

Transforming Lives - Lent 2008

Study Group Leaders' Notes week-by-week



Introduction

Thank you helping to organise and lead one or more sessions in this Lent 2008 Transforming Lives series.

These Leaders' Notes give some reminders and checklists.

At the first session, and maybe at subsequent sessions if your group are new to each other, give people a chance to introduce themselves. You might even give people name-labels (although that is probably a little daunting)! But make sure people get plenty of opportunities to learn and be reminded about each other's names.

The Icebreakers are there to help the group relax in a fairly light-hearted way. If 'Icebreakers' have the opposite effect on your group then abandon them!

Make sure you allow plenty of time for prayer and worship, so these are not just bolted on as extras, but are a good part of the whole session. Through prayer and worship people can be helped to ponder, explore and respond to the themes in ways that simple discussion cannot achieve.

You may need to remind your group that what is said in discussion may be very personal and should therefore be treated confidentially. No gossip.

Please pick-and-mix from the material provided in these notes. Do not attempt to start at the beginning of a session and plough through to the

end. Be selective in the light of what interests your group, but also don't be afraid to get the group to try something that might be outside their 'comfort zone'.

Remember: the basic theme of Transforming Lives and these Lent 2008 sessions is that an encounter with Jesus changes us. As a leader pray for yourself and your group, that through Lent 2008 you and they will meet with Jesus in a new way, and be renewed in faith and commitment.

Week 1 – choosing God's way

In the desert – Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus tempted image

This image looks much better in colour than in grey. It can be downloaded in colour from www.wakefield.anglican.org/transforminglives.

Look for "[Week 1 image - Transforminglives Lives 2008.pdf](#)". It can be printed on any home computer and then cut to size. Print enough copies so that there are enough for one between two.

Worship options

There are a variety of worship options. Please be selective, and use whatever you feel will suit your group.

** For next week **

Please ask people to bring a photograph of themselves as a baby or young child for next week, but keep the photo a secret! The photo will be for the Icebreaker.

Week 2 – new life in Christ

Jesus and Nicodemus – John 3:1-8

Transformation – objects and images

This week invites people to look at some objects or photos, and to “choose one that speaks to them about the process of transformation in their Christian life”.

A useful selection of images can be downloaded from www.wakefield.anglican.org/transforminglives. Look for “[Week 2 images - Transforminglives Lives 2008.pdf](#)”. These images are all copyright-free. They can be printed on any home computer and then cut to size.

Alternatively, or additionally, groups might arrange to display (for example) a broken egg on a plate, seeds, a bulb, an apple cut in half, a twig with buds or other objects that suggest new life (or the lack of life).

**** For next week ****

Buy enough sterilising tablets for each person in the group. These are available from Boots or larger supermarkets. Milton are best – they are larger than ‘own brand’ varieties.

Week 3 – how is Jesus changing us?

Jesus and a woman at a well – John 4:5-30, 39-42

Woman at the well image

This image looks much better in colour than in grey. It can be downloaded in colour from www.wakefield.anglican.org/transforminglives.

Look for “[Week 3 image - Transforminglives Lives 2008.pdf](#)”. It can be printed on any home computer and then cut to size. Print enough copies so that there are enough for one between two.

What you will need

For display at the [Icebreaker](#) and [Closing Worship](#):

- A jug of water
- Glasses for everyone

For [Coming Clean](#):

- Reflective music
- A large glass bowl of water
- Sterilising tablets, enough for each person
- Pens or pencils

Week 4 – the cost of following Jesus

Jesus heals a blind man, and people react – John 9:1-41

‘Seeing differently’ suggestions

There are four options for “Seeing differently”. It is vital that the group leader chooses just one or two of these options. Do not work through all options (there are too many). Do not leave it up to your group to decide which to do – use your discernment to identify which will be the best choices for your group.

What you will need

- For this week’s worship four candles will be needed, plus matches or a lighter.

Week 5 – hope in the pain of life

Jesus and Lazarus – John 11:1-45

Worship: three options

Choose just one of the worship options!

What you will need

For Worship Option 1 you will need:

- A bowl of water
- A cross
- A lighted candle

For Worship Option 3 you will need:

- A copy of the poem/meditation 'The Ragman', by Walter Wangerin. This can be downloaded and printed from one of the following sources:
<http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/6595/ragman.html>
<http://www.angelfire.com/tx2/jbrown/ragman.html>
- Lengths of bandage for group members to 'wrap up' aspects of life that still 'bind' them.

Looking back

If possible try to make time within the evening to let group members reflect on their experiences, insights and learning during Lent – both in church and in the group.

Two questions might be used to get people thinking:

- What have you found most helpful?
- What have you found most challenging? Tell us what you think.