

Priest Idol session 3

What do our church services offer?

BEFORE VIEWING:

- Feed back from reflection/ research at the end of session 2.

Start DVD at Priest Idol 2 – 0000

Summary

Part 1: James struggles on, trying house blessings and the visiting around baptisms, weddings and funerals to get people into church. The marketing company send a research team to Lundwood to ask what would get people into church. James invites the community to help with a church clean up day but only the children come. Julian and Steve from Propaganda visit the church to take a closer look at a typical Sunday Service.

Part 2: The Church building needs renovation. James asks an interior designer for ideas and receives advice from a diocesan committee. Market research reveals that people in Lundwood might go to church if it was less stuffy so Steve visits café church – a different kind of service at another church. The church hall gets a makeover – as does James with his singing and vestments. Finally the marketing company reveal their big idea for Lundwood – Church Lite!

(28.37 minutes)

AFTER VIEWING:

Occasional offices

- Baptism, marriage, funerals seem to be the only time most people in Lundwood go to church. James is frustrated that people don't really understand and wants to help them see the fuller meaning of what they are doing. How might he do that?

How, practically, might your church build on occasions when people from the community visit your church?

Ask what people think?

- The marketing company send a research team to the village to ask what they think will get people to church. Answers range from 'won't go in' to 'no time' and 'it's for old people'.

When was the last time you asked people in your community what they think about church?

Good service?

- Julian and Steve visit a church service at Lundwood. Julian comments, "For this day and age and this society, there's got to be more theatre about it". What do you think he means? Do you agree? How might your church add more 'theatre' to services?

Julian and Steve struggle to understand the language, find The Peace difficult, and reckon the service needs to be more interesting. They reckon the service and James need styling, sales training and a change of language. What changes should your church make to help newcomers and visitors?

Relationships

- Steve visits another church experimenting with café church. The vicar says, “The great danger is we’ve got a two ton Christian message and a half ton relationship, and you whack a two ton message on to a half ton bridge and it breaks”.

Are we in church in danger of overloading newcomers, or watering down the message?

Vicar training

- James receives advice from Penny Jenkins (a singing coach) and Jonathan (about vestments). If you could order some training for your vicar or minister what would you choose?! Be positive!

The Big Idea

- The marketing company finally present their new concept for Lundwood:
‘Church Lite – it’s better for you’ (see separate downloadable sheet).

What do you think Church Lite is trying to achieve?

Do you find any of the strap lines offensive? Why?

Do you think these strap lines have a serious point to make or are they just marketing hype?

- “This is church” insists Steve. “It’s a different kind of church. They don’t like the church that’s on offer. They think the church that’s on offer is heavy, has no humour, is dark.” How much should churches change to appeal to those not part of the church?

The apostle Paul, building up the Corinthian church, says...

- *“I am a free man, nobody’s slave; but I make myself everybody’s slave in order to win as many people as possible. While working with the Jews, I live like a Jew in order to win them; and even though I myself am not subject to the Law of Moses, I live as though I were when working with those who are, in order to win them. In the same way, when working with Gentiles, I live like a Gentile, outside the Jewish Law, in order to win Gentiles. This does not mean that I don’t obey God’s law; I am really under Christ’s law. Among the weak in faith I become weak like one of them, in order to win them. So I become all things to all people, that I may save some of them by whatever means are possible.”* (1 Cor 9:19-22)

How might Paul’s approach and hospitality affect how we organise church?

RESEARCH

One of the advantages of outside help is a fresh pair of eyes. Ask someone you know, preferably who has never been to your church to come to church and give some feedback. You might ask them to use the downloadable **Feedback Form** or one you devise for your church.

If you can’t find anybody to complete a form before you move on to the next session – complete a form yourself.