**Group Reflection**

How many times have you heard the word *unprecedented* recently? We have experienced a strange, difficult, painful and interesting time. As Christians we are called to believe that God has not abandoned us in it, but has been faithfully present bringing life from death, and making all things new. The desire to respond faithfully to this experience invites us to reflect on how God is, has been and will be present to us. It invites us also to reflect on what we have learnt and what that means for the future.

This reflection is designed to be done in small groups, perhaps by leadership teams of parishes and fresh expressions. You could work through it together, or ask people to jot down some responses and then collect them together. It might work best to send it to people beforehand so that they have chance to think about it, and then gather online to talk through your responses. As with any reflection, don’t rush it and do look as widely as you can at the question so that you notice the things God has been doing around the edges!

**Part One**

For each question, think about the time during which churches have been closed and you have been doing things differently than normal.

1. What have you discovered about “gathered” worship?
2. That you already suspected?
3. That you didn’t know before?
4. What have you discovered about what the church means to people?
5. That you already suspected?
6. That you didn’t know before?
7. What have you discovered about your building:
8. That you already suspected?
9. That you didn’t know before?

What new possibilities has any of this opened up for the next phase?

1. What have you discovered about your local community?
2. That you already suspected?
3. That you didn’t know before?
4. What have you discovered about your calling as church?
5. That you already suspected?
6. That you didn’t know before?
7. What have you discovered about individual gifts in your church and community?
8. That you already suspected?
9. That you didn’t know before?

What new possibilities has any of this opened up for the next phase?

1. What have you discovered about prayer?
2. That you already suspected?
3. That you didn’t know before?
4. What have you discovered about God?
5. That you already suspected?
6. That you didn’t know before?
7. What have you discovered about the Gospel?
8. That you already suspected?
9. That you didn’t know before?

What new possibilities has any of this opened up for the next phase?

1. What have you discovered about Christian teaching?
2. That you already suspected?
3. That you didn’t know before?
4. What have you discovered about discipleship, vocation and evangelism?
5. That you already suspected?
6. That you didn’t know before?
7. What have you discovered about the Diocese or the national Church of England?
8. That you already suspected?
9. That you didn’t know before?

What new possibilities has any of this opened up for the next phase?

**Part 2**

Leave at least a week between part 1 and part 2. When you reconvene, collect everything you have noted about new possibilities that have been opened up for the next phase.

Offer these to God in prayer. Ask God to lead your discussion and to give you a God’s vision for the next phase of your church.

Take each point you have made in the summary sections (ie the What new possibilities has any of this opened up for the next phase? Section)

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Reflect on the opportunity and challenge each one offers

Make a note of the outcomes of the reflection and discussion. You may also want to decide what the next step is for each point.

*The Diocese of Lichfield is committed to listening to and learning from your experiences during this time. If there is anything that has come out of this reflection you would like to share or feedback, please email Lindsey.Hall@lichfield.anglican.org*