

**School of Congregational Development  
Gothenburg 2011**

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Rev Joanne Cox  
And Fresh Expressions, 2011.**

## **Session 1 – 21<sup>st</sup> century mission and the story of Fresh Expressions**

Aims:

By reviewing faith journey material, and investigating the power of experience in people's journey to faith, the development of Fresh Expressions in the UK, and how it has helped people follow Jesus.

By the end of the session:

We will know the development of Fresh Expressions, and its key aims as an organisation.

We will also set out some of our hopes for the coming sessions as we meet together.

- Introduce me
  
- Introduce the ministry track and sessions
  
- What do you aim to get out of these sessions
  
- Tell a brief history of FX
  - So we all know what we are talking about
  - Include the UK stats for the last year
  
- Faith journeys material
  - One of the legacies of the decade of Evangelism was a significant amount of research into faith journey's and how people become Christian

## Part one: the process of evangelism

### Coming to faith is a journey

5, 6 – part one, Coming to faith is a journey

Coming to faith in Christ is a journey. There may well be dramatic moments and key moments of insight and turning in that journey – but for most people it is clear that there will be a process of coming to faith and growing to maturity which happens over many years.

We may play a part at different points on that journey – sometimes sowing the seeds of the gospel, sometimes encouraging them to grow and sometimes seeing the seed grow to maturity. Paul writes:

*I planted, Apollos watered but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything but only God who gives the growth.*

**1 Corinthians 3.6-7**

### A journey of four elements

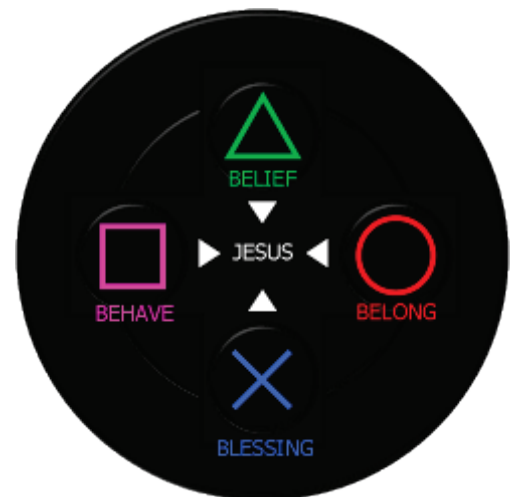
7 – A journey of four elements

Any journey of faith has four basic elements, which can be summarised as belong, believe, behave and blessing. These may already be familiar to you. In most cases these four emerge sequentially but each of them can lead directly to Jesus. They then go on to define our continued life as a disciple of Christ.

Because the four areas do so often unfold in sequence, our understanding of this process can offer us an excellent guide for how to take part – or even help lead – in other people's faith journey. It also guides our expectations of how other people's faith journeys ought to progress.

So often in the past we have expected people to behave first, then believe and only at this point to belong. And blessing was often not considered at all! But if we understand these four areas and work harder at helping people to belong, we are likely to see much more of the faith journey unfold and be more aware of how and when we ought to respond. These four areas then go on to define our continued life as a follower of Christ. Therefore, as we seek to engage in these four areas for ourselves, it shapes our personal discipleship. As we seek to engage in these areas for others, it shapes our personal evangelism. Let us consider each of the four areas briefly.

The diagram we are going to follow as we unpack these four areas corresponds to the four control buttons on a PlayStation video game handset. This is not just because it is an iconic image of today's



culture... in each case the shape of the PlayStation controller relates to the principle at hand to help reinforce it visually.

### The Circle = Belonging



Many people find Jesus through a circle of friends to which they belong and as relationships strengthen so the individual is drawn closer to Jesus and begins to seek Him for themselves. Belief, behaviour and blessing are often not part of many not-yet-Christians' value systems but they do like belonging to this group of people at church who care about them.

### The Triangle = Believing



The use of a triangle here aptly denotes belief born from origins of the Trinity. Many people come to believe in the truth about Jesus before they actually know it through a relationship with Him. Grace Davie (in her book *Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing Without Belonging*, Blackwell, 1994) and Pete Ward (in his book *Liquid Church*, Carlisle, 2002) have both worked on this dynamic of belief without belonging.

### The Square = Behaving



How many times has the Christian been marked out as a 'square peg in a round world' because they want to conform to the Kingdom's way and not the depravity of the world's way? (See John 17.16-17, Romans 8.29, Philippians 3.21, 1 Peter 1.14) This approach is undoubtedly a smaller number statistically.

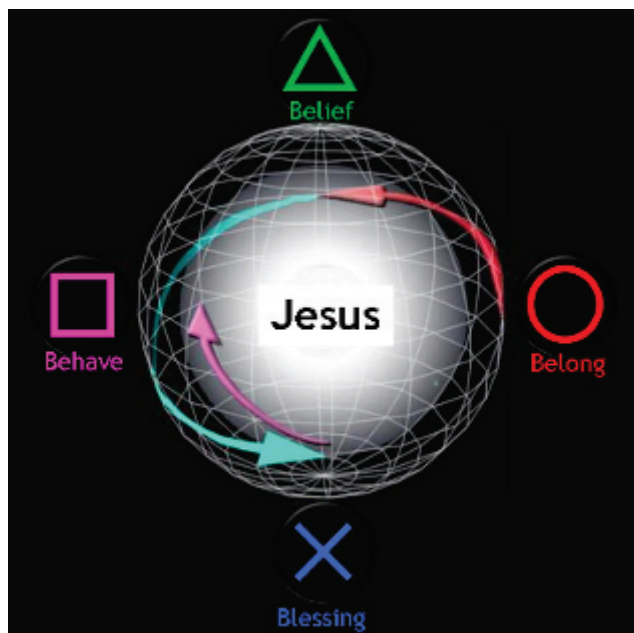
### The X = Blessing into relationship



We denote love with an 'X' in correspondence. Hence by the work of the Holy Spirit through ordinary and extraordinary encounters with Jesus, people can respond to God's love with no real beliefs in place, without belonging to a group of believers or without even being moral in their values and practice. However, it is through the blessing they experience something of the reality of God. God breaks into their lives and they respond to journey towards a relationship with Jesus. Consider the woman at the well in John 4 and the concepts offered by John Wimber in *Power Evangelism*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1985 as examples.

## 8 – A journey in three dimensions

Consider these four elements fitting into a three dimensional sphere, with each element held at the four polar points. The very edge of the sphere represents the opposite extreme of the centre. If the very centre is Christ and the perfection of behaviour, belonging, belief and blessing, then the inference is as one journeys towards Christ we are transformed into His likeness. The renewing of our minds affects the rest of our lives (Romans 12.2). Hence we can create an image that visually allows anyone to begin anywhere with any appreciation of the four themes.



The significance of this infers a very non-judgemental approach to the development of discipleship in a process of evangelism and builds a strategy that looks at the long-term aim, i.e. a true disciple of Jesus Christ. In recent years this discipleship has often been a weak point in the church. Moreover, conversion was perceived as an end in itself, rather than being a journey that has no end in this life.

Entering the Kingdom has no defined territory or boundary. The moment of response can appear anywhere in the sphere, where continued revelation produces fresh daily challenges of choice to either journey toward Jesus or not. As disciples, the sum of our Christian experiences and life choices lead generally towards Christ but there are life moments when the opposite direction is taken. The death of a loved one, a bad choice in behaviour, dryness of faith, could all cause our journey to be away from Christ. That journeying may have a specific direction in our model. It may reflect a diminishing level in one or more elements but perhaps not all four.

It is usually through an accepting, understanding and nurturing church environment that any such experiences can be overcome and the journeying towards Jesus encouraged again. The key things are wisdom, patience and persistence, whilst recognizing these advancements will not happen overnight. Therefore any good contemporary strategy for evangelism should hold a right expectation and a long-term perspective in nurturing people to faith and discipleship.

- **Importance of Missio Dei – God’s love as a priority for mission**

### **In the beginning God...**

All mission should be firmly rooted in God Himself. The sequence we look to see is God – mission – Church.

We wish here to emphasise that all mission begins with God and that the Church arises as a result of God’s mission in and through us, God’s mission being an expression of God’s love for us – God is love. So our motivation for mission always has to be flowing from God’s love.

Our starting place for considering the mission of God is a consideration of God’s love for us. We revisit our understanding of who God is and, in particular, that God is a God of love.

The following slide series is intended as a meditative sequence to visualise the love of God as the source and motivation of all our mission engagement in fresh expressions of church. It moves from an exploration of God’s love for us to how that love constrains us to express his love for his world.

#### 6 – Foundations of mission [1/3]

This slide starts with a picture that was produced by the members of a Methodist youth fresh expression. Allow the picture on its own to speak for itself. Then the simple but profound fact of God’s love [click 2/3] appears as the starting point or foundation for mission – as we go on we will develop this slide with extra layers.

God powerfully and eternally loves the world he has created.

[3/3] God loves every single person who is part of this world. One of the best known verses from Scripture is John 3.16:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have everlasting life.*

**John 3.16**

#### 7 – Foundations of mission [1/3]

There are many, many other passages of Scripture which reveal that love is at the heart of God’s nature.

Understanding God’s love is demanding. Paul prays in Ephesians 3 that the Christians...

*...may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge.*

**Ephesians 3.18-19**

It is difficult to take in and understand how much God loves the world and how much God loves us. It is difficult at a personal level to understand and to know that we are loved by God and by others. It is also difficult at an intellectual level to understand the breadth, length, height and depth of Christ's love demonstrated in his life and in his death on the cross.

Yet understanding God's love is at the heart of the Christian life and at the heart of establishing fresh expressions of church.

### **Individual reflection**

[2/3] What words would you use to describe God's love?

Give participants a couple of minutes to write down words. [3/3] Invite people to call out a few short phrases. Write these on a flipchart headed 'God's love is...'

## God's love

### 8 – Foundations of mission [1/3]

God's love is at the heart of God's nature. God's love lies at the heart of the creation of the universe and at the heart of God's hope for the world.

It is in the nature of God's love and all love to be active. According to the whole witness of Scripture, God does not stand back and wait for the world to come to him.

God calls all of us into a saving relationship through his Son Jesus Christ.

Because of love, God is a God of mission: a God who sends. The word mission comes from the Latin verb, mitto: I send.

- God's mission is to be at the heart of our lives, at the heart of the churches we are part of now and at the heart of the fresh expressions of church we hope to build.

#### **CONCLUSION – Iron Man**

- **Encourage those who feel like the dad – struggles of church leadership**
- **Encourage us to trust in God's love**

Where is God at work in your life?

Where is God at work in your church and your congregation?

Where have you noticed God at work in your community?

Where might God be calling you to join with the Holy Spirit to share His love within your local community?

**Review of the session**

What have I heard that is new?

What has inspired me?

What question would I like to ask?

What action do I need to take, and in what timeframe?

What has been the highlight of this session?

## **Session 2 – 21<sup>st</sup> Century context – digging in the ecology of contemporary life**

Aims:

To understand some of the key features in contemporary Northern hemisphere contexts, and to begin to tease out why these have the potential be challenging for the Church.

By the end of the session:

We will have engaged with some of the features of postmodernity, and begun to apply them to our own contexts.

- Introductory icebreaker - what do you have on your person which says something important about you, your context, and your identity?
  
- Lily Allen - 'The Fear' exercise
  - What does this video say about contemporary society
  
  - Are we using the 'right' language - DVD of German Coastguard
  
  - Are we being appropriate - Cartwheeling verger
  
- Put these observations into a more academic framework

**Outside in or inside out**

Most sociologists and anthropologists agree that culture is more or less integrated so that all aspects connect in some way to each other. Hence if you change one aspect of culture it will affect other parts.

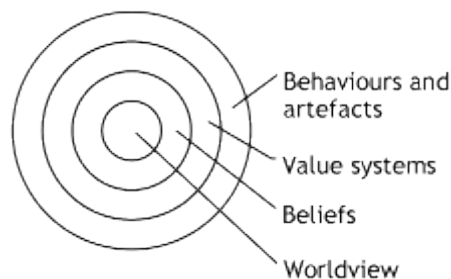
There is also a general acceptance that there are more superficial or surface, observable aspects of culture (such as explained in our early table exercises), and also underlying roots, foundations or core element, all of which shape a culture.

In this sense it is normal to explain and explore culture from the outside in; from the observable behaviour to deeper intentions and motivations. However, many think that a culture is better understood and explored from the inside out. The deepest level of culture is a person's worldview, which affects their beliefs, values and then behaviour.

## Kwast's 'layers of an onion' model

### 20 – Onion rings model

Lloyd Kwast is a professor at Biola University in Los Angeles and devised this diagram as a way of illustrating the interaction between different aspects of culture. Like many diagrams, it suffers from being two-dimensional and assumes that there is a direct linear relationship between the various rings. But many people today operate in an entirely different way and their beliefs (what they think is true) may have no obvious connection at all with their 'worldview' (what they think is real).



You might like to refer to a three dimensional artefact like a slinky spring as a way of illustrating the unstable and ever-changing nature of culture in today's world – while emphasizing that Kwast's model is still useful provided we recognize that it is a simplified schematic way of looking at things. Most people operate for most of the time at the outside ring of this diagram – we just live our lives without giving much thought to why we do what we do. Insofar as we think about it at all, we usually work from the outside inwards. Instead of having some grand theory or set of values that inform how we live, most people just go with what works and, if they reflect more deeply at all, they construct their worldview on the basis of their experience. Christians frequently start from the inside and work outwards, with a strong worldview which determines values and lifestyle, and in engaging missionally it is important to realize that for most people this is counter-intuitive and therefore difficult to grasp. Of course, everyone has a worldview, but it is increasingly rare for people to express themselves this way.

## Worldview

Kwast thinks of this as a response to the question 'what is real?' Hard to define, it relates to how people perceive truth, time, God and ultimate reality. It is the big story ('metanarrative') that a culture recognizes as its foundational understanding – the thing that explains who we think we are and why. Historically, worldviews have emerged from the stories that people shared – the legends of King Arthur in England, or stories of William Wallace in Scotland for example. Throughout the era of Christendom, Bible stories were formative for European culture, offering a frame of reference in which we could identify what is real. Following the work of Einstein, scientists talk about eleven dimensions of reality, highlighting the complexity of the universe in which we live.

Everyone has a worldview, religious or not. In much of the West today the core is based around individualism, consumerism and the market economy. Instead of traditional stories, we increasingly take our cues from 'spiritual' experiences or movies (one reason why we cannot avoid missional engagement with new spiritualities and Hollywood). This is very different from the Enlightenment which placed rationality at the centre of reality. Here are some typical elements within a worldview:

### 21 - Worldview

- the universe and its origin or nature;
- spiritual realities and their relationship with the visible material world;
- understandings of the nature of death and after/beyond;
- a person's purpose and identity in family or communal relationships;
- a person's relationship with earthly and spiritual realms;
- heaven/hell/sin/salvation/illusion/ultimate realities.

By no means everyone today would engage with these categories. There is a growing cynicism among many people, reflective of the view of Ecclesiastes that 'all is vanity'. Large numbers of people of all ages regard the search for some universal understanding of what is real as pointless, because the only thing that we can be sure of is ourselves and this immediate moment.

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**Someone has described worldview as 'What you are thinking about the world when you are not thinking!'**

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## Beliefs

22 – Onion rings model [1/3]

Kwast sees beliefs as an answer to the question 'what is true (or believable)?' The question 'what is truth?' is the oldest question in the world. How we define 'truth' is a key missional issue in today's culture.

Before the enlightenment, what was true and believable flowed from the shared Christian worldview. Then the Enlightenment defined truth in relation to reason and often limited it to whatever could be determined by historical or scientific investigation. But truth is not anything like so straightforward in the 21st century. Now flowing from individualism, personal experience is in the ascendancy: many people today are not unlike Thomas, with his insistence that he would only believe something he had experienced for himself.

## Values

[Click 2/3] Kwast sees values as an answer to the question 'what is good (or best)?' In the past, values always flowed from beliefs and worldviews: our understanding of reality determined how we defined a good life. That is still the case in traditional societies and among religious groups such as Muslims for whom convictions about ultimate realities determine what will be valued. Here, beliefs about origins, purpose, identity and relationship affect and shape an individual's choices, motivations and priorities.

In the past, the values of Western culture were derived from and dependent on a Christian worldview and beliefs and though there are still vestiges of these, it is no longer the case more broadly. The question 'what is good?' tends now to be answered in relation to our individual needs at any given moment, or more generally, flowing from an individualistic worldview, on developing ourselves and our personal wellbeing. This is a major reason why we find it so difficult to empathize with cultures (like Islam) whose values flow from the shared worldview of a community.

### **Behaviours, artefacts, icons and symbols**

[Click 3/3] Kwast identifies this with the question ;what is done?' or 'how shall we live?'. That outer layer of the onion is the superficial aspects of culture that we see first and for traditional people that question is addressed by reference to the inner layers. There is still a residual shared understanding about behaviour even in a culture where, to a large extent, we behave and live in whatever way best pleases us, though the sort of behaviour that is most disapproved of in society now tends to be anything that limits our freedom as individuals (again from our individualistic worldview). In turn, this reinforces the notion that actually we can more or less behave as we like. Of course, nobody truly reinvents the behavioural wheel for themselves – we are all influenced by our upbringing and what we see other people doing. A growing number of people are dissatisfied with this laissez-faire attitude and are searching for the sort of integrated life that connects worldview, beliefs, values and behaviour. Many of them are turning to Islam rather than Christianity. You might like to reflect on some of the reasons for this.

### Forms and meanings – an added dimension

Charles H. Kraft was professor of Anthropology and Intercultural Communication at Fuller Seminary from 1969, and with others, helpfully added this category of forms and meanings to gain a fuller understanding of this pattern of culture.

Forms are another aspect of behaviour, artifacts, icons and symbols. But here we recognise that most of them acquire a specific meaning, significance and content in a particular culture. Now it is of great importance to recognise that the same form may often have different meanings in different cultures. For example a certain quite acceptable gesture in Europe may be very rude in the USA, and to sit cross-legged in company in Western culture conveys a relaxed welcome, whereas in middle-eastern culture it is extremely offensive. Conversely, different forms may convey the same meaning in different cultures: for example polite greetings vary from a handshake to rubbing noses!

One of the most pervasive and complex aspects of culture is language itself. At one level it is just a form. A series of noises to which agreed meanings are attributed. But at another level language conveys truth: there are all sorts of associations which give it content and depth. The same is true for artefacts, icons and symbols.

With this understanding we begin to see how outward behaviour and forms connect to underlying values, beliefs and even worldview.

- Can we put Lily Allen into the layers

**CONCLUSION - Stillman (DVD3) - this is what contextual theology looks like in practice and why it is important**

What is important to me, using Kwast's 'onion'?

In what ways might my worldview differ from other people in the room, from my nation, and in the world?

What might be the advantages and disadvantages of my cultural worldview?

### **Session 3 – 21<sup>st</sup> Century mission shaped church**

Aims:

To introduce mission-shaped ecclesiology as a way of joining the previous two sessions together

By the end of the session:

We will have heard examples of fresh expressions in the UK, and begun to engage with the underlying ecclesiology.

- Intro - Stillman from youtube
- Icebreaker - Draw your perfect church
- Clip - being missional
- Review of where we have got to so far

- Is this church? - Tubstation on DVD 3

### **Tubestation**

Henry Cavender and Kris Lannen are now the project's co-directors and pioneer mission leaders with the Methodist Church's VentureFX initiative to develop mission among young adults in coastal Cornwall.

During school holidays the community can often increase far beyond the capacity of the Polzeath premises, with visitors making up 80% of the numbers served by a core local congregation of 40-50.

The church (the faith community that meets on a Sunday and at other times) and the Tubestation (the mission) are separate but inextricably linked, and the church has risen out of the mission - not the other way around. A decision was taken early on to work with the established Methodist Church plan. This has made for slow progress in many respects, but it has led to a diverse church (all-age, not just surfers) which the Methodist Church can still feel ownership of.

The Tubestation 'mix' of faith, extreme sports, arts, lifestyle and cafe culture has proved to be a popular one. The team has invested in an indoor mini-ramp for skaters and appointed Revd Dave Matthews from Christian Surfers UK, to lead a full-time pastoral care ministry. His home is also used as the base for Substation, a smaller weekly gathering of Tubestation's spiritual community and plans are also being considered for a second Tubestation a little further down the coast.

With this new information, consider:

- What of the essence of church has been further developed?
- Would you now call these new initiatives 'church'?
- What further may need developing?

The intention here is that right from the start participants are thinking through these key issues for themselves.

By having this second stage of the exercise when more true information about these stories is given, this both updates the perhaps familiar story but also enables more reflection and further assessment of the original question. The follow on question can then be introduced – 'what further development may still be needed for it to be more fully church?'

## Part one: the essence of church – four examples

11 – part one

In this section we will consider four examples which may help us to understand the essence of church. In order to encourage us to compare and contrast them we have presented them in two pairings – a biblical pair and a pair from the history and tradition of the church (reformation and current).

### Two biblical verses/summaries

12 – Two scriptures [1/2]

#### Mark 3.14

*And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him and to be sent out...*

**Mark 3.14**

We started with this passage. As each of the statements appear on the screen you may want to draw out from the group the answers to two questions:

What do we learn from this?

The church was founded by Jesus as a key part of his earthly ministry. Belonging to the church is about a relationship with Jesus (to be with him), serving Jesus (being sent out) and doing these together in community (the twelve with Jesus).

Being called out is at the heart of what it means to be the church (the Greek word *ekklesia* means literally 'called out') and Jesus here calls disciples. The church lives in a rhythm of worship and mission (also caught in the summary of the law - to love God and love our neighbour - and in the structure of the Eucharist). There is continuity between Israel and the church (twelve apostles and twelve tribes). The most recent Methodist document on the nature and calling of the church has this dynamic at its heart as expressed in the title: *Called to Love and Praise*.

What's not there?

This is a very basic statement. There is nothing about how the life of the church is sustained; nothing about how the life of the church after the resurrection is different from the life of the disciples with Jesus; nothing about the relationship between this community and the surrounding culture.

#### Acts 2.42 [Click 2/2]

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

**Acts 2.42**

What do we learn from this?

Christians in every generation have found Luke's summaries in Acts a really helpful guide for what is at the heart of building up Christian community. Some of the formal definitions of the church which

we will look at later in the session draw on this verse in particular. The verse majors on what sustains community. We would want to look for each of these four aspects in the life of every Christian community.

What's not there?

This may be a hard question to ask of this particular verse as it is so familiar to many Christians but it is not a complete statement of what it means to be the church:

- there is nothing about Jesus;
- there is nothing about mission;
- there is nothing about baptism.

A key point to draw out here is that it is vital to use a variety of sources for our reflection on the nature and essence of the church.

📖 Andrew Roberts, ***What lessons does Acts 2:42-47 provide for the contemporary movement to resource and develop fresh expressions of church?*** (Academic paper), [freshexpressions.org.uk/research](http://freshexpressions.org.uk/research).

📖 From two biblical summaries and one from our tradition we now turn to a recent summary which features prominently in the *Mission-shaped Church* report.

📖 If 'church' is what happens when people encounter the Risen Jesus and commit themselves to sustaining and deepening that encounter in their encounter with each other, there is plenty of theological room for diversity of rhythm and style, so long as we have ways of identifying the same living Christ at the heart of every expression of Christian life in common.

📖 Archbishop Rowan Williams, *Mission-shaped Church*, page vii

We can summarise these four examples of the essence of church as:

- to be with him and to be sent out;
- they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer;
- a community of Word and Sacrament;
- a relationship with Jesus together;

What else?

Take a moment to look at any other summaries of the church which surfaced in the group discussions and have not yet been shared with the whole group. Emphasise that these examples we have presented are not exhaustive.

- Kingdom/church stuff – Snyder
- Importance of evangelism (the faith journey stuff)
- Tell show be

**CONCLUSION – Kingdom of God breaking in...**

What is Church?

What are the implications of your reflections for your own ministry, mission and leadership?

## **Session 4 – 21<sup>st</sup> Century missional leadership**

Aims:

To investigate what leadership qualities, charisms and qualifications may be required.

By the end of the sessions:

We will have discovered some of the leadership challenges that come with 'missional' leaders. We will be asking 'what sort of leader do we need to be?'

Introduction – who is your hero and why?

- Who is your biblical hero and why

- In this session we are going to look at the character, charisms, challenges and qualities do leaders of missional churches need?
- Present research method
- Call and Commission promotion
- My conclusions about leadership

- The type of disciple I am will determine the sort of church that will develop
  - Do you agree
  - What challenges does this raise for you

Christian leaders come in all shapes, sizes and styles. At various stages of their ministries they may be called to exercise different forms of leadership. At various stages in the development of a fresh expression, different forms of leadership may be required. There is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to leadership. We see this right at the beginning of the formation of the Church in the book of Acts. Joanne Cox, studying the relationship between Barnabus and Saul, has identified this diverse range of aspects of Christian leadership that remain highly significant for those leading in mission today.

### Exercise

Peruse the following list and consider:

- Which of these aspects would you highlight as being particularly relevant in your situation?
- Which do you find especially challenging?

The text in blue is in the Additional Notes to read in their own time. It is reproduced here in case you wish to amplify any points. Again please be careful with timings.

#### Acts 9.23-30

Leadership is about noticing and discerning potential, and putting your own reputation on the line when appropriate. It is about being a person of recognizable character.

- Barnabus testifies and stands up for Saul in public (Acts 9.27). Reflect that in Acts 11.24, Barnabus himself has the credentials for being 'a good man, full of the Holy Spirit';
- Exiled away from community – there is a transience to discipleship, which will lead to transience in leadership. Saul does not stay in a community very long. Some apostolic leadership is only for a short time (Acts 9.30).

#### Acts 11.25-30

Leadership is about spending time mentoring other people. This can take a long time.

- Barnabus seeks Saul out (Acts 11.25);
- They worked together – Barnabus sought Paul out and spent time with him, bringing him to Antioch (Acts 11.25);
- Mentor relationship for a whole year (Acts 11.26);
- Time with a community, behind the scenes. (Acts 11.26 – the community are given a name; they begin to be recognised).

### **Acts 12.25-13.3**

Leadership is about being chosen, commissioned and prayerfully set aside for a task by a bigger group of people.

- Team is expanded – John Mark is with them too (Acts 12.25);
- Set apart and commissioned (Acts 13.2);
- Prayerful discernment with fasting before sending them out.

### **Acts 13.4-12**

Leadership is about stepping up at the opportune moment. It is also about letting the succession continue, and stepping back at the opportune moment.

- The succession begins as the mentor steps back;
- First time that Paul's speech is recorded since Damascus conversations (Acts 13.9);
- Find the people of peace – the interested parties who want a conversation (Acts 13.7);
- Signs and wonders at an opportune moment (Acts 13.11);
- Paul speaks to both Jews and non-Jews with integrity and authority. He can speak outside of his experience.

### **Acts 13.16-45**

Leadership is about using your experience and background, as well as knowing the context to which you are speaking.

- Paul's first sermon;
- Letting Paul speak for himself.

Question: What is significant for you in Paul's speech?

- speaks out of his knowledge of Judaism;
- speaks respectfully;
- tells the story of the Hebrew people;
- links this into the story of Jesus – out of the tribe of Jesse;
- preaches forgiveness;
- people were interested and more and more people come to listen;
- leadership is about having something to say!

### **Acts 13.46-52**

Leadership comes with persecution: the challenge is to stay on track.

- Leaders may live in the midst of persecution (Acts 13.50);
- Leadership is about keeping on track – not getting involved in the politics, but staying focused on the mission (Acts 13.50-52).

### **Acts 14.1-7**

Leadership is about knowing when to leave and when to stay

- Not always a popular message – the role of a leader is to know when to leave, and when to stay.

### **Acts 14.8-18**

Leadership is about pointing to something greater.

- Christian leaders point to a greater leader than themselves (Acts 14.15-18).

### **Acts 14.19-20**

Leadership is not a bed of roses. Sometimes it is about being hurt and knowing that there are other people who will gather around and walk back to the 'city' with you.

- Leadership and evangelism are not always easy – stoning of Paul (Acts 14.19);

Pastoral point: For some leaders in the room, this will be their experience – they will feel as though they have been metaphorically stoned. From the text, the word of encouragement is that the disciples gathered around Paul at this time.

- Discipleship and leadership is sometimes about gathering around and walking back into the city (Acts 14.20).

### **Acts 14.26-28**

Leadership is about being accountable and testifying honestly to what God is doing.

- Leaders tell testimony to be accountable to the community, and also to encourage the community (NB not to blow trumpets or to put people down) (Acts 14.26).

### **Acts 15.1-21**

Leadership is about asking tough theological questions and wrestling with the answers in the midst of those wiser and more discerning.

- Role of pioneer leaders is to ask tough theological questions and to turn to elders for discerning answers (Acts 15.2);
- Tough issues need to be wrestled with (Acts 15.12,19);
- There is a role for oversight within missional leadership that is not afraid of the tough and challenging questions that pioneering brings.

### **Acts 15.22-35**

Leadership is about discerning the right team at the right time.

- Team working and church planting is authorized by the church – whole church discernment of teams (Acts 15.22);
- Some people will join a community out of interest, but cause upset or concern! (Acts 15.24).

**Acts 15.36-41**

Leadership comes with conflict. Succession is a mark of success.

- Leadership in the midst of conflict (Acts 15.39);
- Letting leaders go in the midst of conflict.

Question: Are Paul and Barnabus 'successful' pioneer leaders? Why and why not?

CONCLUSION - what kind of leader are you, and what kind of leader are your empowering and mentoring

CLIP - Think Different

What kind of leader are you?

Who are you / could you mentor?

Who is coaching, mentoring and directing you?

## **Session 5 – Ancient Future Spirituality**

Aims:

To investigate the patterns of spirituality and discipleship in contemporary contextual mission.

By the end of the session:

We will have asked the question 'how do we make disciples'.

We will also have an opportunity to ask any questions that have not been answered throughout the previous sessions.

- Introduction – write down all the words you can think of when you hear the word 'discipleship – share with a partner, and pick your top 3.
- Recap of the previous sessions
- Spirituality of mission session on MSM (my discipleship determines the church – instill depth from the start

## **Digging the wells of history...Genesis 26**

## Part one: Ten marks of an apostolic spirituality (1-5)

5, 6 – part one, Marks of an apostolic spirituality

At the core of this unit are ten marks of an apostolic – a sent – spirituality.

Unpack ‘apostolic’ briefly:

Apostello - I send

Apostolos - one who is sent

Shortly we will explore and reflect upon these marks but before we do so, we are going to locate them in the New Testament. There follow three pieces of biblical material that underlie the teaching in this unit - three passages in which the disciples of Jesus are sent out in mission:

The main biblical material underlying the teaching is a composite of the first missionary journeys as recorded in:

- Matthew 9.35-10.16;
- Mark 6.6b-13;
- Luke 9.1-6.

Take a few minutes to read them before we explore and reflect upon the marks of mission spirituality we find in them.

What kind of people are these first missionaries – what is ‘mission’ making them? What characterises their spirituality, their living towards God?

Invite suggestions of marks of missionary spirituality that we see in these passages and then present this summary of the marks that will be explored in this unit.

7 – People who are...

What we find in these passages are people who:

- are called and sent;
- are greatly loved;
- see and listen;
- travel light;
- are people of prayer and the Holy Spirit;
- go two by two (and know the value of companionship and community);
- bear a message;
- are wounded healers (who know how they have been made whole in their brokenness, and have been and are being saved from their sinfulness);
- live rhythmically;

- are adventurers.

We will now explore the ten marks one by one:

## Called and sent

### 8 - Called and sent

*Then Jesus called the Twelve together... he sent them out.*

**Luke 9.1-2**

This section has its roots in a theology of 'the missionary God'. *Mission-shaped Church*, chapter five may give some helpful ballast to your preparation.

Vision and call have already been covered in **A04 – vision and call** so you may feel this is one that can be tackled more briefly. Further material and examples if you need them are to be found in *Mission-shaped Spirituality*, chapter two, pp6-13.

Issues to touch on with relevant examples:

### Issues

- Apostolic spirituality is frequently formed through an encounter with God.
- Our call may need to be re-ignited from time to time.
- The danger of forgetting and the need to remember.

### 9 – Called and sent

*That amnesia... which causes the church to lack in any serious missional energy.*

**Walter Brueggemann, Biblical Perspectives in Evangelism, Abingdon Press, 1993, p90.**

### 10 – Called and sent

*We can see that wherever the missionary character of the doctrine of election is forgotten: wherever it is forgotten that we are chosen in order to be sent... wherever men think that the purpose of election is their own salvation rather than the salvation of the world: then God's people have betrayed their trust.*

**Lesslie Newbigin, The Household of God, SCM, 1953, p29.**

Knowing who we are and what we are for - being and doing it - releases energy and joy.

### 11 – Called and sent

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

## 2 - They are people who know they are greatly beloved

12 – Greatly beloved

*Even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid.*

**Matthew 10.30-31**

The main issue here is one of identity, of where we find our security and sense of being.

What we are aiming at is that people are safe enough in their relationship with God to move out into the unknown and to take risks. If you can use one or two personal stories from your own experience that will assist greatly! Additional material, examples in *Mission-shaped Spirituality*, chapter three.

### The picture of Jesus in the Gospels

The missionary journey made by Jesus from baptism to cross was marked by joy, energy, clarity of focus, friendship, conflict, struggle, adulation of crowds, powerful preaching and encounters with evil, including structural evil and the great battles of Gethsemane and Calvary. The journey was resourced from a source that Jesus knew to be his Father:

*The Son can do nothing on his own; but only what he sees the Father doing.*

**John 5.19**

*The Father and I are one.*

**John 10.30**

*Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*

**John 14.9**

Jesus could give himself, even in a context of conflict, because he was secure in who he was. At his baptism, starting his public ministry, what did God give him? A blueprint for the mission? No! Rather a word about who he was in relationship to the Father:

*You are my Son, the Beloved: with you I am well pleased.*

**Luke 3.22**

The place of belonging with God (what Jesus called 'abiding') is the place from which all mission proceeds. It is our home from which we move out towards others.

### Facing the fear

Going in mission can throw up fears:

- physical safety;
- fear of failure;
- fear of saying/doing the wrong thing;
- 'fear of their faces'.

Knowing we are loved is the antidote to fear.

*There is no fear in love... perfect love casts out fear.*

**1 John 4.18**

Organise people to buzz in twos and threes... other fears?

The following reflection questions can be referred to here and then may form the basis of the time of silence after the testimony.

**For further reflection**

- Have I got a fear to do with mission?
- Do I know that I am dearly beloved and that the Father loves me?

13 – Greatly beloved

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

### 3 - They are people who are learning to see and to listen

14 - Learning to see and to listen

*When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them.*

**Matthew 9.36**

#### 'True sight leads to true action'

The task of apostolic spirituality includes the recovery of sight and of un-blocking our ears. This is the hard work - a spiritual discipline - of maintaining a double focus - on God, and on those to whom we are sent. 'Love God... love your neighbour as yourself.' We need to be aware of:

- the need to look lovingly and carefully at the cultures/groups to whom we are sent;
- the danger of just shoving a 'Gospel package' at them.

We need to open our eyes to what is out there already.

#### For further reflection

The great saint Bernard of Clairvaux, writing to Pope Eugene III in the 12c, warned the Pope of the danger of busy-ness. He wrote:

*It is far wiser for you to withdraw from time to time from your affairs, than let your affairs draw you and drive you, step by step, to where you certainly do not want to go. You ask where? To the point where the heart is hardened. Do not ask any further what this means - if you are not alarmed now, your heart is already there.*

Has my heart become hardened at all? How can I start to deal with this?

15 – Learning to see and to listen

*Attention to the mission context, or listening to the world, comes before discerning how the inherited Christian tradition works within it. Mission precedes the shape of the church that will be the result... listening to the context of the world shapes what emerges.*

**Susan Hope, Mission-shaped Spirituality, p105**

16 – Learning to see and to listen

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

#### 4 - They are people who are learning to take nothing for the journey

##### 17 – Taking nothing for the journey

*Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money – not even an extra tunic.*

**Luke 9.3**

#### Issues

- Money and possessions - 'living by another story';
- Because we live in the world it is highly likely that as Christians we too are affected by the love of possessions and consumer culture;
- Dependence on God and on those to whom we are sent - 'person of peace';
- Lightweight structures for a mobile church;
- Going with empty hands rather than with a Gospel package.

*Mission-shaped Spirituality*, ch5 has background and stories to supplement yours

#### For further reflection

What are the big challenges for me/our mission team in this?

##### 18 – Taking nothing for the journey

*The call to a responsible lifestyle must not be divorced from the call to responsible witness. For the credibility of our message is seriously diminished whenever we contradict it by our lives. It is impossible with integrity to proclaim Christ's salvation if he has evidently not saved us from greed, or his lordship, if we are not good stewards of our possessions, or his love if we close our hearts against the needy.*

**John Stott (ed.), *Making Christ Known*, Paternoster Press, 1996, p148.**

##### 19 – Taking nothing for the journey

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

## 5 - They are people of prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit

### 20 – Praying and depending on the Holy Spirit

*So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you.*

**Luke 11.9**

#### Making time for prayer

Biblical focus: the really key thing to encourage is the need to develop a disciplined prayer life. This has to be shaped to 'fit' the person of course, and we have to take care not to overburden those who are not ready for it.

Everyone involved in a leadership capacity of a fresh expression of church ought to be making some time every day for their own private prayer. And fresh expression leadership teams should be developing regular corporate prayer.

#### For further reflection

- What's my pattern of prayer?
- Are there some practical things I need to do to develop my prayer life?

#### Dependence upon the Holy Spirit

The second important point is about dependence upon the Holy Spirit – see *Mission-shaped Church*, pp64-70.

A common pattern of spiritual renewal for individuals and churches:

- a wilderness experience often serves to remind us of our need of the Spirit;
- ask... seek... knock... receive by faith with thanksgiving.

#### For further reflection

Where am I in the 'cycle' of renewal at present?

### 21 – Praying and depending on the Holy Spirit

*Those who set out on the journey of mission cannot do so without prayer because the journey cannot be undertaken without the Holy Spirit, and the way to access the Spirit and the Spirit's power is through prayer. 'Stay in the city,' urged Jesus, 'until you have been clothed with power from on high.' (Luke 24.49)*

**Susan Hope, Mission-shaped Spirituality, p61**

### 22 – Praying and depending on the Holy Spirit

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

At the mid-way point in exploring these marks of missional spirituality, invite the group around their tables to reflect on what they have heard so far. They should feel free to pick up any of the points but it may be particularly appropriate to focus on mark five. These questions may be helpful:

- Discuss in small groups about your own pattern of prayer;
- Share your own experience of how you have learned to shape your prayer life;
- Talk about practicalities in getting started with a more regular prayer pattern;
- How do you cope with boredom or distraction in prayer?
- Have you any experience of quiet days or retreats?

## Part two: ten marks of an apostolic spirituality (6-10)

24 - part two

### 6 - They are people who are learning how to go two by two

25 – Going two by two

*The Lord... sent them... in pairs.*

**Luke 10.1**

The real issue of this is to help people really believe in the product! That is - in the power of community and of committed relationships. See p50 of *Mission-shaped Spirituality* and chapter six for background and examples.

#### Issues

- The bridge of our humanity;
- Two by two is small but effective - story (*Mission-shaped Spirituality*, p52);
- The 'fishing net' - relationships in the church;
- Koinonia at the 'core' - leadership modelling community/vulnerability.

'The Product' - God's community - has got great power and attraction. It really is the real thing! It doesn't have to be 'glossy' - just real. Do we believe this?

#### For further reflection

I/we could do with doing further thinking/work on...

26 – Going two by two

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle

### 7 - They are people who know they are bearers of a message

27 – Bearing a message

*As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'*

**Matthew 10.7**

At the 'core' of apostolic spirituality is the message of the resurrection of Jesus. This is at the heart of the Gospel proclamation and of our lives as 'bearers' or 'carriers'.

It's not to encourage the participants to be reductionist in their message but to remind them of the central truth.

An 'imagination' exercise: invite the participants to picture the ancient city of Jerusalem, still dark, on that first Easter Day. Read the following paragraph:

You are hovering, as it were above the city, and from that vantage point you can see someone - a woman - running... running from the place where they had buried Jesus... You can hear the sound of the woman's breath, coming in short, sharp bursts as she runs through the silent streets... She seems to know exactly where she's heading, as she turns first one way, then another, through narrow alleys, up steps, across an open courtyard... She stubs her toe and momentarily misses a step, taking the opportunity to wipe the sweat off her face... Then she continues, leaping at last up a narrow stair and knocking, quietly but persistently..., until the door is opened. She enters... The door closes behind her... Those who are inside turn towards her... For a brief moment, before she speaks, they form a silent tableau, a still picture, a moment frozen in time... They do not realise it, but they are poised at the turning point between the old world and the new... Then the words burst from her, exploding from her mouth - and the new age is born...

Question to ask: What are the words that Mary Magdalene says? (Mary is sometimes known as 'the apostle to the apostles'!)

Buzz in small groups and/or feedback answers from the floor.

### One important reminder

This conviction does not exclude times of doubt and darkness, puzzles to solve and mysteries to ponder. See *Mission-shaped Spirituality* p76.

### Some issues

- The need to proclaim the message in ways and words that make sense - story on *Mission-shaped Spirituality* p79 or use your own examples;
- The place of testimony - pp81-82.

### For further reflection

- How am I/are we at 'proclaiming'?
- When did I last talk to someone about Christ and what he means to me?

28 – Bearing a message

*At the heart of apostolic spirituality lies one great, central, bewildering, joyful, life-giving discovery – that Jesus is alive. Everything else really does flow from that.*

**Susan Hope, Mission-shaped Spirituality, p75**

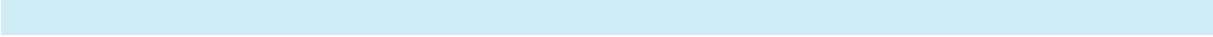
29 – Bearing a message

*This central conviction, that Jesus is alive, is woven into the heart and mind of the apostolic person: she is branded with it, marked with it: it is burned into the psyche.*

**Susan Hope, Mission-shaped Spirituality, p75**

30 – Bearing a message

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.



## 8 - They are people who know they are wounded healers

31 - Wounded healers

*Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.*

**Matthew 10.8**

This is to underline the fact that the mandate to apostolic people includes healing. This is a big topic and of course there will be different understandings of what it means - and maybe some 'baggage' for the participants too. An example of a healing from your experience and an example of how healing (or a looked-for transformation) didn't happen and what was learned might be useful to weave in.

### Issues

- The breadth of 'healing': individual, social, physical, spiritual, institutional, national, ecological, etc;
- The assertiveness and authority given to the missionaries to heal the world;

Jesus' words starting 'heal the sick...' could continue 'get clean drinking water to everyone on the planet, get justice for child prostitutes, fight for decent schools...'

- Physical healings sometimes happen at the start of a new piece of mission;
- Healing as sign;
- Living with and bearing our own brokenness – we are wounded healers.

### For further reflection

- How am I getting on living with the 'now' and the 'not yet' of the reality of the kingdom?
- How does it feel to live in this tension?
- Have I let go of one side or the other - in cynicism or despair - or am I determined to hold on to both in faith?

32 - Wounded healers

*The Kingdom of God is creation healed.*

**Hans Kung**

33 - Wounded healers

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

## 9 - They are people who are learning to live rhythmically

34 - Living rhythmically

*On their return the apostles told Jesus all they had done. He took them with him and withdrew privately.*

**Luke 9.10**

This section deals with the apostolic person having L-plates on - all the time - being willing to come aside and reflect on what has been happening and learn from it. This means living rhythmically - rhythms of retreat/return - something that may need to be encouraged, especially if a team is just getting going and very keen. And the 'laughing' bit means not just having a good time (which is essential) but the ability to cultivate 'detachment' from the project. See *Mission-shaped Spirituality*, ch10 for some background.

### Issues

- Rhythms of life - patterns of rest, renewal, recreation;
- L-plates - patterns of reflection and learning;
- Laughter - detachment, leaving outcomes to God.

Use own experience/stories to colour in issues.

### For further reflection

- How are my/our rhythms of life?
- What patterns of rest and reflection are we building into the work?
- Am I enjoying being a 'learner' or do I feel I need to know all the answers?
- How do I feel about 'leaving the outcomes to God?'

35 - Living rhythmically

*These images of rhythm and of returning-with-detachment, of reflection and of rest speak powerful words of freedom into the climate of anxiety that so often dominates our church culture with regard to mission. They mediate a kind of relaxed maturity about the mission, a sense of well-being, a light-heartedness about the whole enterprise. We are to be both joyfully serious and seriously joyful about the task. At the heart of this is surely a particular humility: a humility that recognises that the outcome of the mission is God's not ours, that there is always much to learn and that the relationship of trust and dependence must constantly be attended to. We may die for the mission, but we are not to live for it - we are to live only for God.*

**Susan Hope, Mission-shaped Spirituality, p107**

36 - Living rhythmically

Here is the time to include a testimony from within the group that demonstrates this mark. Follow this with silence, with the option of lighting a candle.

## 10 - They are people who are learning to be adventurers

37 – Being adventurers

*And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people'. And immediately they left their nets and followed him.*

**Mark 1.17-18**

### Issues

- Being risk takers/crossing boundaries (cultural/linguistic) and how that feels;
- Living with uncertain outcomes;
- The way 'traditional' church can also take risks - and the need for courtesy on both sides of the two economies. See story in *Mission-shaped Spirituality*, p115.

A good final quote from the Quakers of Balby (17th century):

38 – Being adventurers

*We do not want you to copy or imitate us.*

*We want to be like a ship that has crossed the ocean,*

*Leaving a wake of foam, which soon fades away.*

*We want you to follow the Spirit, which we have sought to follow,*

*But which must be sought anew in every generation.*

***Cited by E Arnold, Why we Live in Community, Plough, 1995, Preface***

39 – Being adventurers

## CONCLUSION

20 minutes of questions

Where the Hell is Matt clip