



## WAY OF LIFE | PRACTICE TOOLKIT

# DWELLING

## DWELLING IN THE WORD

### INTRODUCTION

#### ◆ Background

Dwelling in the Word is rooted in the ancient practice of *Lectio Divina*. We hear a passage of Scripture and, guided by the Holy Spirit, see where our attention is drawn. We dwell in the passage, listen and share.

#### ◆ Summary of the practice

Once a Bible passage has been selected, the group hears the passage being read out slowly, listening for a word or phrase that stands out and feels important. This is shared in pairs, after which each listening partner will present to the group what stood out to their partner.

#### ◆ Ways to use the practice

Dwelling in the Word can be a good way to start a PCC, Synod or other church meeting. Use the *Dwelling* practice in small groups; with children, young people and adults; in school as a tool for spiritual reflection or RE lesson; as a family at home; in church as a sermon or creative reading.

Any Bible passage can be used, though some good places to start could be:

- Genesis 32:22-31, Jacob Wrestles
- Exodus 3:1-6, Moses at the Burning Bush

- Exodus 3:11-14, I Am Who I Am
- Micah 6:1-8, What God Requires
- Matthew 3:3-17, The Baptism of Jesus
- Matthew 6:25-34, The Lilies of the Field
- Luke 6:12-19, The Twelve Apostles
- Luke 10:38-42, Mary and Martha
- John 20:11-18, Do Not Hold On To Me
- Acts 2:1-13, Pentecost
- 2 Corinthians 4:1-15, Spiritual Treasure in Clay Pots

You might want to choose one passage and use it throughout or have a more varied diet. As different groups of people meet at different times and in different places, there will be great richness from dwelling in the same passages.

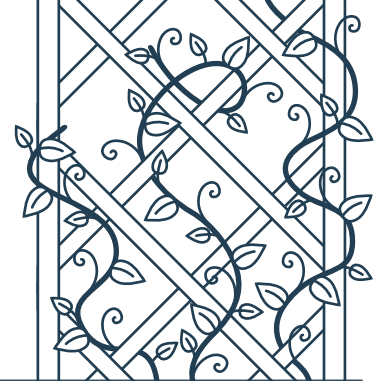
#### ◆ Time

Dwelling in the Word is primarily a listening practice, which needs time. Anything from 15 minutes to an hour. If you are short on time, skip the second reading (step 5) and shorten the amount of sharing time (steps 6-8). If you have lots of time, leave long pauses after each reading. Share in pairs, then groups of four and then the whole group. Reflect together on the experience.



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### OUTLINE

#### 1 Pray

Invite God in prayer, to open ears, hearts and minds. You could use the following prayer, with one person leading and everyone joining in with the words in bold:

God who speaks, hear our prayer.

As we dwell in your life-giving word,  
**May we find deep-rooted delight.**

As we learn to live inside your Kingdom story,

**May our stories find their meaning.**

As we look through the lens of your love,  
**May our perspectives be enlarged.**

As we let go and listen with ears to hear,  
**May we be open to hearing God's voice through others.**

As we catch wind of your gentle whisper,  
**May we find your comfort and challenge.**

Speak God, we are listening.

**Amen.**

#### 2 Passage

Read your chosen Bible passage aloud, slowly.

#### 3 Perceive

Notice where your attention is drawn. It could be a certain verse, phrase or single word. Something that resonates or something that feels strange or raises questions.

#### 4 Pause

Hold silence for a minute or two. Dwell with the place in the passage that stood out for you.

#### 5 Passage

Read the Bible passage again, slowly.

#### 6 Pairs

Share in pairs what you noticed. Each person should speak without being interrupted and both need time to speak. In the next step, you will be asked to share what your partner said, not what you noticed. You might find it helpful to take notes to help you remember.

#### 7 Pass on

Regather as a whole group or organise into groups of four or six. Take turns to introduce your partner by name and share what you heard them say.

#### 8 Ponder

Spend some time reflecting, as a whole group, on the themes arising. What might God be saying to us?

#### 9 Pray

Thank God in prayer, for speaking to the group. You may like to take some time to reflect together on the experience. You could use the following closing prayer:

God, we thank you for your word. A lamp for our feet, a light for our pathways.

May your light shine  
**Restoring your image in us.**

May your light shine  
**Reorientating us within your story.**

May your light shine  
**Reframing the present.**

May your light shine  
**Reimagining the future.**

May your light shine  
**Now and forever. Amen.**

*This practice is an adaptation of the Leicester Diocese Holy Habits resource. Used with permission.*