



<b>Theme &amp; Passage</b>	<b>Faith, hope and imagination</b> <b>Isaiah 35</b>
<b>Welcome</b>	Share with the group the most surprising transformation you have witnessed. Examples of the serious, absurd and extraordinary are all welcome!
<b>Worship</b>	<p>On post-its or pieces of paper each write down recent answers to prayer or examples of ways in which you are seeing God's kingdom coming in the world where you live, work or play. Take turns to read them out loud. Spend time in thanksgiving and praise to God for the ways in which he is at work in the world. Read Ephesians 3:20-21 and thank God for the 'more' he desires to do.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Try using this 15 minute audio Imaginative Contemplation - Jesus &amp; The Healing Of Bartimaeus by Pray as you go (other meditations are also available online) <a href="https://soundcloud.com/pray-as-you-go/imaginative-contemplation-jesus-the-healing-of-bartimaeus">https://soundcloud.com/pray-as-you-go/imaginative-contemplation-jesus-the-healing-of-bartimaeus</a></p>
<b>Word/ Read &amp; Reflect</b>	<p>Read through Isaiah 35 a couple of times and then share together from your present thoughts or memories from Sunday's preaching.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How are the themes of faith, hope and imagination at play in this chapter?</li><li>2. The prophesy of Isaiah 35 is a complete reversal of the Israelites' current circumstance. Caroline referred to a distinction between general optimism and Christian hope, which is trust that God will do what he has promised. One of the ways in which we embody this hope is by allowing ourselves to have an alternative perception of reality, choosing to see things from a heavenly perspective rather than an earthly one. Do you have any experience of facing a situation or set of circumstances that give you one set of 'facts', but choosing to put your hope in an alternative reality (God's reality)? You may want to refer to Romans 4:18-24 as an illustration of this.</li><li>3. Isaiah 35:3-4 refer to those who are feeling weak, frail or fearful as a result of their circumstances. Is this your current experience? Or perhaps God is wanting to use you to encourage those who are feeling this way?</li></ol> <p>Pray for those who are feeling fearful and for those who are feeling called to bring encouragement and to speak hope to others. You may want to speak the words from verse 4 over one another: <i>"Be strong, do not fear; your God will come...he will come to save you"</i>.</p>
<b>Working it out</b>	Spend time either as a group or as individuals imagining what 'all things reconciled' looks like in your community or on your street or in your workplace. You may want to refer to the example from Oasis Hub Waterloo (on the next page) or to Revelation chapter 21. Invite the Holy Spirit to stir your imagination. We would love to see and share some examples of these so do feel free to share them with the Ministry Team!

## Oasis Church Waterloo 2020 Vision

It was 8 o'clock on Monday morning.

I was standing by Lambeth North station.

And I saw a new London coming down from the heavens.

I saw a teenager leaping out of bed with joy, laughing with the freshness of the morning.

I saw elderly ladies skipping down Kennington Road.

I saw children paddling in the River Thames.

I saw a football match in Kennington Park and the teams were mixed people from every people group: asylum seekers and taxi drivers, policemen and prisoners, pensioners and politicians.

People from every race and class playing and laughing in the sun.

I saw a street party where the people were eating and dancing because there was hope again.

And I looked across the community of South London; a community of hope, a community of grace, a community of warmth.

And, in the clearness of the morning, I looked down into the Elephant & Castle and there was no more asthma.

No more unwanted pregnancies,

No more debt, no more violence,

No more overcrowding and nobody was too busy.

The River Thames was flowing with crystal-clear water.

There were no more needles and condoms in the park.

No more sorrow of family breakdown. No more poverty. No more need. No more unemployment or mind-numbing jobs. No more hopelessness.

No more sadness and tears, only joy and laughter.

No more discrimination.

No more drunken clubbing.

No threats, no fears.

The dividing walls were gone.

Families and neighbours were restored.

There was no more rubbish, no dealers, no guns, no knives, no dangerous dogs.

There were no racial tensions, just one harmonious mix in technicolour.

And I looked and I saw kids playing football in the streets, and neighbours cheering them on.

I saw homes without locks on the doors, where a welcome was always guaranteed.

I saw a playground with climbing frames that weren't rusty, where children threw themselves in the air without fear of harm, where the teenagers helped the little ones up to the highest climbs.

I saw a London where neighbours shared favours and returned them without pressure or obligation.

I saw a London where hearts were unbroken, partnerships are lasting, peaceful and happy.

I saw a London where families eat and play together.

I saw a London where tears were wiped away.