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Living Christianity Course

Living Christianity - Inclusive Church's course for new and established Christians

Living Christianity is a five part programme (ideal for a course during Lent) that takes the shape of the Eucharist (Communion Service) to introduce the Christian faith in the Inclusive tradition. "Living Christianity is a course to nurture new Christians, to refresh old ones and to catch up with people asking questions about the Christian faith.

Available as a book or digital download from [Lulu.com](https://www.lulu.com)[1].

Here's an extract from Session 2 - "Listening" - leaders' notes:

LET US PRAY

"In the name of God, Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit, Amen?"

THE EUCHARIST

The words for today are about our own story and are in the Prayer of Confession (look) "Forgive us all that is past?"

ICE BREAKER

Go around the room asking each person their name and to say something about their name which they know but we do not and which they would like us to know (if this is sticky for anyone and they have nothing to say just ask them simply if they like their name - that should do it!)

LISTENING

Often in life it seems that the person who shouts the loudest gets their way. In today's fast moving world of short attention spans and sound bites we hear much but may understand less in any real depth. Often people do not feel listened to and understood. Learning to listen is an art, the ability to listen a gift, which is why we sometimes slow down in this group to listen to each other, saying silly things like what we were doing today at 10.00am or more serious things like how we experience God.

EXERCISE

Choose a person to work with, try to choose someone different from the person last week

1. Talk to that person for five minutes about a time when you felt someone listened to you well in your life. Describe the person and how you knew they were listening.
2. Swap so that the other person has five minutes too!
3. Back in the whole group describe those people who were good listeners.
4. Make two lists: a) What effect does it have on us to be listened to? b) What effect does it have on us to go unheard?
5. What about listening to God and being heard by God? Discuss in the group any difficulties or differences there may be in the experience of listening to God or being heard by God. What signs may there be for us that we are listening to God? What signs may there be that God is hearing us?

(This may take a long time - let it develop so that people feel able to speak about obvious difficulties with this as well as pleasures)

THE BIBLE: 1 KINGS 19.4-16

Having experienced what it is like to be listened to we are going to look in the Bible at two passages which describe what it might be like to have God listen to us!

What do you notice here? Do you have any questions?

PROMPT TO ASK:

- Where does God engage with Elijah (all sorts of answers of course including in the depths of Elijah's utter despair)
- What does God sound like (notice he "speaks" more than once in this passage)
- What effects do speaking to God and listening to God have in Elijah's life? (it is actually life saving - do we expect God to be life saving for us?) ...

(the session continues with a further reflection on Matthew's Gospel, an extract from *Space for Grace* by Giles Goddard [2] and final prayers)

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[3]

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Links

[1] <http://www.lulu.com/inclusivechurch>

[2] <https://canterburypress.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9781853119163/space-for-grace>

[3] <http://twitter.com/share>