

KEEP CALM and



Creative Material for 4 sessions on the themes of celebration, prayer, partying and trust; connecting issues in day to day life with Bible stories



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Unlock Burnley Discipleship Development Worker 2014–
2015

Keep Calm

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KEEP CALM and Celebrate

Icebreaker:

Drink and a biscuit

My name is.

If I were a biscuit I would be a

Because



Unlocking Real Life Stories of Urban people

Unlocking life experience:

Show video celebrating Burnley Football Club's promotion to the Premier League.

- 'Everybody wrote Burnley off at the start of the season.'
- 'No one expected anything from us but the manager...'
- 'This is our time.'
- 'Great day (parade).'
- 'We are going up.'
- 'Back in our town back on our turf.'
- 'We are premier league.'
- How do you feel after watching that?
- How do you feel about the promotion?
- If you support BFC how did you react when the referee blew the final whistle?
- How do you think it affects the town?
- Are you proud to be from Burnley at the moment?
- Do you only support Burnley in the good times? There were more season ticket holders last time we were in the Premier League than when we were in the Championship.

Most of the group were not into football (or supported another team!) but it was useful as a way into the topic of celebration. Leaders should choose some local celebration if they can find one.

On this day... (this session took place on June 18th)

1815 – Battle of Waterloo; Napoleon defeated by Wellington and Blucher

1928 - American aviator Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman to fly across the Atlantic

1941 – Delia Smith born

1942 – Paul McCartney born

1948 - UN Commission on Human Rights adopts the International Declaration of Human Rights

1961 – Alison Moyet born

1979 - SALT II agreement signed by the USA & the USSR limiting the size of nuclear arsenals



A quick internet search will help you to find historical events worthy of celebration relating to *the date of your meeting*. As here, try for a mixture of different kinds.

Questions for Discussion

- Have you celebrated anything recently or are you about to – birthdays, anniversaries, special events?
- Where did you celebrate?
- How did you celebrate?
- Why did you celebrate?
- How does it feel when you are celebrating with somebody else?
- How does it feel when you are being celebrated?

There was a good variety of celebration stories shared from birthdays and weddings to being drug or alcohol free for X number of days, months, years.

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

Zephaniah 3:14-20

A Song of Joy

¹⁴ Sing and shout for joy, people of Israel!
Rejoice with all your heart, Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The Lord has stopped your punishment;
He has removed all your enemies.

The Lord, the king of Israel, is with you;
there is no reason now to be afraid.

¹⁶ The time is coming when they will say to
Jerusalem,

“Do not be afraid, city of Zion!
Do not let your hands hang limp!

¹⁷ The Lord your God is with you;
His power gives you victory.

The Lord will take delight in you,
and in His love He will give you new life.

He will sing and be joyful over you,
¹⁸ as joyful as people at a festival.”

The Lord says,

“I have ended the threat of doom
and taken away your disgrace.

¹⁹ The time is coming!

I will punish your oppressors;
I will rescue all the lame
and bring the exiles home.

I will turn their shame to honour,
and all the world will praise them.

²⁰ The time is coming!

I will bring your scattered people home;
I will make you famous throughout the world
and make you prosperous once again.”

The Lord has spoken.



I read the Scripture aloud as well as giving out printed sheets. This proved a good decision as one of the men afterwards told me he couldn't read.





Releasing life changing skills and confidence

- Can you see connections between our celebrations and the Bible story?
- How do you think God feels about Burnley’s promotion?
- How do you think God feels about you?

As well as practical connections to celebration stories such as not letting your hands hang limp there were some amazing comments from those who are battling addiction. One lady who is only just starting out on the road to recovery spoke about her shame being turned to honour! Another said that what it all comes down to is that everyone needs to know that God loves them. It was good to have a church member there who has been through the addiction programme and became a good link between those from church and those from Narcotics Anonymous and other such groups.

Creative reflections

Frieze: Write on ‘post its’ (or use paper and glue) a phrase that stands out to you and stick it on our praise frieze.

Bubbles: share the word/phrase that stands out to you and then blow a bubble. Everyone watches it float to the ground and when it pops or is out of sight all give a shout of praise.



I just did the bubbles activity as it was a lovely sunny day. The man who couldn’t read didn’t want to shout a phrase out but he had picked something to say so I shouted it and he blew the bubbles. Everyone took part although I think some were not sure about openly doing this outside the church.

God sings over us.

What does this mean? Imagine God rejoicing as you enter the room. See Him swoop you up in His arms and declare to everyone that He is pleased with you. Meditate on the fact that God delights in you.

Listen ‘The Father’s Song’ by Matt Redman about God singing over us and draw/write how it makes you feel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0nWPUpZKbk>

I asked people if they wanted to just listen to the song or if they wanted to draw or write something as they did. One lady said no and basically closed the option for everyone. In future just put paper and pencils out and give everyone the option to use them if they want to.



If God is singing and rejoicing over you, how might that affect your daily life?
How could it help you when you're having a bad day or going through a hard time?

Didn't have time for much conversation after the song. One lady though was in tears at the end. She has attended Bible study at the church and Sunday worship. She was really touched by the message of how much God loves us and thinks about us. She suggested taking it to the Women's Refuge as this is something they all need to hear. I later heard that at the church Bible study she doesn't usually share but following this she opened up to tell people her story.



Continuing reflective cycles

- Cards to take away (see Page 7) - Keep calm God rejoices over you, God is singing over you, God is crazy about you. If we have spare ones encourage people to take one for a friend?

Questions to think about

- Has knowing that God rejoices over you affected your life?
- Has hearing our celebration stories cheered you up today?
- Has hearing the Bible story and stories of other group members given you confidence that no matter what others think, God is rejoicing and singing over you?





KEEP
CALM
GOD REJOICES
OVER YOU



KEEP
CALM
GOD IS
SINGING OVER
YOU



KEEP
CALM
GOD IS CRAZY
ABOUT YOU



KEEP
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GOD IS
SINGING OVER
YOU



KEEP
CALM
GOD IS CRAZY
ABOUT YOU



KEEP CALM and Pray

Icebreaker:

Keep calm and eat breakfast (*it could be another meal or just a snack*)

Breakfast is served with Table talk cards (page 9):

- What helps you keep calm? Keep calm and...?
- Do you have people you can confide in?
- Have you ever needed to talk to someone and felt that there was no one you could approach?
- Were you taught any prayers at school or Sunday School?
- Can you remember anybody saying they would pray for you?
- Have you ever said you would pray for somebody?
- Do you think prayer has a place in our modern life?



Unlocking Real Life Stories of Urban people

Keep calm and listen

At the time that this session was designed these were fairly contemporary stories and audio or video clips were available for them, which may no longer be accessible. Ideally choose your own stories that are reasonably current at the time that you use this session and find appropriate clips; or learn enough about the stories to tell them in your own words. The ones below are included as examples only.

Stories of prayer from famous people followed by short discussion:

The story of Daniella Westbrook, Eastenders actress and former drug addict, who was saved by God – *I just had a conversation with God. This was way before I was a Christian, but I said to Him, 'This is really hard and I can't do this on my own. But if I'm meant for more than to just be working in television and wasting my life doing other stuff, then you need to step in and help me out because I can't do it on my own.' I felt that was my first real connection with God.*

<https://www.premierchristianity.com/Browse-By-Category/features/Profile-Danniella-Westbrook.aspx>

PowerPoint showing images of the Fabrice Muamba story, the footballer who suffered a heart attack on the pitch but survived after many people prayed.

<http://metro.co.uk/2012/04/22/fabrice-muamba-attributes-miracle-recovery-to-power-of-prayer-398070/>

James Corden on Desert Island Discs where he talks about his parents praying with him at a very low point in his life and career.



Table Talk Topic

What helps you
keep calm?

Table Talk Topic

Do you have people
you can confide in?

Table Talk Topic

Have you ever needed to talk to
someone and felt that there was
no one you could approach?

Table Talk Topic

Were you taught any
prayers at school or
Sunday School?

Table Talk Topic

Can you remember
anybody saying they
would pray for you?

Table Talk Topic

Have you ever said you
would pray for somebody?

Table Talk Topic

What Place do you think
Prayer has in our modern
life?

Table Talk Topic

What helps you
keep calm?

Keep calm and sing

Ask if people know any songs about prayer and sing some round a piano or with videos:

- I say a little prayer for you, Aretha Franklin
- God on High, from Les Miserables
- The Prayer, Rhydian
- When you believe from The Prince of Egypt (Moses), Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey
- Thankful, Josh Groban
- Smile (replace 'smile' with 'pray'), various artists

We chose just two songs to look at as there wasn't time for all of them. We had some interesting conversations, particularly regarding if the singers/composers knew who they were praying to or whether it was just the idea of there being some higher power out there.

See also <http://spiritattheoasis.blogspot.co.uk/2012/03/secular-songs-about-prayer.html>

Discussion on what the song writers were feeling as they wrote the songs and which songs people like the best and why.



News stories – Keep calm and pray for
 Ask participants for current news stories that they feel are in need of prayer; e.g victims of violence, exploitation, war or natural disasters.



Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

Keep calm and share

Ask if anybody wants to share anything from the table talk conversations.

Share personal stories of prayer :

- When did you first pray?
- When did you last pray?
- Is there a point in your life where you think prayer made a difference?

Lead to discussions about:

- What is prayer?
- When can we pray?
- Where can we pray?
- What do we pray?
- How do we pray?
- Why do we pray?

People seemed to think that some of the questions were very simple as they already had a church background and could easily give 'churchy' answers. I asked them to consider how people without a church background might find the questions.

Did you know that Jesus prays for us today? How does that make you feel? How should we respond? If Jesus wants to be our friend, how does that affect how we talk to Him?



Releasing life changing skills and confidence

Keep calm and pray

Tables with prayer activities, people can engage with as many or as few as they like.

.....
Pray

Candle prayers

If you know somebody who needs help then talk to God as you light a candle for them. As you watch the flickering flame, remember that Jesus wants to bring His light into that situation.

Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. "I am the light of the world," He said, "Whoever follows Me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness."

John 8:12



Sand tray

If you know there is something you need God's forgiveness for, write it in the sand with your finger. As you say sorry to Him wipe the words away and remember that He forgives you and will remember that sin no more.

The Woman Caught In Adultery

Then everyone went home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early the next morning He went back to the Temple. All the people gathered around Him, and He sat down and began to teach them. The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and they made her stand before them all. "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. In our Law Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do You say?" They said this to trap Jesus, so they could accuse Him. But He bent over and wrote on the ground with His finger. As they stood there asking Him questions, He straightened up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." Then He bent over again and wrote on the ground. When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. He straightened up and said to her, "Where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you?" "No one, sir," she answered. "Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."

John 8:1-11



Keep calm and pray (continued)

..... Pray



Bottle of tears
Is there something you are worried or upset about? The Bible says God has collected our tears in a bottle. Take the lid off the bottle, fill the pipette with water from the container and drop a 'tear' into the bottle for the things that worry or upset you. Replace the lid as you place those situations into God's care.



*You know how troubled I am;
You have kept a record of my tears.
Aren't they listed in Your book?*
Psalm 56:8

Some translations say He has collected our tears in a bottle.

Frieze prayers
Is there something you want to say thank You to God for? Write or draw it on the frieze or make a plasticine model.

*How good it is to give thanks to You, O Lord,
to sing in Your honour, O Most High God.*
Psalm 92:1



Friezes about Burnley
Add your likes/dislikes, good/bad stories about Burnley to the wall Frieze, either as words or as pictures.

But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
Acts 1:8



Something to take home

..... Pray

Keepsake Cards

Take a card with the reminder to 'Keep calm and pray' on one side (page 17). Choose one of the Bible verses related to prayer below which speaks to you the most and write it on the reverse side or take one of the printed verses and glue it on. Remember that you can talk to God at anytime just like you would call a friend and God will always be there.

But you, my friends, keep on building yourselves up on your most sacred faith. Pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jude 1:20

You hear my voice in the morning; at sunrise I offer my prayer and wait for Your answer.

Psalms 5:3

You will listen, O Lord, to the prayers of the lowly; You will give them courage.

Psalms 10:17

I prayed to the Lord, and He answered me; He freed me from all my fears.

Psalms 34:4

Hear my prayer, O God; Don't turn away from my plea!

Psalms 55:1

Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times.

Romans 12:12

My friends, how I wish with all my heart that my own people might be saved! How I pray to God for them!

Romans 10:1

I ask God from the wealth of His glory to give you power through His Spirit to be strong in your inner selves.

Ephesians 3:16

Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking Him with a thankful heart.

Philippians 4:6

Be persistent in prayer, and keep alert as you pray, giving thanks to God.

Colossians 4:2

Pray at all times.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

In my distress I called to the Lord; He answered me and set me free.

Psalms 118:5

But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all.

James 1:5

Always pray and never become discouraged.

Luke 18:1b

Turn to the Lord and pray to Him, now that He is near.

Isaiah 55:6

I praise You, Lord, because You heard me, Because You have given me victory.

Psalms 118:21

Listen to my prayer, And save me according to Your promise!

Psalms 119:170

Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you.

Luke 6:28



Keep calm and drink tea

Tea/coffee with pretzels served with handout (see page 16) and table talk cards to encourage conversations:

The conversations about the event happened quite naturally without me formally asking questions or encouraging discussion. This may have been because some of the group were already church people.



Did you know that pretzels are related to prayer?

One tradition says that as early as 610 AD, monks in Southern France or Northern Italy offered pretzels to children as a 'little reward' for memorizing their Bible verse and saying their prayers. The monks appropriately called it a *pretiola*, Latin for 'little reward'. At some point *pretiola* become *brachiola*, which is Italian for 'little arms' because the pretzel looks like arms folded in prayer. Eventually it found its way to Germany and became known as a *Bretzel* or *Pretzel*.

- What did you enjoy the most about this morning?
- What will you take away with you?
- Do you think anything from the session will affect your prayer life?

People available to pray with if needed.

Keep calm and carry on

Glow stars to take home as a reminder to carry on praying and not give up. A glow star needs to keep returning to the light in order to glow again.

Everyone liked the glow star idea. The closing prayer didn't happen as people gradually drifted off and others began to help tidy up.

Closing prayer





The Story of Pretzels



... Pretzels

As you eat a pretzel or two, read the story of the first pretzels:

A very long time ago, there was a man who worked for God. He was a MONK. A MONK does everything in his life for God. He lives in a special place with other MONKS, who pray and read the Bible many times during the day. They usually live in a building or group of buildings called a monastery. MONKS usually make and/or grow their own food.

This MONK had been in the kitchen where other monks were baking special bread for LENT, and he saw some leftover pieces of dough. This monk decided to use the leftover pieces of dough for something special. The Monk formed the dough into thin strips crossed into a looped twist to be like the folded arms of children in prayer.

Look at the pictures above. You will be one of the few people who know which way is really UP! That was how children held their hands to pray in those days.

*This treat was given to the children as they learned their prayers. They began calling the treat "Pretiola", which means "little reward" in Latin. (A different version of the story calls them *bracellae*, a German word that eventually became *pretzel*.) The simple shape of the pretzel, arms folded in prayer, reminds us to pray every day.*

Every time you see a pretzel, remember prayer!

The pretzel has its origins as an official food of Lent, a time when we think of what Jesus gave up for us – His body and blood – His life – so we could go to heaven. The monk in our story lived in a time when you could not eat meat or milk or eggs during Lent! So he and his brother monks had to figure out a special bread that did not use eggs or milk.

The monks were preparing a special Lenten bread of water, flour and salt – which is what pretzels are still made out of today. Pretzels then began to be enjoyed by all people. They were also a common food given to the poor and hungry. They were cheap and easy to make and satisfied hunger.

What are pretzels supposed to remind us of?

Say a prayer for poor and hungry people in our towns and cities today.





**KEEP
CALM
AND PRAY**



**KEEP
CALM
AND PRAY**



**KEEP
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AND PRAY**



**KEEP
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AND PRAY**

**KEEP
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AND PRAY**



**KEEP
CALM
AND PRAY**



KEEP CALM and Party!

Icebreaker:

Decorate buns - maybe some for self and some to give away.

Follow up discussion from last session – has knowing that God rejoices over you affected your life?



Not everyone was keen to decorate buns whereas someone who couldn't attend the meeting would love to do something like that all the time. I encouraged everyone to join in by suggesting they could give the buns away if they didn't want any themselves. One person with learning difficulties needed almost one to one attention to complete the activity.

Unlocking Real Life Stories of Urban people

Make up a pass the parcel with one of these questions on a piece of paper in each layer of wrapping. Try to ensure everyone gets a turn.

- Pass the parcel with story prompts:
- Have you ever lost anything important?
- Have you ever found something you thought you had lost forever?
- Have you ever lost your way to somewhere?
- Have you ever felt lost in your life?
- Have you ever been to a welcome home party?

This seemed to work quite well apart from one person who doesn't talk really except one word answers and nodding the head. Another lady sat next to her eventually shared a story instead of her. Another man was full of stories and very keen to share his background of being lost in his life.



Luke 15:11-32

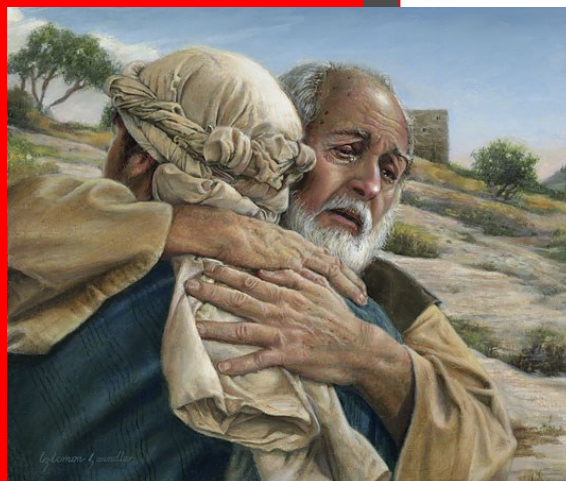
The Lost Son

¹¹ Jesus went on to say, “There was once a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to him, ‘Father, give me my share of the property now.’ So the man divided his property between his two sons. ¹³ After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. ¹⁴ He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing. ¹⁵ So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. ¹⁶ He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. ¹⁷ At last he came to his senses and said, ‘All my father’s hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father and say, “Father, I have sinned against God and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers.”’ ²⁰ So he got up and started back to his father.

“He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity, and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him.

²¹ ‘Father,’ the son said, ‘I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.’ ²² But the father called to his servants. ‘Hurry!’ he said. ‘Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. ²³ Then go and get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast! ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’ And so the feasting began.

²⁵ “In the meantime the older son was out in the field. On his way back, when he came close to the house, he heard the music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him, ‘What’s going on?’ ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come back home,’ the servant answered, ‘and your father has killed the prize calf, because he got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ The older brother was so angry that he would not go into the house; so his father came out and begged him to come in. ²⁹ But he spoke back to his father, ‘Look, all these years I have worked for you like a slave, and I have never disobeyed your orders. What have you given me? Not even a goat for me to have a feast with my friends! ³⁰ But this son of yours wasted all your property on prostitutes, and when he comes back home, you kill the prize calf for him!’ ³¹ ‘My son,’ the father answered, ‘you are always here with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’”



Releasing life changing skills and confidence

Questions for Discussion



- Can you see connections between our stories and the Bible story?
- How do you think God feels over people who are lost?
- Why is God waiting for us?
- Why does he want to forgive us and provide a fresh start?
- How does God feel when people return to Him?
- Why does He throw a party in Heaven when people come home to Him?



Creative reflections

Eat buns decorated earlier and drink tea/coffee.

Listen to Song: Amazing Grace modern version with 'My chains are gone'.

<http://www.metrolyrics.com/amazing-grace-my-chains-are-gone-lyrics-chris-tomlin.html>

Paper and colouring pencils available to use during song if desired.

Something to take home

Cards to take away - Keep calm God is waiting for you, God welcomes you, God has found me



Questions to think about

- How has knowing that God is waiting to welcome home the lost affected your life or somebody else's?
- How has hearing our stories helped you today?
- How has hearing the Bible story helped you today?



For further reflections and activities relating to this topic see 'Unlocking The Prodigal'

<http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/documents/UnlockingtheProdigalPopversion.pdf>



KEEP
CALM
GOD IS
WAITING FOR
YOU



KEEP
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GOD
WELCOMES
YOU



KEEP
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GOD HAS
FOUND ME



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KEEP
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GOD HAS
FOUND ME



KEEP CALM and Trust

Icebreaker:

Use some simple trust games.

There are some ideas here <https://www.wrike.com/blog/team-building-games/>

And here <http://www.simply-fun-games.com/indoor-teambuilding-games.html>



Unlocking Real Life Stories of Urban people

Look on the internet for definitions of Trust, or use these or other trust related pictures to generate a discussion

You might want to show this picture and share this story <http://thestations.org.uk/the-stations/trust/>



and/or show this video clip from Indian Jones and The Last Crusade <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFntFdEGgws>

- How easy or difficult do you find it to trust in yourself?
- Can you think of a time when you put your trust in someone else?
- Can you think of a time when you put your trust in a stranger?
- Can you think of a time when someone else has put their trust in you?
- Are there things that make you afraid to trust?
- Are there things that make you afraid to be trusted?



Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

..... Trust

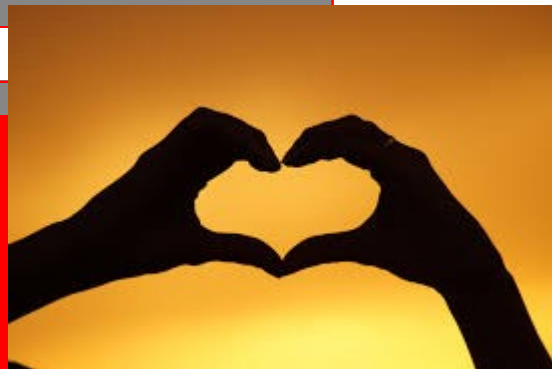
Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the LORD in everything you do, and he will show you the right way.

Luke 12: 22-29

²² Then Jesus said to the disciples, “And so I tell you not to worry about the food you need to stay alive or about the clothes you need for your body. ²³ Life is much more important than food, and the body much more important than clothes. ²⁴ Look at the crows: they don't plant seeds or gather a harvest; they don't have storage rooms or barns; God feeds them! You are worth so much more than birds! ²⁵ Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it? ²⁶ If you can't manage even such a small thing, why worry about the other things? ²⁷ Look how the wild flowers grow: they don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. ²⁸ It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today and gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? What little faith you have!

²⁹ “So don't be all upset, always concerned about what you will eat and drink. ³⁰ (For the pagans of this world are always concerned about all these things.) Your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹ Instead, be concerned with his Kingdom, and he will provide you with these things.



Psalm 130:5-6

I wait eagerly for the LORD's help, and in his word I trust.
I wait for the Lord more eagerly than sentries wait for the dawn



.....
Trust

Isaiah 40:31
But those who trust in the LORD for help will find their strength renewed.
They will rise on wings like eagles; they will run and not get weary;
they will walk and not grow weak.



Psalm 62: 8
Trust in God at all times, my people. Tell him all your troubles, for he is our refuge.

Psalm 31:14
But my **trust** is in you, O LORD; you are my **God**.



Listen to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eIQQayhpak>

Have coloured pens or pencils and paper available for anyone who wants to doodle or make pictures while they listen to the music and words.

Questions for discussion.

- **What might it mean to Trust in God?**
- **What are the Risks?**
- **What are the possibilities?**
- **How do you think it might be different to Trusting in people?**



Releasing life changing skills and confidence

Creative reflections

Build Trust Towers with lego bricks (or some other child's construction toy).

Make three towers; one to show how much you trust yourself; one to show how much you trust other people and one to show how much you trust God. If you like you can change the colour of the bricks and add a further level to each tower to show how much you would *like* to be able to trust each of these things.

Continuing reflective cycles

Something to take home

Cards to take away - Keep Calm and Trust (p26). On the back people can paste one of the shorter Bible extracts from page 24, or they can draw or write something to help them remember what they have been thinking about.

Questions to think about

- Is there anyone you would like to have more trust in?
- What would help that trust to grow?
- What can you do about it?





KEEP
CALM
AND
TRUST
GOD



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For Group Leaders

Resource name: *KEEP CALM and . . .*

Authors / Facilitators: Alison Adlum (Unlock Burnley 2014/2015)

Aims: To enable participants to engage with their own stories in relation to celebration, prayer, parties and trust. To create opportunities to explore how their own story connects with the bigger story within scripture. To be able to reflect on the impacts, both positive and negative, of our attitudes and actions. To enable participants to reflect theologically on situations in their lives and in society, and to make reflective and informed choices about how they respond to challenging experiences and circumstances.

Outcomes: The group will be more able to engage with each other, using a reflective theological cycle, starting from their own story or the stories of others in the group, or things that have affected them on a daily basis, without necessarily having to have to understand at an academic level. The group will be more able to refer to the connections made with Scripture, and intended changed approaches in similar situations in the future. The group will be able to reflect on their own experiences, and topical issues which affect them, and to do this in relation to scripture. The group will be better able to manage the points of crisis and tension in their lives with reference to scripture.

Session Content

Unlocking Real Life Experience

Media: the sharing of participants' own stories is facilitated starting from various images, stories and questions.

Own story: Within our own narratives and situations are threads that can be woven into scripture and understood, helping us recognise our connections with God's story. The contents of this resource were designed for a specific group of people with particular needs. Other groups will have different needs.



For Group Leaders

Planning and Content Details

Ice Breakers and opening questions: See individual sessions for suggestions or insert your own.

Revealing the Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

Bible: Passages used (examples):

Celebrate - Zephaniah 3:14-20

Pray - Psalm 92:1, John 8:1-12, Psalm 56:8, Acts 1:8 and more

Party - Luke 15:11-32

Trust - Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalm 31:14, Psalm 62:8, Psalm 130:5-6, Luke 12:22-29, Isaiah 40:31

The Bible passages suggested are a selection from which facilitators can choose. It is not necessary to use all of them and if the group's discussions go in a different direction you may need to choose others that are more appropriate.

Releasing Life Changing Skills and Confidence

By connecting God's story with our own, participants begin to encounter alternative responses to the issues and pressures they encounter in their day to day lives.

Reflective Activities

Creative activities to enable further reflection are offered as part of each session. Leaders are advised to review them in plenty of time to allow for the gathering of any necessary resources.

Throughout this material the red text in red outlined boxes indicates facilitator's notes, mostly made by Alison in the light of the experience of actually running these sessions.



Unlock, by various names, has been around since 1972, trying to help (mainly) urban Christians to understand and share their faith appropriately. Our life experience matters; our stories; our joys and sorrows. The Bible has plenty to say, more than we'll ever know, about our lives, if we know how to read it and apply it - if we know how to **UNLOCK** it!

The work outlined in this pack applies the learning cycle on page 31, **starting by using a 'prompt'** to draw out group member's stories. Allow plenty of time for people to respond to the prompts and share their own experiences and listen carefully as they do. What are the themes and issues arising in the stories? Try to remember so that you can remind people later if necessary.

The next stage is to **find part of the Bible** that comes to mind having listened to the stories. If you are using these sessions with a non-church group you will need to be ready to provide some Bible links, but only if they are unable to do so. It is always worth giving them a chance to come up with a Bible link for themselves first; they may surprise you! Then ask the group to explore **connections**, similarities or differences.

Finally there is a **reflective activity**, giving people an opportunity to reflect on the session and any action they might want to take as a result. The reflective activity creates space in which discussion and reflection can continue in an unforced way.

How well the group know and trust one another will affect the type of story that they share, often the newer the group, the more light hearted the stories are likely to be.



Unlock uses an approach to engaging with the Bible that is different to traditional Bible studies (see page 31). Unlock's approach starts from the stories and experiences of group members, whereas a more traditional approach starts from the Biblical text. Unlock's approach has been found to work well with small groups of urban, oral learners from outside of the church. There are many free resources on the Unlock website designed for use with such groups. However, because each of these resources was designed for a particular group in a particular time and place they are unlikely be a perfect fit for your group as they stand. They are offered more as inspiration to you to design your own materials along the same lines, rather than as ready to use packages.

Unlock usually works with people outside of church who may be interested in finding out a bit more about faith but perhaps are not attracted to the formal methods of learning often associated with church. Our work is based on a reflective learning cycle and is a tried and tested way of introducing people to the Bible in a non-threatening way. Many churches have activities that draw in members of their surrounding community but then struggle with how to move on from those relationships into exploring faith, especially in urban environments where anything formal might be treated with suspicion.

This resource has been developed by an Unlock worker in Burnley. The sessions were developed to meet the needs of specific groups of local people.

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The Unlock Learning Cycle

Unlocking real life stories of urban people

Start with the group telling stories from their real life experience.

Leading to more experience

What we learn now is learnt for life and changes us. We also learn to keep reflecting!

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

The real life stories are connected to and compared with similar situations in the Bible.

Releasing life changing skills and confidence

Change happens as a result of linking real life experience with the Bible. This change often leads to action among others.



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