

Coming to our senses



Exploring faith through
sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste

Group Members' Leaflet

There will be more material in the course than is indicated in this leaflet, but you may like to look up the Bible passages for each session and think about the questions in advance.

Lent 2018
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St Peter and St Paul, Seal

SESSION ONE INTRODUCTION

- What does the word “Sense” mean to you?
- Are some of your senses more acute than others? Are any of your senses impaired in some way?

Read: Genesis 2. 4b-7

- What does this story tell us about humanity?
- If you were Adam, waking up for the first time in the world, what would your first experiences of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste be?

SIGHT

- What have you seen recently that has made you particularly joyful or sad?
- Can you think of images which have stuck in your mind, perhaps those that get described as “iconic”.
- What makes an image iconic? Why are some images so unforgettable?

BIBLE BASE

Read : 2 Kings 6.8-23

- Who sees (or fails to see) what in this story?
 - Are there times when you have failed to see something, either literally or spiritually, which turned out to be important?
 - What makes it easier or harder for us to see the things which matter in our lives?
 - What might someone who is visually impaired say about this story?
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SESSION TWO HEARING

- What have you heard today?
- What sounds do you remember from your childhood?
- Are there sounds from the past which you wish you could hear again?
- How would life have been different before it was possible to record sounds?

BIBLE BASE

Read:

Ezekiel 37.1-14

Genesis 3. 8-10

Mark 10:46-52

John 10.2-5

Mark 7.32-37

- What might we learn about listening from these Bible stories?
 - What does it feel like really to be listened to?
 - Can you remember a time when you have been listened to, or not listened to? What difference did it make to you?
 - What gets in the way of us hearing God?
 - What part does silence play in your life?
 - What experience do you have of deafness – in yourself and/or in others? What difficulties might deafness cause beyond the obvious physical difficulties?
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SESSION THREE

SMELL

- How many words can you think of which refer to smell?
- Dogs navigate by smell. Are there places you could identify by scent alone ?
- Are there smells which take you back to a particular place or time in your life?
- What is the effect on us of losing our sense of smell? How might it make life difficult?

BIBLE BASE

John 11.1 & 12.1-7

Genesis 8.20-22

Exodus 30.22-38

Song of Songs 2.10-13

2 Cor. 2.14-16

- What do these readings tell us about the importance of smell?
 - What does smell tell us about ourselves and the world/people around us?
 - How do we use scent in the church/ in prayer and reflection?
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SESSION FOUR

TOUCH

- How are touch (and taste) different from sight, hearing and smell?
- Did you (or your children if you have them) have a comfort blanket or teddy when you/they were little? Why do you think such objects matter so much?
- Do you have anything in your home which you particularly like because of its texture?
- Have you ever experienced an illness or condition where it was painful to be touched, or where you couldn't feel sensation at all? What was that like?

BIBLE BASE

Mark 5.21-43

Mark 10. 13-16

Leviticus 5.2-3

2 Samuel 6.1-11

Mark 15. 15-20

John 20.11-18

- What did the people who wrote these passages want to tell us about their beliefs about touch?
 - How do these passages resonate with us today? Do we agree/disagree with them? What do we believe about touch today?
 - What would life be like if we were never able to touch and be touched, or if our nerve endings had been damaged, for example by a disease like Diabetes or Leprosy.
 - What is it like to live with chronic pain? What might help people to cope with this?
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SESSION FIVE TASTE

- What makes this sense different from those which have gone before?
- Marmite – love it or hate it? Why?
- What are your comfort foods?
- Have you ever tasted something really vile?
- Why does taste matter? Why do we need to be able to taste?

BIBLE BASE

Matthew 5.13

Luke 14. 12-24

Acts 10.1-23

1 Corinthians 8

Numbers 11.4-15

Matthew 26.20-30

- What do these readings tell us about the importance of taste, and the God who gives us food to us?
- Food nearly always means more to us than simple nourishment - what extra meanings do the food in these readings have?
- Food seems to be a widespread cause of anxiety and problems to people – eating disorders, obesity, food fads etc. What do you think these readings might have to say to us about our attitudes to food?