

# USING GROWING GOOD FOR *Sunday worship*

Growing Good was designed as a seven-session course for small groups. However, a number of churches have used the themes, bible readings, and case study films to create an outline and content for Sunday worship.

This guide will give you some ideas and tips for adapting the session materials, and share some examples from churches that have used the resources in this way.



## Themes

You could shape a series of services around the Growing Good session themes, or pick one or two that are most relevant to your context or congregation. For example, if you want to encourage a culture of welcome you might choose the theme of Hospitality. For an all-age or family service the theme of Participation has a fun all-age activity. And, during Advent the theme of Presence would allow you to reflect on God's presence with us and our communities.

For a shorter series over three weeks you could consider two themes in one service: Presence and Perseverance; Hospitality and Adaptability; Participation and Justice.



## Scripture readings

Each session guide includes a reading that links to the theme. You could use this or choose your own. We've also suggested some additional readings to complement those in the session guide.

- **Presence:** God's people are called to be a visible sign that reveals God's character to the world. Isaiah 42:1-9 describes God's compassion, justice and desire for all people to know him. As his disciples we are called to embody His presence through service, compassion and restoration – revealing his light to those around us.



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- **Perseverance:** Hebrews 12:1-3 likens faithful perseverance to running a race. Both require focus, the encouragement of others, and a willingness to set aside anything that hinders progress. We are urged to consider Jesus who endured the suffering of the cross so that we might receive life. His example strengthens us to keep going, even when the journey is difficult.
- **Hospitality:** In Genesis 18:1-8, Abraham's hospitality to the three strangers transcends mere politeness and unveils a profound spiritual lesson about openness and generosity: that welcoming the unfamiliar can lead to extraordinary blessings.
- **Adaptability:** Ruth's story is one of adaptability and change as she chooses to leave her homeland and follow her mother-in-law Naomi to Israel. Her declaration in Ruth 1:16, "Do not urge me to leave you or to turn from

following you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God", highlights her willingness to embrace change for the sake of loyalty and faith.

- **Participation:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 describes the church community like a body made up of different parts. Together we are like this one body with many gifts. Together we are made to love God and love our neighbours. And we do this by bringing our individual gifts, many and varied as they are, for the benefit of everyone
- **Justice:** Micah 6:6-8 shows us that God's vision of justice isn't an abstract concept or a distant ideal. Micah describes a way of life that takes shape in our everyday interactions with other people. Justice shows up in how we speak, how we listen, and how we treat the vulnerable.



## Case Study Film (optional)

If your church has the right audio visual equipment you could show the case study film for the session as a way of illustrating the theme.



## Sermon or Discussion

The session guides include some notes that go along with Scripture reading. These are intended to help the group understand the context of the passage and might be useful for the preacher, along with their own knowledge and reflections.

Instead of a sermon, some churches might be comfortable with a more informal discussion using some of the questions in the session guide.





## All-age activities

A number of the Growing Good sessions include activities that could be adapted for use in a service:

- **Neighbourhood mapping (Presence session):** Provide large maps of the parish/local area. Invite people to mark significant places with post-it notes or stickers. An alternative could be to ask them to draw their own maps in groups. Ask people to compare their maps. What did they include, what did they miss out? What do people's maps reveal about different experiences of the community? The maps could then be used as a focus for a time of prayer for your community (see the Presence session guide for more information about this activity).
- **Head Heart Hands (Participation session):** An activity to help you identify your own gifts and skills and those of the people around you. Suitable for all ages and can be used with small groups or as part of a church service or larger gathering. See more here: [Head Heart Hands](#)
- **Volunteering spotlight (Participation session):** A service focusing on participation is a great opportunity to spotlight and celebrate the value of volunteers. You could interview and thank volunteers from within the congregation or invite volunteers from local organisations to talk about their project. You might already have some links with local organisations that use your building or through the connections of congregation members.



## Intercessions

The following prayers have been shaped around the Growing Good session themes:

- Ever-present God, strengthen your church to serve You. Give us the grace to meet human need through loving service, and to help build communities of hope and resilience.
- Oh God who never lets us go, renew all those who are working tirelessly to support your children.
- Open-armed God, you host us at your table and bid us welcome others in turn. Open our hands, our eyes and our hearts to the strangers in our midst.
- Creator God, thank you for your gifts of creativity and imagination; give us courage to face challenge and embrace change through the power of your Spirit.
- Missionary God, always inviting us to join in with what you are doing, open the doors of your church that the contribution of all may be welcomed and valued.



## Other activity ideas:

**Shared meal:** Extend your service and put the theme of hospitality into practice by starting or extending your time together with a simple shared meal.

**Prayer Walk:** In better weather you could start or finish a service with a prayer walk. See more here: [CUF prayer walk guide](#)



## Case Study

### Revd Martin Poole, St Luke's Prestonville

Growing Good encouraged me to run some services on Sundays, where we celebrate the work that happens in the week at activities like The Real Junk Food Project. We've invited all the volunteers to come and join in and get a sense of what we do on a Sunday in a space they know from Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Partnering with people and extending that invitation to everyone contributing to the life of the church in different ways. A couple of the people who volunteer with Real Junk Food, also sing in choirs which have come to contribute to our Sunday worship. The inspiration came from Growing Good to bring all these different elements together as much as possible.



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