 6 months' time and to commit this to God in prayer.

Then put a date in the diary to meet up again and share.

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