



FIVE INSIGHTS TO HELP YOU EQUIP YOUR CONGREGATION TO SHARE THEIR FAITH

EXPECTATIONS - FOCUS - MOMENTUM - PRACTICE - TRAINING

TRAINING
MORNING
APRIL 2024



WELCOME

Welcome to Five Insights to Help You Equip Your Congregation to Share Their Faith, part of our Evangelism: How to Make it a Whole Church Ministry series. We hope you enjoy our morning together as we explore evangelism in our contemporary context. Let us know if there is anything we can do to help the morning work for you.

Overview of the Session

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SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD ZOOM ENGAGEMENT

- **Please participate, don't just observe** Pop things in Chat, ask questions (use virtual hand or just dive in with a question), contribute your best insights.
- **Set aside distractions** Close down other programmes, resist the temptations of your phone/tablet, put out of reach other reading material.
- **Keep your video on throughout** It will help you be fully present, and will help others engage with you. A blank screen is rather dispiriting.
- **Don't mute your sound** It helps with the flow of interaction, and an occasional background noise actually makes it feel less artificial. However, if there is a lot of noise in your room, or you are meeting as a group in one place, please do mute.
- **Combat Zoom fatigue** Two things will help combat weariness. Hide your self view (right click on your own image and select hide self view) and take regular stretch breaks (every 20 minutes or so stand up, stretch, take a few deep breaths).
- **Be patient** At some point something will go wrong. Please be patient with us as we try to sort it out.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD INTERACTION

- **Learning together** We are all here to learn from God and one another. **Adopt a learning posture.**
- **Participate** Share your thoughts, insights and questions. Listen carefully to what others say. **Have an enquiring mind.** You'll get the most out of it if you do.
- **Confidentiality** What is said in the room cannot be shared outside the room attributed to anyone in the room. That makes it a safe place for us to be honest and share more deeply. **Choose honesty and openness.**
- **Reality check** It is always easy to become disconnected from reality in a training session, so please keep us connected with reality by taking us back to how things really are in your context. **Keep grounded.**
- **Next step** We will cover a lot of ground, but throughout our time together **be attentive** to what might be your next step following this morning's session. We will give you a chance to identify that at the end of the morning.

LEARNING TOOLS

We're using a Padlet Board this morning, as well as some of the features in Zoom. It works best if you identify one person in your group to act as 'Padlet monitor'. They will post on behalf of the group. They are fairly simple tools, but don't hesitate to ask if anything is unclear. Take look at a short (3 minute) introductory [video](#).

Throughout this handout there are hyperlinks to various materials. They appear in [blue](#) and [underlined](#).

TIMINGS

9.15	Welcome and Session 1
10.20	Break
10.25	Session 2
11.15	End

Timings are for guidance only, apart from the end time. We will finish by 11.15.

LEAD ON

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COURAGEOUS WITNESSES

Every Christian
a courageous
witness



We long for people to share their faith in a...

- Relaxed...
- Natural...
- Helpful...

... way, so that they might be courageous witnesses in daily life.

WHY COURAGEOUS AND NOT CONFIDENT OR COMPETENT?

(Although of course we do long for them to be competent and confident as well.)

1. Consider what the early Church prayed for in Acts 4:29, then see Acts 4:31, 9:28, 13:46, 18:26, 19:8, 28:31.
2. Recognise it is hard to feel confident when:
 - Facing persecution or ridicule.
 - In the complexities of the contemporary world.
 - When you've just become a Christian.
3. Confidence is a rather professional, middle class concept.

'I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave person is not the one who does not feel afraid, but the one who conquers that fear.'

Nelson Mandela



ACTIVITY

What has most helped you to share your faith?

For further exploration on the difference between [evangelism, witness and evangelist](#).

1. AGREE EXPECTATIONS

Unrealistic expectations demotivate people. Unclear expectations confuse people.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Colossians 4:2-6



Don't assume people know what is expected of them.

Don't assume you know the expectations people have of themselves.

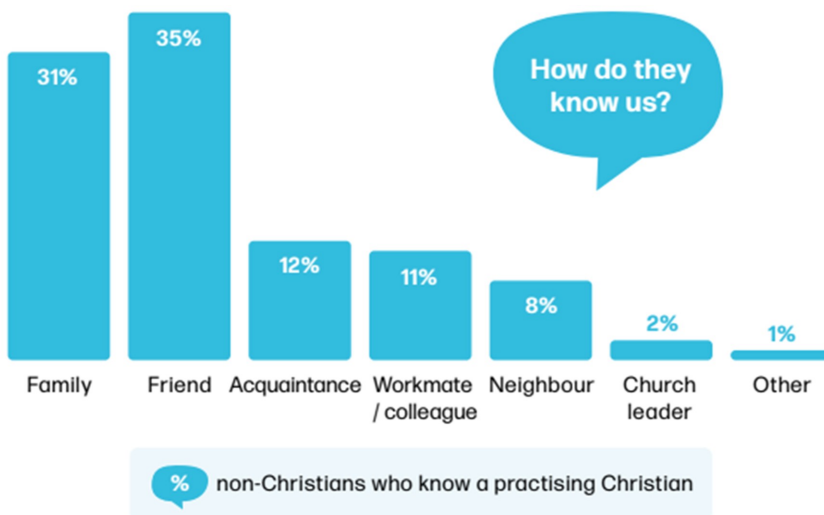
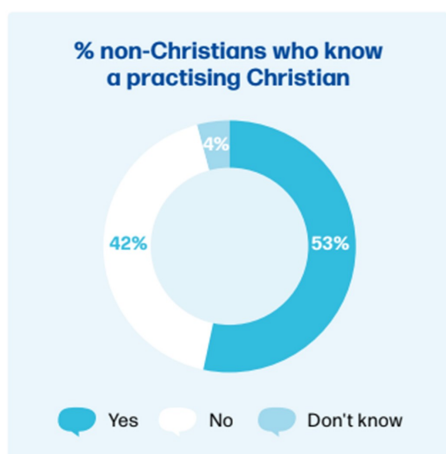
For some ideas on [increased expectations](#) as people mature in faith, identify gifting and take on responsibility.

2. BE FRONTLINE FOCUSED



Most people's frontlines are made up of:

- Occupation.
- Neighbourhood.
- Networks.
- Home.



ACTIVITY

What would it look like to be frontline focused when you gather? Think about this in terms of your services, in particular the worship, preaching, intercessions and dismissal. Share your ideas on the Padlet board under the relevant heading using this QR code or the link in the Chat.



LICC have some great resource for thinking about Frontlines, including their [Frontline Sundays materials](#).

3. START SMALL TO GATHER MOMENTUM

FOR REFLECTION

What starting small ideas can you identify for your context?

Which one are you going to start with?

How will you best do that?

4. PRACTISE FAITH CONVERSATIONS

'Far more likely to talk to others about our faith if we're talking about our faith with others.'

James Lawrence



STAGE 1

Invite people to chat about an aspect of their faith in pairs. If people are unfamiliar or uncomfortable talking about faith matters, start here.

- How did you come to be a part of the congregation?
- Who has been most influential in helping you on your faith journey?
- What is your favourite Bible passage, hymn or prayer, and why?
- When has God been especially close?
- In what ways does your faith impact your life?
- What do you struggle with in your faith?

Swap the pairs around week by week. Over time, gently invite people to share some of their conversation with the larger group so they get used to speaking in that context. The idea here is to help people to become more comfortable talking out loud about their faith.

STAGE 2

Take some common scenarios and explore how to say something suitable when opportunities arise. For example:

- A friend shares they are going through a hard time: how to offer to pray with or for them.
- A colleague asks what you got up to over the weekend: how to own up that you go to church.
- A classmate notices you have made a behaviour change: how to speak of the difference Christianity has made in your life.
- A neighbour comments that they wish they had your faith: how to invite someone to read a booklet, or come to an event.

STAGE 3

Link it with Pray for Five. As we pray for people and for opportunities to share our faith, it is fairly easy to ask whether anyone has had an opportunity this week to share their faith with any of their five, or with anyone else? If they have, then invite them to share what happened, whether it went well or not. Then explore what can be learned from this encounter for a similar opportunity in the future. Play with how the conversation might go, and possible things that might be said.

STAGE 4

Take one of the common questions that non-Christians ask (there are only around 15) and work out together how you might respond to it if it came up in a conversation.

For further resources on [practice faith conversations](#).

5. OFFER JUST-IN-TIME TRAINING



THINK TWICE BEFORE RUNNING A COURSE

Courses tend to be attended by:

- Those who like courses.
- Those who least need them.
- Those who have the time.

Courses tend to front load input and offer minimal ongoing support.

Some evangelism training courses suffer from 'gift projection'.

PROVIDE JUST-IN-TIME TRAINING

- Share a guide on [how to invite people](#) to an event, especially when you have a suitable event coming up.
- Send a link to an online video people can watch e.g. [how to talk about your faith with someone who is apathetic](#).
- Run a 20 minute Zoom session on a relevant topic e.g. how to make the most of the Easter season. How to talk about the recent census figures. How to talk about LLF.
- In existing small groups take a common scenario and talk about how you would engage with it.
 - * A family member shares they are going through a hard time: how to offer to pray with or for them.
 - * A colleague asks what you got up to over the weekend: how to own up that you go to church.
 - * A neighbour comments that they wish they had your faith: how to respond and perhaps invite someone to read a booklet, watch a video, or come to an event.
 - * An online contact notices you have made a change in your online posts (since becoming a Christian, although they don't know that is the reason why): how to speak of the difference Christianity has made in your life.
 - * At a social event a person you've just met asks 'what do you do?'
 - * A friend who is a parent and who brings their child to a parade service once a month: 'It's good for her to learn about right and wrong...'
 - * At a school governor's meeting, over coffee someone says to you: 'Why is the church so homophobic?'
 - * Travelling on a train reading a Christian book or Bible someone sits across from you and makes conversation: 'We buried my niece last week, she was only 14.'
 - * A friend admits they are really struggling with anxiety. How do you respond?
 - * A co-worker mentions the horrors of the war in Ukraine 'How can people do that to other people.'
 - * A contact on social media comments about a religious item on the news by dismissing the Christian faith: how do you respond?
 - * A family member is surprised to hear that you go to church.
- Run a 45 minute session on one of the common things that hold people back from sharing their faith. [The Evangelism Health Check Tool](#) is a great way to discover what does hold people back (use the 10 question version). Alternatively create a [simple questionnaire](#) and send it round your people.



ACTIVITY

What insights would you add on equipping a congregation to share their faith?

FOR REFLECTION

What one next step are you going to take as a result of this morning? Please make it simple, doable and attractive.

RESOURCES

THE ONE TO READ

- [How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture](#), James Lawrence (CPAS)

TOP READS

- Honest Evangelism, Rico Tico (Good Book Company)
- How to Talk About Jesus, Sam Chan (Zondervan)
- Living His Story, Hannah Steele (SPCK)
- Evangelism as Exiles, Elliot Clark (TGC)
- Being the Bad Guys, Stephen McAlpine (Good Book Company)

OTHER RESOURCES

- For a wide variety of resources, articles and materials go to www.cpas.org.uk/leadingevangelism.
- PCC Tonight, [Leading in Evangelism](#): six sessions to use with your PCC to help shape churches around evangelism.
- [Leading Evangelism Learning Hub](#), a 16 month learning community.
- [Leading in Evangelism](#), an online modular learning resource.
- [Talking Jesus Research](#), (HOPE and EA)



Lead On

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Leading Evangelism Learning Hub

Want to see the ministry of evangelism central to church life rather than on the periphery? Then sign up for our 14 month Hubs for incumbents to attend with others involved in leadership. www.cpas.org.uk/hub.



How to Nurture a Faith Sharing Culture

An exciting and accessible new church resource to help leaders nurture a faith-sharing culture in their church, congregation, fresh expression or church plant. www.cpas.org.uk/faith-sharing.



Venture and Falcon Holidays

CPAS runs around 90 fun-filled holidays for 8-18 year olds each year. The holidays are run by volunteers, and if you are interested in helping on one or know a young person who would benefit from a great holiday with a focus on Jesus visit www.ventures.org.uk



Making Mission Possible

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