

Case Study

Screening TV show '*The Chosen*'

Starting Out

Church of the Holy Spirit, Etching Hill, (Rugeley) started Screening episodes of the popular TV show '*The Chosen*' (a fictional television series which tells the story of Jesus through the eyes of his contemporaries).

Who set it up?

The church had existing parallel small groups established on a Monday evening and on Wednesday afternoon. The screenings were set up by the leaders of the 2 groups Kathy and Kate. They both have experience and skills in leading small groups.

Why was it set up?

Summer (August) gave the opportunity to break from the previous studies the small groups had done (e.g. books of the bible, Ruth, Haggai, Philemon etc) and do something different.

They were inspired to develop their small group offer and start screenings of *The Chosen* when they heard about it being done by another church in the deanery at a synod meeting.

Kate says "When I started this, I hadn't seen any episodes at all, so I watched the first one and googled questions to go with it. Various sites offered questions and I picked and chose according to my anticipated audience." "The audience' is made up of churchgoers many of whom have a deep faith and are happy talking about it, so my role is often more of facilitator than leader as such."

They had considered having to watch all of the episodes first and getting all the preparation done before they started – they found this wasn't necessary.

Guiding principles

Successes/achievements

Kathy says "We have been blown away by the videos and have had some very fruitful discussions after each session. *The Chosen* has brought Jesus and His ministry so much more to life and it has inspired people to go back to their Bibles to research or re-read passages with so much more enthusiasm and excitement!"

Marketing – how did you get people there?

The group at Etching Hill ranges between 8-12 people which is good for discussion. As an existing group, little marketing was needed, but anyone wanting to replicate this activity can find marketing resources at <https://www.comeandseefoundation.org/resources> I would suggest that this can be run with those with little or no church experience (see things to think about) so marketing your session to newcomers via social media and other local communication networks could work well as an outreach activity.

Things to think about

When I visited, it was clear that the space used for the sessions is key. The church sanctuary area at Etching Hill – the hall was being used for another activity - lent itself well. It was free of noise and distractions, and the light was suitable. There was a very large screen with comfortable chairs and they did use subtitles on the video. It could be run in someone's home if the space fitted this criteria – with suitable safeguards in place.

I suggest you get to know your audience – if they have little biblical knowledge, do explore that this isn't purely a re-telling but an adaptation. The group facilitators at Etching Hill ensured discussion covered what is included for dramatic effect and storylines added by the producers/ directors as opposed to what appears in scripture.

How to do it

In this church, the leaders watch the episode the night before and prepare the questions/ sheets. They print sheets of discussion questions ready.

They offered refreshments on arrival to create a warm, hospitable welcome and started with a prayer (if you need suggested wording do let us know).

N.B. Sessions could be run thematically rather than episode by episode – see topics at [Come and See - Free Chosen Resources for Your Church](#) but it may need some familiarity with the series to do this.

What might be the challenges

The leaders shared how discussion can sometimes digress into casting / what people would have looked like / how they were depicted (Jesus in particular) which didn't add to deepening their discipleship. The discussions about interpretation of scripture could get complex.

As with any small group, encouraging contributions from those less comfortable with speaking out might be a challenge. Also be mindful of encouraging application of what is discussed to every day life and faith.

What responses did we observe/record/notice

When I visited, the audiences were enthralled and absolutely transfixed by the drama. Responses to the moments of humour as well as the serious scenes created a relaxed atmosphere which prompted open discussion.

Resources

You will need either the DVD or facilities to stream the episodes from
<https://watch.thechosen.tv/page/home>

Discussion Notes are available from <https://resources.comeandseefoundation.org/>

Connections to our overall diocesan plan

Workstream – Feeding Our Faith

Priority - Developing Discipleship

Contact

If you need support in setting up screenings of The Chosen in your church, feel free to contact our Whole Life Discipleship Officer Helen Emery via helen.emery@lichfield.anglican.org or on [07498 192669](tel:07498192669) and she would be happy to visit you.

By Helen Emery, last updated 13th January 2026