



# Telling the Story

- A WORKBOOK IN PERSONAL  
EVANGELISM

by

The Rev. Duncan Johnston

2006

## Introduction

This workbook comes as a gift from the Evangelism and Church Growth Commission. We believe it is a timely contribution to the Episcopal Church in Western Michigan and we hope it will be widely used in parishes.

It is designed to be a light but thought-provoking collection of six studies in the subject of evangelism. It seeks to help church members understand the need to share their faith and to give them tools for this task. It does so by using the notion of the Christian Gospel as 'story'. The story is two-fold - the Great Story of God's reconciling the world to himself throughout the life, death and resurrection of Christ, and the personal story of how this has made a difference to the individual Christian. This is a helpful model, as it encourages all Christians to feel they have something to offer in evangelism which is unique to them.

Readers are helped to ground what they have learned by exploring a series of practical questions and tasks at the end of each study.

The studies are designed to be undertaken by individuals, with the exception of no. 6. However, they can easily be adapted to a group setting. Some parishes may wish to encourage individual members to complete the studies and then hold group meetings each week for members to discuss how they got on. All of this publication is photocopyable without the need for permission.

## Contents

### 1 **Evangelism**

- De-bunking and defining the word
- The need
- The importance of the individual Christian

### 2 **It's all about relationships**

- Research findings
- Finding a contact person
- Praying for friends and family

### 3 **Their story**

- What non-Christians believe
- Obstacles to accepting Christ
- It's about their agenda, not ours

### 4 **His story**

- The content of the Christian faith
- What aspects of our faith should we seek to share?
- How can we articulate this helpfully?

### 5 **My story**

- My journey of faith
- Particular people, events and times which helped me in my faith
- Keeping it fresh

### 6 **Do's and don'ts**

- Some general practical advice
- A model of Episcopal faith-sharing (Bible study of Luke 24:13-49)

## STUDY 1

## EVANGELISM? ME? YOU MUST BE JOKING!

### ***Fire the PR department!***

'Evangelism isn't something I'd do to my dog, let alone my friends'.

Sound familiar? Let's face it. When it comes to the 'E' word there are a million other Christian activities I'd rather be doing. Like cutting the church lawn - with nail scissors, or polishing the floor of the church hall - with my tongue.

The word has such an image problem. A rector in Western Michigan Diocese asked members of his congregation what came to mind when they heard the word 'evangelism'. The responses didn't make pretty reading. 'Annoying', 'self-serving', 'closed-minded', 'over the top', 'having all the right answers', and 'fake' were some of the printable ones. And these were Christians! How, then, would non-churchgoers respond if they were asked the question?

For many Christians the word can carry with it deeply uncomfortable images of knocking of strangers' doors, looking to engage the residents in a manipulative conversation about God. Alternatively the thick-skinned street-preacher or the white-suited TV pastor scurry across our imaginations. None of these pictures inspire understated, Prayer-Book reading Episcopalians to throw off our religious reserve and engage in evangelism.

### ***And now ... the Good News***

However, when we strip away those images and understand the true meaning of the word things seem less threatening. Evangelism is literally 'Good News'. When the early Christians in the New Testament spread the message of Jesus they were Good News-ing. The word does **not** carry connotations of public preaching or of harassing strangers. Whenever ordinary Christians mention something to someone about their faith which is Good News they are, literally, doing evangelism. The merest faltering sentence which draws attention to God, Christ or faith, however small, is a wonderful thing.

***So, evangelism can be defined as, 'A Christian sharing their faith with someone who is not yet a Christian'.***

### ***Yes, but ...***

Most of us are not called to stand on street corners and preach or to go knocking doors. (Phew!) All Christian people, however, have a crucial role to play in passing on the Good News of Christ when the opportunity arises. We're not all **evangelists**, but we are all **witnesses** - ordinary folk who have a story to tell about the God who has touched our lives in some way.

Some Christians may protest, 'I can't talk about my faith, but I try to show God's love by the way I live'. That is fantastic. St Francis once said, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel; and use words if necessary.' But the time comes for all Christians when it **is** necessary to use words. Unless a Christian is able to say **why** they are honest, humble, hopeful and loving then their life of witness is only half complete.

Similarly, someone may respond, 'but I don't know enough about God to talk about my faith. What if someone asks me why God allows suffering - I wouldn't know how to answer!' Again,

we're not all called to be members of the clergy or theologians. We're witnesses. That means simply saying what we've experienced of God. Some people may be able to hold deep and convincing conversations about the finer details of theology, but that is not necessary for the rest of us humble believers. In this booklet we'll see how each and every Christian has a valuable and effective tool to use in sharing their faith - their own personal story.

### ***Crisis? What crisis?***

In the Episcopal Church we are familiar with bleak assessments of our Church and gloomy predictions of the future. 87% of Episcopal Churches are not growing. Worries about money, concerns over schisms, and declining congregations can get us down. There is one piece of bad news which we must own up to, however. If the decline in membership and attendance of our Church continues we will be in serious trouble. It's easy to avoid this fact. Clergy and lay people alike can become absorbed with other very legitimate needs with the result that the work of faith-sharing goes largely undone. We can all become exhausted merely ministering to one another that we can forget there is a world out there, for which the Church exists. We regularly remind ourselves that Jesus commands his followers to be fisherfolk. Yet often we kid ourselves that merely putting a bucket on the beach and waiting for the fish to jump in will produce a catch.

Someone once said, 'the Church is only one generation away from dying'. Scary, but true. Sadly, we can't leave this to the clergy. Each ordinary Christian goes to places where their clergy will never go. Each of us knows many people who are unknown to our priest. Face it - if our Churches are to grow and flourish it's up to you and me.

### ***To ponder***

- 1      What does the word 'evangelism' make you think or feel?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2      What would you say to a Christian friend who tells you that faith is a private matter and should not be shared with others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3      Evangelism means Good News, but sometimes the way it is done is Bad News. Have you ever seen any bad examples of faith-sharing? How would you help that person improve their technique?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4      We all encounter hundreds of advertisements each day on billboards, in magazines, on TV and on radio. They are designed to get us to buy things. How is evangelism different from trying to sell a product?

## STUDY 2

## THE 'R' FACTOR

### ***Non-one is an island***

In Study 1 we mentioned some common and unhelpful images of evangelism - the street preacher, the TV pastor and the door-to-door visitor. These kinds of evangelism have something in common. There is no relationship between the evangelist and the hearer. They are conducted by committed and well-meaning Christians, yet they are very limited in their fruit. This is maybe because the evangelist and the hearer are strangers to each other.

Studies have shown that the most fruitful faith-sharing is done between people who have a good relationship - usually a friend or family member. Most Christians find it especially hard to share their faith with a member of their family or a close friend, but this appears to be most effective context for evangelism.

### ***The American non-churchgoer***

A recent study\* of people who do not go to church showed that the most effective method of encouraging them to attend worship would be a personal invitation by a friend, neighbor or pastor. In fact 63% of people said they would be more likely to attend church if they were invited by a friend, while only 4% said they would be **less** likely to attend. Only 9% of those surveyed said that seeing an ad in the newspaper or yellow pages would make them more likely to attend church than now. Amazingly, 16% said they would be **less** likely to attend after seeing an ad in the paper!

### ***Across the pond***

Research in the UK shows similar pattern #. Interviews were conducted with over 500 adults who had been baptized or confirmed in the previous year to see what the most important factors were in their finding faith. Amongst women 24% said a Christian friend, 17% their minister and 13% their children. 100% of women said that at least one of these factors was important in their decision to follow Christ. Of men, 23% said their wives had been the most important factor, 16% their ministers and 15% a friend. 97% said that at least one of these factors had been important. Interestingly, only 4% of people said that organized evangelistic events had been the most important factor in their finding faith, and only 11% said they were at all important.

In other words - ***relationship with Christians is the most important factor in people starting to attend church and eventually coming to faith.***

That is good news for all of us. We all have relationships and so we can all be fruitful witnesses to friends and family members.

### ***The Church - kindergarten for all of us***

When it comes to helping people in their journey towards faith there is one valuable resource we should mention. The good old parish church. Yes, it has its frustrations. Yes, it drives you crazy sometimes. Yes, it is too quick to talk and too slow to act a lot of the time. Yes, it

\* George Barna, 'Grow your Church from the outside', 2002, Regal Books.

# John Finney, 'Finding Faith Today', 1992.

occasionally looks like anything but the Body of Christ. However, it is an obvious fact that people do not usually become Christians in a social vacuum. Indeed, the vast majority of people who come to faith do so after attending church regularly for a period of time. Together with friends they can learn, grow, ask questions, observe and participate in the life and worship of the church. All the time their faith is growing and their hearts are nearing the point at which they are ready to make a decision to become a Jesus' disciple with accompanying baptism, confirmation or other public rite.

### ***Exercise***

Praying for friends and family members to come to faith is a good way of helping them on their journey towards Christ. This exercise helps to us to pray for one or two people.

- List below people you know well
- Now underline those who are already Christians
- From the remainder choose one or two.
- Pray for them every day - in particular that you will have opportunities to help them on their spiritual journey.
- When you spend time with them listen closely so you can know what to pray for them.
- Think about whether there are any practical ways in which you can help them.
- Invite them to church.

## STUDY 3

## THEIR STORY

### ***You have two ears and one mouth***

If we are going to be helpful and relevant witnesses we need to listen to those who are journeying towards the Christian faith. We can be so keen to speak that when we do so we can be thinking only of our own performance. Or we can be so nervous and self-conscious that we lose sight completely of the person we are engaging with. We need to remember that sharing our faith is not something we do for **our** sakes, but for other people's. They are real people who have pasts, presents and futures, complex emotions and personalities. We are privileged to share something precious with them at this moment. We must always act with total respect for the other person. They are on a journey, even if they have not come to a fully Christian faith yet. We are also on journeys and need help in learning about and experiencing more of God. We must engage with people humbly and with an awareness that the other person might lead us deeper into our relationship with Christ. It is a two-way street.

### ***Browsing the supermarket of beliefs***

Everyone believes something. Even the atheist **believes** that there is no God. In fact, everyone has a large shopping cart full of assumptions and theories about life, spirituality and the universe around us. Some of the items in a person's cart might be inconsistent and even illogical, for example a recent poll found that more people believe that Jesus is the Son of God than believe in the existence of God! Nonetheless we can make no assumptions about the person we are talking with and we need to listen and try to understand their belief system.

There are 7 common reasons why a person may not be ready to accept the Christian Faith.

- They may have personal issues, for example a tragedy which has made them disbelieve in the existence or goodness of God.
- They may have intellectual questions, for example they may think that science has disproved religion.
- They may be scarred by bad memories of organized Christianity.
- There may be cultural pressures at play, such as the family or other social environments they inhabit.
- They may simply have never heard a clear and simple explanation of what Christians believe.
- They may have picked up some unhelpful misconceptions about the Christian Faith, for example that a person is a Christian simply by going to church or by being born in a 'Christian' country.
- Finally, a person may simply not **want** to follow Christ because of the demands of the Gospel.

Each of these obstacles to faith can be overcome by God's love and the patient and prayerful friendship of a Christian.

### ***The long journey***

Whatever the reasons a person has not yet reached a point of decision to follow Christ one fact remains: that person is on a journey of faith. It's a journey which began when they looked with wonder at the new world at birth. During this journey they will have met God in many places and in many guises, often without realizing it. Their journey has possibly taken some detours. Maybe they have even gone backwards at times. But now they have arrived at this moment with us accompanying them. Our task is to move them on in the journey, closer to

God. Wonderfully, we may be instrumental in helping them into a decisive moment of response to Christ's invitation. Alternatively, we may just help them to go a little further down that road. A football team doesn't try to score a touchdown every play. Neither can we expect our brief evangelistic efforts to produce immediate fruit if the person is not ready.

### ***A map of the journey***

Many evangelism experts have tried to analyze a person's journey towards the Christian Faith. Although they differ in their theories they seem to agree on the basic stages along the path.

- Stage 1 A person is not interested in religious matters and does not devote time to thinking about or pursuing God.
- Stage 2 The person's interest is sparked. They may have experienced a momentous event which leads them to think about some of the big questions of life. Maybe they get involved in a conversation with their friends about spirituality.
- Stage 3 The person has contact with Christianity. This may be a Christian friend who discusses matters of faith with them. Maybe it involves a visit to church for a wedding, funeral or baptism.
- Stage 4 The person's interest is awoken. They think a great deal about God and Jesus. They usually read a lot, maybe buy a Bible, maybe attend an enquirers' group at church.
- Stage 5 The person responds to Christ's call to discipleship. They may be baptized or confirmed or proclaim their faith publicly in some other way.
- Stage 6 The beginning of the rest of their journey!

It is our privilege to be involved with God moving people along their path.

### ***Exercises***

Think about the one or two people you identified in Chapter 2.

- 1 Why have they not made a clear Christian commitment yet? Do you think any of the 7 obstacles to faith listed above apply to them?
- 2 Can you identify them as being at any of the 6 stages of the journey listed above?
- 3 Begin to think about how God might want to use you to help overcome those barriers to faith
- 4 How might you help them move along one stage in their journey?

## STUDY 4

## HIS STORY

### ***Not just a nice person***

Christians seek to shape their lives after the example of Jesus. Naturally, we all fail repeatedly in this calling. However, if we are even remotely fruitful in following Christ then our friends will notice and eventually the opportunity to share something about our faith will arise. The big question is 'what do I say?' Let's imagine it's Monday and you're having lunch with workmates in the staff canteen. Someone says they went to their niece's baptism yesterday and they found the service interesting. Alternatively, there has been a disaster somewhere with a tragic loss of life. Someone says to you, 'I don't know why God lets such terrible things happen'. How can we use these opportunities to say something helpful and relevant but without sounding scary or cheesy?

### ***Be honest***

Many Christians respond in one of these ways:

- Develop a lump in the throat, break out in a sweat, feel the heart racing
- Think of an excuse to leave. 'Oh dear is that the time? I really must be going.'
- Pray hard that the subject will change to last night's TV.
- Some pluck up the courage to speak about their faith but feel at a disadvantage because they think don't know enough to say anything helpful.
- Others might contribute to the conversation but slip into unhelpful jargon. 'Have you been washed in the Blood?'
- Still others might say something but exaggerate slightly in order to make the Christian message seem more attractive.

Despite our feelings it is always good to admit that we don't know everything about God or faith. A great many of God's ways are a mystery to us. We need not feel embarrassed at not knowing why God has, for example, allowed a certain event to happen. It is always best to stick to talking about things you know or believe, rather than try to sound like you have **everything** sewn up.

### ***What do you believe?***

The Christian Faith is a dramatic Story. It is a tale of love, betrayal, sacrifice and redemption. Our Faith is not a collection of theological lecture notes, or a book of rules. It is a Story and is full of stirring tales of endearing heroes and heroines and dastardly evil. It also tells the tale of every person's life with all its loves, joys, despairs and sufferings, each woven into the plan of the loving Storyteller. We can be confident that when we talk about the Faith we are telling a Story which has captivated the hearts and imaginations of millions. Yet it is not a work of fiction. It is a drama which was played out at particular moments in history, in places which we can actually visit and starring a man who really lived. More than that, who lived, died and rose again.

Therefore, the content of our faith-sharing should include the person and work of Jesus. Sometimes we might find it easier to talk about the life of our church. We might feel more comfortable telling our friends about the pot-luck supper, the lovely building, the inspiring worship, the nice priest. These things are always good and helpful to hear. Saying these things is never wrong. However if our faith-sharing stops there we have missed the point, rather like a football player carrying the ball the full length of the field and dropping it just before he crosses the goal line. We must also remember that the church is often seen as bad

news by those who never go.

Jesus, on the other hand, is almost universally thought of as Good News. Nearly everyone believes him to have been an enlightened teacher and a morally good person. Even many atheists respect him for his wise words and his compassionate works. Christians also believe he was unique. He was God born as a human being. This too is a mystery which we will never be able to understand or explain to a friend. We must not let that trouble us or put us off sharing what we believe.

***Have a plan***

If the idea of sharing your faith frightens you then you might it helpful to have some thoughts already prepared so you can mention them when the opportunity arises. Here is a way of preparing what you might say about the Faith.

- Summarize Jesus' story in 6 points
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- How has the Church summarized His story?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Go through your answers and underline jargon words which might not be understood by other people (or you!)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Work on some simple definitions of those words.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Form these into sentences which you can memorize and recall.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Find another Christian to 'role play' a conversation with.

## STUDY 5

## MY STORY

### ***Once upon a time***

In the last chapter we thought about the story of Jesus. Before that we saw that our non-Christian friends also have stories. Now we will look at the third story in the equation of faith-sharing - **your** story.

Every Christian has a unique and powerful tool in sharing their faith. Each of us has been on a journey which no other person has undertaken. The bundle of experiences, relationships and events which make up your life is duplicated in no-one else on the planet. Often it is tempting to see other Christians as 'better' than us. We can feel that their experience of God is greater than ours and that their knowledge of the Faith is more complete. However, your history and your experience of God are yours alone. This makes you vital in God's plans. No-one else can take your place.

### ***Happily ever after?***

During your journey through life you will have gone through difficult experiences and troubled situations. You have also had times of great joy and fulfillment. Most of the time you have probably been in neither of these places. Each experience in your life, whether good or bad, has gone towards making you the person you are today. Furthermore, God has been with you at each point and has watched over you, shaping you and leading you to new places. Christians can sometimes feel that they have nothing to say about their lives which could help someone on their journey of faith. We can believe that our experiences of God are too small and brief to be worth mentioning. We can also assume that our failures, sufferings and struggles disqualify us from talking about our faith; 'If only I were a better Christian, with an amazing story of God's power and love then I would have something to say. But I'm not'.

The wonderful news is that you can use all of your experiences to speak to others about your faith. Even the events which you think of as failures can be inspiring to someone who is searching for God. Remember that we are not trying to persuade people that we are saints who have our lives totally sorted. Our aim is to lead our friends to faith in Jesus Christ, who draws alongside us in times of trouble. Most Christians can look back at tough times and see that God was faithful and present during them. This speaks very powerfully to many people who are not Christians.

Thrillingly, no-one else can talk with authority about your journey of faith. Your collection of experiences and events is unique to you. Even someone who has been a Christian for a short time has a story to tell of his or her journey of faith. A person who has recently received good news is often more enthusiastic about it than the person who received the same news many years ago. In the same way a person who has recently come to a living Christian faith can be very fruitful when sharing that new faith.

### ***The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth***

A person's last words are important. They form an opportunity for the person to say something inspirational which will be remembered forever. In the book of Acts Luke tells us that Jesus chose his final words on earth to be a rousing command to his followers. This was his last promise and encouragement to his friends. 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8). The task of the apostles was to be

witnesses. It continues to be the talk of every Christian today.

When we read the word 'witness' we usually think of a court of law. In court a witness is someone who tells the story of what they have seen and heard. That's all. They are not allowed to give their opinions. Neither are they allowed to report what someone else has seen or heard. Their testimony must be personal. This is a helpful way of thinking about our task as witnesses for Christ. We are called merely to say what we have personally experienced of God. This is a great relief for those of us who think they do not have enough Christian knowledge to be an effective witness. Witnessing is not about having answers to tough questions, but about being able to say something about how our faith has had an effect upon our lives.

We might not know why God allows suffering, but each of us should be able to point to some answers to prayer, or experience of God's love. Encouragingly, no-one can dismiss these personal stories - they are **your** experiences which cannot be disproved or scientifically dissected. A good witness demonstrates that God is real and that Jesus is alive. A dry theological debate cannot do that.

### ***To ponder***

1 How does it make you feel to know that your experience of God is unique?

- 'I was raised in a Christian home and I cannot remember a time when I was not a Christian.'
  - 'I remember a particular moment in my life when I became a Christian.'
- Which statement is true for you? Describe the benefits of each.

### ***Exercises***

1 In the space below list five events or experiences which have helped you in your faith (you can include people).

2 Now list three events or experiences which have tested your faith (eg things which have made you doubt God or resist Christ's love).

3 Think of three answers to prayer you have received in the last few weeks. How can you mention these in a conversation with a non-Christian friend?

- 4 Plot your spiritual life on a graph with your age along the bottom axis and your spiritual health along the side axis  
Is the line straight? Is your position now the highest it has ever been?

## STUDY 6

## DO'S AND DON'TS

Over the course of these studies we have identified several do's and don'ts . Here is a summary.

### ***Do's***

- Pray for one or two friends who are not yet Christians
- Look for opportunities to naturally share something of your faith with them.
- Put yourself in the shoes of those you wish to share your faith with.
- Listen carefully and try to understand someone before you share your faith with him or her.
- Be open to learn new things about God from the person you are sharing with.
- Be clear in your own mind what the essentials of the Christian Faith are.
- Learn some phrases which express your beliefs in a natural and relevant way.
- Be patient. Sometimes it takes years of faithful prayer for someone before they respond to Christ.
- Remember that you are seeking to introduce your friend to Christ, not necessarily become a member of your church.
- Be honest about the gaps in your Christian knowledge.
- Remember it's about Jesus - not you.
- Be honest about your failings as a Christian.
- Memorize key events in your spiritual journey.
- Be ready to talk about recent answers to prayer.
- Be able to say very briefly what difference being a Christian has made when facing troubles.
- Invite people to church.
- Love people you are sharing your faith with.
- Remember the aim - to share your faith in a natural, helpful and relevant way.

### ***Don'ts***

- Use Christian jargon when talking about your faith.
- Worry what the person will think of you.
- Expect to be rejected or ridiculed.
- Give up.
- Exaggerate your experience of God
- Promise an easy ride for someone if they would become a Christian.
- Get involved in an argument. God doesn't need to be defended.
- Pretend that the Church is perfect.
- Nag people into coming to church.
- Manipulate the conversation so that it becomes 'religious'.

# EPISCOPALIAN EVANGELISM?

- *A Bible study of Luke 24:13-49 for groups.*

## **INTRODUCE**

Welcome members and introduce the following ice-breaker to encourage them to begin relating to each other.

- Ask each person to describe their most memorable vacation and the journey they took to get there. Have a map handy to locate the destination.
- Was there anything unusual about the journey? How did they feel while traveling - excited? Nervous? Curious?

Lead into telling the group that in this study they will be encountering another journey, made by two of Jesus' disciples. They will also be thinking about their own journey through life and how they can help other people on their journey.

## **READ**

Luke 24:13-49. This is a long passage and could easily be shared by 3 or 4 readers.

## **UNDERSTAND**

Use the following questions to help members understand what they have just read.

1. On what day did this journey take place?
2. How were Cleopas and his friend feeling as they walked to Emmaus? Why?
3. During their journey a stranger joins them and begins a conversation. How do they respond to him?
4. The two friends describe the events of Easter Sunday. Do you think they really believed Jesus had risen? What clues do we get in the reading?
5. From verse 25 it becomes clear that this stranger is rather unusual. In what ways?
6. When they reached Emmaus the stranger seemed to be going further. How did the disciples react to his likely departure?
7. The three sit down to eat dinner together. The stranger takes some bread and breaks it. What happens then?
8. What did Jesus do after he had revealed his true identity?
9. How do you think the two friends were feeling at the end of the story?

## **EXPLORE**

Encourage the members to explore the story and discover some of its riches. Use these questions as discussion starters.

10. Jesus had been walking with the disciples for a long time but they did not recognize him. Do you think that Christ accompanies people on their journey through life today?

11. With hindsight can you recognize times when he walked with you, unrecognized?
12. While they were on the road the disciples had not yet come to believe in the resurrection. Yet still Jesus was accompanying them on their journey and drawing them towards faith. Can you think of anyone you know whom Christ is leading and accompanying towards the Christian faith, but they don't recognize him?
13. As Jesus explained the Scriptures to Cleopas and his friend their hearts 'burned within them'. How important is hearing or reading the Bible in a person's journey towards the Christian faith?
14. The two friends finally recognized Jesus when he broke the bread. What does this make you think of? How important is the Eucharist in a person's journey towards the Christian faith?

Explain that the Anglican Communion (and therefore the Episcopal Church) has traditionally taught that there are three sources of authority in the Christian life - Scripture, tradition and reason. Anglicans have always been good at affirming the emphases of each person. The story of the Emmaus Road reveals how these three authorities interact in a person becoming a Christian.

- The Scriptures are opened. This suggests that the role of the Bible can be crucial in people coming to faith. St Paul affirms that 'faith comes by hearing the message' (Rom 10:17).
- The bread is broken. The traditions of the Church, and particularly the Sacraments, can speak loudly to those who are exploring the Christian faith. The Sacraments wonderfully bring into being the grace of God as they are celebrated.
- The context is the Journey. The daily, reasonable experience of the unseen Christ working in people's lives is essential in a person accepting the Christian Faith.

The Emmaus Road reminds Episcopalians that we need each other and the emphases which each member brings. The milking stool of 'Bible, tradition and reason' is incomplete without one leg. It also tells us how important it is to invite friends to church as it is in our worship that Scripture, tradition and reason are encountered and Christ can breathe faith and life into human hearts.

### **APPLY**

Lead the group to think practically about how they can put the teaching of the Emmaus Road into action. Ask the following questions.

15. What can you do to help you remember that Christ is walking your journey with you?
16. Who can you invite to Church?

### **CONCLUSION**

- Lead into a time of prayer in which you invite people to name friends whom Christ is calling to the Christian Faith.