

St Mary's Discipleship Leaflet

Listen & Discern

God

Blessed is the one who listens to me. Prov 8:34

Listen & Discern

We are pleased to offer you the Listen and Discern discipleship Leaflet. Hopefully you have been able to listen to the Discipleship talk that outlines the strategy that St Mary's would like to use to help us grow as disciples of Christ. If not this will be available online on our website. This discipleship strategy will focus on three areas to help us: Listen and Discern; Grow and Respond; and then initiate Change or Action. Over the next year we would like to get all members to use the resources to help them as they seek God's call on their life, and grow to be more Christlike.

This leaflet has been put together to help us begin the first part of this process, to enable us to listen and discern what God wants for our lives. This is an important part of the process, as without listening and discerning as individuals and as a church, we will not be able to find the path that God wants us to take. If you would like to know more about the Discipleship strategy or get some advice on how to use the resources in this pack, then please come to the first 'Discover' session (either an afternoon or evening) on the 21st February at St Mary's Church. Or speak to a member of the leadership team.

Rev. A. Walmsley

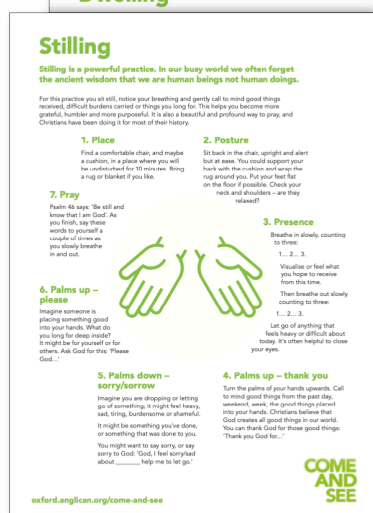
Contemplative Toolkit

One of the first tools that we could use is to take time to do what St Benedict calls, "Listen with the ear of your heart". This means that we need to do more than just spend 5 - 10 minutes in prayer, we need to set time aside to carry out some simple exercises so that we can be still, be aware of God's voice, and be aware of God's call on our lives. One tool that you could use is the Contemplative Toolkit provided by Oxford Diocese. This series of simple tasks will allow us to slow down and open ourselves up to God.

We have some copies in church by the discipleship noticeboard, or you could download the free resource from here:

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/everyday-faith/contemplative-toolkit/>

We will also put the link onto the discipleship website.



Time out



One of the difficult things about beginning this process is finding 'time' to take 'time out' to listen to God. It is all too easy to say that we don't have time to do this and so it never gets done. If that is how you feel then why not do a simple time analysis of your week. Use the resource on the discipleship website or take a sheet of the discipleship noticeboard in church to help map out your week and work out where you could take time.



Gifts for everyday faith

Once you have spent time listening to God it would be good to also pray about the gifts that you have and the gifts that God might be giving you to carry out that call. The following is a simple tool written by Oxford Diocese to help you identify where your gifts might be strong.

	Statement	Score 0-5
1	I enjoy explaining things to others	
2	I am a good listener	
3	I enjoy being with other people	
4	I dislike anyone being treated unfairly	
5	I am a practical person	
6	I like to express myself artistically	
7	I enjoy being quiet	
8	I am able to get people to see things in a new light	
9	I am sensitive to other people's pain	
10	I enjoy working for the good of the community	
11	I try to be just and to see that others are treated justly	
12	I am detail conscious	
13	I enjoy discovering how things work	
14	I like to spend time regularly just thinking about things	
15	I can communicate effectively in public	
16	I try to help people in need	
17	In groups, I am happy to take the lead	
18	I have to speak about injustice when I see it	
19	I am good at administration	
20	I like devising new and exciting ways of doing things	
21	Contemplation is important for me	

The answers you provide to the following statements will help you to think through where your gifts are strongest.

Give yourself a rating for each statement on a scale 0-5

0 does not apply to me.

1 seldom applies to me.

2 sometimes applies to me.

3 fairly often applies to me.

4 usually applies to me.

5 is exactly me

Then tot up your scores using the grid below to help you work out the column totals.

Copy your scores below against each statement. Then add up your scores for each of the columns A to G, and write each column total in the second table.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

	Gifts	Score
A	Teaching	
B	Caring	
C	Building Community	
D	Seeking Justice	
E	Making things work	
F	Creating	
G	Reflection	

The highest score indicates a strong gift.

This is just a simple tool to help you work out where your gifts might be strongest. As you work through listening and discerning you may find that God is calling you to an area that you are not gifted for, or you might only need to use part of your gifting.

Part of the process of discernment is also to find out the steps needed for putting God's call into practise. This may include finding out how to develop the new gifts God wants to give you.

Use the last page to help you record down what you have found out and think about your response.

How are you called to be more Christ-like?

After you have spent time listening, discerning and have carried out a skills / gifts check, then you need to begin to work out how you can move forward in your Journey of faith. As part of this discernment there are six questions that can help you reflect on this journey.

- C Core Gifts:** What are my gifts? Am I sharing my gifts in my everyday life and work?

- A Attracted by:** Where may God be calling me, in mission, service, prayer, community, care for the world, ministry, social action, evangelism?

- L Listening:** Where am I being guided to gain experience or insights? Where is the Bible inspiring and leading me?

- L Life plan:** What is happening in my life now? What would I be doing if I could invent my ideal future?

- E Experience:** What energises me from my current and past experience? Where am I challenged and what am I challenged by? How can I use this in God's service?

- D Discipleship:** How am I deepening my daily spiritual life and faith? How can I become more Christ-like?

Now turn to the back page where you can begin to plan and work out your next steps.



The tools on these two pages can also be found online on the CofE's Everyday Faith portal. It's free to sign up, and then look for 'Everyday Faith, gifts and goals'. The website also has other resources that might help you in this process.

<https://everydayfaith.churchofengland.org/>

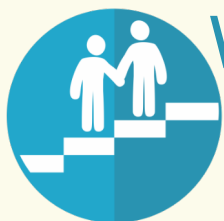


One other resource similar to this is the online tool from "Making Disciples". This tool can also help you work out where your gifts might be strong or weak. You can find this here: <https://www.wearemakingdisciples.com/>

Your Personal Discipleship Plan

Complete the table below to begin to work out what steps you might take to grow. Think carefully about the key focus areas, then the steps and support you will need to help develop those areas. It is also good to be able to think of timescales as this will give you a target from which to work.

Area of Focus	What are my development steps? Who can support, guide or inspire me?	When?



Who can help?

It is also important to think about who could help you work through the next steps, and who might be able to pray and talk this through with you: a friend, family member, Life Group leader. If you are not sure please ask in Church and we will help find someone who can support you.