



Leader Guide – Weekly Gathering
Acts 17:16-34; 8:26-40; 1 Corinthians 9:19-22
November 12, 2006 • Ben Gorman

Opening (5 minutes)

Take time as leaders to welcome people and set a tone of joy and openness in community.

Check-in Time (15 minutes)

How was your week?

Share with the group five people you came in contact with this week? Who did you interact with in your everyday life?

Centering Worship (10 minutes)

Take a moment to imagine Christ being present in our midst. Ask Christ to allow us to open our hearts and minds to ways he wants to stretch us in our lives of faith. Leave a few moments of silence to center on Christ.

Sharing (15 minutes)

Questions you might use during this time:

- Where have you experienced God this week?
- What stood out to you as you used the exercises this week?
- What exercise or section of Scripture caught your attention and why?
- Ask group members to look back over their journals and share some things that catch their attention.
- Ask group members to look back at the last worship gathering on Sunday. Where did they experience God?
- What did you notice (sense, feel, think, learn) this week as we gathered for worship?
- How did God show up in your life this week?
- How have you been intentional in creating space to listen to Christ this week?
- How have you noticed Christ calling you to “live out love” this week?

Group Listening Practice (40 minutes)

Lectio Divina – Acts 17:22-28

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’”

Start by inviting participants to get comfortable, slow down if they need to, and let God catch up with them. You will be reading the same passage slowly through several times. Invite participants to listen

for what God has to say to them individually in this guided listening exercise. Let them know they will have opportunity to share insights toward the end.

- Ask people to simply listen to the passage this first time through. Read Acts 17:22-28 slowly.
- Now ask people to reflect on the passage as it's read. Say, "Listen for how a word or phrase touches your life today." Read the passage. When finished reading the passage, invite people to meditate for a moment on what they noticed and write their response in their notebook or journal. Pause a few minutes for them to reflect and write.
- Now read the passage slowly again. When finished, ask, "What do you sense God is saying to you through this passage?" Invite people to write their responses in their notebook or journal. Pause a few minutes for them to respond and write.
- Now invite participants to rest in God's presence. Encourage them to let their soul reach out and touch God, who is reaching toward them. Leave a few minutes for them to rest in the Spirit.
- Now invite participants to share what they noticed or what God seems to be revealing to them. Leave this time open for a few minutes.
- End with prayer. Invite each group member to silently pray for the person on his or her left. Bring the prayer to a close by saying, "Amen."

Closing (5 minutes)

Bless the participants, that they might find the strength to enter into uncomfortable areas to share the love of Christ with people in their own languages.