

Way of Discipleship Small Groups

Leading: Encouraging the gifts of all kinds of people - part two



Touching base and introducing this session (7 minutes)

Open in prayer as is helpful for your group.

If this is your first session take time to introduce yourselves and set any ground rules you want to for your time together.

If you met previously take the opportunity either as a group or in pairs to check in with each other about how your response from last time has gone.

Introduction: Following on from last session about the importance of developing the gifts of other people (session 1), this session we look specifically at some of the challenges people of diverse backgrounds can face in doing this, and what we might do to address them.



Opening question(s) (8 minutes)

Read Revelation 7: 9-12 which gives a vision of God's desire for us.

What can stand in the way of this vision, or of people's gifts being encouraged and recognised?



Valuing the gifts of everyone in the CofE: video and discussion (20 minutes)

Watch the 6 and a half minute video "I too am CofE (edited)" at:

https://youtu.be/stvbG6A8n_Y

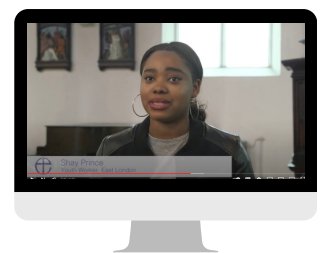
Discuss:

How does the video make you feel?

What issues does it highlight that you can address in your life, and the life of your church?

Why do you think this matters to God?

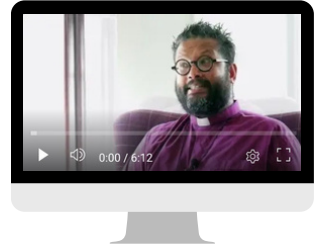
What questions do we need to ask ourselves so that this can change?



Facing the issue and good practice - video and discussion (20 minutes)

Watch the 6 minute video “Unconscious Bias Good Practice” in which Bishop Saju outlines why encouraging everyone’s gifts matters, and how we can address the things that get in the way of this at:

<https://youtu.be/pm0dA0wT3gw>



Start by summarising the reasons he says this matters:

Because it is about who we think God is, because it is about the discipleship of all nations, and because it is about the way we love one another.

Our biases are varied, and we need to be aware of our hidden assumptions.

Read out the four questions Bishop Saju suggests we ask ourselves about developing others and pick one they think most relates to their situation:

How am I intentional about fairness?

How many people do I know from diverse backgrounds?

How might I challenge bias in myself or others?

How much do I want a diverse church?

Discuss your responses to the question you have chosen.

Responding to God’s leading (8 minutes)

Read out these further questions to finish, giving space between each for reflection.

For myself: Do I offer my gifts willingly?

As a leader: Am I being intentional about recognising the gifts of all kinds of people?

As a team/church: What can we put in place to respond to this?

Give people time to think, and then invite them to share with one other person what one thing they can do in response to this session.



Group prayer (5 minutes)

Dear God, thank you for the many gifts that you have blessed your church with.

Thank you that together, we can do incredible things for your glory. Help us to recognise these gifts in ourselves, and in the people around us.

Help us to use these gifts, coming together as one church, one body. Amen.

