

Theme & Passage(s)	ENCOUNTER - Jesus and Nicodemus John 3: 1-21
Intro	We are looking at the meeting between Jesus and Nicodemus as part of the "Encounter" series. One of the purposes of the "Encounter" series is to encourage people to have an encounter with Christ in a way that strengthens and deepens their relationship with Him. The focus of this "encounter" is about strengthening and deepening our relationship as spirit-filled people so that we can fulfil the purpose that God has for our lives. That purpose is lived out in the places we find ourselves. God wants our lives, in the places we find ourselves, to point others towards God. We need the life transforming power of the Holy Spirit to do this.
Welcome	Ask people in the group to share a positive memory from the past which still impacts them today. It could be a childhood experience that has inspired them and shaped who they are today, for instance the teacher who encouraged them to become an engineer, or the family member who said they have a great singing voice, which inspired you to become a performer.
Worship	Give everyone in the group a copy of the words from the Apostles Creed - see below. Ask each member of the group to read one line in turn, and then say the prayer together, with a collective amen at the end. Play "I Believe" by Hillsong https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7AQeYL9c74 Encourage people to follow the words on the screen and sing if they feel comfortable doing so. As the song is being sung ask people to reflect on the truth of the words and then respond with personal prayers prayed allowed.
Word/ Read & Reflect	Read the passage - John 3 v 1-21 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was God's purpose in sending Jesus into the world? Is it our personal salvation? Or is it something else? 2. Read v 21 of the passage. What are the implications of this verse for how we live our lives? 3. Jesus talks about being "being born of water and the Spirit". What does he mean? 4. The preacher talked about the "continuous present" of the Holy Spirit. How does this relate to our understanding of "being born of the Spirit"? 5. Our memory verse for the year is John 4 v 35. Why is this verse relevant when thinking about the purpose that God has for our lives which is explained in John 3 v 21?
Working it out	Break into smaller groups, ideally of three people in a group. As each person in turn to talk about a "field" they find themselves in. It could be the field of their home, their family, their workplace, their community, or a thematic field like education, health, etc. Ask each person to share what they are facing, particularly any challenges that they are having in pointing people in that field towards God. Once each person has shared spend time together praying for one another, asking for the Holy Spirit to come so that each person is empowered to point people towards God in the midst of those challenges.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.