

Service One Journey

Before using this service outline, read the notes on how to use the sessions.

These outlines are intended for Local Arrangements. They are built from the MWOL service outlines at [MWOL service outlines - The Methodist Church](https://www.methodist.org.uk/faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/mwol-service-outlines/#c)
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These notes are only intended as guidance, recognising that you know your context and community best. Pick whichever activity is best for you and the people you're serving. Or just use the theme and songs and create everything else yourself. You can take these notes apart and rebuild them in a way which works best for your situation or use them 'off the shelf' when needed.

Grace would very much appreciate your feedback grace.cauldwell@methodist.org.uk so we can make these suitable for every methodist congregation in Cumbria! Tell her what has worked, what hasn't worked- which songs you used, and which you changed!

Green denotes an option

Red denotes a reading or song (feel free to change these!) or other action, or tips for what to do!

***You will need-
Post It Notes.***

***MWOL pocket guides or beer mats, or giant mat, or printed sheets. (see end page)
printed or projected words to the first hymn.***

Read the words in black, you could use a group of people!

Start Here!

God is with us on every step of our journey through life!

Welcome to worship this morning, I am xx and I (along with....) will be guiding us through this locally arranged service reflecting together on following Jesus on the journey of a life time.

Let's pause a moment

(Pause)

and pray

God who sets us on a journey, thank you for being with us this morning as we worship, and every moment of our lives. Thank you for everyone here today as we journey together with you. Thank you that you have created the whole universe to explore, that you send your Holy Spirit to guide us as we follow you, and that you never ever stop inviting us to join you on the journey. Amen

Opening Hymn (tune Blaenwern)

God who sets us on a journey
to discover, dream and grow,
lead us as you led your people
in the desert long ago;
journey inward, journey outward,
stir the spirit, stretch the mind,
love for God and self and neighbour
marks the way that Christ defined.

Exploration brings new insights,
changes, choices we must face;
give us wisdom in deciding,
mindful always of your grace;
should we stumble, lose our bearings,
find it hard to know what's right,
we regain our true direction
focused on the Jesus light.

End our longing for the old days,
grant the vision that we lack –
once we've started on this journey
there can be no turning back;
let us travel light, discarding
excess baggage from our past,
cherish only what's essential,
choosing treasure that will last.

When we set up camp and settle
to avoid love's risk and pain,
you disturb complacent comfort,
pull the tent pegs up again;
keep us travelling in the knowledge
you are always at our side;
give us courage for the journey,
Christ our goal and Christ our guide.

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Read Matthew 4:18-22

Video [The journey of a lifetime | A Methodist Way of Life](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQ2SHyS9nCM)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQ2SHyS9nCM>

Or Read....

Close your eyes for a moment, if you're able. Imagine that you're about to embark on a new adventure – a train journey around the world. How do you feel as you make the first commitment and jump on the train – excited? Nervous?

Who is with you on the journey – is it a friend, or a family member? Or are you starting alone, looking forward to meeting people as you go?

How will you reflect on the journey you take? Will you take photos, or write a journal, or chat with fellow travellers?

Open your eyes.

[You could take some feedback here – ask people about the journeys they were imagining.](#)

That journey is a bit like the journey of discipleship. We make a commitment to go on a journey with Jesus, not entirely knowing what will happen. Journeys are a great metaphor for change and growth, because that's exactly what happens! As we go to new places, have new experiences and meet new people, our views about life, the world and God change.

That might sound exciting, or terrifying.

When Jesus called the disciples to follow him, we're not told their emotional states. But we know that they had to leave behind families and livelihoods to take a step of faith and follow this man they didn't really know. It was only after that initial moment of commitment that they learnt who Jesus truly was and slowly came to understand what that meant for them. That first moment of commitment is a big step, but there are small day-to-day commitments too. The disciples had to choose to keep following Jesus when the religious authorities were against him. Sadly, Judas chose to stop following Jesus, giving in to the promise of money.

But the great thing is that we're not alone in this journey. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "everyone enters discipleship alone, but no one remains alone in discipleship". We are on the journey with Jesus, and with each other.

Jesus promised the disciples that even when he stopped being physically present with them on earth, the Holy Spirit would be with them, and the Spirit continues to be with each one of us.

We are on a journey with each other. We are all 'travelling companions' to each other.

That's why sharing our spiritual experiences, and our struggles, and our needs for prayer, are so important. And it's a good reminder that none of us is perfect. We all stumble, we all have moments of doubt, or times when we feel like we've travelled backwards. In John 13, Jesus told the disciples "love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (verses 34-35). Our support for one another is one of the things that marks us as Christians.

John Wesley encouraged Methodists to meet in Classes and Bands – small groups of Christians meeting together to encourage and lovingly challenge one another on our spiritual journey.

Many churches follow a contemporary version of this tradition today, studying the Bible and praying together, or exploring how we are experiencing God through the practices of [Methodist Way of Life](#).

We are here for each other, and God is here for us all.

Sing Captain of Israel's Host

Read John 1:35-51

Discussion questions (either read these and invite people to chat, or simply offer 1 minute of space between each question to respond)

- Do you think you would have responded like the disciples in the Bible stories, giving up your livelihood to follow Jesus?
- What are the moments in your life, big or small, when Jesus has called you to "follow me"?
- Where are the times you've seen someone else invite you to "come and see" what Jesus is doing?
- How are we, as a church community, providing opportunities for people to intentionally travel alongside each other?

or

CREATIVE IDEA - offer everyone a post it note and ask them to draw a mini-map of their life. Make it clear nobody will need to offer an explanation for what they draw.

We are now going to spend 5 minutes drawing a map of our life so far. When we have drawn them we will all bring them to the front and place them on this board, as a reminder that we never travel alone in our journey. As you draw you might like to reflect on where you see the moments that Jesus has called you to "follow me" or where you've been invited to "come and see" what Jesus is doing. It doesn't matter whether it looks like a tube map, an OS map, a treasure map or just a squiggle! Nobody will be asked to feed back on what they have drawn or why.

(optional, music during activity Lark Ascending, the first 5 minutes [Vaughan Williams ~ The Lark Ascending](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZR2JIDnT2I8) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZR2JIDnT2I8>)

Let's place our journey's on the board now. (allow them to be brought forwards)

Pray

Let's pray. God of the journey, thank you for those who have invited us to Come and See what you are like. Thank you that you invite us to follow you. Give us the courage to follow. Amen

Sing *Will you come and follow me (StF 673)*

Creative prayer (you could physically move, or use images of parts of your community, or just encourage people to move in their seats, or point in different directions)

We are going on a mini journey around our church building (or outside for, if it's practical), taking a prayer with us, a little refrain. As we walk we will pray 'Where will you lead me?' You can walk together or alone and we will spend the next 5 minutes walking and quietly praying those words "where will you lead me" you might want to go alone, or with a small group! We will meet back here at (XXX time)

Or Ways to respond

Turn to someone next to you and commit to taking a step in your discipleship journey this week – go deeper, or try something new, and share the experience with other people.

You could write it down and pin them all to a board, ask people to draw something representing their commitment, or to fill a bowl with pebbles to give their commitment to God.

(If your church takes up an offering please do so here)

Pray

We are now going to pray for ourselves and the world. When we pray we both offer needs to God, and ask God to use us to fill those needs. We will use the refrain "where will you lead us" which I will say and then you will respond with "where will you lead us". As we pray we listen for God leading us to journey into meeting some of these needs.

We pray together

Where will you lead us?

God walks with us, we walk with God. Thank you for our journey with you so far.

Where will you lead us?

We pray for people on journeys, refugees, asylum seekers, people who have lost their home.

Where will you lead us?

We pray for those whose journey through life is coming to an end, and for all those who are grieving those who have travelled on ahead.

Where will you lead us?

We pray for those in our local community who are fearful of what the journey of life may bring. **(Leave a pause here for folk to think of specific situations)**

Where will you lead us?

We pray for.... **(add in specific global or local situations?)**

Where will you lead us?

God who leads us, we thank you that you invite us to follow you, and promise to be with us every step of the way, thank you for Jesus who calls us to follow along with others, and taught us when we pray to say

Our Father... **(use whichever version of the Lord's Prayer you are most familiar with)**

Amen

We are coming to the end of our service this morning. There are some ways you could follow on the conversation about the journey with Jesus.

- Explore [A Methodist Way of Life](#), a framework for living as a follower of Jesus
- Have a conversation with a friend about what it means for you to follow Jesus
- Explore [creative ways to pray](#) and become more aware of Jesus' presence with you and calling upon you. You could use creative prayers included in the Methodist Prayer Handbook.

Sing We are marching in the light of God

Prayer of blessing¹

Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.
Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

We share together in the Grace. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the holy spirit be with us all, ever more
Amen

¹ from John O'Donahue's *Blessing For a New Beginning*



