

Session 4

You will probably want to go round the group, letting each person share if they have done the work since last time. Don't let the mood get too heavy – encourage those who have discovered something new. Then ask participants to finish the following sentence:

The Church is called to be a...

Affirm responses if at all possible; you may find a healthy diversity of views shared. Then, on a flip chart or large piece of paper, reveal a statement from the course:

The Church is called to be a therapeutic community, an advocate for healing and a messenger of salvation.

Give participants a chance to say if they find this statement helpful; they may want to point to aspects that are missing from the statement, but they will probably all accept that, among other things, this is the vocation of the church.

Find a confident participant to read the Bible reading

4.1-3: Move fairly quickly through the material.

4.4: Cut, paste and print out the following, and cut them up with scissors so that each box of words is on a different slip of paper.

• **Luke 8.43 Therapeuo - to care, treat, cure, heal - “no one could heal her”**

• **Luke 8.47 laomai - to heal - “she was healed”**

• **Luke 8.48 Sozo - to save - “your faith has saved you**

Highlight the way the meaning of the words is fluid – sozo, in particular, can simply mean physical healing, but can also mean a complex cluster of things including incorporation in God’s people, receiving a new identity and being assured of a life that continues through and beyond death.

4.5 Show the slides. Don’t read them out loud (unless you have a participant with visual impairment unable to read the screen, or you suspect literacy is an issue); just pick out one or two ideas on each slide. Remember, participants have their guides to take away, so they don’t need to take notes on each slide – 30 seconds is the maximum time any one slide needs to be displayed. You certainly do not have time to ask participants to look up verses in bibles.

4.6 Now we’re going to pray for a sick person. They might be present – gently ask if anyone feels brave enough to volunteer. Or it might be someone not present, who has disclosed to the church community that they are sick and would like prayer, who is on the heart of a group member. This group member will brief us about them. In the latter case, you might like to set up a chair and ask members to imagine that the person prayed for is on it; you will certainly want to emphasise that confidentiality is very important. Take time to go through the stages suggested in the participant notes, point by point. Don’t hog the leadership – you might like to suggest that several people take it in turns to lead this prayerful activity.

Practical Work End the session with one or other of the activities listed as “practical work”. Take a vote which it will be!