



Small Group Outline

These suggestions are designed to be used with a pack of All We Can's Lent postcards, available to download from allwecan.org.uk/lent2024

These sessions will work best if people have had a chance to read that week's postcard ahead of the session, but will still work without prior reading.

Week 1 – Pray

Opening activity/prayer

As a group, try to think of as many ways of praying as you can in 5 minutes. You might want to write these down as you go.

Bible passage

Read Ephesians 6:18 – 'And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.'

Read story

Read Jeremiah's story. One person could read it aloud, or each person can read it themselves.

Questions to discuss

Paul encourages us to pray 'all kinds of prayers.' Do we tend to pray only in certain ways, and about certain things? Refer back to your list and see if there are any that are underused.

It is surely impossible for each of us to *always* pray for *all* the Lord's people, so how do we best do so as a church body?

Do you think some people are especially called to a ministry of prayer?

How might we best support the work of All We Can (and other charities/causes we care about) in prayer?

Discuss some of the ideas and suggestions included in the Lent postcard about prayer. How might these apply to some of the people in the group? Are there other people you can think of in your church or community who might benefit from finding out about this week's focus?



Week 2 – Commit

Opening activity/prayer

Play a 'spectrum' game. Ask the question 'how easy do you find it to commit to things?' and ask people to go to one side of the room if they find it really easy, the opposite side if they find it really hard, or somewhere in the middle. Have a discussion about why people responded the way they did. If you want to do a couple more rounds you could ask the following questions:

'how committed are you to...'

- Your church denomination.
- The brand of the phone you use.

Bible passage

Read Galatians 6:9: 'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.'

Read story

Read Cynthia's story. One person could read it aloud, or each person can read it themselves.

Questions to discuss

What does charitable giving look like at your church, and for you as individuals? Is it committed, or sporadic?

Do you recognise the 'weariness' in the passage? Does that make us prone to jumping around from initiative to initiative rather than committing to what we can sustain?

How might Cynthia's story have been different if she had only been supported by a one-off project, rather than long-term support?

Discuss some of the ideas and suggestions included in the Lent postcard about regular giving. How might these apply to some of the people in the group? Are there other people you can think of in your church or community who might benefit from finding out about this week's focus?



Week 3 – Fundraise

Opening activity/prayer

Use the following short quiz about the challenges charities are facing. Ask people for guesses, whoever gets closest wins a point!

1. What percentage of people fundraised for a charity in 2022? Answer – 7%
2. What percentage of people reduced or cancelled a regular donation to charity in 2022? Answer – 13%
3. By how much has the average donation in the UK reduced in value due to inflation since 2020? Answer - £3.55. The median donation size in the UK, which hasn't changed for many years, is £20, but this now doesn't go as far due to inflation.

Bible passage

Read Luke 8:1-3 – 'After this, Jesus travelled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.'

Read story

Read Lisa's story. One person could read it aloud, or each person can read it themselves.

Questions to discuss

What was the best fundraiser you've ever given to or taken part in? What made it good?

Does your church have a history of fundraising? Why/why not?

Does fundraising feel like a natural part of the mission of the church? How might the passage speak into that?

Discuss some of the ideas and suggestions included in the Lent postcard about fundraising. How might these apply to some of the people in the group? Are there other people you can think of in your church or community who might benefit from finding out about this week's focus?



Week 4 – Champion

Opening activity/prayer

Read this definition aloud: Champion, *verb*: to support, defend, or fight for a person, belief, right, or principle enthusiastically.

Invite the group to share: What are the things that you 'champion' in your life? I.e. your family, your football team, your friends, your faith...see how many you can name between you.

Pray this short prayer:

God of all grace, we come to you, grateful for all that we have received. Thank you for giving us the strength to champion, support and defend each other and those we care about. As we learn more about each other and about you today, and about what you are calling us to do, help us to learn more about you and your call on each of our lives. May we learn to walk humbly with you, each and every day, Amen.

Bible passage

Read Micah 6:8: He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Read story

Read Daniel's story. One person could read it aloud, or each person can read it themselves.

Questions to discuss

To what extent are you a 'control freak' or are you more relaxed about letting go of control? (You could get people to show on a scale of 1-10 where they think they sit on this spectrum and have a conversation about the various merits or issues with where they stand).

What do you think it means to 'walk humbly with your God'? What does humility look like for you in the journey of discipleship? Who do you think models this 'humble walking'?

How do you spend your 'free time'? What are your favourite hobbies and activities beyond what you 'have' to do because of a particular role you play (whether that's paid employment, in a church capacity, or in a familial or caring context)? Do these hobbies help to make the world a better place? Do they heal and energise you and others?

Discuss some of the ideas and suggestions included in the Lent postcard about being an All We Champion. How might these apply to some of the people in the group? Are there other people you can think of in your church or community who might benefit from finding out about this week's focus?



Week 5 – Pledge

Opening activity/prayer

You might like to pray this prayer together, inviting people to join in with the response.

Everlasting God,

Thank you that our short time on Earth is only a tiny part of your overarching act of redemption.

Teach me, O Lord, **what is mine to do.**

We praise you that you still choose to meaningfully involve and include us in your mission – giving us freedom to discern your will, not passively receive it.

Teach me, O Lord, **what is mine to do.**

We thank you, Lord, that our part in your redemption story is not limited to the time we are alive. Help us to consider the many ways we can leave a legacy that serves your Kingdom.

Teach me, O Lord, **what is mine to do.**

We are sorry, Lord, when we are afflicted by short-term thinking, when we think only of the problems immediately in front of us, not recognising your big plan for the future.

Help us pledge to serve you now and in the future.

Teach me, O Lord, **what is mine to do.**

As you have pledged your unfailing love to us, we pledge ourselves today and everyday to you.

Teach me, O Lord, **what is mine to do. Amen.**

Bible passage

Read Acts 20:35, where Paul is speaking to the leaders of the church in Ephesus:

“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Read story

Find out more about All We Can’s partner Rural Human Rights Activists Programme (RHRAP) by reading the story on the postcard. One person could read it aloud, or each person can read it themselves.

Questions to discuss

Have you had a conversation with your next-of-kin about your Will, about what you might like to do with your earthly resources? It’s not always an easy thing to talk about but if you feel like there is enough trust in the group you are with, you might like to share



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What is mine to do?



some of these plans with each other. Make sure not to force anyone to share anything they are uncomfortable saying in this context.

Paul's reminder to the church leaders is about the importance of giving, and supporting those most in need. Is this something that is a part of your church culture, do you think? Have people in the group got a story to share about a time when they have experienced that it is 'more blessed to give than to receive'?

What are your dreams for the future? For yourself, and for future generations?

Discuss some of the ideas and suggestions included in the Lent postcard about making a legacy pledge to All We Can. How might these apply to some of the people in the group? Are there other people you can think of in your church or community who might benefit from finding out about this week's focus?



Week 6 – Nothing

Opening activity/prayer

Invite the group to share in a group time of stillness and meditation. If this is something people have not done before, you may want to guide them using some of the words and prompts below. If the group is familiar with the rhythms of silent prayer, you may simply wish to set a timer for 5 or 10 minutes and allow the silence to do its work.

Let us be still.

- Find yourself a comfortable position and let your hands rest open on your lap.
- Resist the temptation to fidget, and tune yourself in to the rhythms of your breathing – in and out.
- Allow yourself to quieten your mind. Do not try to do anything, or intend anything, or perform anything. Simply be still. Don't worry if you do have a distracting thought – let it come, notice it, put it down again – there will be time enough for thoughts and actions.
- In the stillness, notice the little sounds of the space we are in. Notice the emptiness. Notice the quiet.
- Come amongst us, God of the still small voice we pray.

Bible passage

Read Exodus 20:8: Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God.

Read story

Read Jeremiah's story from SHIFSD in Liberia. One person could read it aloud, or each person can read it themselves.

Questions to discuss

Do you practice any 'sabbath' rhythms in your day, week or month? How do you find pockets of rest and recuperation?

Why do you think God introduced the concept of Sabbath to the Old Testament people? What does that concept look like for us, today? Is it still relevant? How do we make use of this ancient tradition in our own journey of discipleship?

What is it that you might be invited to 'put down'?

Do you find it easy, or difficult, to say 'no', to let go, to step down?

Discuss some of the ideas and suggestions included in the Lent postcard about stopping and letting go of 'actions'. How might these apply to some of the people in the group? Are there other people you can think of in your church or community who might benefit from finding out about this week's focus?