



SMALL GROUP OUTLINES



EVEN MORE MINOR PROPHETS

These Small Group Outlines are produced by the Youth and Children's Ministry Unit in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview). They are available every month from our website.

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SESSION ONE:

JOEL – A SPIRIT-FILLED FUTURE

The prophet Joel encouraged the people of Israel to learn from the past, recognise their sin in the present and set it aside to enjoy a Spirit-filled future. In today's session we will explore the themes of the book of Joel and see how they relate to our experience as believers today.

SESSION TWO:

HAGGAI – GET ON WITH IT!

The people of Israel finally had what they'd always wanted. Due to the decree of King Cyrus, they were able to return home and rebuild the Temple. So, why didn't they get on with it? In our session today, we'll explore the message of the prophet Haggai. God was tired with the people's procrastinating ways. It was time to wake them up and call them to action. As we explore the story in more detail, we'll discover how we can avoid procrastination and make sure we play our part in building the Kingdom of God.

SESSION THREE:

ZECHARIAH – THE COMING MESSIAH

Throughout the words of the minor prophets there is a continued message of hope as the people of Israel looked to the coming Messiah. The book of Zechariah repeatedly points to Jesus, and we should do the same. We have a message of hope for this world, and in today's session we will focus on the importance of sharing the good news of Jesus.

SESSION FOUR:

MALACHI – JUMPING COWS!

We have reached the final minor prophet in the series. Today, in this cow-themed session, we'll be exploring the book of Malachi, the messenger of God. We'll discover how we can be like the jumping calves of Malachi 4:2 and will recap the minor prophets we have explored throughout the 12 sessions.

Any text in italics represents notes for the leader. It gives more context around the Scripture/activity. You may choose to share verbatim, summarise or not share at all.

JOEL – A SPIRIT-FILLED FUTURE

The prophet Joel encouraged the people of Israel to learn from the past, recognise their sin in the present and set it aside to enjoy a Spirit-filled future. In today's session we will explore the themes of the book of Joel and see how they relate to our experience as believers today.

WELCOME

- 🗨️ If you could be any insect, which one would you be? Explain your choice.
- 🗨️ What is your least favourite insect? Explain your choice.
- 🗨️ How would you react if you were caught in a swarm of your least favourite insect?

This week's minor prophet is Joel and there is one particular insect that features heavily in his prophetic words.

- 🗨️ What insect is talked about in the book of Joel?

The book of Joel features the locust, known for its ability to devour everything in its path. Let's watch the clip to see them in action.

- 📺 **Watch: Locust Plague Devours 40,000 Tonnes of Vegetation – Earth's Tropical Islands BBC Earth (2:54)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LA16W2T0kh4>

- 🗨️ The locusts are normally solitary insects, but what brings them together? An abundance of crops.
- 🗨️ What name do the locusts go by when they are young? Hoppers.
- 🗨️ At what age do the locusts become adults? Five weeks old.
- 🗨️ How often does a large swarm appear? Approximately once a decade.
- 🗨️ What impact do you think the locusts have on rural communities?

Keep these images in mind as we study the book of Joel.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

If the group would like to discover more about locust swarms, then watch the ITV News item from 27 February 2020.

- 📺 **Watch: Locusts destroying crops and leaving farmers helpless in Kenya – ITV News (3:14)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK8_IYYjBT8

WORD

- 📺 **Watch: Book of Joel Summary: A Complete Animated Overview (6:48)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQLazbgz90c>




Leader's notes: Follow the clip timings below and discuss the questions and Scriptures to guide the young people through the book of Joel.

- 📺 **Watch 0:00-1:20**

- 🗨️ Why is the book of Joel unique?

1. There is no clear indication when it was written.
2. Joel references many other scriptural books.
3. Joel doesn't accuse Israel of any specific sin, like many of the other prophets do. He assumes that you've read the other prophets and understand what the main repeated sins are.

Joel spent time exploring Scripture and looked at the journey taken by the Israelites to that point.

-  In what way can exploring the history of the Church help us to learn from the mistakes of the past?
-  What key lesson do you think we need to learn from believers in the past?
-  As a church, are we good at learning from past experiences? Explain your answer.

 **Watch 1:21-2:21**

 **Read Joel 1:1-4:**


¹ The word of the Lord that came to Joel son of Pethuel.

² Hear this, you elders;
listen, all who live in the land.

Has anything like this ever happened in your days
or in the days of your ancestors?



³ Tell it to your children,
and let your children tell it to their children,
and their children to the next generation.

⁴ What the locust swarm has left
the great locusts have eaten;
what the great locusts have left
the young locusts have eaten;
what the young locusts have left
other locusts have eaten.

-  What key event in the life of the Israelites featured locusts?

Back in Exodus 10 the Lord sent a plague of locusts on the people of Egypt. This time, instead of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the target for the locusts were the people of Israel themselves. They were the ones who needed to repent and turn to God, and the imagery of the locust would have immediately hit home.

 **Watch 2:21-3:41**

-  What prophetic word does Joel give the people about their future?
-  What did the people need to do to avoid the devastation?

 **Read:**

¹² But there's also this, it's not too late –
God's personal Message! –
"Come back to me and really mean it!
Come fasting and weeping, sorry for your sins!"


¹³⁻¹⁴ Change your life, not just your clothes.
Come back to God, your God.

And here's why: God is kind and merciful.
He takes a deep breath, puts up with a lot,
This most patient God, extravagant in love,
always ready to cancel catastrophe.


Who knows? Maybe he'll do it now,
maybe he'll turn around and show pity.
Maybe, when all's said and done,
there'll be blessings full and robust for your God!

— (JOEL 2:12-14 MSG)

Through the prophet Joel, the people were given a message of hope. This hope would only come through true repentance. The people were called to come back to God and 'really mean it'.

 The Message translation says: 'Change your life, not just your clothes.' What do you think it means and how does it relate to us today?

 **Watch 3:41-4:36**

 What three things did God promise to do to restore the people of Israel?

1. *Defeat of the invaders*
2. *Restoration of the devastated land*
3. *Divine presence among God's people*

It is in this section of the book of Joel that we read some of its most well-known words.

Leader's notes: Ask the group to read Joel 2:28-29 and discuss what New Testament event it reminds them of. Guide them to the events of Pentecost in Acts 2 and see if they can find the words of the prophet Joel there. What would it have meant to the people listening to Peter's sermon, to hear that part of God's prophecy was fulfilled?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 What is the powerful inclusive message found in Joel 2:32?


³² **And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved;
for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there will be deliverance,
as the Lord has said,
even among the survivors
whom the Lord calls.**
— (JOEL 2:32)


WITNESS

In the final section of the book of Joel there are three poems that set out a message of hope for the future.

 **Watch 4:37-6:48**

Leader's notes: The book of Joel uses powerful poetic language to depict God's vision for his people. The young people are going to turn this poetic language into a creative piece of artwork depicting the fulfilment of this vision in the present day.

 What would our world look like if all God's people were filled with the Spirit?

 What evil would God confront?

 How would God renew creation?

Supply the young people with large sheets of paper and art materials and divide them into three teams focusing on each area. Each team will focus on one aspect of God's vision for the future. Allocate a theme to each group.


God's Spirit Will Fill All His People – Joel 2:28-32

God Will Confront Evil Among All Nations – Joel 3:1-16

God Will Renew All Creation – Joel 3:17-21

Each group needs to create a picture that shows the fulfilment of the prophecy in the present day. The aim is for the young people to imagine a world of Spirit-filled people where evil is confronted and creation is renewed. When each group has completed their creative representation of these themes, then share them together.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 In what way does the book of Joel bring a message of hope for us as Christians today?

WORSHIP

Place the group's artwork on the floor or in a space where everyone can see it. Using the artwork as a stimulus, encourage the group to pray about each area represented in the pictures. A music track based around Joel 2 is provided if you would like to use it as part of your time of prayer and worship.

 **Watch: FaithNet WorldWide – Joel 2 – Sarah & Andrew Ross (7:23)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VekYPnf3duM>

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Incorporating the prayer points raised by the young people, bring the session to a close in prayer.

HAGGAI – GET ON WITH IT!

The people of Israel finally had what they'd always wanted. Due to the decree of King Cyrus, they were able to return home and rebuild the Temple. So, why didn't they get on with it? In our session today we'll explore the message of the prophet Haggai. God was tired with the people's procrastinating ways. It was time to wake them up and call them to action. As we explore the story in more detail, we'll discover how we can avoid procrastination and make sure we play our part in building the Kingdom of God.

WELCOME

🗨️ How would you define procrastination?

The prophet Haggai had a message for the procrastinating Israelites. Before we discover what that message was, let's learn a little bit more about why we procrastinate.

📺 **Watch: Why you procrastinate even when it feels bad (stop at 5:25)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWTNMzK9vG4>

🗨️ When is putting something off a good thing?

🗨️ What is procrastination?

“ ‘Procrastination is when we avoid a task we said we would do, for no good reason, despite expecting our behaviour to bring negative consequences.’

— TED-ED

🗨️ Do you agree/disagree with this definition? Explain your thoughts.

🗨️ According to the clip, how are our bodies trying to protect us when we procrastinate?

🗨️ What kind of tasks are we most likely to avoid completing?

🗨️ What is the difference between laziness and procrastination?

🗨️ What are the results of procrastination?

🗨️ How does the clip suggest that we break the cycle of procrastination?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

In what way do you relate to the following quote?

“ ‘A day can really slip by when you're deliberately avoiding what you're supposed to do.’

— BILL WATTERSON, *THERE'S TREASURE EVERYWHERE*


WORD


Leader's notes: *The main purpose of the 'Word' section is to set the scene of the story and explore the reasons why the people of Israel were reluctant to build God's Temple. There is no need to spend a significant amount of time on these Scriptures. Their main purpose is to set the scene for the book of Haggai and explain the position the people were in when he spoke to them on God's behalf.*

The prophecies of Haggai take place over a relatively short space of time, around four months. One of the unique things about these prophecies is that the Israelites actually listened to what God had to say and turned their procrastination into action.

 Watch: Book of Haggai Summary: A Complete Animated Overview (5:36)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juPvv_xcX-U

 Watch: 0:00-1:20

 Read Ezra 1:1-11:

¹ In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing:

² ‘This is what Cyrus king of Persia says:

“The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. ³ Any of his people among you may go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem, and may their God be with them. ⁴ And in any locality where survivors may now be living, the people are to provide them with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem.”

⁵ Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites – everyone whose heart God had moved – prepared to go up and build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. ⁶ All their neighbours assisted them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with valuable gifts, in addition to all the freewill offerings.

⁷ Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the temple of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his god.


⁸ Cyrus king of Persia had them brought by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.

⁹ This was the inventory:

gold dishes	30
silver dishes	1,000
silver pans	29
¹⁰ gold bowls	30
matching silver bowls	410
other articles	1,000

¹¹ In all, there were 5,400 articles of gold and of silver. Sheshbazzar brought all these along with the exiles when they came up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

After years in exile, the Israelites were finally free to return home and rebuild the Temple. Artefacts that were stolen many years before were returned and they had everything they needed.

 Try and place yourself in their position. What would hearing this decree from King Cyrus have felt like?

As the clip outlined, the story of the rebuilding of the Temple is found in Ezra. In Ezra 2 we find a detailed list of everyone who returned home and read how they settled into the area. The only problem was, they settled in a bit too much!

 Read:

⁸ In the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak and the rest of the people (the priests and the Levites and all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem) began the work. They appointed Levites twenty years old and older to supervise the building of the house of the Lord.

— (EZRA 3:8)

 How long had they been home before they started work on the Temple?




Read:

¹⁰ When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the Lord, as prescribed by David king of Israel. ¹¹ With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord:

“He is good;
his love toward Israel endures for ever.”

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. ¹² But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. ¹³ No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

— (EZRA 3:10-13)



-  How did the people react when the foundation stones were laid? Was everyone shouting for joy?
-  How else did people react and what was the reason for their weeping?
-  Where do you see these differing reactions to new initiatives in your own church or the wider Salvation Army?

The people had waited two years to start working on the Temple and now some were looking back to the past with rose-tinted glasses. It made sense that they needed to grieve what had gone, but now it was time to move forward. If only it was that easy!

Read:

⁴ Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. ⁵ They bribed officials to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.

— (EZRA 4:4-5)



-  What had started to happen as the Israelites tried to continue their building project?
-  What emotions do you think they were starting to attach to rebuilding the Temple?

We need all this background and context to understand the circumstances when we meet the prophet Haggai.

Read Haggai 1:1-2:

¹ In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest:

² This is what the Lord Almighty says: “These people say, “The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord’s house.””

-  Who is on the throne now? What does this suggest about the amount of time that has passed?
-  What is God’s first complaint against the people of Israel?

Almost 20 years after the people returned to build the Temple, very little progress had been made. A new king was on the throne and the people were still procrastinating.

Think back to the procrastination clip that we watched at the beginning of the session, and the background story of the book of Haggai you have discovered so far.

-  What do you think contributed to the people’s inability to get on with building the Temple?

Leader's notes: Encourage the group to focus on the human aspect of this story. Possible discussion points are outlined below.

- 💬 They looked to the past and remembered how the Temple used to be. Without Solomon's wealth, they believed they couldn't build anything that lived up to the glory of the former Temple.
- 💬 When they hit obstacles, they invested their time and energy into other projects. These included building their own houses rather than the Temple.
- 💬 They were fearful of the negative responses of others and the opposition they experienced.
- 💬 They had lost their sense of purpose and couldn't understand why their lives weren't improving.

📺 **Watch: 1:21-3:07**

- 💬 How does God encourage the people to turn away from their distractions and focus on their God-given purpose?

In Haggai 2 the prophet declares that God had said, 'I am with you' (Haggai 2:4). He promised the people that 'the glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house (v9) and reassured them that 'in this place I will grant peace'. With this reassurance from God the people moved forward rebuilding The temple and left their procrastination behind.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

- 💬 In what way do you relate to the experience of the people of Israel as they attempted to rebuild the Temple?

WITNESS

Leader's notes: Although the purpose of The Salvation Army is not the same as the call to the Israelites to rebuild the Temple, God still gave us a specific task to do in his world. Drawing on all the discussions so far, ask the young people, either all together or in small groups, to answer the following question:

- 💬 What can The Salvation Army learn from the book of Haggai?

Give the group/s a piece of flipchart paper and felt-tips. Ask them to reflect on the challenges faced by the people of Israel and apply them directly to the work of The Salvation Army.

- 💬 To what purpose do you think God has called The Salvation Army?
- 💬 How are we living out what God has asked us to do?
- 💬 In what areas are we procrastinating or focusing on the wrong things? What are we focusing on instead?

Give the group/s time to collate their ideas and then share them together.

📺 **Watch:3:08-5:36**

- 💬 After hearing the closing message of the book of Haggai, what do we need to do as a denomination to refocus and move forward in our calling?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

- 💬 In what ways do you think the Israelites blamed others for the lack of progress with the Temple rebuild?
- 💬 Why is it important for us to take responsibility for our part in building God's Kingdom?

WORSHIP


- 💬 What is your response to the following quote from the Bible Project clip?
- 💬 In what way does it connect with you personally?

SMALL GROUP OUTLINES

“The Challenge of Haggai


Our choices really matter! The faithfulness and obedience of God's people is part of how God has chosen to work out his purposes in the world. This surprising truth should motivate humility and action in God's people.'

— BIBLE PROJECT


 What purpose do you think God has called you to today?

We get so caught up in our plans for the future, but we are part of the purpose of God in this world every single day of our lives.

At the beginning of the session, we watched a clip about procrastination and considered some of the ways and reasons that we avoid doing what we need to do.

 Rather than thinking about completing college work or tidying our rooms, how do the points raised in the clip apply to the work God wants us to do in this world?

Although the Ted-Ed procrastination clip is not written from a Christian perspective, we can still learn how to apply it to our faith. Toward the end of the clip, we are given practical advice to avoid procrastination.

 **Watch: Why you procrastinate even when it feels bad (4:18-5:25)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWTNMzK9vG4>

Leader's notes: *Discuss the strategies mentioned in the clip to tackle procrastination. Take each one and explore what it might look like in the life of a follower of Jesus.*

Breaking a task into smaller elements – *Instead of looking at the big picture and the larger issues in society, what small part can we play in building God's Kingdom?*


Journalling – *Although journalling is a worthwhile way of exploring our feelings, what part could prayer play in getting us involved in what God is doing?*

Removing distractions – *What tends to distract us from growing in our faith and focusing on God's purpose for our lives?*

Forgive yourself – *The clip talks about self-forgiveness and self-compassion. As Christians, our sense of worth comes from God rather than ourselves. God is the only place to find grace and compassion. How can we search out his love and grace when we fall into the trap of procrastination?*

Spend some time in prayer, asking God for whatever is needed to stop procrastinating and to get on with what he has called us to do in this world. Just like the people of Israel, we are not alone. God promises he is with us.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 What one aspect of the message of Haggai is most challenging for you? Explain your response.

ZECHARIAH – THE COMING MESSIAH

Throughout the words of the minor prophets there is a continued message of hope as the people of Israel looked to the coming Messiah. The book of Zechariah repeatedly points to Jesus, and we should do the same. We have a message of hope for this world, and in today's session we will focus on the importance of sharing the good news of Jesus.

WELCOME

Leader's notes: *The group will need paper and pencils/felt-tips for this activity. Ask them to draw, without describing out loud, the strangest dream they've ever had. Once they have created their picture, they need to show it to the rest of the group for them to guess the dream. After a few guesses, each member of the group can share the details of the strangest dream they ever had. If they can't remember one to use as an example, then just encourage them to get creative and come up with a dream they would love to have.*

WORD

Leader's notes: *Before you dive into the book of Zechariah, ask the group to recap what they discovered in the book of Haggai. What was going on at the time and what did God have to say to his procrastinating people?*






Haggai and Zechariah both prophesied to the people of Israel at the same time, but they had very different communication styles. Haggai was a straight talker. He told the people to stop building their own houses and focus on building the Temple instead. As you will see, Zechariah had a more mystical approach to sharing God's word.

As the book of Zechariah is 14 chapters long, we'll be taking a whistle-stop tour through its content and focusing on its overall message.


 **Watch: The Prophet Zechariah in 5 Minutes (5:14)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wO3Sxlidp0>

 **Watch: 0:00-2:40**

-  What is the main theme of the prologue of Zechariah?
-  What key word could sum up the theme of all the minor prophets?
-  How many dreams did Zechariah have during the night?
-  Which visions can you remember?
-  What are the main purposes of the visions?
 1. They predict God's protection of his people.
 2. They show God's renewal and purification of the priesthood.
 3. They symbolise the rebuilding of the Temple.
 4. They show God's judgement of evil.
 5. They symbolise the removal of sin from God's people.
 6. They point to the coming of the Messiah.

As this is a whistle-stop tour, we're not going to spend too long on the visions but have a look at Zechariah 4:6.

-  What important message does this verse give us about the way God works in our world?

Read:

6 'So he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty."

— (ZECHARIAH 4:6)

Watch 2:40-3:40





Leader's notes: For this activity the young people are going to match up Scripture references from Zechariah with verses from the New Testament. You can divide the whole group into smaller teams, but you will need one set of Scripture cards for each group. A handout is provided. Make sure the cards are muddled up before you give them to each group. As you can see from the answers below, there is more than one NT reference for some of the Zechariah passages. Give the group time to read and match the Scripture and then discuss what they have discovered.

NB: In Matthew 27:9 Jeremiah is specifically mentioned, but this prophecy was also given by Zechariah.

Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:5	John 12:15
Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:9	
Zechariah 12:10	John 19:37	Revelation 1:7
Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31	Mark 14:27

There are many more references to Jesus in Zechariah. In fact, the prophet's words are quoted in the New Testament more than 40 times.

Watch: 3:40-5:14

-  What are chapters 12-14 about?
-  How is Zechariah a prologue to the New Testament?
-  Read Matthew 23:35. What happened to Zechariah?
-  Zechariah is not a straightforward book to understand, but how would you describe its main message to the people of God?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

If the young people would like to discover more about the book of Zechariah, then watch and discuss the following clip.

Watch: A Summary of the Book of Zechariah – GotQuestions.org (stop at 4:29)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=859lebl1xiw>


WITNESS


The book of Zechariah consistently points to Jesus Christ as the coming Messiah. Our priority as followers of Jesus is to point others to him as the source of hope in our world.

One of the Mission Priorities of The Salvation Army is to 'Share the Good News'.

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

At the heart of The Salvation Army's mission is a passion to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ far and wide. This is not an optional extra. The Salvation Army only does what it does because our inspiration and vision come from people's ongoing relationship with Jesus. We know the difference our relationship with God makes in our lives and we don't want anyone to miss out.

 In what way is pointing to Jesus and sharing the good news at the heart of the mission of The Salvation Army?

 What part do you think you have to play in that mission?

Leader's notes: *The Witness section for today's session will be led by the circumstances and needs of your group. The discussion needs to be centred around ways they can share the good news of Jesus Christ. What do they find challenging when talking to others about Jesus? What resources would help? What can their local church do to support them? A link is also provided for a Salvation Army leaflet, 'Who is this Jesus anyway?' You may want to print off copies for the young people to read and discuss whether this is a useful resource for them to share with friends. Just as Zechariah pointed to Jesus, the aim of this activity is to help the young people find ways to share the good news.*

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Discuss the following quote:

“‘The single most loving act we can do is share the good news of Jesus Christ, that God saves sinners.’


— MATT CHANDLER

How true is this?

WORSHIP

Throughout the words of the minor prophets there is a continued message of hope as the people of Israel looked to the coming Messiah. The book of Zechariah repeatedly points to Jesus, and we should do the same. We have a message of hope for this world.

Leader's notes: *For the time of reflection today, share together the Chris Tomlin song 'Jesus'. When the song has finished, spend time praying for those who need to hear the good news of Jesus. Ask God to equip the young people to share that message with everyone they meet.*

 **Watch: Chris Tomlin – 'Jesus' (Lyrics and Chords) (4:06)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEbQswNB6Wc>

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Read the following Celtic prayer to bring the session to a close.

**May the wisdom of the Wonderful Counsellor direct you,
the strength of the Mighty God protect you,
the love of the Everlasting Father embrace you,
the peace of the Prince of Peace surround you.
Amen.**

Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:5	John 12:15
Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:9	
Zechariah 12:10	John 19:37	Revelation 1:7
Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31	Mark 14:27

MALACHI – JUMPING COWS!


We have reached the final minor prophet in the series. Today, in this cow-themed session, we'll be exploring the book of Malachi, the messenger of God. We'll discover how we can be like the jumping calves of Malachi 4:2 and will recap the minor prophets we have explored throughout the 12 sessions.

WELCOME

Leader's notes: *With minimal introduction, watch the clip of calves running free in a field for the first time. Then, ask the group to give you as many words as they can to describe the calves running free, eg joyful, care-free, happy etc. Write these words on a flipchart sheet and keep them in view for the whole session. You will need to refer to them in the Worship section.*

 **Watch: Calves Run Free for the First Time (0:55)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMZOIwqrtbM>

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY



 Why do you think we've shown you calves in a field and called the session 'Jumping Cows'?

WORD

Our final minor prophet is Malachi. At the time of his prophecy, we join the people of Israel in Jerusalem, around 100 years after they returned from exile. The Temple was built, and they had settled in the land. They had learned from past mistakes and were all faithfully following God's commands.


Hold on! Let's check the beginning of Malachi to see if we've got that right!


Leader's notes: *Read Malachi 1 aloud together. The group members could read a verse each.*

-  What situation do we find the people in at the start of the book of Malachi?
-  Are they behaving out of character or are they behaving in a way we have seen before? Give examples of issues raised by the previous minor prophets.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel found themselves in need of another word from God, and Malachi was chosen to deliver the message. His name literally meant 'messenger of God'.

 **Watch: The Prophet Malachi in 4 Minutes (4:19)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llrwsZ3EyRo&t=42s>

 **Watch: 0:00-2:28**

 What were the main issues God raised with the people in this question-and-answer session?

As always there is a message of hope for those who continue to follow God.


 **Read:**


¹⁶ All those who truly respected the Lord and honoured his name started discussing these things, and when God saw what was happening, he had their names written as a reminder in his book.

¹⁷ Then the Lord All-Powerful said:

You people are precious to me, and when I come to bring justice, I will protect you, just as parents protect an obedient child. ¹⁸ Then everyone will once again see the difference between those who obey me by doing right and those who reject me by doing wrong.

— (MALACHI 3:16-18, CEV)

 What hope is there for those who follow God?

 **Watch: 2:29-4:19**

 How does the book of Malachi lead us into the New Testament?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

If the group would like to discover more about the prophet Malachi, then watch and discuss the following clip.

 **Watch: Book of Malachi Summary: A Complete Animated Overview (7:09)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPGShWZ4Jvk>

WITNESS

Leader's notes: *For the past 12 sessions we have explored the message of the minor prophets. Today the young people will have an opportunity to recap what they have discovered and find a creative way to remember each prophet and their message. They could create a mind-map, mnemonic, spider-diagram or any other creative way of remembering the minor prophets. You may want to bring along the session outlines for the previous sessions to recap the content.*

Here are the session titles:

Session 1: Jonah – When God doesn't play by our rules!

Session 2: Amos – The art of telling it like it is

Session 3: Hosea – The God who keeps on loving

Session 4: Micah – A prophet pointing to Jesus

Session 5: Nahum – A message of hope

Session 6: Zephaniah – The God who sings

Session 7: Habakkuk – The questioning prophet

Session 8: Obadiah – A warning about revenge

Session 9: Joel – A Spirit-filled future

Session 10: Haggai – Get on with it!

Session 11: Zechariah- The coming Messiah

Session 12: Malachi – Jumping cows!

The links below provide additional information if needed:

 **What are the Major Prophets and Minor Prophets?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1bVkko85EQ>


 **If the minor prophets made music (2:42)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDdPf1wef6k>

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

Give the group two minutes to write down the names of as many of the minor prophets as they can and summarise their message without looking at their memory aid.

WORSHIP

 As you have revisited each minor prophet, how would you summarise their overall message?

God called the people to turn away from sin and return to him.

Throughout this series we can see the many ways God's people are capable of disobeying him. We are still called

by God to turn away from sin and return to him. In our worship time today, we are going to write our own prayers of repentance and recommitment to God. We're going to write these prayers on paper cows!

Leader's notes: Give each member of the group a *Jumping Cows* handout. The group may be initially confused about the cow outline, but we are using it as a visual reminder of their recommitment to God and a verse found in the book of Malachi.


If you don't think this handout would connect with your group, then encourage them to complete the exercise by writing their prayers in a way and in a place that they will remember and refer back to.

 **Read:**

2 But for you that honour my name, victory will shine like the sun with healing in its rays, and you will jump around like calves at play.

— (MALACHI 4:2 CEV)


Ask the group to imagine the joy of a young calf playing in the field. Refer them back to the calf clip they watched at the beginning of the session and the words they used to describe the calves. This is the joy that comes with following God. As they write their prayers, play the following song based on the words of Malachi 4.

 **Watch: 'But For You Who Fear My Name' (3:20)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvdSjrgkfYk>

Share a prayer with the group to bring the session to a close.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

 Which minor prophet would you like to discover more about? Explain your response.

