

IMAGINE - LEADER'S RUNNING ORDER

What could God do through us?

TIME	ITEM	TIME	ITEM
10.00	Welcome	11.00	Coffee Break
10.05	Worship	11.10	Encountering Jesus
10.10	Getting Talking	11.30	What Are We Hearing?
10.15	Why Imagine?	11.40	Looking Forward - Imagine
10.20	Loving Our Community	11.50	Next Steps, Prayer & Close
10.40	A Culture of Invitation	12.00	Finish

10.00

WELCOME

“Good morning and thank you for coming. We’ve called this morning Imagine, and the question sitting behind everything we’re going to do is simply: What could God do through us?”

We’re going to spend most of our time listening and talking rather than listening to people from the front. But before we begin, we want to remember that this is God’s church, not ours, so we’re going to begin by worshipping him together.”

10.05

WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

One song, then a short prayer asking God to help us listen to him and to one another.

“Before I explain what we’re going to do this morning, let’s get everybody talking.”

10.10

GETTING TALKING

“At your table, let’s simply go around once: If you were talking to a stranger about our church, what is one thing you would tell them you are thankful for? Just one thing each - and if you’d rather pass, that’s absolutely fine.”

After 5 minutes: “Hold on to some of those things. Today isn’t starting from the assumption that everything needs to change. There is much for which we should be thankful. Part of today is recognising what is fruitful and making sure we

don't lose it."

10.15

WHY IMAGINE? - 5 MINUTES

SLIDE 1: "There's one question behind today: What could God do through us? We're not presenting decisions already made or trying to decide everything before twelve. We're here to listen, reflect honestly and ask where God might be leading us."

SLIDE 2: "Our three conversations are Loving Our Community, A Culture of Invitation and Encountering Jesus. The journey is: How are we loving them? Would we invite them? How could they encounter Jesus?"

SLIDE 3: "Keep one real person in mind who has little or no connection with church. Keep asking: Would what we're talking about genuinely help someone like them take a step towards Jesus?"

SLIDE 4: "Celebrate - what is fruitful? Change - what should we do differently or stop? Imagine - what aren't we doing that perhaps we should? Possibilities first; practicalities later."

SLIDE 5: "Everybody gets a voice. Listen as much as you speak. Make space for others. It's okay to disagree or pass. Someone at each table should note what emerges. We're ready to begin."

IMAGINE - DISCUSSIONS & CLOSING

Keep transitions brief. Protect the discussion time.

10.20

1. LOVING OUR COMMUNITY - 20 MINUTES

“Our first conversation is Loving Our Community. Think about the community God has placed us in and the relationships we already have. What should we celebrate? What might need to change? And what might we imagine? You’ve got 20 minutes. Keep that one person in mind - and off you go.”

10.40

2. A CULTURE OF INVITATION - 20 MINUTES

“Thank you. Let’s move straight into our second conversation: A Culture of Invitation. This time we’re thinking about what would help invitation become a natural part of who we are as a church. Again: Celebrate. Change. Imagine. You have 20 minutes.”

11.00

COFFEE BREAK - 10 MINUTES

“We’re going to stop there and take ten minutes for coffee. Please be back at your tables ready to restart at 11.10. And perhaps keep the conversations going over coffee.” But don’t add to the sheet after talking to others.

11.10

3. ENCOUNTERING JESUS - 20 MINUTES

“Let’s come back together. We’ve talked about loving our community and developing a culture of invitation. Now we come to where that journey has been heading: Encountering Jesus.

How might we make it easier for someone with little or no church background to take a genuine step towards Jesus? Again: Celebrate. Change. Imagine. And particularly for this conversation, picture that person you’ve been keeping in mind. You have 20 minutes.”

11.30

WHAT ARE WE HEARING? - 10 MINUTES

“We’ve generated quite a lot of material. Now let’s stop generating ideas and start listening for what is emerging. Take a step back and look across everything you’ve discussed.

As a table, identify just three things: one thing we really don't want to lose; one idea we really think is worth exploring; and one thing we think God may be drawing our attention to.

Don't reproduce everything you've said. Ask: What seems most important? You have ten minutes."

At the end: "Please make sure your table number is on the sheet. We'll collect these and take time afterwards to listen properly to what every table has said."

11.40

LOOKING FORWARD - IMAGINE - 10 MINUTES

"For our final conversation, stop thinking primarily about programmes and activities. Instead, imagine the church we hope we might become.

Imagine it is three years from now. If you were talking to a stranger about our church, what would you hope you could tell them you are thankful for?

For 3 minutes, imagine alone and write. Then 3 minutes sharing one thought each around the table. Finally, 4 minutes imagining together and capturing 3-5 shared hopes. Don't worry yet about how we make them happen - dream together."

11.50

NEXT STEPS, PRAYER & CLOSE - 10 MINUTES

"Before we finish, let me tell you what happens next.

We're going to collect everything you've written today and bring together the feedback from every table. We'll look carefully at what we've heard - the things we value and don't want to lose, the things you think may need to change, the possibilities you think are worth exploring, and the kind of church we hope we might become.

We'll look for the themes that have emerged across the room, but we'll also pay attention to things that may have been said by only one or two tables but are important for us to hear.

We won't assume that the most popular suggestion is automatically the right thing to do,

and we won't assume that every idea raised today will happen. Our next task is to pray, listen and discern what God may be calling us to do. And we will come back to you. First, we'll share with the whole church what we believe we heard at Imagine. Then, as we discern the next steps, we'll tell you what we believe we should do about it.

So thank you. Thank you for being honest, for listening to one another, for sharing what you see, and for being willing to imagine.

We began this morning with a question: What could God do through us?

We don't have all the answers at twelve o'clock today - and we weren't meant to. But hopefully we leave more ready to listen to God, more ready to listen to one another, and more ready to follow wherever he leads us.

Let's pray." Then Sing