

Week 2: Loving

Icebreaker

Ask the group to think of someone who has come alongside them at some point during their life. Invite group members to share something encouraging about that person, and how they were supported and encouraged by them.

Watch

Watch the introductory video together and consider the following concepts:

1. Caring doesn't come naturally
2. We're insensitive to others
3. Layer-to-layer fellowship
4. The 'front door, back door' syndrome
5. The environment of unconditional acceptance

Memory verse

Read the week's verse (1 Cor. 12:25) aloud as a group and then ask group members to share what it means to them.

Discuss

1. Discuss what aspects of the Sunday message ('Love Comes Alongside') struck you the most and why. (You could refer back to your notes in the *Daily Guide*.)
2. In the sermon, a distinction was made between problems and needs. Discuss the difference between the two and the different types of needs.
3. Is there anything more that you feel could be done in your church to create more opportunity for coming alongside? Consider ways of how this might be achieved.
4. From Hebrews 10:24—25, talk through the idea of a Paraclesis Community, especially the concept of '*paraclesis ethos*' and the distinction between vision, projects and culture.
5. Following from the discussion on Hebrews 10:24—25, what do you think of the statement in the *Daily Guide* this week (Week 2: Tuesday): '*Many churches suffer from the 'front door, back door' syndrome. They are so busy concentrating their efforts on getting new people through the front door that they fail to recognise the*

current members of the congregation who are rapidly slipping through the back door.'

6. Explore the idea of 'cannibal Christians' (Week 2: Wednesday) and how this might evidence itself. Read Galatians 5:15.
7. What do you think of the view that the primary mission of the Church is to reach out to people who are not yet Christians? Is it important to first establish a culture of care in our churches, before reaching out to the community? See 1 John 4:7—16, MSG.
8. Discuss the uncaring disciples and the feeding of the 5,000. The heart of a '*paraclesis ethos*' is compassion; what are your thoughts on this and the concept of 'compassion deficit disorder'?

Do:

This week, the **Tips for journeying together** in the *Daily Guide* have been focused on the idea of coming alongside and the skills needed to develop our sensitivity. Share together how you have been getting on with the tips this week and which ones have been most useful.

Next as a whole group or in pairs, discuss any entries made in your **Daily Journal** that you think will be helpful to others and reflect on them together. How has your **Journeying Together Action Plan** with both people in your church family and in your local communities progressed this week? Has anyone received any responses to their wristband?

If your group has a **Kindness Box**, ask members to share whether they achieved their act of kindness in the last week and encourage everyone to take another kindness card for the week ahead.