


# Vineyard Discipleship Year

Church Handbook

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# WELCOME

Hello,

Thank you for taking the time to consider partnering with Vineyard Churches UK & Ireland (VCUKI) to run a Vineyard Discipleship Year at your local church.

It is amazing to hear what God is doing among our young people across the nations. Over the last couple of years, we have heard incredible stories of young people hungering after the presence of the Lord, and seeing his power working in their lives. We've seen more and more young people stepping out in faith and they are witnessing the Lord do incredible things as they partner with him.

Through Vineyard movement events like Dreaming the Impossible (DTI) and The Cause to Live For (CTLF), we've sought to create spaces where young people from across the church can gather, be equipped and sent out to their local communities.

As a movement, we have heard many stories of salvations, healings, young people stepping out and starting Christian gatherings in schools, Alpha Youth groups and much more. We've been really encouraged by the many baptism stories we have heard.

Thank you for being willing to go on this journey and make a kingdom investment in the lives of young people; one that will go far beyond anything that you can see in the here and now. Our hope is that you are also blessed as you witness first hand what the Lord does in the lives of those who surrender to him.

DTI / CTLF / Training

# VINEYARD DISCIPLESHIP YEAR

Vineyard Discipleship Year is a resource designed for local churches, equipping passionate young adults to live with purpose as they seek the extension of God's kingdom in their lives and their local communities.

As VCUKI, we recognise that many Vineyard churches would love to run a discipleship year. But, considerations of staff, preparing and delivering content and making sure it's of high value year after year can often be a barrier. It's not always possible.

With the Vineyard Discipleship Year, we have created an accessible resource with prepared material that you can pick up and use in your local setting. These resources have been curated by members of the DTI, CTLF and Training teams who have collaborated to create a year-long program which can be used flexibly by churches across the movement.



# COURSE INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Vineyard Discipleship Year is designed to be run over three terms following an academic schedule. In most regions this means that discipleship years will run during the following months:

**Term 1** Sept - Dec

**Term 2** Jan - Apr

**Term 3** Apr - July

The resource is aimed at individuals between the ages of 18 and 25 (17-25 in Scotland).

## **Annual Rhythm - Regional Flexibility**

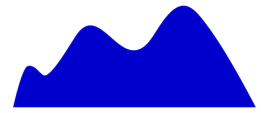
Each term has 12 weeks of ½ a day's worth (4 hours) of planned content ready for you to use with your participants.

We recognise that holidays across regions vary quite significantly and so we have produced the course in a way that allows you to have the flexibility to decide when the year will begin in your setting and when holidays will happen during each of the terms.

**There is only one fixed date for the year, and this is the Vineyard Discipleship Year residential, which will run from 8th October to 10th October.**



# CURRICULUM



The year contains pre-recorded sessions that form the basis of the three 12 week terms\*. We've drawn some of the best speakers and practitioners across our movement and beyond to share, encourage and inspire through their own stories and learning.

Each week participants have a mix of pre-work, activation questions and follow-up tasks to complete. Vineyard Discipleship Year covers three main teaching themes across the three terms. These are:

- **Theology: Who is God? [UP]**

This branch of the curriculum gives all discipleship year participants access to two Vineyard Theological Training modules: The New Testament Survey and The Old Testament Survey. In addition to these modules there are other sessions across the year that touch on this theme focussing on who God is, his kingdom rule and reign. Some examples of subjects covered in this theme include: God's goodness, God's sovereignty, the power of the Holy Spirit and God of the impossible.

- **Christian Identity: Who am I? [IN]**

This branch of the curriculum gives all Discipleship year participants a chance to learn who they are in Christ and more about how he calls them to live in relationship with the world around them. There is a personal identity and relationship focus to all of these sessions. Some examples of subjects covered in this theme include: identity, calling, friendship, accountability, confession and sexuality.

\*You may decide to shorten or lengthen your terms according to your own local rhythms.

- **Discipleship Practices: How does he want me to live? [OUT]**

Through this theme, participants have the opportunity to learn about different spiritual disciplines and practices. Also included here is a particular emphasis on evangelism and outreach. Some examples of subjects covered in this theme include: worship, stewardship, silence and solitude, sabbath and prayer.

**Learning Outcomes:**

To support participant's reflection and learning across the year, we have also created learning outcomes that fall under the following five learning areas:

- Vision and Calling
- Communication
- Spiritual & Emotional Capacity
- Gathering & Mission
- Leadership & Multiplication

You can find these listed in detail under the learning outcomes section on the training platform. We recommend that you give participants time to engage with these over the course of the year.



# FACILITATOR ROLE

**In order to run a Vineyard Discipleship Year, churches must be willing and able to provide a facilitator who will journey alongside participants. This could be a paid member of the church staff team or a very experienced volunteer.**

The role of a Vineyard Discipleship Year Facilitator is to support and guide participants as they journey through the course. Facilitators create a safe, encouraging environment where participants can reflect, ask questions, and discuss what they're learning.

Facilitators will also oversee each participant's local serving opportunities and will host participants whenever teaching input takes place.

The key responsibilities of facilitators are listed below:

- Build relationships with participants
- Host weekly teaching sessions, guiding discussions, reflections and activation moments
- Create space for response through individual prayer, corporate prayer and ministry opportunities
- Liaise with church staff and / or ministry leaders to ensure participants are well-placed and supported in their serving
- Keep track of attendance, progress, and any pastoral needs that may arise
- Communicate with the central Vineyard team when needed (feedback)

We would anticipate that this would take 1 day a week of someone's paid / volunteer time.

# FACILITATOR SUPPORT

Throughout the year, we will run termly Facilitator Connect evenings for all facilitators. These moments give facilitators an opportunity to hear directly from the Vineyard Discipleship Year team and to connect with other facilitators across the regions.

Dates for this year are:

- 17th September 2025
- 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026
- 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

# TEACHING INPUT

## Time Commitment

It is entirely up to the facilitator when the teaching component of the discipleship year is run. You have the flexibility to run it as a morning, afternoon or evening session but you will need around 3 - 4 hours each week to facilitate the content. You may decide that it works better to spread teaching across the week. You have the flexibility to decide what works best for your setting.

30 mins	Weekly Catch up
1 hour	Session 1 w/ Activation & Discussion
1 hour	Session 2 w/ Activation & Discussion
1 hour	Prayer / Reflection / Activation activity

## Identifying a Learning Space

We would recommend that you identify a space you will use each week for the teaching component of the discipleship year. Identifying a consistent space means you are able to consider how you can set it up as best as possible for participants coming to learn together.

All participants have different ways of learning and the activities designed for this year aim to reflect that. You may find that you have to adapt your space to ensure that all participants can learn in a way that is helpful for them.

Things you may want to consider:

- Set up of room - some people struggle in a formal learning environment, is there scope for formal and informal? Tables for those who would like to type/write, other chairs/space for the listeners?
- Space to move: some people find sitting for prolonged periods really hard and uncomfortable; what space do you have for people to move around? How can you make space for this with your language and your layout?
- Space for questions: although there is planned content for each week, how can you make space for spontaneous questions, thoughts and learning?



# SERVING GUIDANCE AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Local Serving

Alongside the teaching content of the year there should be space for participants to serve in their local sphere. The amount of serving will depend on the participant and the church and how much they are able to offer. [We would recommend that participants serve at least one day in the life of their local church \(in addition to Sunday serving\).](#)

Some churches choose to give participants the chance to serve in one ministry area (for example, youth) while others give participants a taste of different ministries and spaces. You should decide what this looks like in your local context. Below are some examples of tasks and outlines for participants' serving days.

## Administrative Responsibilities

You may give participants some administrative responsibilities that help support the running of the church. This could include Sunday service prep, team emails, welcome packs, notice creation etc.

## Event Preparation

This could include a whole range of different tasks - researching, planning with team, buying materials for the event itself, performing delegated tasks etc.

## Problem Solving

It might be that there is a problem you are looking to overcome within the life of your church / or a ministry area e.g. engaging with the community, starting a new youth ministry, developing outreach connections etc. Whatever it might be, bring your participant(s) into a conversation developing some ideas around this & if appropriate delegate actions.





## Community Engagement

Perhaps you are looking to make greater links with various stakeholders in your community (health visitors, refuge centres, schools, befriending agencies, Community Psychiatric Nurses). Whatever it might be, you could delegate the development of these relationships to your discipleship year participant.

## Participants Serving Schedule

### Example 1 - Compassion / Outreach Serving

9:00	Meet with compassion leader for prayer and team time
9:30	Food Bank prep (sorting donations, organising shelves, packing parcels etc )
11:30	Volunteer with lunch drop in or community café (serving food, chatting with guests, listening well)
12:30	Lunch
13:30	Join team planning to consider new outreach events
14:30	Help create social media content or flyers for the next community event
15:30	Reset rooms for next use / Sunday service

## Participants Serving Schedule

### Example 2 - Youth Ministry Serving

12:30	Planning session with youth pastor (review the night's program, prep discussion questions, brainstorm games)
13:30	Set up the youth space (chairs, lights, AV, snacks, etc.)
15:00	Admin tasks (social media content, birthday cards for youth, emailing parents, resource prep)
17:00	Dinner
18:00	Team Time before youth arrival
19:00	Youth Night
21:00	Clean up and team debrief

## National & Regional Serving

Across the year there are opportunities for participants to get involved and serve together at national and regional events.

Serving at these national and regional events allows the participants to continue to deepen friendships made during the year and still receive input alongside others from their generation. There are several national and regional opportunities for serving across Vineyard Discipleship Year:

- Dreaming The Impossible
- The Cause to Live For
- The Vineyard Leaders' Gathering
- Scotland and Ireland Regional Gatherings



# VINEYARD DISCIPLESHIP YEAR RESIDENTIAL

The Vineyard Discipleship Year residential allows all participants of the discipleship year from across the regions to come together for a couple of days of teaching, community, connection, fun and ministry.

During this time we will cover some subjects that require a little more time and sensitivity in the unpacking. The residential will be facilitated by members of the DTI and Cause to Live For teams, drawing in speakers from across the movement and beyond to share and invest.

The residential cost for all discipleship year participants is included in the cost of the course but costs for any discipleship year facilitators attending should be covered by the local church.

The location and dates for the residential can be found [here](#).



# VINEYARD DISCIPLESHIP YEAR RESIDENTIAL

## INTRODUCING CORE GROUPS

During the residential participants will be placed into CORE groups, that they will then meet with through the rest of their discipleship year on a weekly / fortnightly basis for one hour.

The CORE groups will include four people and will happen once a week for the duration of the discipleship year. Participants will be connected across regional areas and so groups will happen via Zoom / Google Meets.

CORE groups will look at four areas each week:

- CONFESSION
- OTHERS
- READING SCRIPTURE
- ENCOURAGEMENT

This session will be shared with facilitators before the residential to ensure they know what is covered but the responsibility falls on participants to organise their core group meets.



# PARTICIPANT SUPPORT

## **SUPPORT MENTOR**

Participants should be given a support mentor from their local church who journeys alongside them.

The primary role of the mentor is to listen, encourage and challenge participants, where appropriate, as they journey through the year with the Lord. The support mentor will get to know the participant and will meet with them fortnightly throughout the year.

We recommend regularly checking in with mentors and participants to ensure that meetings are happening. Regular check-ins also mean that mentors feel supported in their role too.

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**

As with any intensive discipleship program, there will be moments across the year when participants require further support beyond what facilitators are able to provide. We would encourage you to be mindful of moments when participants might require input from any of the following support services:

- GP / Other medical professionals
- Counselling
- Inner healing ministries
- Pastors / Pastoral teams



## HELPFUL POLICIES

We recommend creating policies and procedures that you can signpost participants to while participating in the year. Further guidance and support is available on this via the Church Induction Course, including templates and guidance for policies such as:

- Safeguarding
- Complaints
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety

In addition to this, you might also find it helpful to share your local church's guidance on absence and ministry guidelines.

# PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

For the duration of the year, we ask all participants to sign up to the following expectations. We recommend going over these with participants at the beginning of the year.

## RELATIONSHIPS

- Avoid any kind of behaviour that would be destructive or harmful to the lives of those participating in the discipleship year, in the church and beyond.
- Seek reconciliation whenever necessary to keep relationships healthy. This includes being willing to take responsibility when appropriate for any mistakes made.
- Actively seek out opportunities to bless those in your home, your community and your church family.
- Demonstrate respect, kindness and care in all interactions with church staff, Vineyard Discipleship Year staff and other discipleship year participants throughout the course.

## ATTITUDE

- Openness and honesty are core values in all our interactions but most specifically in your interactions with your discipleship year mentor.
- Jesus modelled a servant hearted approach in all that he did and as his followers, we want to do the same.
- Being teachable means that we are willing to learn, to grow and to be shaped by those around us. This is an important part of our discipleship as we allow Jesus to shape us through our learning.
- Punctuality and reliability are a fundamental part of your year as you step into a new rhythm. Be aware that any lateness or lack of reliability has a significant impact on those around you.



- For the duration of the discipleship year, participants are submitted to the leading of their group facilitator(s) and local leaders.
- Deadlines must be upheld by all participants. This includes all payment and teaching deadlines set as part of the course.
- Participants must observe all policies for the duration of the discipleship year. This includes policies relating to absence, conduct and disciplinary processes. You can find out more about these policies by speaking to your discipleship year facilitator or another senior leader in your church.

## CONTACT THE TEAM

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If you require any further assistance you can contact the team on [training@vcuki.org.uk](mailto:training@vcuki.org.uk)