

Come and See 2023

campaign evaluation

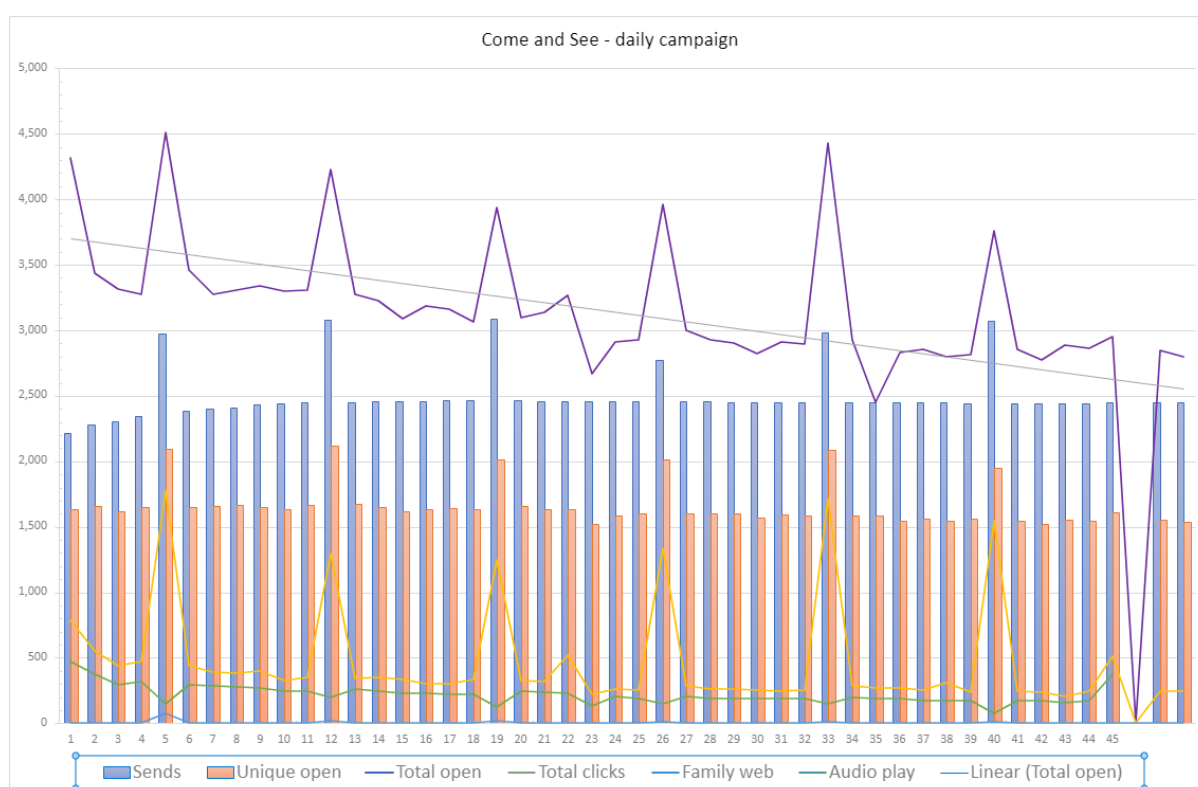
"I found I looked forward every day to being fed and finding new ways to strengthen my faith! The whole of Lent was very uplifting!"

Introduction and executive summary

- Come and See was developed by the Diocese of Oxford in 2021 as a free online experience to explore spirituality and help people find out more about the Christian faith.
- Come and See 2023 took place over 48 days, starting in March. Those who registered received short daily emails to reflect on and a weekly short film. The theme for 2023 was the Beatitudes.
- We undertook an evaluation to understand a little more about those who registered for emails and/or attended a small group for Come and See. One third of those who participated in Come and See participated in a survey conducted after Easter.
- The evaluation consisted of a desktop review of data captured from YouTube, Vimeo, Soundcloud and Mailchimp. The analysis of survey data was undertaken by Dr Bev Botting.
- Come and See 2023 has built on firm foundations laid in 2021 and 2022. It's clear that Come and See is now valued and established as part of the diocesan calendar.
- We held the attention of c. 1,600 people per day throughout Lent who were directly in touch with us. We know the emails are shared onwards, this happens throughout the week but particularly so on a Sunday when the films are released. The total open rate for emails during the 2023 campaign was 150,000.
- Consistently, our key finding with Come and See is that once people sign up, they stay. The challenge for 2024 has to be increasing promotional activity to encourage further sign ups.
- Our current audience for the materials led by +Steven is mainly church goers in their 60's and above.
- This year we extended Come and See to include 6 films for Schools, Youth and Childrens groups, this appears to have been well received, though we need to improve how we capture metrics in this area as the predominant mechanism is download and show to class or group. Assuming films were used and allowing for a small group size, total downloads of 182 might well indicate a youth audience of in excess of 1,500 though we cannot evidence this.
- What we do know is that engagement with the Sunday family emails by CYF workers and others was good in terms of open rate, though the clickthrough to extended family materials was poor compared to the other Come and See emails. Outside of classroom and CYF group leader materials, it's clear that family recipients need a single and simple action to take each week.
- The chaplaincy films also taught us more about optimising 'discoverability' on YouTube. Techniques that can be used for the +Steven films in 2024. However, as we can see from the data, discoverability doesn't necessarily translate to increased views.

What does the sign up and usage data tell us?

- 246 people registered as church organisers for 2023, slightly higher than in 2022. With Come and See now well-established, it was notable that sign ups happened during January and February.
- The average conversion rate for individuals (the percentage of people signing up after clicking a web link) dipped to 49.8 percent (54.7 percent last year), though this remains a high figure.
- As we saw in 2021 and 2022, it took around two weeks before audience numbers to peak as people continue to sign up for emails during this time.
- 81 people unsubscribed during the campaign, compared to 60 in 2022 and 49 in 2021. However, taken as a proportion of the total Come and See audience (when we had the largest number of subscribers) unsubscribes fell from 4.5% in 2021 to 3.6% in 2022 and to 3.3% in 2023. At the end of Come and See 2023, however, we had 11% more subscribers than at the beginning of the campaign.
- Average unique open rate across the 2023 campaign was 66.4%, 5 percentage points higher than in 2022 and 6 percentage points higher than 2021. Open rates (orange bar and yellow line in the chart below) decreased slowly through the campaign, falling from 72% in the first week of Come and See to 67% in week 3, 65% in week 5 and 63% in the final week. This is much higher than an average diocesan campaign. Industry average open rates for religion/non-profit campaigns is 25-27%



1. Video and audio performance

- Soundcloud audio was listened to more times than the clicks show (average 284 listens vs. Circa 216 click links). Both figures are higher than 2022. A significant issue this year was SoundCloud auto playback of a news track. We recommend moving away from SoundCloud to the podcast platform next year.
- Video impressions and average percent viewed told an interesting story this year. 2023 was the first year to show chaplaincy films aimed at a younger audience. We can see the YouTube algorithm served the testimony films (those files with an 'FS' suffix) more times, but they were clicked through to much less.
- Another innovation was the longer Q&A format film with +Steven at the end of Come and See. The numbers demonstrate that long-form content works on occasion. Also worth noting is the necessity of six films in the teaching series to maintain engagement.

| Video | Impressions | Total views | Average view |
|-------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| V1 | 2800 | 1867 | 1075 |
| V1FS | 3600 | 594 | 234 |
| V2 | 2300 | 1296 | 849 |
| V2FS | 2600 | 209 | 72 |
| V3 | 2300 | 1225 | 801 |
| V3FS | 1700 | 176 | 64 |
| V4 | 2500 | 1060 | 717 |
| V4FS | 1900 | 168 | 59 |
| V5 | 1300 | 899 | 654 |
| V5FS | 1500 | 288 | 135 |
| V6 | 1500 | 892 | 593 |
| V6FS | 1600 | 91 | 38 |
| V7Q | 4100 | 1393 | 369 |

- The testimony films were less successful this year and we recommend a change in approach next year, using the slots to promote participation in Come and See. This links well with the proposed theme for 2024.
- Films were also available for preview, then download and local use in churches. It is not possible to estimate total views of downloaded films (one download may be shown to a small group, or even the congregation).
- In 2021 many churches were using Come and See video content as part of their Church at Home services during the pandemic. We were pleased to see download numbers recover significantly in 2023 (excluding testimonies), reflecting the number of churches using the films with their congregations.

| Downloads (excludes previews) | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|
| +Steven film 1 | 134 | 45 | 94 |
| +Steven film 2 | 92 | 35 | 92 |
| +Steven film 3 | 79 | 30 | 93 |
| +Steven film 4 | 74 | 44 | 96 |
| +Steven film 5 | 57 | 33 | 92 |
| +Steven film 6 | 76 | n/a | n/a |
| Testimony 1 | 10 | 10 | 91 |
| Testimony 2 | 5 | 4 | 94 |
| Testimony 3 | 5 | 6 | 91 |

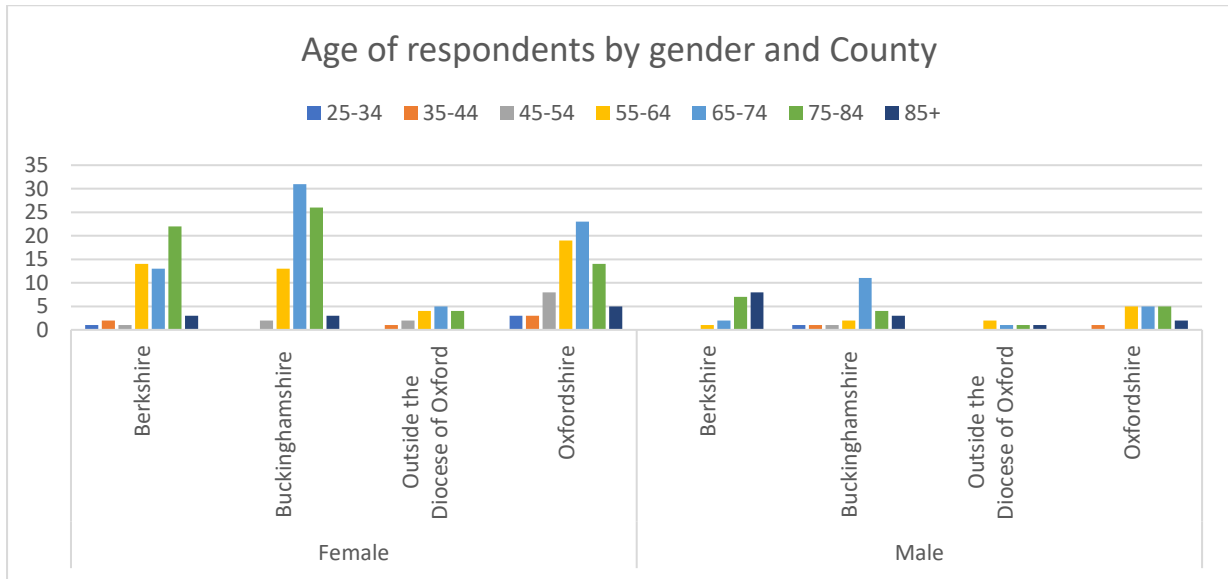
Summary of 2023 findings from individuals

- Four in every five respondents (79%) said they had signed up to Come and See as they wanted to go deeper with their faith. Just four percent said their faith had lapsed and they were exploring returning to faith, and two respondents said they were exploring faith for the first time.
- Half of all respondents had been part of Come and See in previous years, and a further quarter of respondents had heard about it in church. The remainder were equally likely to have found out about it from e-News, the diocesan website or from someone else. One person mentioned twitter and another LinkedIn as how they found out about Come and See.
- Respondents were asked both whether they had shared the invitation to join Come and See and whether they had forwarded any of the daily Come and See emails. One third of respondents had shared the invitation to join Come & See, and one in five respondents had forwarded one or more of the daily emails to someone else. Overall, 17% of respondents had done both.
- Just over half (56%) of respondents found the daily nature of the emails most helpful. In 2022 several people had commented that the daily emails arrived too late for their morning time of reflections, so this year the emails were scheduled for 6.30am. There were no comments on timing this year, so this small change proved helpful.
- Three quarters of respondents found the reflections most helpful, just over one half (52%) found the Bible readings most helpful. Over one third (36%) of respondents found the videos to be one of the most helpful elements of Come & See. Almost all (97%) of these respondents rated the videos to be helpful or very helpful. Two thirds of those who did not include the videos in their most helpful elements still rated the videos helpful or very helpful. Not everyone watched the weekly videos so this will have affected the proportion of overall respondents who found the videos most helpful.
- Most (86%) respondents engaged in Come and See alone. The remaining respondents shared their Come & See journey with one other adult except in one case where there were two additional adults. Just three respondents also shared their Come & See experience with children.
- One third (32.2%) of respondents had attended attend a Come and See small group or discussion group or had had direct contact with their local church about Come and See. This is a similar proportion to 2021 and 2022. A further 16% of respondents had been offered such a group but had been unable to attend.

- Overall, 11% of respondents (one third of those who had attended a small group) were offered a one-to-one conversation with someone to encourage them or invite them to embark upon a Personal Discipleship Plan (PDP). This is about the same level as in 2022, but a smaller proportion compared to 2021, when it was closer to 15%.
- Two thirds of respondents (66%) agreed (giving scores 7-10) that Come and See had encouraged them to find out more or to go deeper into their faith, and one quarter of respondents (25%) gave the highest scores of 9 and 10. These are the same proportions as in 2022.
- Respondents were asked whether they would recommend Come and See to others. Three in four of all respondents (77%) answered positively (scale 7-10) with almost half (48%) giving the highest scores of 9 or 10. These are slightly higher proportions than in 2022.
- Three quarters (76%) of the respondents were female and one in five (21%) were male, which is similar to 2022. Male respondents were on average older than the females, with 74% of the men being aged 65 and over, compared with 66% of the women. However, this is a smaller proportion of men being aged 65 or over than in 2022. Only 5% of respondents of either gender was aged 44 or under.

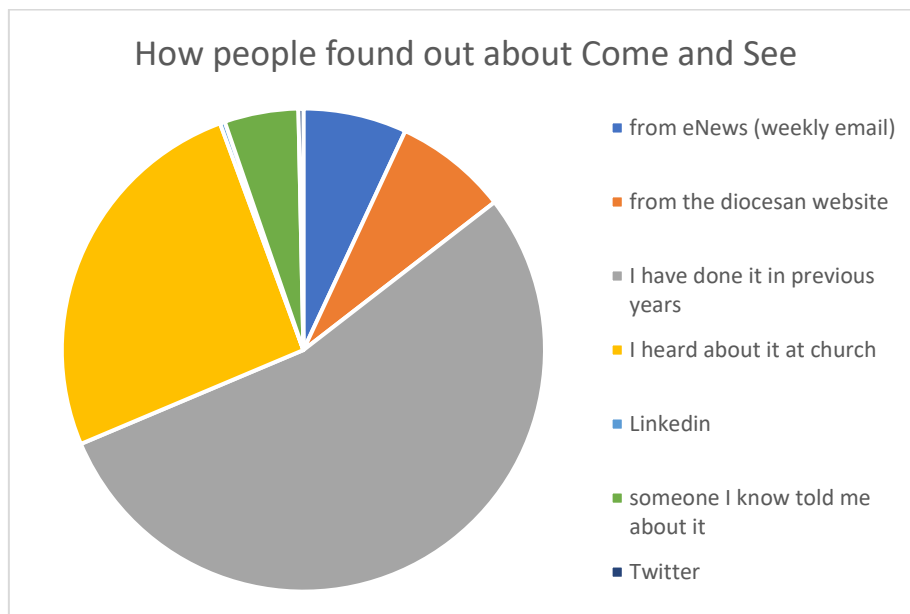
Who Responded?

- We received responses from 320 people who had engaged with Come and See during Lent 2023. By day 18 2,465 people received the daily emails ('subscribers') and 1,635 opened them. This represents a survey response rate of 20% of those who had opened the emails, and 13% of all subscribers. This is a much lower response rate than in 2022 despite having a much higher number of subscribers and unique opens. In 2022 by day 18 1695 people received the daily emails and 1063 opened them; a response rate of 30% of those who had opened the emails, and 19% of all subscribers. In 2021 there were far fewer subscribers (884) and 137 people (15%) responded to the evaluation survey. So, in 2023 we had 43% more subscribers, and 54% more people open the emails than in 2022 yet received about the same number of respondents.
- Three quarters (76%) of the respondents in 2023 were female and one fifth (21%) male. A greater proportion of respondents were female compared to earlier years and a smaller proportion were male. This varied by Archdeaconry, with about one quarter of the respondents from Buckinghamshire and Berkshire being male, compared with fewer than one in five (19%) in Oxfordshire.
- Male respondents were on average older than the females, with 74% of the men being aged 65 and over, compared with 66% of the women. However, this is a smaller proportion of men being aged 65 or over than in 2022. Only 5% of respondents of either gender were aged 44 or under. The age distribution of respondents also varied by Archdeaconry, from 83% of male respondents from Berkshire being aged 65 and over, compared with 75% of male respondents from Buckinghamshire and 67 per cent of male respondents from Oxfordshire. All these proportions, however, were lower than in 2022.



How they found Out about Come and See 2023

- Half of all respondents had been part of Come and See in previous years, and a further quarter of respondents had heard about it in church. The remainder were equally likely to have found out about it from e-News, the diocesan website or from someone else. This demonstrates the importance of audience retention (word of mouth) and local church promotion.

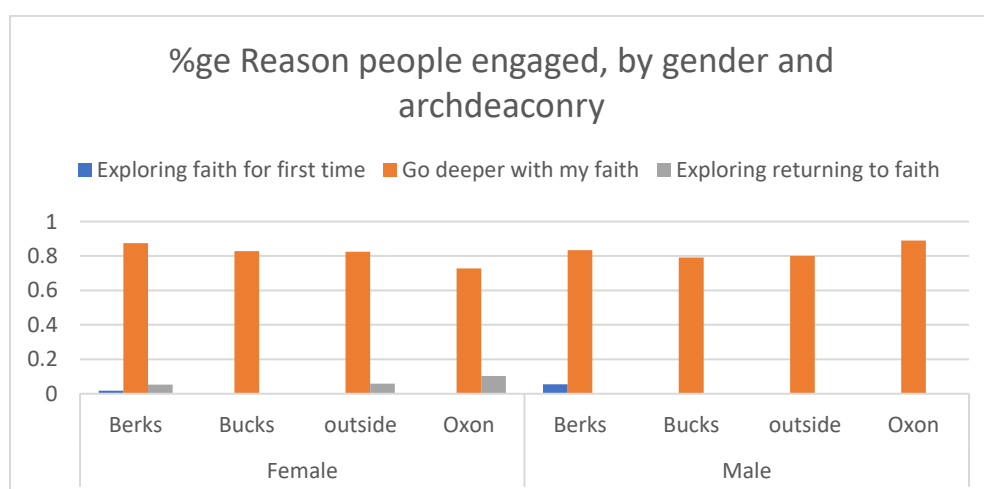


Why they engaged.

- People were asked ‘Which statement best describes how you were feeling about faith at the start of this Come and See journey’.
 - I was exploring faith for first time.
 - My faith had lapsed / I was exploring returning to faith.
 - I was wanting to go deeper with my faith.
 - Other

‘I wanted to identify with all those of the Diocesan Family following the same Lenten discipline’.

- Four in every five respondents (79%) said they were wanting to go deeper with their faith. Just four per cent said their faith had lapsed and they were exploring returning to faith, and only one per cent of respondents said they were exploring faith for the first time or gave another reason.
- These findings are similar to 2021 and 2022, when 83% and 81% respectively of respondents said they wanted to go deeper with their faith, and 5% and 3 per cent were exploring returning to faith. Although only two people had said they were exploring faith for the first time, in 2022 nobody had given this response. In 2021, 2 people said they were exploring faith for the first time.
- Whereas in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire over four in five female respondents were wanting to go deeper into their faith, in Oxfordshire three quarters of females selected this reason, with ten per cent exploring returning to faith.



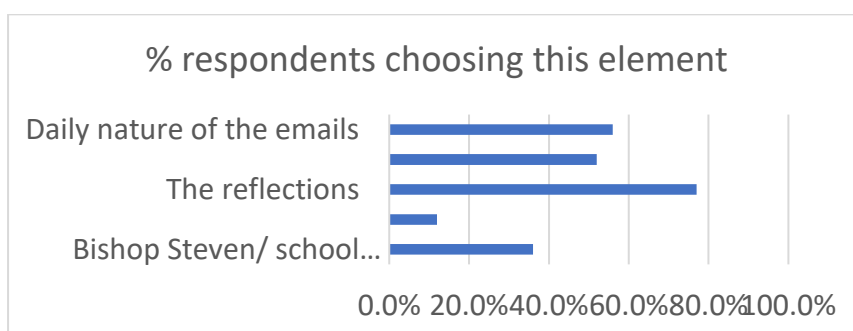
Encouraging others to share Come & See

- Respondents were asked both whether they had shared the invitation to join Come and See and whether they had forwarded any of the daily Come and See emails. One third of respondents had shared the invitation to join Come & See, and one in five respondents had forwarded one or more of the daily emails to someone else. Overall, 17% of respondents had done both.

| Did you share invitation | Did you forward the emails | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----|-------|
| | No | Yes | Total |
| No | 60% | 2% | 62% |
| Yes | 18% | 17% | 36% |
| Total | 80% | 19% | 100% |

Reaction to different elements of Come and See

- Respondents were asked to think about the different elements of the Come and See journey and assess how helpful each element was (where 1 is Not at all helpful and 4 is very helpful). They were asked to tick up to three elements that were most helpful to them.
- Just over half (56%) of respondents found the daily nature of the emails most helpful. In 2022 several people had commented that the daily emails arrived too late for their morning time of reflections, so this year the emails were scheduled for 6.30am. There were no comments on timing this year, so this small change proved helpful.
- Three quarters of respondents found the reflections most helpful, just over one half (52%) found the Bible readings most helpful and over one third (36%) found the weekly videos most helpful. Not everyone watched the weekly videos so this will have affected the proportion of overall respondents who found the videos most helpful.



- The scoring of different elements showed that all elements had an average score between 3 and 4 i.e., between helpful and very helpful. As not all respondents listened to the daily audio or watched the weekly videos, these elements had a higher proportion of blank replies. Over two thirds of all respondents scored the Bible readings and reflections most highly, as did over half the respondents for the videos and the moment of prayer/ reflection/ calm.

| Score | Daily Audio | Videos from Bishop Steven | Bible Readings and reflections | The prompt to think/ pray or have a moment of calm |
|----------------|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 13% | 3% | 1% | 4% |
| 2 | 9% | 6% | 5% | 8% |
| 3 | 12% | 20% | 23% | 33% |
| 4 | 35% | 57% | 69% | 54% |
| blank | 32% | 14% | 2% | 1% |
| Average | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.4 |

- Audio** Participants were asked to rate the helpfulness of the Audio from 1 to 4. If they gave a score of 1 or 2, they were asked why they had given this low score. Over half of those giving the low score said it was because they prefer to read in quiet or at their own speed, and a further one in six giving these scores said they did not listen to the audios. Two people mentioned hearing loss.
- Respondents had an opportunity to mention other reasons for low scores. Several mentioned how the end of the audio ran immediately into another unrelated article: 'It kept bring other articles in as well as come and see and I could not work out how to stop it - so gave up and just did the reading which I didn't enjoy as much (sound cloud)'. This will be something to explore for next year.

| Rating 1-4 where 1=low and 4 is high | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Reason for low score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | blank | Total |
| Blank | 4 | 4 | 38 | 113 | 101 | 260 |
| Hearing loss | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| I did not have the time to listen to the audio | 3 | 5 | | | | 8 |
| I did not listen to the audios | 10 | 2 | | | | 12 |
| I preferred reading in quiet, or at my own speed | 21 | 17 | | | | 38 |
| Total | 40 | 28 | 38 | 113 | 101 | 320 |

Bishop Steven video

"I found the films helpful: Bishop Steven revealed things through the Beatitudes, that I had not considered before, and helped me interpret them in new ways. I found the videos a springboard, from which I would pray or sit in silence and think."

- Over one third (36%) of respondents found the videos to be one of the most helpful elements of Come & See. Almost all (97%) of these respondents rated the videos to be helpful or very helpful. Two thirds of those who did not include the videos in their most helpful elements still rated the videos helpful or very helpful.
- Respondents were asked 'if you had one thing to say about the videos what would it be?'. Almost everyone responded to this question. Most comments were from those who rated the videos as a '4' and not surprisingly they were positive, using words such as 'inspiring', 'useful', 'thought provoking' and 'calming'. There were a few comments from those who rated the videos as a '1' or a '2'. These mainly related to preferring other elements such as the reflections, being disappointed by them, or finding them too simplistic.

Bible readings and reflections

Over two thirds of respondents (69%) found the Bible readings and reflections to be very helpful. This is higher than in 2022. 95% of those who found the Bible readings and reflections very helpful also found helpful or very helpful the prompt to pray, reflect or take a moment of calm.

Pause

Only 12% of respondents found the pause to be helpful or very helpful. This is a similar proportion as in 2022. However, despite so few people finding the pause among their most helpful elements of Come & See, 87% of respondents still found it to be helpful or very helpful with an average rating of 3.4. The pause is there as a prompt to pray or reflect and remains a key part of the overall offer.

Individuals and Families

- Respondents were asked how many adults and children shared their Come and See journey. Most (86%) respondents engaged in Come and See alone. The remaining respondents shared their Come & See journey with one other adult except in one case where there were two additional adults. Just three respondents also shared their Come & See experience with children.

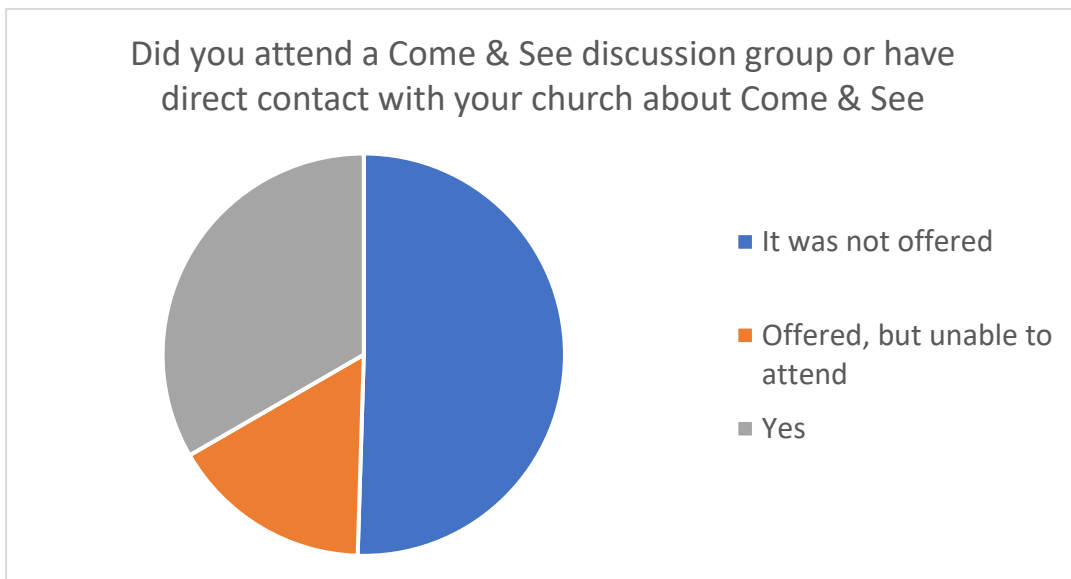
| Number of adults | Number children | | | Total |
|------------------|-----------------|---|---|-------|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | |
| 1 | 274 | 2 | | 276 |
| 2 | 42 | | 1 | 43 |
| 3 | 1 | | | 1 |
| Total | 317 | 2 | 1 | 320 |

- Those respondents that shared their Come and See experience with children were asked if they were aware that we offered special resources for families. One was unaware of these resources but two had signed up for them. Of those that had signed up for them one found them helpful and would like more resources for families next year. The other, however, found the family resources unhelpful and was unsure whether they would engage with family resources next year. Given this small group of users, they are unlikely to be representative of families in the diocese.
- What we can see is that email engagement was high for the segment that received CYF focussed emails (this included CYF workers, paid and unpaid), but click-through rate on the day was very low compared to other Come and See resources. From this we might hypothesise that CYF workers will have already prepared materials, so it is less likely that they will need to click through; busy families presented with a video to watch and a link through to a week's worth of materials just don't have the time. We're clear that we need to refine the CYF offer in 2024 and SpaceMakers for Families is likely to hold the key.
- We've also received good anecdotal evidence that the chaplaincy films (used for schools and CYF) were largely appreciated and welcomed. We can build on this approach in 2024.

Small Groups

“Extremely helpful. Led by the lay clergy, we were able to share comments, life experiences and questions. We were able to bring relevance to the Beatitudes and to see how they could help structure our lives in a truly Christian way. I feel it brought us together as a church family, and I shared deep discussions with members of the church I hadn't spoken to before.”

- One third (32.2%) of respondents had attended attend a Come and See small group or discussion group or had had direct contact with their local church about Come and See. This is a similar proportion to 2021 and 2022. A further 16% of respondents had been offered such a group but had been unable to attend.
- If the respondent had attended such a group or discussion group, they were asked if they found it helpful. Almost all the respondents said they found it helpful, citing lively, engaging, and thought-provoking discussions. Fewer than 7% found the groups unhelpful. One person commented they found the series unsuitable for a group. No reasons were given.



‘We used the reflection questions to guide us in our Bible Study group, as well as Bishop Steven’s videos. We had some lively discussions, and discussed the implications for our own lives, as well as discussing some challenging issues. We really enjoyed these’.

One to one

- Those who had attended a small group or discussion group about the Come and See materials were also asked whether they had been offered the opportunity to have a one-to-one conversation with someone to encourage them or invite them to embark upon a Personal Discipleship Plan (PDP).
- Overall, 11% of respondents (just over one third of those who had attended a small group) were offered a one-to-one conversation. This is about the same level as in 2022, but a smaller proportion compared to 2021, when it was closer to 15%. In Berkshire a greater proportion of people had joined a small group for Come & See, and as a result while one third of those attending a small group had been offered a one-to-one, this represented a larger proportion of those from Berkshire.

| Area | % of those joining small group | % all respondents |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Berkshire | 41.9% | 17.3% |
| Buckinghamshire | 30.6% | 10.9% |
| Oxfordshire | 33.3% | 10.4% |
| Total | 35.1% | 10.9% |

Other Lent Courses

- All respondents were asked whether they had taken part in another Lent course this year. Just over one third (34%) of respondents had taken part in another Lent course, of which the national Church of England course 'Dust and Glory' was the most frequently mentioned, by 7% of all respondents. Two people mentioned the Pilgrim course, and three people mentioned Tearfund.
- Those who had taken part in another course were asked to rate it against Come and See, where 1 was the other course was much better, to 10 where Come & See was much better. The average rating was 6.6 meaning that Come and See rated slightly more highly than the other courses taken.

Impact

- All respondents were asked whether Come and See had encouraged them to find out more or to go deeper into their faith. Three quarters of respondents agreed, giving scores 6-10, (a similar proportion to 2021 and 2022) and one quarter of respondents (25%) gave the highest scores of 9 and 10. This is similar to 2022 but lower than in 2021 when 28% had given the highest scores of 9 and 10.
- Respondents were asked whether they would recommend Come and See to others. More than three in four respondents (77%) answered positively (scale 7-10). This is the same positive response as in 2022. Almost half (48%) of respondents gave the highest scores of 9 or 10 being slightly higher than in 2022 (45%).

| Gender | How likely are you to recommend Come & See to Others | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Total |
| Female | 1% | 0% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 7% | 5% | 10% | 19% | 12% | 39% | 100% |
| Male | 6% | 1% | 1% | 4% | 1% | 4% | 4% | 9% | 21% | 12% | 31% | 100% |
| Total | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 6% | 5% | 10% | 19% | 11% | 37% | 100% |

What could we do differently

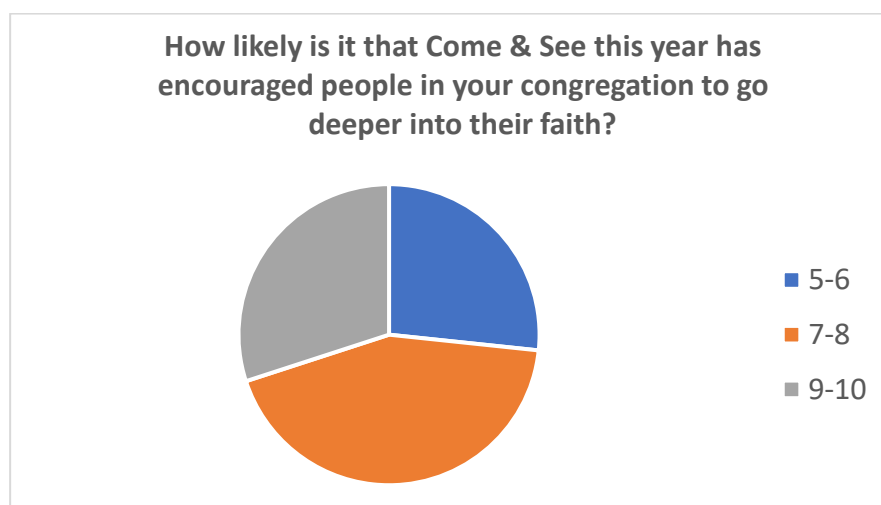
Finally, respondents were asked whether there was anything we could do differently next time. Over two thirds of respondents did add a comment, although 75 comments affirmed the value of the resources produce and a few comments would have liked the resource in booklet form (this was available) and more illustrations. Some comments were critical, with 13 people mentioning issues with the daily audio.

- I loved listening Come and See as an experience. I would've liked the link to listen be at the top rather than the middle of the email.
- Make it a little longer with more time for reflection.
- In prior years the audio rolled over to the prior day's Come and See following the closing music, so less of a jarring close to sessions. Please can you revert to that in 2024, or otherwise just fade out with no follow-on clip
- Use a different platform for the audio. I prefer YouTube to SoundCloud
- The news item about Oxford churches stopped any of my ongoing reflection or pause thoughts in their tracks each day as it started straight afterwards.

Responses from small group leaders

"I thought it was amazing, my group were very regular members, but I think it really supported their faith journey. we also used the contemplative practise as part of our 3-hour good Friday reflections which meant more people experienced them and found them helpful."

- 39 responses were received from leaders within churches, compared to 11 in 2022. 32 had led small groups through Lent, of which four had led a Lent course (Alpha/Christianity Explored/Pilgrim etc) as their Come and See offer. 35 respondents had sent the daily emails to members of their community.
- Of those who led a small group, 88% agreed that their group(s) engaged well with the daily emails, and 94% agreed that their group(s) found the weekly films by Bishop Steven engaging and informative. The films were described as 'thought provoking', 'engaging' and 'inspiring'.
- Two thirds of the respondents felt that engaging with Come & See had a positive impact in enabling them to invite people to explore faith. One commented 'Yes! Yes! Yes! Everyone in the group shared knowledge and very personal experiences; reflected how they felt about self and God. One person was inspired to write personal and heartfelt Beatitudes of their own and shared with the group!' Others who commented felt that most of those participating were already committed in their faith, and that it did not attract seekers to faith.
- Three of the respondents thought that being part of Come and See would result in baptisms immediately and a further ten thought it was possible in the longer term.
- 30% of leaders thought it was very likely that Come & See had encouraged people to go deeper into their faith, and 43% thought it was quite likely.



- 44% of group leaders said that some people in the group had used the printed booklet to follow the course. This is a key requirement for 2024 and reflects feedback from the 2021 and 2022 campaigns.