**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 3 of 4

# On the beach

### MEETING AIM

To capture something of the extraordinary Jesus, who is with us in the ordinary.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

John 21:1-19

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your situation.

This passage is such a wonderful example of Jesus being completely extraordinary, but also sharing in something as ordinary as breakfast with us. The session aims to capture something of both the extraordinary, understanding better who Jesus is through his miracles and the amazing things that he did with the disciples that are echoed in this passage, but also that Jesus is still with us today in our own ordinary lives that begin with breakfast, just like they did for the disciples all of those years ago! Open the session with breakfast foods together, and enjoy the novelty and disruption of it, and the bizarreness of having breakfast with Jesus after the resurrection.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

As people join you, share any refreshments you have. Ask the group to ask them to share what they have been doing during the past seven days. Chat about the different breakfasts you have had before coming to the group. What breakfast food is people’s favourite?

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

Play a game of ‘Halibut or hairstyle’. This list is a mixture of fish and hairstyle names. The group has to decide which is a fish and which is a hairstyle. You could split into two teams and deliver prizes to the winners.

Dab (fish), pompadour (hairstyle), silver pomfret (fish), gooseneck (fish), fauxhawk (hairstyle), beehive (hairstyle), grey mullet (fish), tonsure (hairstyle), John Dory (fish), ducktail (hairstyle), kingklip (fish), fishtail (hairstyle), Ivy League (hairstyle), pouting (fish), bouffant (hairstyle)

### BIBLE EXPLORATION – 10 mins

**You will need:** study Bibles

The passage in John 21 is so resonant of other Bible stories, and everything that happened in it would have been so packed with meaning for the disciples, based on their time with Jesus before his death and resurrection. Read the passage together and split the group up into smaller groups to do a forensic study, thinking back to other Bible stories that help us understand this passage better. Make sure the groups have Bibles with good indexes in, and encourage them to use them, thinking about the different parts of the passage that give us clues about or remind us about other things that Jesus is drawing on in these stories. Alternatively, they can search the internet for background information.

Ask the groups to give feedback and share the other stories that they thought of and why they might be better linked to this passage. How do these other stories help us understand who Jesus is? What might be going on for the disciples as they remember the things that have happened before.

It might be helpful to fill in the gaps with this list of other stories that today’s passage overlaps with:

* The disciples’ calling to follow Jesus with the first miraculous catching of fish (Luke 5:1-11)
* Peter walking on water (Matthew 14:22-33)
* Jesus and Peter – the three times Peter denied Jesus (John 18:15-18;25-27)
* Peter’s denial of Jesus foretold with shepherd imagery (Matthew 26:31-35)
* Shepherds visiting Jesus (Luke 2:8-20)
* Jesus’ metaphor of being a shepherd to lost sheep (John 10)
* King David of the Old Testament was a shepherd (Psalm 23).

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Chat about the story using these questions, encouraging everyone to join in if they want to:

* What do you think the miraculous catch of fish says about Jesus?
* Why do you think Jesus appeared to the disciples while they were fishing?
* What do you think Jesus was asking of Peter in their conversation? How do you think Peter would have felt about that?
* What would have changed for the disciples after that encounter with Jesus?
* What would you talk about with Jesus if you shared breakfast together on a beach?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

**You will need:** credit-card sized cards with a fish outline drawn on one side and a lamb on the other; pens

In this passage we see the metaphors of fish and lambs. At the start of their journey together, Jesus asked the disciples to become “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17, NKJV), and here he asks Peter to become a shepherd. If he didn’t mean that literally, what did he mean?

Ask the group to consider who might be the ‘fishes’ and ‘lambs’ that Jesus would ask us to fish for and shepherd (respectively!) today?

Ask the group to take a pen and write the names of people or groups on the card that they might consider metaphorical fish or lambs in the world today, and to take the card to tuck away somewhere like a wallet or pocket as a reminder of who Jesus asks us to be to these people as his disciples today.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** A5 paper and pens

The idea of Jesus sharing breakfast with us on a beach is so beautiful. Through the Holy Spirit, we can share breakfast with Jesus in prayer, and join in the celebration of Jesus being alive with us today, but also to begin the day starting with a reminder that Jesus has left us his work to carry on with.

Ask the group to write their own breakfast prayers in response to everything you’ve spoken about today, on sheets of A5. Ask them to stick the prayers somewhere they’ll encounter daily in their morning routines, like a mirror or on their cereal box! Encourage them to write prayers that capture some of the joy of sharing breakfast with Jesus, but also prayer that Jesus would help them continue the work he’s left for us since his resurrection.

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