

The World is My Parish: Session 4

Opening hymn

Brother, sister let me serve you,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may find the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Richard Gillard © Maranatha Music

Partnership brainstorm

Consider the following questions, so that all the questions are covered within the group:

- Can you brainstorm towards a definition of partnership, including its purpose? (As starting points you might like to think about *'Take your partners for the next dance', the way you were paired off with a partner when walking anywhere in primary school, the use of the term 'partner' for today's quasi-marital relationships.*)
- What partners does your local church have? (these might include the parish, town or county council, churches of other denominations, the arts council, a link parish in another part of the world, the diocese....) Are some of these relationships more of a partnership than others? What marks the relationship as a partnership? How have these partnerships come about?
- What benefits and difficulties might arise from partnerships? (If you're considering the example of church partnerships, you might like to think about benefits and difficulties for the church as a whole, for individuals in the church, for other individuals in the church who are not involved with the partnership, and for the other partner.)

The Magnificat (NRSV)

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

 'My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

 Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

 and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him

 from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;

 he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,

 and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,

 in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

 to Abraham and to his descendants forever.'

The Magnificat (NIV)

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

‘My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me –

holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones

but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things

but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,

remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,

even as he said to our fathers.’

Sending out

Commissioning prayer:

O God, whose word is fruitless
when the mighty are not put down,
the humble remain humiliated,
the hungry are not filled,
and the rich are:

make good your word,

and begin with us.

Open our hearts and unblock our ears

to hear the voices of the poor

and share their struggle;

and send us away empty with longing

for your promises to come true

in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Janet Morley, Bread of Tomorrow (SPCK & Christian Aid, 1992)

A Covenant with God

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours.

Methodist Covenant prayer.



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