‘HEARTS ON FIRE’
A study course for groups for the Lent or Easter seasons

‘Were not our hearts burning within us
while he was talking to us on the road,
while he was opening the scriptures to us?’ [Luke 24:32]

Using the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus as a connecting thread, these 5 sessions explore how we can open ourselves afresh, or for the first time, to the presence of Jesus on our road and the work of the enlivening Holy Spirit.

Each session begins with a moment within the Emmaus story. As the account of this encounter unfolds we open ourselves to allow Jesus to talk with us about our own road. The sessions also contain a reflection on a psalm linked with the theme of the week, a group activity, times of prayer and questions for sharing and discussion. Reflection exercises for the time between sessions are also provided.

The course is laid out for use by groups but can also be used as individual reflection material.

The course takes its inspiration from Bishop Christopher’s call to mission.
‘HEARTS ON FIRE’

A brief outline of the sessions

Session 1 – Remembering Jesus is with us
In this session we will explore our Christian journey thus far - the highs and lows, the times of closeness to God and the times when we have felt far away. Have we forgotten God’s faithfulness and love?

Session 2: Renewing our faith through openness to God’s Word
In this session we will explore how we are called to learn and grow through reading the bible and exploring what lies at the heart of our Christian faith. Have we stopped expecting to discover anything new about God? Do we spend time reading the Bible and other Christian books with open minds and open hearts?

Session 3: Responding to God with us through prayer
In this session we will explore ways we meet and respond to God within daily life through prayer. Do we need to find more space in our lives for God?

Session 4: Rebuilding community
In this session we explore why building community is so much at the heart of Christian life. Have we forgotten that is only through the love that flows from God that the fear that divides our broken world can be overcome?

Session 5 – Reviewing our lives as we listen to the Spirit
In this session we review how our hearts have been set on fire in our walk along the Emmaus road. As the road leads us onwards how will we continue to allow God to transform and re-energise us, both as individuals and as communities of faith? Do we dare to day ‘yes’ to the leading of the Spirit?
Using this material

The following symbols are used to help indicate how you might use different elements of this material within the sessions and beyond:

Prayer material
A simple form of opening and closing worship is included. You may want to adapt this to meet your own group’s needs.

Readings
These are scripture readings to be used within the session:

- An excerpt from the Emmaus road story
- A psalm

Both readings help explore the theme of the session. We recommend that these bible passages are read aloud.

Group exercises within the session
These are aimed to help participants relate what is being explored to their own experience. Depending on the size of the group and whether they have worked together before, it can be helpful to begin sharing in 2s or 3s before opening discussion up in the larger group.

Input material. After the Emmaus reading a short commentary follows intended to put this part of the story in context and link it with the theme of the session. Later in the session some background input on the theme is provided.

You may want to use your own words rather than simply read out what is given. The text given can then be used as a back up.

Reflection exercises
These exercises are designed to help participants go further with the themes being explored in the time between sessions. A choice is given so people can opt for what feels most useful. These exercises may also be of use beyond the course as tools for continuing to live with ‘hearts on fire’.

It may be helpful to build in a ‘what have you been thinking / exploring since last time?’ slot near the beginning of the following session.

A further option is to use one of the exercises within the session itself.
We welcome feedback on the experience of using this resource.

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