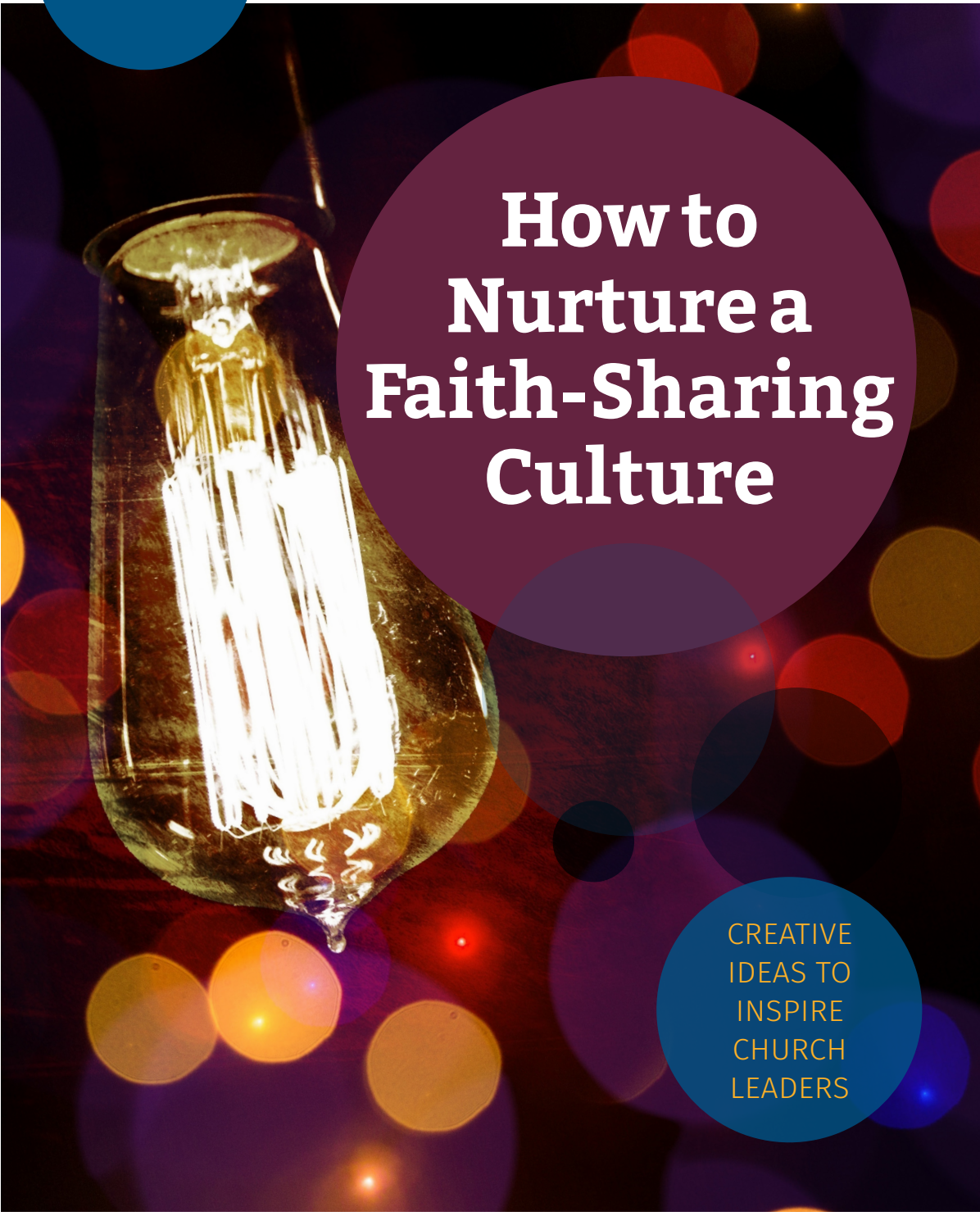


The background of the cover features a glowing lightbulb on the left side, with its filament visible. The background is dark with numerous out-of-focus, colorful bokeh lights in shades of red, orange, yellow, and purple. A large, semi-transparent purple circle is positioned in the upper right, containing the title text.

How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture

CREATIVE
IDEAS TO
INSPIRE
CHURCH
LEADERS

JAMES LAWRENCE

CONTENTS

A QUICK GUIDE TO USING THIS BOOK	1
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PART 1 – THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

1. Good news for a change	5
2. So how are we doing?	11
3. Let's talk about culture	16

PART 2 – SMALL SHIFTS, BIG CHANGES

4. Seven core shifts	28
Practice 1 Engage with God	32
Practice 2 Pray for five	36
Practice 3 Refocus your intercessions	38
Practice 4 Practise faith conversations	40
Practice 5 Tell faith stories	42
Practice 6 Resource faith sharing	45
Practice 7 Budget for evangelism	47
5. Seventy simple ideas	48
For church leaders to model sharing their faith	48
For church leaders to encourage others in evangelism	51
For leaders of worship services	55
For PCCs and Group Councils (or equivalent governance bodies)	57
For leaders of church groups (all ages)	58
6. Taking it further	61

PART 3 – GUIDES

1. Evangelism expectations	67
2. Prayer and evangelism	70
3. Ideas for praying for five	74
4. Creating a resource base	76



A QUICK GUIDE TO USING THIS BOOK

**Want to dive straight
in to some ideas?**

No problem. **Turn to chapter 4** for our top seven one-degree shifts, or to chapter 5 for 70 simple ideas.

**Intrigued as to
whom this book
is for?**

Continue reading
this section.

**Interested to know
why the focus of this
book is on creating an
'evangelistic' culture and
not a missional one?**

Turn to
chapters 1 and 2.

**If you are confused
about 'culture', what it is,
how we assess our existing
culture or what it takes to
change a culture, then
chapter 3 is for you.**

**Looking for clarity
around what to expect
of your congregation
members when it comes
to sharing their faith,
prayers you could use to
pray about evangelism,
ideas for praying for five, or
suggested resources?**

Try the Guides.

**Prefer to watch a
video introducing
the resource?**

Scan the QR code.



Or are you
someone who **likes
to start at the beginning
and read through to the
end...?** My sort of person,
join me, and turn
the page...

THE WHO, WHAT AND WHY

Who?

This book is for leaders of churches, congregations, church plants or fresh expressions. Messy church leader? Yup, it is for you (and Sweaty church, Forest church, Café church too). Vicar? Yes, you as well. Focal leader of a congregation? You too. Church planter? You're in.

What?

This book is about one very specific thing. How can we shape the culture of our churches, congregations and fresh expressions to be more evangelistic? To put it another way, how do we help evangelism to become a normal part of how we do church, rather than an add-on activity for a few? (Those of you for whom the word evangelism is already off-putting, stick with me, we'll think more about that a little later on in the book. And those for whom evangelism is already a normal part of how you do church, please contact me and let me know how you did it – seriously.)

It might also help to say what this book isn't. It is not a book of ideas on how to do evangelism per se: how to run an Alpha course, how to speak about faith with an eight-year-old, how to reach the young people in your community and so on. Important as these are, we're focusing elsewhere.

Neither is this a book about adding loads more things to do onto your already over-busy schedule. It's not a programme or huge new plan. It's not designed to make anyone, or any churches, busier. If anything, it's designed to do the opposite, and to bring life that will have its own momentum.

Why?

I thought you might ask that, so the first chapter explains our focus, and starts with some good news, some really good news...

Just before you press on, three further things.

'That all sounds very Anglican', you think. 'What about other denominations like mine?' I really hope it will be helpful for you as well, although I have to admit I have written from my predominantly Church of England experience, and many of the stories and ideas come from this context. If you are from another denomination, from overseas, or from other parts of the Anglican Communion, you may need to do a bit of translation into your own context; nevertheless, I hope that this book will be useful and thought-provoking.



I am so grateful this isn't all up to us. If it was I'd give up today. I am amazed that God wants to weave us into the lives of other people so that they too may discover the incredible good news at the heart of our faith. And I am grateful that we don't have to get everything sorted before he can do that.

Firstly, a big thank you to the large group of people who contributed to the list of ideas. Some of your ideas made it in to the final cut, others didn't, but I am grateful for them all. You may not find them quite as you wrote them, but I hope I have done justice to the kernel of your contribution.

Secondly, you may not find any of the ideas in this book hit the spot. You may think they won't work in your context, in your tradition, with your people (although they have come from a variety of contexts, traditions and people). Even if that is the case, I hope they will inspire you to come up with better ideas that will work for you, and then you will be kind enough to send them to us at CPAS so we can include them in the bonus section of the book, which is to be found online (go to www.cpas.org.uk/77 or scan the QR code). In this way we can help resource one another with an ever-growing range of practices that will help shape an evangelistic culture.



Thirdly, it is easy for things to come across as neat and tidy when writing a book, but of course in reality things are more likely to be messy and unpredictable. As church leaders we will miss opportunities to show and share the faith. For example, last week I missed one and have been kicking myself ever since, trying to work out why exactly I didn't 'make the most of the opportunity' that clearly presented itself. So frustrating! As churches we navigate all the normal ups and downs of church life, sometimes wondering if we are in any way close to reflecting the 'one another' verses mentioned throughout the New Testament (for example love one another, forgive one another, encourage one another). Yet... in all this God continues to be at work, weaving through our foibles and failings a glorious thread of his redemptive purposes. Indeed, it is often precisely through our muddles and brokenness that God reaches through us to others, for none of us have it all together. Being honest about our struggles is crucial. Sharing how God is with us in our dark days and confusion can speak to others in powerful ways... even when we are hanging on to him by our fingernails. It is one of the ways that people will discover God is real.

PART 1

THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

“

Conversations about the things we love most and are most interested in arise naturally and easily through the connectedness of our lives with people that we know.

The good news of Jesus is no different – it has always been passed on through ordinary individuals.

Hannah Steele, Dean at
St Mellitus College¹

CHAPTER 1

GOOD NEWS FOR A CHANGE

Read or listen to the news, and when it comes to the UK Church, it normally isn't good. Decline, irrelevance and marginalisation are part of the narrative that surrounds much of what is said. Indeed, even internal church conversation can follow a similar pattern. But let's not start there. Let's start with good news for a change.

Good News

Daily, people become disciples of Jesus across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

I think of Brett² whose wife became ill, very ill. He had to give up his job, care for her and the children, and run the home; not what he was used to. Things declined, with debts building up and a degree of chaos in the home. A neighbour suggested he went to the local church to ask for help. He did. And they helped. Meals were cooked, the house was cleaned, homework was completed, and he learnt how to do those things for himself. The debt agency at the church helped sort out the money problems. One night he found himself on his knees in his garden crying out to the God whom those at the church had shown him and shared with him. He speaks of how his life hasn't been the same since.

Or Akira, a nine-year-old living with significant disadvantage, and no contact with gathered church, ever. Through a church-attending neighbour she was invited on a CPAS Falcon Holiday³, paid for by the neighbour, her first ever holiday out of the city. She loved it. Her first time seeing the sea, cows in a field (yes, we are talking the 21st century), and her first time encountering a group of Christians who loved her, respected her and introduced her to a God who loved her and had a purpose for her life. It was good news, and she responded. Now she helps lead Falcon Holidays for kids just like herself, is a teaching assistant and involved with the youth work at her church.

Or Onde, a successful business man in his mid-forties with everything he aspired for in life. Yet... a friend asked him and his wife to her house for a simple event she was running in her home. It involved some great food, a short talk about success in life, and an opportunity to explore matters of life and faith from a Christian perspective. He only really went to accompany his wife, but he loved it. He asked many questions that evening, and kept on asking many more over the months that followed. Bit by bit he found himself drawn to Jesus as he read a gospel and chatted about it with one of the church members. He made a decision to follow Jesus, and joined the adventure of re-orientating his life around the person of Jesus and the priorities of his kingdom.

“

Gratitude is why we do it, because we can't help it. Why are we seeking to share the good news of Jesus Christ? It is because we have received without payment an inestimable gift, which will not stay still in our hands.

Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury



Every day, somewhere in the UK, similar stories are happening, and people's lives – children, young people, women and men of every age – are being transformed for eternity.

For more stories of people coming to faith.

GOOD NEWS

The majority of people who come to faith in Christ do so because someone they know shows and shares their faith with them, however falteringly.

Research reveals that the most important people in helping others come to faith are ordinary Christians in contact with others in everyday life⁵. Yes, evangelists and ministers and youth workers all have their part to play, but the people most likely to influence someone on a journey to faith are those to whom we say at the end of our services, 'Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.' And they do, in the name of Christ.

“

It is important to note that just 1% of adults think of a church leader and 1% of young people think of a Christian youth worker as their first point of contact with a Christian. We can't leave the task of making Jesus known to the “professionals”. We all have a story to tell and a unique set of friendships, connections and opportunities.

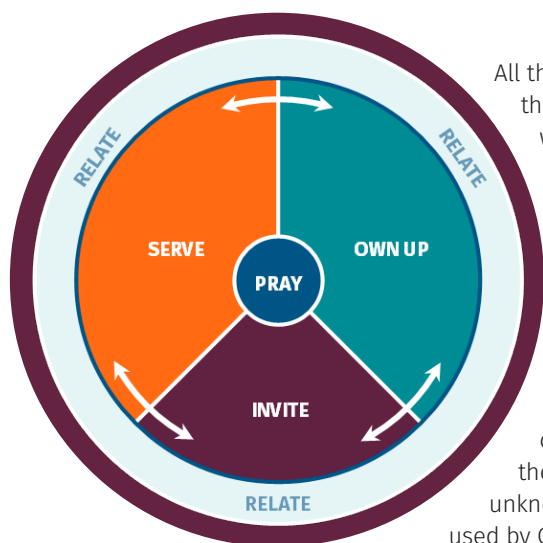
Talking Jesus report⁴



For example:

- A work colleague who stands out because of her authenticity and refusal to be a part of a blame culture that dominates. When challenged, she quietly points people to the one who shapes her life around different priorities.
- A sibling whose life is a bit of a mess, yet in the midst of it all has become a Christian and, whilst still not in any way sorted, speaks passionately of their raw and new-found faith.
- A school mate who talks naturally of his faith and links and likes appropriate YouTube videos through his social media.
- A neighbour who gently and appropriately invites those on her street whenever her church puts on an event for those who aren't yet followers of Jesus.
- A friend who always has time to listen when things are tough and offers to pray for (and sometimes with) people.
- A parent who is struggling with anxiety and depression, and yet somehow in the midst of the darkness speaks to those family and professionals caring for her of a God who will not abandon her.
- A gym friend who, when asked how her weekend was on a Monday morning in the Zumba class, always finds a creative way to talk about the impact of the Sunday service she attends, as well as the other things she did.
- A dog walker whom others notice picks up litter as he walks the dog, and has a warm smile, a cheery hello and time to chat as he encounters other dog walkers each day.
- A member of the school hockey team who is as competitive as anyone, but often apologises if she oversteps the mark, and, whenever a Christian sports personality speaks of their faith, finds a natural way to raise this in conversation in the changing rooms.
- A neighbour who invites the person across the road who is going through a hard time to come to a weekday Mass with him, simply to find some peace.
- A volunteer at the church lunch club for the elderly of the community, who invites people to a book club based on Christian books that engage with issues the elderly find helpful.
- A long-term friend who has been a Christian for decades, but speaks honestly and openly about some of the struggles and doubts he has, when on his weekly walk with his three friends.
- A member of an interest group who shares its passion, but doesn't allow that passion to become more important than Jesus, and prays before every gathering for an opportunity to talk with someone about deeper matters of life and faith.
- A volunteer sales assistant at the local charity shop who invites a different member of staff each time an Alpha course starts at his church.





All these examples are of ordinary Christians going about their life with a desire to **serve** others sacrificially in whatever ways seem appropriate, a willingness to **own up** to their faith and the difference it makes in their life, antennae raised to any opportunity to **invite** those they encounter to join in or find out more, and a steady pattern of **praying** for God to open up opportunities to show and share the faith. You can find more on **pray, serve, own up, invite** in Guide 1.

These are the people God writes into the stories of other people's lives, just as he wrote Ananias into the story of Saul's life in Acts 9:10-19. Ananias was an unknown, ordinary Christian yet he was open to being used by God.

GOOD NEWS

Churches come in many forms, and whether a fresh expression led by a lay person, a congregation led by a focal minister, a church or churches led by a clergy person; whether a gathering of six or 600; whether located in a rural, urban, market town, inner city, coastal town, suburban, or outer estate context; whether affluent or poor, catholic or evangelical, in a church building or in a home... it is possible to order the life of church community around the ministry of evangelism.

Of course, evangelism is only one of a number of priorities for the life of a Christian community⁷, and of course it takes time and isn't necessarily easy. But possible? Yes, most certainly. This book offers a whole range of ideas to help.

“

To be a disciple is to be made a witness. The task of evangelism, then, is not a separate activity, but, rather, is characteristic of every aspect of discipleship.

Hannah Steele, Dean at St Mellitus College⁶

GOOD NEWS

God's grace abounds, his love is constant, and his desire for all people to flourish through his Son is unwavering. Thankfully this isn't up to us. It isn't even something we do, primarily. The initiative is God's. He longs for all people everywhere to become all he made them to be, through what he has done for humanity in Jesus (1 Timothy 2:4). As Christians, we simply get to join in with what God is doing (John 20:21). He has been doing it for a while, and is more than able to draw people to himself (John 12:32; 15:16). So, we can relax, trust him, look for where he is at work, play our part, and rejoice in the privilege of being ambassadors for his kingdom in the world today (2 Corinthians 5:20). We have an exciting opportunity to explore how to further develop the ministry of evangelism in our context, building on what we are already doing.

GOOD NEWS

Each time we gather as the people of God, be it for a service or a small group, all-age or age specific, we witness to the faith that draws us together. Each time we say our prayers and read our Bibles, we witness to an alternative way of living, with God at the centre of our lives. Each time we serve someone in need or share something of our own experience of faith in Christ, we witness to the love of Christ for all. Each time we try to shape our place of work to be a little more kingdom-like, we witness to the Lordship of Christ over all things. Each time we join others in a campaign to address an environmental concern, we witness to the fact that 'the earth is the Lord's' (Psalm 24:1).

AND SOME NOT QUITE SO GOOD NEWS...

However, many of us recognise that the ministry of evangelism is still somewhat peripheral to how we do church. It is often seen as an add-on activity for the few, or worse, an irrelevance from a bygone era.

CPAS has created this book (and a bunch of other resources, but more on that later) to provide some simple, doable, practical ideas to order and mobilise church communities around evangelism, to make it part of the culture of our churches or congregation or fresh expression. Whether you are already doing this, or starting at the beginning, we hope these ideas will help to make evangelism part of the culture where you are.

Most of the ideas in this book have been tried and tested and have proved helpful in doing just that.

Good News Forever

The word gospel (euangelion, good news) was associated in the ancient world with the announcement of news. The use of it to capture the heart of Christ's message (Mark 1:1, Luke 4:14-20), to name the accounts of Jesus' life (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John), and to focus the early Church's mission (euangelizo, to proclaim good news, Romans 10:15) is significant.

However, it is true that the word evangelism doesn't always conjure up positive images and excited feelings. Sadly, much has been done in the name of evangelism that we are rightly ashamed of, and want to distance ourselves from. These negative associations with evangelism leave us with a conundrum. The conundrum is around language. Do we continue to use the word 'evangelism' or try to find a replacement? Evangelisation. Faith sharing. Outreach. Witness. Talking about Jesus. Alongside this, there is considerable confusion in what we mean by mission, evangelism, evangelisation, witness and evangelist.

CPAS has produced materials on how to address some of these negative associations and clarify the language we use⁸, as well as three documents on a theology of evangelism, a definition of the various terms, and the relationship between evangelism, discipleship and leadership.⁹ Do take a look at these if they are areas of concern or interest for you.

“

The best decision anyone can ever make, at any point in life, in any circumstances, whoever they are, wherever they are, whatever they are, is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. There is no better decision for a human being in this life, any human being.

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury



Building on this thinking, this book focuses on how we animate a church culture that places the good news at the heart of church life, and ripples that good news out to others.

In the next chapter we explore why the focus is on evangelism rather than mission, but as we reflect on the good news of what God is doing in our nations and the good news at the heart of our faith, we are reminded that we are good news people following a good news Saviour. Since Jesus' time on earth, this good news has changed people's lives, transformed local communities, and shaped nations' values. Today, it continues to impact the lives of billions, all around the world.

So how are we doing in the UK?



CHAPTER 2

SO HOW ARE WE DOING?

We can't avoid some hard truths. The Church in the UK has been declining, is seen as irrelevant by many, and has been increasingly marginalised over the last few decades.¹⁰ We can argue about the minutiae, but I think those trends are all verifiable.

Look around the UK and you see signs of these trends in everyday life:

- Children who don't know the Easter story has anything to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Families where there are now five generations of non-church attendance.
- In 2018 less than a quarter of all marriages (21%) in England and Wales were in religious ceremonies.¹²
- The erosion of Christian values in society, and the adoption of alternative, often unhelpful or antagonistic, values.
- In 2019 only 38% of Britons describe themselves as Christian, down from 66% in 1983 (2019 British Social Attitudes poll).
- 38% of churches in the Church of England have no one under 16 attending on a Sunday.¹³

But these trends don't paint the whole picture, and they certainly don't have to be predictors of the future.

I've been ordained over 30 years, and have seen some significant shifts in the life of the Church and society over that time, not all discouraging. Allow me a few examples.

30 years ago mission was a not a common part of the internal dialogue of the Church, and when we did talk about it the focus was generally on overseas mission. Today mission is

“

Gen Z are not simply living in and being shaped by a post-Christian cultural context. They do not even have a memory of the gospel. The degree of spiritual illiteracy is simply stunning.

James Emery White,
church leader¹¹



When I left Mirfield in 1984 there was a general acceptance that if you were faithful people would come to church and the gospel would be served. Faithfulness was the key concept. Actually the idea that if you opened the church doors people would come was bankrupt even then; in its turn this looked back to the myth of the full church of the 1950s or 1930s. It is very clear today, though, that however important faithfulness to the gospel is, this in itself will not bring people to faith. The Christian story is fundamentally lost in society and people can't be expected to discover it by osmosis.



A Christian group at a university decided to run a 'Try Church' initiative during Fresher's Week. As they talked with many students who expressed an interest at their stall, they discovered that there were two questions that were uppermost in the minds of those who weren't from Christian homes: 'So... what happens at church?' and 'When does it happen?' They simply didn't know that churches tended to gather on a Sunday, and had no idea what would happen at such a gathering. They had never been.

“

The results show that non-Christians of all ages like the Christians they know. They're much more likely to describe us as friendly, caring or generous, with very small proportions saying that the Christian they know is homophobic, uptight or hypocritical. And only 6% of young people thought that the Christian they knew was boring.

Talking Jesus report ¹⁸

regularly part of conversations about the focus and future of the Church across all of the traditions.

30 years ago fresh expressions of church didn't exist, or at least not under that label or in the astonishing numbers we find today. Today thousands of people have come to faith through a wide variety of fresh expressions of church¹⁴, and a 'mixed ecology' of churches is now a part of central Church of England thinking.¹⁵

30 years ago funding for mission was hard to come by. Over recent years, significant resources have been released to fund mission projects through the Strategic Development Unit of the Church of England, through generous giving to fund Resource Churches, and through agencies, charities and local churches pouring resources into a wide variety of initiatives.

30 years ago we were (just about) in a Christendom context. Now many see contemporary society as post-Christendom. This is not all bad news. Those working among Gen Y and Gen Z find both a substantial lack of knowledge about Christian things, but also significant spiritual interest.¹⁶ Marjorie and Nick Allen, who write about their engagement with these generations, discovered; 'They don't have a clear conception of Christianity, although they are rarely negative towards it... There is spiritual openness and hunger in Britain's unchurched generations.'¹⁷

30 years ago we hadn't been through a recent global pandemic. Alongside death, trauma, and poverty, Covid-19 has shaken the foundations of many ordinary people's lives. Consequently, there seems to be a new openness to spiritual things. 23% of adults regularly engaged with online worship in February 2021. 4% of the population who self-identified as having no religion, or Christians who previously didn't attend church, were attending regularly during lockdown, of whom 52% were under 35. Of those who attended, 35% wanted to connect with others in a community, and 47% wanted to know about God.¹⁹ For a helpful overview of this, the report 'Changing Church: Is the Missing Generation Still Missing?' provides fascinating insights into the impact of the pandemic on the younger generation in England.²⁰ Many churches are rethinking what it means to be church in the post-pandemic era, loosened up by their experience during the various lockdowns. It is a great time to reset our evangelism engagement.

Overall, there are positives and negatives about where the Church is today, and how wider society relates to the Church and the Christian faith in a post-Christendom context. So where does this leave us?

Complexity and Struggle

1. POST-CHRISTENDOM CULTURE OR NOT?

When people speak about a post-Christendom culture it tends to imply that there is a monoculture across the UK. To an extent this is true. Post-Christendom tends to be the air we breathe today. We live in a post-truth world, where knowledge of the Christian story is diminished, the Church is marginalised and we reap the results of alternative world views shaping the reality of people's lives. Many of these views are deeply incompatible with the Christian faith, such as individualism, consumerism, relativism, the refusal to countenance external authority, and the denial of the possibility of revelation from 'outside' my own experience.

While these views may seem dominant in society at a macro level, it is also the case that at the micro level, there is a wide variety. This means that, in reality, a huge range of cultures co-exist in the UK, creating a mosaic rather than a mono-culture.

Therefore, it is still true that in some parts of the UK, Christendom is alive and well. People are strongly connected with the traditional values and virtues associated with it. In others, people are almost completely lacking in knowledge of Christian things. Even within one community, people of different generations may well express this mosaic of cultures – not surprising when one considers the world of the 1940s that shaped a 90-year-old in their formative years in contrast with the world of the 2000s that shaped a 20-year-old.

This means that our current missionary context is complex.



“

Coronavirus has changed society. It has changed the Church and there have been devastating effects, frustrations and challenges. But it has also birthed extraordinary innovation and courage and has inspired many, especially in this age group, to explore faith and ask deeper questions.

Changing Church report

2. WHY THE EVANGELISM FOCUS?

Whilst the UK Church has taken significant steps forward in its missionary endeavour over the last 30 years, many churches are struggling with helping people become disciples of Jesus. The Anglican Communion uses the Five Marks of Mission to help its thinking around this area.

1. To proclaim the good news of the kingdom.
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.
3. To respond to human need by loving service.
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

“

Without a specifically evangelistic ministry our mission ceases to be specifically Christian.

Stephen Cottrell,
Archbishop of York ²¹

Our experience over the last 20 years is that many churches are doing a good job of number 3, and even more so during the pandemic. The stories of churches delivering food and medicine, working with those in debt, or providing a supportive ear to the lonely and shut in are numerous and wonderful. We have also had an increasing focus on marks 2, 4 and more recently 5. There is a long way to go, but we have made some progress.

The first mark, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, which those who drafted the Five Marks were clear was the one from which the other four flowed, is perhaps the one we are least confident about at this time. Even in church traditions that historically have emphasised evangelism, many speak about a lack of confidence among their people to share their faith, old ways of sharing faith not working so well today, and a diminishing sense of motivation that sharing the faith is even necessary, let alone appropriate.

I recently asked a group of 24 church leaders to honestly assess how many people (of all ages) they had seen come to a clear faith in Christ over the last three years within their church spheres (either de-churched or non-churched people, excluding transfers from other churches). The majority responded with between zero to three. They were all leaders with a heart for evangelism, keen to shape the life of their churches around the sharing of faith with those outside the life of the church. 'It's tough,' they said, with one voice. Congregation members are generally not motivated, confident or competent in the verbal sharing of their faith. And, perhaps surprisingly, many church leaders feel that as well.

This means our current missionary taskforce is struggling.

“

The heart of the problem with evangelising any generation in a post-Christian world is Christians who don't feel they need evangelising.

James Emery White,
church leader ²²

Where Next?

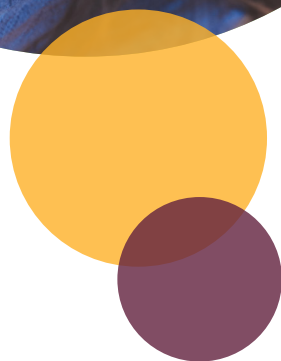
What interesting times we live in. Our context is complex, and many of our congregations are struggling to work out how to share faith. Yet people are hungry for something more, there is an openness to spiritual things, and many churches are experimenting with exciting new ways of connecting with people and sharing good news.



For the latest thinking,
ideas and resources see
Reaching the 'Nones'.

In all of this our role as leaders is to **connect** with our current context and with what God is doing, personally **model** the sharing of faith, **order** the life of our congregations around the ministry of evangelism, and **mobilise** our people to play their part in the sharing of faith. Or, to use some of the language in the Church of England at the moment, to influence the culture of our gatherings so we may become better 'missionary disciples' in our everyday lives.

How are we to do this? Let's talk about culture.





CHAPTER 3

LET'S TALK ABOUT CULTURE

What is Culture?

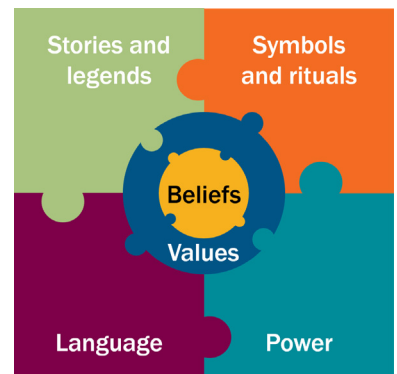
We use the word culture in a variety of ways. We talk of British culture, by which we mean things that somehow intrinsically capture the way we behave. Back in the 1990s Jilly Cooper wrote a book called 'Class', in which she humourously described the English class system. More recently Kate Fox wrote 'Watching the English', 'an absolutely brilliant examination of English culture and how foreigners take as complete mystery the things we take for granted.' ²³

We also use culture to refer to organisational culture, the way, for example, a particular business, university or charity might do things. McKinsey's is a well-known consultancy firm. Those who have worked there speak of the McKinsey way. Somewhere like Waitrose has a strong culture, a way of doing things that is specific to Waitrose in comparison to other supermarkets.

There are also regional cultures, generational cultures, family cultures and church cultures.

The academic literature on culture is plentiful, and there are many definitions. For example: 'Culture consists of group norms of behaviour and the underlying shared values that help keep those norms in place' (John Kotter). Or 'Culture is... the basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of the organisation and operate unconsciously, defining the church's view of itself' (Edgar Schein). For the purposes of this book I want to go with a very simple definition: 'The way we do things round here.' Ultimately this isn't a complete definition, but it is sufficient. It points us to the reality that culture is expressed primarily through behaviours. If you want to assess the culture of a particular church, congregation or fresh expression, look at what they do.

'The way things are done round here' is based on core beliefs and values and expressed through stories and legends, symbols and rituals, language and power. All these can be 'mapped' to gain a fuller picture of a particular culture, but again, most of this is experienced in the behaviour one encounters. It is a bit like putting together the pieces of a jigsaw to make up the picture of the culture.



I heard recently of someone who decided to attend their local church one Sunday morning. She took along with her one of her young children. When she entered through the door she was left to her own devices to pick up some books that seemed to be relevant to what was about to happen. When her child made occasional noises through the service others turned and frowned at her. By the time she exited the building no one had spoken to her. She'd experienced something of the 'culture' of that church. It wasn't one of welcome.

To be a little more nuanced, she had picked up something of the culture of that particular service. Many churches have several services and each one, whilst sharing some aspects of the culture of the whole church, also has a particular culture of that congregation. This applies equally to churches that are in a group benefice.

To assess a culture of a church or congregation we can map it using the different elements of the jigsaw puzzle on page 17, considering what we observe in terms of behaviours for each area. Or we could take a particular aspect of the life of our community, such as evangelism, and explore our 'way of doing things around here' related to that area.²⁵

To be clear, it isn't that some churches have a culture and others don't, or that some have an evangelistic culture and others don't. All churches have a culture, a way of doing things around here. All churches have an evangelistic culture, a way of encouraging (or not) the sharing of faith. The key questions therefore are: do we have an accurate awareness of our culture? How do we shape the culture to reflect a little more the person of Jesus and priorities of his kingdom?

How does Culture Change?

If we want to help church or congregational culture to become more evangelistic, how do we do it? Sam Chand, church leadership consultant, suggests: 'Changing a culture requires clear thinking, concerted effort, enormous courage and creative consistency.'²⁶

CLEAR THINKING

Thinking, alongside prayer, is one of the key things church leaders do, and yet both are so easily lost in the sheer busyness of church life. Most intentional change in church life can be traced back to someone praying and thinking about something.

For example, someone longs to reach out to the young families in the community and, as they pray, thinks about how to develop a Messy Church. Five years later, 40 people are regularly attending their Messy Church, with dozens of them having come to new-found faith in Christ.

Or a new minister wants to encourage evangelism in the life of their group of churches, and comes up with the idea of introducing a prayer focused on the evangelistic ministry of the churches that will be given to everyone in all congregations, on an attractively-produced card. The prayer will be used in every service during her first year. One year later, seven people have come to faith and nearly every Sunday a new person is turning up at one of the churches.

Generally, for thinking about culture change it is best to do that thinking with one or two other key people, a leadership team or group, to ensure a rich and wise way forward.

CONCERTED EFFORT

Culture change takes time, normally measured in months and years not days and weeks. As a broad guideline you get some culture change in 1-2 years, significant culture change in 3-7 years, and sustained culture change in 8-14 years. All these timelines will vary according to context and circumstances. I remember speaking on this at a church leaders' gathering in a rural context, and someone suggested that, in many of their rural communities, all the figures needed doubling. Then someone else spoke, 'No, no, no,' he said, 'not doubling, trebling!' On the other hand, if a church is in crisis, the timelines may be quicker. We've seen something of this during the Covid pandemic.

“

Changing a culture requires clear thinking, concerted effort, enormous courage and creative consistency.²⁶

Sam Chand

What is the difference between these three levels of culture change? It isn't an exact science, but perhaps the following descriptions help articulate some of the differences.

- 'Some' culture change (1-2 years) is about the 'low-hanging fruit', the things that can be changed relatively easily and quickly. For example, you can encourage a culture of welcome by starting to serve great coffee at the end of a service.
- 'Significant' culture change (3-7 years) is about bigger and deeper things where some trust capital needs to be banked before people are prepared to engage with the level of change suggested. For example, it may well take several years of concerted effort to develop a culture of invitation where all share the responsibility of inviting people to consider Jesus, rather than this being seen as the vicar's job alone.
- 'Sustained' culture change (8-14 years) is what happens when the change is so embedded in the life of the churches that things don't go back to how they were if a key leader leaves. For example, every major decision on the PCC is passed through an evangelism filter that considers the consequences of the decision on the ministry of evangelism; if they are detrimental the decision is reviewed and revised to make them favourable. This continues even after the main advocate for such an approach leaves the PCC.

Generally, for sustained culture change it is best to have one or two other key people or a leadership group to work on it together so that, if anyone moves on, the remaining group carry on with the culture change envisaged.

ENORMOUS COURAGE

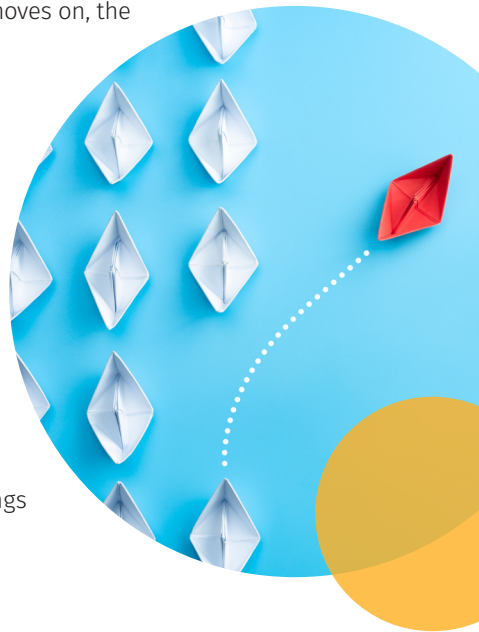
Culture change involves changing norms and habits, attitudes and assumptions, which not everyone will like or agree with. There may be some long-standing ways of doing things that need to be challenged, or some ingrained patterns of behaviour that need to be addressed. This isn't easy, and fortitude and faith will be required. The good news is that as leaders we can grow in courage which will help us face those times when enormous courage is required.²⁷

This is part of why, for culture change that requires courage, it is best to approach it together with other key people or a leadership group, so as to encourage each other when things get tough.

CREATIVE CONSISTENCY

Culture is made up of many things, so change is rarely simple. Creativity in thinking through which practices will help shape the culture appropriately will enable a multi-faceted approach to develop. Consistency in applying those approaches over time will help them to become embedded.

For creative culture change it is best to invite one or two other key people or a leadership group to come up with the creative ideas and then hold each other accountable to consistently living them out.



THE ROLE OF THE LEADERSHIP

All this reminds us that culture change isn't for the faint hearted. It is both exciting and demanding work. As one church leader put it, 'In a sense, culture-creation encapsulates what leaders need to do: it is by far the most important responsibility of leaders.' If you add in to this culture change that focuses on the ministry of evangelism, it possibly gets even harder. That is why at CPAS we are committed to supporting such culture change in a variety of ways, including this book.

But how exactly do leaders do this?

Some speak of leaders as cultural architects, designing and shaping the culture. There is some truth in this. It helps if those in leadership consider the existing culture and reflect on it in the light of the Scriptures to assess how much it reflects the kingdom culture that Jesus encourages. However, the language of architect can imply that somehow those in leadership are outside the culture, whereas of course in reality they are very much a part of it. A new minister is assimilated very quickly into the existing culture, as much as they bring their own culture.

Others speak of leaders as cultural avatars. This is the approach Simon Western takes: 'Leaders today must be cultural influencers and cultural transmitters... Individual leaders do not so much lead cultural change, but are more likely to be cultural avatars, acting on behalf of cultures that animate them as leaders. They become skilled transmitters of the cultures in which they swim.'²⁸ Western is helping us see that we operate from within as leaders, and nurture the existing culture around us towards what might be.

Perhaps a way forward is to think of those in leadership as cultural animators, bringing to life a kingdom culture through their own example, and through discerning and instilling behaviours that reflect that culture. Thus, the life of the community is shaped.

A Framework for Shaping Culture

At CPAS we have developed a framework to help leaders shape culture. It draws on the insights of many others.

For a video introduction to this framework.

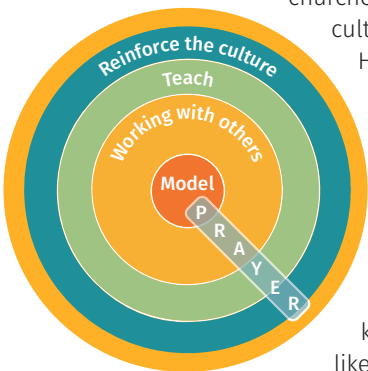


1. MODEL: BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE

There is an old adage: 'People learn what you teach, they become what you are.' The first priority when it comes to culture change is for leaders to model what they want others to become. For example, as we at CPAS try to help churches think through how to develop an evangelistic culture, we have had to reflect on our own culture as an organisation.

How are we modelling this at CPAS? As part of our response to that question, on the team I lead, we introduced 'praying for five' as part of our team meetings. We think of and pray for our chosen five, and practically encourage one another to both pray for them in a consistent way, and use any opportunities to speak of our faith to them.

Theologically such an approach is rooted in the incarnation. Jesus set before us a model of a human life shaped by the priorities of the kingdom of God. As the king, he showed us what kingdom living looked like, and modelled the cultural change he wanted to see, for example, washing the disciples' feet (John 17).



There are a lot of reasons why our church culture might not change – lack of resources, strong voices, past history – and there are always going to be some things that are out of our control. But never underestimate the impact of being the change you want to see. As Max DePree suggests, the leader's touch must match her or his voice.³⁰ We have to get involved. We have to get our hands dirty.



When Roy became an incumbent in a working class community he was committed to shaping the life of the church around evangelism. Yet he struggled to find ways to connect with those outside the church in his own personal life. He observed that pigeon racing was a major part of the life of many men in the community, so he began to take an interest. Over the next few years he began to race pigeons himself, and then to breed them. Through this he connected with many men in the community, attending various gatherings and hosting some in his own home. He found many opportunities arose to show and share his faith, and a good number of men came to faith through a short enquiry course he created for that community.

“

In my experience if the key leaders in the church are not promoting or practising evangelism, it will not become a high priority for the congregation as a whole.

Dave Male, Director of Evangelism and Discipleship for the Church of England²⁹

2. WORK WITH OTHERS

Andy Crouch suggests that to create a new cultural good, a small group to head it up is essential. I think he is right. Changing a culture on your own is hard work. Sometimes it is necessary, but generally it is better to try and identify a few others with whom you can share the journey.

Partly this is because culture gets caught and taught primarily through relationship, so if it is just you as the church leader championing a new culture, it will take more time to change the prevailing one. Partly, as mentioned above, it is because we are likely to make wiser decisions, find ongoing encouragement, and be more creative if we do this with others.

Early on in Jesus' ministry he invited 12 people to join him (Luke 6:12-16), and beyond that 12, a wider group of women and men (Luke 10:1-41). These first followers gradually absorbed Jesus' kingdom culture and then became the core group which began sharing this culture more widely. Sometimes they did this well, other times not so well, but when Jesus ascended it was this group who continued his kingdom work, empowered by his Spirit.

It is also worth noting that in the New Testament the leadership enterprise is almost exclusively plural. It reflects the nature of the Church as a body, which reflects the nature of God as Trinity. Leadership is best developed in community and best exercised in community.³¹ Whilst of course it may well just start with us as the overall leader, it makes both theological and practical sense to bring others on board to share leadership with us as quickly as possible, even if initially that is just one other person.

3. TEACH

It is in teaching that people's beliefs become increasingly aligned with Scriptural truths. When I mention teaching, I am not just referring to the public preaching ministry (one-to-many), vital as this is, but also to the application of God's word in every situation to shape the beliefs (and therefore the understanding, attitudes and assumptions) of people (one-to-one). Much of this is done in conversations over coffee at the end of the service, in pastoral visits, in Zoom meetings with people in their places of work. Much of it is done by asking questions (How would the Scriptures encourage us to think about this matter?) as well as by providing insight from our knowledge of the Bible.

Right at the start of his ministry Jesus set out his culture change agenda: 'Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news"' (Mark 1:14-15).

Then at every opportunity he spoke about the kingdom and gave examples of what a kingdom culture is like. Often he told stories: 'The kingdom of heaven is like...' mustard seeds, yeast, lost sheep, lost coin, pearl of great price and so on.

Teaching that helps our churches and congregations to inhabit the kingdom in their gathered and scattered lives will animate the culture from within the Christian tradition. This is a vital counterpoint to the disciple-making of contemporary society which shapes people to live in alternative ways to the kingdom.

To animate an evangelistic culture there may be particular things we want to focus on in our teaching:

- The nature of God as a missionary God.
- The role of the Church in sharing in God's mission to the world.
- Our understanding of words like mission, evangelism, witness, evangelist and pioneer.
- The sacred secular divide.
- Expectations and responsibilities in faith sharing.
- Learning from our sisters and brothers in the growing church in the developing world.
- Common struggles in faith sharing.

Both a systematic teaching programme addressing some of these areas, and an informed leadership able to pick up on these things in informal conversations, will help nurture an evangelistic culture.

4. REINFORCE THE CULTURE YOU WANT

There are a variety of things we can do to help reinforce the culture we want to see, providing motivation and inspiration for the desired change.

Jesus took the Jewish culture and imbued it with radical new meaning. Jesus didn't abandon the 'old' culture, but transformed it by:

- **Changing stories** Telling a commonplace story of a man being attacked on the road, but adding a Samaritan as the hero (Luke 10:25-37).
- **Celebrating culture-changers** Those who would not usually be celebrated, for example the Canaanite woman 'When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith"' (Matthew 8:10), or using a child as an example of the kingdom (Matthew 19:14).

- **Changing traditions** Entering into the current Passover tradition, but adding the words 'This cup is the covenant in my blood'; and 'You have heard it said... but I say to you' (Luke 22:20).
- **Changing practice** Confronting the purity culture by eating with tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:15-16).

From all these, I want to suggest that two powerful motivators are stories and celebration.

Stories

Stories inspire people by painting pictures of how our longed-for culture might look. There are two types of stories:

1. Those that inspire us because they are so far beyond what we currently experience that it breaks an old paradigm within us and shows us another reality, another possibility. These stories need to be used sparingly. Heard too often they can set up what psychologists call cognitive dissonance: when the gap between the expectation set by the story and the reality of our daily lives is so big, that we are initially inspired, but ultimately become disillusioned because our experience doesn't connect in any way with the expectation. Disillusionment can quickly lead to demotivation and discouragement. For example, if the only stories of faith sharing we hear are of a Christian (often someone gifted as an evangelist) having conversations with a stranger on the train that lead to the individual becoming a Christian on the spot, although we are initially inspired ('Isn't that wonderful, I would love that to happen for me'), long term we easily become disillusioned ('I've tried to strike up a conversation but it never works out as the story suggests it might').
2. Those that resonate deeply within us because we can see ourselves within the story. Our primary thought is, 'I could do that', and indeed we could. They tend to be the more ordinary stories, but ultimately the more helpful ones. I think that is why the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity's (LICC) idea of This Time Tomorrow has been so helpful: someone speaking about their daily reality and how God might feature within it.³²

These principles apply to developing an evangelistic culture as well. For example, if we only tell stories of congregation members who invite people they know to events and those people come, we inadvertently set up the expectation that getting people to an event equals success. Whereas the truth is that we can't determine how someone responds to an invitation to an event, but we can determine whether we make the invitation or not. Telling stories of people who invited someone who didn't attend will create appropriate expectations.

Also, if we only tell stories related to the gathered life of the church, again we will set expectations about what evangelism looks like and unnecessarily exclude many people from fulfilling their role in faith sharing. Stories from people's daily lives outside church will indicate that this is where the majority of faith sharing is likely to take place. For example, conversations at work, or school, or with our neighbours, or at the gym.

Finally, if we only tell stories that come from our role as a congregation or churches' leader, we will disempower our people. It was a sobering lesson I learnt early on, that when talking about



evangelism, I couldn't use any of my stories based on the benefits that my role gives me in faith sharing. For example, when asked at a social event what I do, this gives me an easy way in to speak about faith. Most people don't have that advantage.

Telling stories is a great way to motivate people, we simply need to be sure we are telling the right sort of stories, telling them in the right way, and in the right places. Stories can be shared usefully not just in sermons or from the front of church, but also in notice sheets, in social media, on our church website, parish magazines, on YouTube, in home groups, at children and youth gatherings (and include images whenever you can). My hunch is that most of us don't tell enough appropriate stories, and that if we did, we might see culture changing a bit more quickly.

Celebration

The second powerful motivator is celebration. I'm not good at this. I am wired to be forward looking. I rarely look back, so when something is completed, straightaway I tend to be looking towards the next project. This means celebration gets missed. Not good. Celebration presses meaning into what we have done, affirms the good that has happened, and stimulates energy for what might be. As one church leader puts it, 'Celebrate the good things that already exist.'

Celebration includes:

- Saying thank you to those who have got involved, even when something hasn't gone particularly well, perhaps especially so then.
- Congratulating people when something has gone well, and perhaps even having a celebratory event. This could be a party for a big project, or simply taking someone out for a coffee and cake (or their favourite equivalent).
- Publicly sharing the good news of what has happened, using whichever is the appropriate channel to do this.
- Intentionally praising God for his role in what we are celebrating.

Alongside stories and celebration there are some other ways we can reinforce the culture we want to nurture.



I was struck a few years back when visiting an Amazon fulfilment centre that all their team meetings started with people celebrating good things that had happened since they last met. There was no time limit to this item on the agenda and everyone was encouraged to contribute. They had institutionalised celebration as part of the way they did things, their culture. Wouldn't it be great if we found creative ways to do the same in our churches?

Symbols

Every gathering of people has a variety of symbols that communicate something about the culture. For example, when I walk into a church hall where the PCC or Group Council is meeting and I see a top table with three chairs behind it and all the other chairs in rows facing the table, it tells me something about the way things are done there. Identifying the symbols

in our context and the messages they communicate is a little like detective work, and often it is easier if you invite in someone from outside to do it on your behalf. They see things with fresh eyes that we no longer see, and can help us learn how certain symbols influence the culture.

Appointments

When appointing people to leadership positions, be they paid or unpaid, it helps to attend to these six key issues: character, calling, competence, chemistry, cause and culture.

The tendency can be to become competency focused (i.e. can they do the job?), with a smattering of character and chemistry. However, it makes a significant difference when we appoint people who naturally reinforce the culture we are wanting to nurture. It is easy for this to be missed out in an appointment process, but the long-term consequences of not paying attention to culture considerations can be undermining. Imagine you were wanting generosity to become part of your culture. If you then appoint someone who is rather miserly to a key leadership role (for example a home group leader, a youth leader, or a churchwarden), they will constantly undermine the culture you are looking to nurture. Appoint someone who is generous with their time and resources, and they will constantly reinforce the culture you want to nurture.

The same is true for evangelism. Appoint people with a heart for those who aren't yet disciples of Jesus and they will influence the culture in that direction. They don't have to be evangelists, or even very skilled or experienced in faith sharing. They simply need to be concerned for those outside the life of the Church. They will bring that concern to every meeting, every decision, and most likely and most importantly, to their own daily prayers.

Appraisal

Having appointed people to leadership positions, how we appraise their work in that role can also reinforce the culture we want to see. The questions we ask, the actions we affirm, the behaviours we challenge, will all influence the future direction of that person in their role.

Rewards

Linked to this is how we reward people. Church leader Andy Stanley says, 'What gets rewarded gets repeated'. Rewards come in many forms, from saying thank you, to gifts, to public affirmation. The closer we link these rewards to the culture we are nurturing, the more we reinforce that culture, not just in the life of the individual who is rewarded, but also in the lives of those who see that reward.

Resource Allocation

Resources feed things just as food feeds the body. Our primary resources are time, energy, attention, talents and money. How we allocate our money will feed the culture we want or not. For example, I sometimes ask if there is a line in the annual church budget for evangelism. Most churches don't have a line, and if they do, often allocate more to flower arranging than evangelism (not that I have anything against beautiful flowers to enhance our corporate worship).

If PCCs or Group Councils give no time on their agendas to evangelism it shouldn't surprise us that it isn't seen as a priority by them, and that the culture of the churches is not very evangelistic.

If we give no energy to working out where people are at, with regard to faith and church, it shouldn't surprise us if what we do or offer does not connect well with those people.

Time, energy, attention, talents and money are all precious resources. We can reinforce the culture we want to see by using them to feed that culture.

5. PRAYER

All of this process is best rooted in prayer. Those in leadership pray for God to be at work animating the culture through the work of his Spirit. This is not something we can do on our own, for ultimately this is God's work in people's lives. We pray that his Spirit will transform his people ever more into the likeness of Jesus and give them a heart for the priorities of the kingdom. Such prayer may well begin in the leaders' gatherings (PCCs, Group Councils, meetings with Churchwardens, staff team if we have one, gatherings of other leaders), and then spill out into the prayer life of the church, congregation or fresh expression (prayers of intercession, small groups, encouragement to pray in personal prayers and so on). There are ideas for how to do this in chapters 4 and 5.

In Summary

Modelling the culture we want to see shows people what it looks like.

Working with others around the culture we want to see enriches our approach, broadens our impact, and sustains us on the journey.

Teaching about the culture we want to see shapes people's thinking, attitudes and assumptions according to the Scriptures.

Reinforcing the culture we want to see motivates people to keep going.

Praying for the culture we want to see reminds us this is God's work.

Remove any of these and the likelihood of sustained culture change is lessened:

- Remove **model** and integrity walks out the room, in which case the gap between who we are in public and who we are in private grows ever bigger, fundamentally undermining us as leaders and robbing our leadership of any real credibility.
- Remove **working with others** and we will influence some, but it will be limited, is less likely to be done well, and we are more likely to give up without other people's support.
- Remove **teach** and it won't be rooted in the Scriptures, and may well become more about what we want to achieve than what God wants.
- Remove **reinforcing** the culture and it all becomes hard work and dreary and people eventually run out of energy. There is little to keep people motivated and excite them about what is happening.
- Remove **prayer** and we won't depend on the animating power of the Spirit to bring about kingdom life in our community.

The role of those in leadership is to oversee the process that animates an evangelistic culture using the things available to us: model, work with others, teach, reinforce and pray throughout.

Again, to be clear, it isn't that some of us are cultural animators and others aren't. All leaders are 24-hour cultural transmission systems. How we behave reveals our culture and influences others. In this way we constantly encourage a certain type of culture.

Take some time to reflect on how you are animating the ministry of evangelism in your context using the following questions. Be honest, really honest with yourself. If you have a prayer partner, a colleague, mentor, friend or spiritual director you can share some of your reflections with, do so. It will help you to gain perspective, receive support and develop accountability.

I know the temptation is to press straight on to the next chapter, but may I encourage you to stop and do this bit of personal reflection. It could be the most helpful thing for you from the whole book.

What does my life model with regard to faith sharing, in both my personal life and my 'working' life as a church leader?

What part does faith sharing play in my prayer life?

How do the Scriptures inform and influence my own faith-sharing practice?

With whom do I share my hopes and aspirations when it comes to evangelism?

What do I do to keep myself motivated in faith sharing?

Done that? Great. So, what practically can we do to animate an evangelistic culture?

PART 2

SMALL SHIFTS, BIG CHANGES

“

I long for churches to be
loving communities committed
to sharing the gospel as
part of an ongoing way of life,
not by the occasional
evangelistic raid event.

J. Mack Stiles, pastor

Culture is about the way we do things round here. It is seen in behaviours. Animating an evangelistic culture will involve aligning behaviours through nurturing appropriate practices that become habits. Small shifts that lead to big changes.

CPAS has worked with a range of ways to do this over the last few years, and invited leaders to send us the ideas they have used to develop an evangelistic culture. We had a good response. We've categorised these ideas into two groups:

- Seven core shifts that are most likely to lead to a significant change in the evangelistic culture.
- Seventy simple ideas that are relatively quick to apply that will nudge things along in the right direction. We have gathered these ideas into different areas of church life to make them easier to access.

Here is a quick recap of what I said right at the start of this resource in case you jumped straight here looking for ideas.

You may not find any of the ideas hit the spot. You may think they won't work in your context, in your tradition, with your people (although they have come from a variety of contexts, traditions and people). Even if that is the case, I hope they will inspire you to come up with better ideas that will work for you, and then you will be kind enough to send them to me so I can include them in the bonus section of the book, which is to be found online (go to www.cpas.org.uk/77). In this way we can help resource one another with an ever-growing range of practices that will help shape an evangelistic culture.



CHAPTER 4

SEVEN CORE SHIFTS

One-Degree Shifts

Building on insights from the world of high-performance coaching, LICC introduced the Church to the idea of 'one-degree shifts'. Here is how they explain it: 'Think of a compass. If you change direction by just one degree and walk far enough, you'll end up in a new place.'³³ I have my own personal experience of this.

When I was a teenager I was very involved in sailing. This involved occasional trips sailing across the North Sea from England to Holland. It is a quite a distance and would take up to 20 hours. Seeing landfall was always a relief. On one occasion we had sailed through the night and in the early hours of the morning were looking for first sight of land. When we spotted it, we looked for some familiar indicators as we approached that part of Holland. However hard we looked we couldn't see them. Things didn't look quite right. As we came closer to the land we still couldn't find what we were looking for. At this point the navigator took out the charts, and after a while, rather embarrassed, admitted he had made a mistake the day before when we set sail from England. He had miscalculated by one degree, and that was why we didn't recognise anything. The land we were approaching wasn't Holland. It was Belgium.

A one-degree shift meant that, over time and distance, we ended up in a different place.

LICC have identified a series of one-degree shifts that help a church shift towards whole-life disciple making, and the Church of England has identified seven shifts it recommends for its Everyday Faith project.³⁴

We want to apply this idea to animating an evangelistic culture within our churches, congregation or fresh expression. What are the core ideas, the one-degree shifts that will take us to a different place in terms of nurturing an evangelistic culture? We've also identified seven.

The good news here is that focusing on a few of these shifts in a concerted and committed way over time can change the culture of a church.

Don't try and do them all at the same time. Rather, choose two or three to introduce and work with in your context. Once those have become part of the way you do things, you might like to choose one or two more. You will know they have become a part of the culture when they operate at the level of a habit, a shared behaviour that you do without thinking.

For example, praying for five people we know who aren't yet disciples of Jesus is a simple way to begin. When we first start doing it, we will need practical ways to remind ourselves. Ideally, we will pray for our five in a group context, because then it becomes a shared habit with an element of appropriate accountability. Eventually, it will become what we do every time we meet as a group. In fact, if it doesn't happen, people will ask why.

As always, we're trying to avoid adding lots more activities onto already busy churches. Rather, it is about taking what we are already doing and shifting things by one degree.



For a video about the core shifts concept that you could use with leaders in your context to introduce the idea.

The Top Seven

WHY SEVEN?

It seems the right number to offer choice without being overwhelming, and yet also enough variety for you to find the best one to start with. As you read through them, some are more likely to resonate with your context than others, but hopefully there will be two or three that you can try.

WHY THESE SEVEN?

They are deliberately a mix of things to be done by individuals and things to be done within the gathered life of the church. Secondly, they also cover a range of time frames: ideally some are practised on a daily or weekly basis, others once a term or year. Thirdly, they reflect the framework for culture change explored in the last chapter, with a bias towards prayer. Fourthly they have a good track record. People have explored these practices in a range of places over a number of years.

WHY THESE SEVEN PRACTICES?

Much has been written about the formational power of habits over the last few years.³⁵ Whilst for some this may seem a recent innovation, for those of us within the Christian tradition we have a long history of reflection and engagement with how practices shape who we are and who we become. Spiritual disciplines, rule of life and formation are all familiar language to any student of Church history, pastor or spiritual director. A number of theologians and church leaders have recently reconnected the evangelical wing of the Church with this heritage, many influenced by the thinking and writings of Dallas Willard³⁶, whilst within the Catholic wing this has often been more central.

I have chosen the language of ‘practices’ for two reasons. Firstly, it carries less baggage than the language of disciplines. Secondly, it aptly describes what these ideas are, things to practise. You might want to add another word – spiritual practices, evangelism practices – or to use disciplines, habits or something else instead.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE PRACTICES

Each practice is introduced using a simple structure:



Summary of the practice.



Explanation of what it involves and suggested ways to introduce it.



Tips to guide you in setting it up.



Resources that might be of help related to the practice.

Ideally the process of discerning which ones to focus on will involve sharing the Top Seven with others in leadership, praying and talking about which one might be most appropriate for your context, committing to practising those practices within that leadership group for a period of time before you invite others to do them, and then introducing them to others in a creative and engaging way.

Key to developing a practice are a number of factors:

- **Clarity** about what exactly the practice is. Any fuzziness in understanding will become an easy opt out for people.
- **Consistency** over time. The nature of the practices is that they need to be practised until they become habit, something that we almost don't have to think about to do. Researchers debate how long it takes for a habit to form, but it seems somewhere between six to twenty weeks of consistent practice is the range.
- **Companionship** on the journey. People are much more likely to 'succeed' in developing the practice if they are doing it with others rather than on their own. The mutual support offers encouragement and accountability.

Practice 1 – Engage with God

“

Remain in me as I
also remain in you.

John 15:4



SUMMARY

Developing a daily practice of intentional time to engage with God is foundational for the spiritual life, and often vital for motivating people to share their faith. Invite and resource people to spend 15 minutes with God each day.



EXPLANATION

'Hold on a minute James,' you might be thinking, 'isn't this book about nurturing an evangelistic culture within our churches?' Indeed it is. Yet one of the primary struggles at the heart of faith sharing is to do with motivation.

The Pilgrim Course suggests, 'There is no effective evangelism without authentic spirituality.' Biblical scholar and church leader John Stott said, 'Nothing shuts the mouths of Christians quicker than having nothing to say'. Pastor and writer Tim Keller says we develop confidence in faith sharing 'when we see breakthroughs in our own lives, that the gospel actually makes a difference, that it works'.

Without a lived experience of God, it is hard to see faith sharing as a priority, let alone do it. Research reveals that the level of discipleship is low within many churches, with, for example, over 60% of people connected with churches saying they never read their Bibles.³⁷ Church leaders tend to confirm such research through their experience: many within congregations who have no daily or weekly habits of prayer; regular attendance at church increasingly seen as fortnightly at best, monthly more often; few practising some of the basic spiritual disciplines such as giving, fasting, or prayer, let alone some of the more 'advanced' disciplines, such as silence, celebration or study; little connection made between what happens in services on a Sunday and how that impacts life Monday to Saturday.

Whilst there are many ways people can nurture faith, throughout the centuries of Church history one of the core spiritual practices has been to spend intentional time with God each day, normally involving prayer and engagement with the Scriptures. In some traditions the emphasis is on this being a personal practice, in others it is a corporate one. It was fascinating during the pandemic lockdown to hear that online daily prayer (be it a daily office or some form of non-liturgical scriptural reflection and prayer) was one of the significant growth points for many churches.

More recently, Justin Whitmel Earley has explored what a rule of life might look like in an age of distraction in his book *The Common Rule* ('common' because they are done with others). He suggests four daily habits and four weekly ones. Two of his daily habits are 'kneeling prayer' and 'Scripture before phone'. He suggests: 'As far as habits go, the invisible reality is this: we are all living according to a specific regimen of habits, and those habits shape most of our life.'³⁸

So here is the idea: ask people to spend 15 minutes a day to pray and read the Scriptures. 15 minutes is both doable (there are very few people who can't make 15 minutes a day), and a stretch (for many 15 minutes each day is beyond their existing practice). It is important that we don't simply ask people to do this, but resource them with a wide variety of aids and ideas to help them into this daily practice (see the resources section overleaf).

Such a practice can play a significant part in changing the spiritual temperature of our congregations. 'Draw near to God and he will draw near to you,' (James 4:8) is a wonderful promise. As we draw near to God our outlook shifts, our attitudes and assumptions are shaped and our priorities are changed. Formation occurs as we increasingly develop the 'mind of Christ', and love for God and love for neighbour increasingly become priorities for how we live our lives. Without such intentional engagement with God we are building on a weak foundation.



TIPS

- Try to avoid a guilt trip. Gratitude for what God has done tends to be a better motivator for spending time with him than a sense of guilt that we ought to be doing more.
- You may decide in your context that 15 minutes isn't the right length of time. No problem – whether it is 5 or 25 is up to you. But having a goal to aim at is helpful.
- Be careful not to impose your spiritual practices on others. What works for us does not necessarily work for others, and most of us have found that different things work better in different seasons of life. Illustrate possibilities by either sharing a variety of practices, or interviewing a variety of people who can enthuse about their own practices.
- Many resources are available as Apps. These are great for ease of access and portability, but it is good to be thoughtful about them, as one of the problems many people have is an unhealthy relationship with their mobile.³⁹ Trying to engage with God via their phone may simply lead them to be distracted by other things. Sometimes, sticking to paper-based resources is the best way forward.

“

Enthusiasm for evangelism doesn't begin with evangelism at all. Enthusiasm for evangelism begins with an enthusiasm for Jesus. My willingness to speak of Jesus arises from my delight in Jesus.

Tim Chester, church leader



RESOURCES

There are loads of resources available to help people with a pattern of daily prayer. Choose those that will work in your tradition and context. Be sure to resource children and young people as well as adults. Here are a few suggestions.

- Invite people to join you for a daily time of prayer and Scripture reading online (morning, or evening prayer, compline, or some other form). Online makes it more accessible to people than onsite.
- Use social media to prompt young people to read a verse and pray at the same time each day.
- If they are spending 15 minutes engaging with God on their own, provide some suggestions for how to structure that time, for example:
 - Identify a regular time and place where Monday to Saturday you can spend 15 minutes with God. It could be a particular chair in your lounge, on the train as you commute to work, with a coffee having just dropped the kids off to school, as you walk the dog, a quiet space in your lunch break at work, when you return from school at the end of the day, and so on. A regular time and space generally help with forming a habit, a rhythm.
 - Start your time with a short prayer asking God to help you meet with him.
 - Read or listen to a passage from the Bible.
 - Reflect on it (write or journal if that helps) using a few questions: What does this passage help me understand about God? What encouragement does it offer me? What does it ask me to do? How might I apply that today?
 - Pray in the light of your reflections, and then pray for your five, for the next 24 hours, for the concerns of the world and those you know.
- Resources to help people engage with the Bible:
 - Bible reading notes for all ages: www.brfonline.org.uk/collections/our-notes; www.content.scriptureunion.org.uk/bible-reading-guides; www.thegoodbook.co.uk/daily-bible-reading/.
 - The You Version Bible App offers a variety of reading plans and daily passages, www.youversion.com/the-bible-app/.
 - The Bible Explore App, www.thegoodbook.co.uk/explore-app.
 - The Bible in One Year (read or listen), www.bibleinoneyear.org, links to App and daily emails.
 - Free online daily Bible study guide, <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/resource/word-live>.
 - For an overview of further resources go to, www.blackburn.anglican.org/storage/general-files/shares/Resources/Prayer%20worship%20and%20discipleship/Bible_study_resources.pdf.

- Sam Corley has done an incredible job of introducing every book in the Bible in short YouTube videos in an accessible way. Great for people who want to know a bit more about a book before they read them, www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZK9aJevj6o&list=PLiEYWfMmuteSqksMSm-0V52bRWg1QSRMH&index=69.
- Alternatively the Bible Project has a series of animated videos to introduce books and themes of the Bible, www.bibleproject.com/explore/ and the Visual Unit offers diagrams that layout biblical books or themes on a single page, www.visualunit.me/category/english/.
- Resources to help with prayer:
 - Daily Prayer Apps from the Church of England, www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps.
 - Sacred Space, either online or as an App, is an Ignatian guide to daily prayer www.sacredspace.ie/.
 - PrayerMate App is a way of ordering your intercessory prayer, enabling you to link to many organisations' and charities' prayer requests, www.prayermate.net/app.
 - Northumbria Community daily prayer, www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices.
 - Inner Room App from 24-7 Prayer, www.innerroom.app/.
 - Centering Prayer App encourages a daily practice of still, centred prayer through its App, www.contemplativeoutreach.org/centering-prayer-mobile-app/.
 - Lectio 365 App focuses around praying the Scriptures each morning and evening, www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional.
 - Pause App encourages you to take a one-, three- or five-minute pause in the middle of your day with an image and verse to reflect on, www.pauseapp.com/.
 - Pray As You Go App is based on Ignatian spirituality, and includes music, Bible reading, suggested lines of engagement, and space for prayer, www.pray-as-you-go.org.
 - Many people find using a journal a helpful way to pray, often writing their prayers. For a brief guide to journaling, www.cpas.org.uk/77.
 - The Examen is a way of praying used by many since the 16th century. For a guide on a variety of ways to do it, including for families, children and young people, www.cpas.org.uk/77.
 - At Home with God is a website with free resources to help families pray together, www.athomewithgod.org. You can find other resources to help with family prayers and nurturing prayer with children on a Padlet board in the column headed Mobilising: ideas for sharing faith in families, www.padlet.com/jlawrence65/kvdjfcdsmtntyqm.

If you want to share the ideas for any of the practices more widely, download a summary pdf.



Practice 2 – Pray for Five

“

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful...

Colossians 4:2



SUMMARY

Build into the personal and corporate life of your church, congregation or fresh expression an intentional and regular way of praying for specific people to come to know the life transforming love of Jesus.



EXPLANATION

Thy Kingdom Come⁴⁰ has popularised an idea that has been around for a while⁴¹, that of praying for specific people that they might come to know ‘the amazing, life-transforming love of Jesus’. Prayer is at the heart of faith sharing as we seek to join in with what God is doing in people’s lives, and also as we recognise that in some mysterious way God’s activity on earth is linked to our praying. Someone once said to me ‘talk to God about people, before you talk to people about God.’ That does seem the right way round. Ultimately God is the evangelist, and we depend on him to be at work in and through us and in the lives of those we pray for.

Thy Kingdom Come have encouraged people to make praying for five a specific intention of prayer from Ascension to Pentecost. This practice expands the timescale to make it a normal part of the ongoing personal prayer life of Christians, and of our prayer life as we gather in various ways.

Construct a process for helping people to identify their five that will work in your context. For some, there may need to be quite a bit of explanation about why praying for five is a good thing to do, as well as what it involves. For others, you may be able to introduce it quite quickly. For some it will be best to start by introducing it to a specific group (churchwardens, PCCs, a Lent course, a youth group), and then percolate it out to others over time. For others, it will be fine to introduce it to whole congregations straight away.

When introducing Pray for Five, invite congregation members to identify five people they know using the following suggestions:

- Those who, as far as they are aware, are not yet Christians.
- Those with whom they have contact on a regular basis.
- Those whom they have a concern for.

Encourage them to write their names down, and pray for them on a regular basis (they can define what regular means, but ideally at least once a week, if not each day), that they might come to know the life-transforming love of Jesus. Use some of the resources suggested and in Guide 3 to help with this.

“

The most important human factor in effective evangelism is prayer.



Then work out how to build praying for five into the flow of gathered church life. For example:

- When you gather for worship together find creative ways to include Pray for Five as part of what you do each time you gather (see Practice 3).
- At your PCC meetings build in time to Pray for Five. It only has to be a few minutes but it will shift the culture of the PCC.
- If you have a staff meeting, a meeting with key leaders (for example churchwardens or standing committee, eldership, Messy Church leadership team), make Pray for Five a part of your time together.
- In ministry groups (for example music group, choir, Messy Church Team, prayer ministry team, finance committee, and possibly even flower arrangers, bell ringers and so on) spend a few minutes Praying for Five as part of your gathering.
- If you have home groups, youth or children's groups, include Pray for Five.

Making it a part of our gathered life helps build in support and accountability. If I am honest I am shocked how quickly I forget to pray for my five in my own personal prayers. Regularly being in a context where I am reminded to keep on praying for my five is incredibly helpful, especially if there is time to reflect with others on how things are going (see Practice 4).



Listen to John Sentamu, former Archbishop of York, talk about his experience of praying for five.



TIPS

There are some great resources available to help people do this (see below) but here are a few tips if you are introducing this idea:

- Encourage people to prayerfully identify their five. It may take a few weeks to discern whom to put on the list.
- It is fine if initially people can only identify one or two names.
- Generally speaking, it is best to not include family or close friends. Two reasons. Firstly, we are probably already praying for these people anyway. Secondly, those closest to us are often the most difficult people to share faith with (read Mark 3 and 6 to see the struggles Jesus had with his family and those who knew him well).
- Generally speaking, it is best to choose people whom we think might be open to faith conversations.
- The list isn't fixed. As people move in and out of our orbit we may change the list. For a season I prayed for my chiropractor, with whom I had some great conversations about faith as he pummelled my back, but then he moved to America and I am no longer in touch with him. I took him off my list and added the manager at the gym I went to.
- It works best if we have regular contact with these people (online or onsite), and sometimes it helps to describe what regular means. I generally suggest at least once a month, preferably once a fortnight.

- Teach people what and how to pray for their five (see Guide 3 for some ideas). It is easy to assume people will know how to pray. That isn't necessarily the case.
- Finally, I have seen an interesting pattern over the years. Sometimes the people we end up sharing faith with are not on our list of five, but the fact that we have been praying for five has actually opened us up to the possibility of sharing our faith in new ways.



RESOURCES

- See Guide 2 for more ideas on prayer and evangelism (also available as a downloadable guide, www.cpas.org.uk/77).
- See Guide 3 for more ideas on Praying for Five.
- Thy Kingdom Come have a wide range of resources for children, young people and adults to help with praying for five. They include materials for individuals to use, and materials for use in gatherings www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources. Some of these are outlined in Guide 3.
- HOPE Together also have resources related to Pray for Five, www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/284190/Pray_for_five.aspx.
- Five Things to Pray for the People You Love, Rachel Jones (Good Book Company), www.thegoodbook.co.uk/5-things-to-pray-for-the-people-you-love.

Practice 3 – Refocus the Intercessions

“

And pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message.

Colossians 4:3



SUMMARY

As part of the prayers of intercession each week, include prayers for those whom we long to come to know the life-transforming love of Jesus.



EXPLANATION

Many of us have a point in our gatherings when we intercede for (amongst other things) the world, our country, the community around us, those we know and the Church. It is a good discipline in our corporate worship, as it reminds us we exist to serve and bless others, and one way we do that is by praying for them. Often in these prayers of intercession we pray for those we know who are unwell. We may even have a moment of quiet for each person to pray for specific people they know.

In the same way, add an additional element to the intercessions by inviting people to pray for those they know who aren't yet Christians. This communicates that, as a church or congregation, we not only have a pastoral concern for those who are struggling, but also an evangelistic concern for those without Christ. We can also ensure that any other evangelism-related activity is prayed for (for example each week during an enquirer's course like Pilgrim or Hope Explored, or leading up to a carol service). Do this every time you gather and the culture begins to shift.



TIPS

- If you are the leader, model how to do this well.
- If you have others on rotas who lead the intercessions, gather them (online or onsite) for a training session on leading intercessions well, and include this as part of it.
- Be sensitive to the fact that visitors may be present, some of whom may not yet be disciples of Jesus. Help people find ways of introducing this into the intercessions that respect visitors. Praying for 'non-Christians to come to repentance and faith' may not be very sensitive. Instead, how about, 'Let's take a moment to pray for those we have contact with during our week whom Christ loves and longs to come to him.'
- If you have established Pray for Five, connect with this as a way of encouraging people to focus their prayers: 'Let's take a moment to pray for our five.'
- Keep an eye on the evangelists who might be on the intercessors' rota. Sometimes, in their enthusiasm, they may lead public prayers in a way that alienates any visiting non-Christians or makes Christians feel a little inferior or annoyed.
- There is an interesting relationship between pattern and variety. A pattern helps people relax into what becomes familiar, and to fully inhabit what is happening or simply be carried by it. Variety engages people in a fresh way and stimulates new thoughts and actions. Both are helpful. The pattern is that we do this every time we gather in our prayers of intercessions, and often use a similar format. The variety helps keep things fresh and people engaged. Here are a few ideas to add variety to the ways we pray for evangelism:
 - If you have the facility to show pictures, pray for the streets of your community and show pictures of the relevant street. Or make a short video on your phone of key places in your parishes to pray for – then show it in the service.
 - If you are familiar with the language of frontlines (the places where people spend most of their daytimes), show pictures of church members' frontlines and pray for people in those places to come to know Christ.
 - Stand and face north, east, south and west as you pray for people within your community to come to know Christ.



RESOURCES

- Gloucester Diocese have a guide for leading intercessions with links to useful resources, www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Leading-Intercessions-Guide.pdf.
- The Church Of England also has a page on its website with a link to Leading Common Worship Intercessions, Doug Chaplin (CHP) for those who would like a more comprehensive introduction, www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers/leading-prayer-through-intercessions.
- John Truscott has a helpful download called 'Breathing Life into the Intercessions' available on his website, www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Training-Notes-index/Breathing-life-into-the-intercessions.

Practice 4 – Practise Faith Conversations



SUMMARY

Many people struggle to own up to their faith in their workplace, school, neighbourhood, social group and home. Practising faith conversations with other Christians builds both confidence and capability in knowing what to say.



EXPLANATION

Sharing our faith is a soft skill, like problem solving or public speaking. Soft skills can be learned. They are best developed under certain conditions:

- In a safe place where the pressure isn't on, it is ok to make mistakes, and there is a healthy amount of fun.
- Through practice, reflection, and refinement. This is aided by swift and specific feedback.
- Where the learning process involves us stretching ourselves beyond what we currently feel comfortable to do.

There are a variety of potential 'safe places' in gathered church life where we can practise faith conversations, for example a home group, a youth group, a Lent course, a PCC, a Group Council, one-to-one interactions, mentoring, or an evangelism training course. It may work in a service too, unless there is usually a reasonable number of visitors or enquirers, in which case it may need to be carefully adapted – or not done at all.

This practice can be introduced in stages. Start at the stage that is most appropriate for your context, and then build up to the following stages.

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.



Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace and seasoned with salt.

Colossians 4:5-6

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 (see Practice 6).

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; identify the one to explore, as a group) and work out together how you might respond to it if it came up in a conversation. If you get stuck, ask someone who could help to visit your group.



TIPS

- Explain that evangelism is a soft skill and that soft skills are developed with time and practice. It often leads to an 'A-ha' moment as people realise why it is best to practise faith conversations before having faith conversations.
- The key to this practice is to practise. In group contexts, ideally make this a normal part of how the group meets.
- Of course, this feels very odd to begin with, awkward even (but probably less awkward than trying to say something to a contact outside of church). Acknowledge the awkwardness, be sensitive to how people respond, but gently persist and people will become more relaxed and natural talking about their faith.
- Try to build some fun into it. Suggest some terrible ways to respond, really cringe worthy, and have fun going over the top.
- If someone is sharing their attempt at talking about their faith, be as encouraging as you possibly can.
- Remind people that God has assured us of his help, that it doesn't all depend on us.

“

However inadequate you feel, if you ask the Holy Spirit to speak through you, he will.

Nicky Gumbel,
church leader



- Encourage people to listen to others and ask questions – it is what Jesus did. Practise questions that would help open up a conversation about matters of faith. Pray for opportunities to arise to use one of the questions in the coming week. Discuss what makes a good listener and how you know you are being listened to.
- Work out how to intrigue people, to make the conversation ‘salty’ – that is, sprinkled with little comments that might prompt a reaction or question. For example, when someone says, ‘It is a terrible world’, ask, ‘Why do you think that is?’



RESOURCES

See Guide 4 for some great courses to help equip people to speak about their faith, however be a little careful about depending on a course to do this. They tend to attract the interested and also require more time, so may best be seen as complementary. The approach above can involve more people and build into what already exists.

Practice 5 – Tell Faith Stories



Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I’ve ever done.”

John 4:39



SUMMARY

Each month share a story of how someone came to faith at your gatherings.



EXPLANATION

We’ve already identified that stories are a powerful way of igniting an evangelistic culture. When we hear stories of how people have come to faith it does a number of things. Firstly, hearing stories reminds us that God is at work in ordinary people’s lives drawing them to himself, people like those we long to see come to faith in Christ. Secondly, it encourages

thanksgiving in us for what God has done, which fuels faith for what he might do. Thirdly, if well told, hearing

stories highlights the role that ordinary Christians play in helping others come to faith.

For those who already use This Time Tomorrow (where a church member is interviewed in a service about where they will be This Time Tomorrow, what they do there and how people can pray for them), you could simply insert an additional question alongside the suggested four from LICC⁴³: ‘Tell us how you came to faith’. Or alternate This Time Tomorrow with a story of someone’s journey to faith.

The main problem people normally raise is that they don’t have many stories to tell. However, once you have worked through all your existing congregation members (which may take 4, 40, or 400 months), there



Hearing regular stories of people coming to faith through ordinary Christians inspires me that God can use me too.

Pam Macnaughton,
church leader

are plenty of other sources to draw on (see resources below). And hopefully as a result of some of these practices, there may be new stories to tell in the coming years.



TIPS

- Most people are very nervous about telling their story, so normally the best way to encourage them is to use an interview format. This enables you to guide the person and keep control of the situation. Take time to walk through the questions you are going to ask with the person ahead of the interview and help them think through their answers. If you have someone in your context who is good at interviewing, invite them to do so. It isn't everyone's gift. A basic structure can be as simple as:
 - What was life like before you became a Christian?
 - What led you to consider the Christian faith?
 - What difference has it made to your life?
- Or for those who have grown up in a Christian home:
 - What part did faith play in your early life?
 - When did you own that faith for yourself?
 - What difference does it make to your life?
- Try to tease out who helped the interviewee on their journey. The vast majority of people come to faith because someone they know shows and shares the faith with them. The more we can evidence this in the life of those we interview, the more we help our people see the role they could play. Try a question like, 'So who was key to you coming to faith?' Follow it up with, 'So how did they show and share the faith with you?'
- Be aware of language. For some people it may better to conduct the interview talking about church: When did you first attend church? What do you find helpful about attending church? What difference does it make to your daily life?
- Most people have ordinary stories, and often think no one will be interested in hearing their story. However, our experience is that these make the best stories. Dramatic conversion stories are wonderful, but are also not the norm and therefore don't always relate to most people. When people hear ordinary stories, they think 'That could be me'. It helps to remember: there are no second-class stories, but there are second class ways to tell your story. Part of our role is to help people tell their stories well.
- During the pandemic lockdowns, many churches discovered that some people, who were not prepared to stand up in front of a congregation, were happy to record themselves on their phone. So, if you have someone who is particularly nervous about sharing their story, either interview them using Zoom and record it, or ask them to do it on their phone. Give clear guidance about what you are asking them to do, how long you want it to be and where it will be used – some people may not want it to be available forever online.

Last summer at our church we interviewed people for each Sunday service through the summer. We deliberately didn't choose the more well-known members of the congregation. They told their stories of how they came to faith. People loved it, and not only learnt new things about those interviewed, but also were encouraged in their own faith sharing.



- Please include children and young people, where appropriate. And if you lack significant diversity of age, gender and ethnicity within your own congregation see if you can invite people in from neighbouring churches where there may be more.
- Finally, try to post and share the stories in as many places as possible. With permission, can they be recorded and placed on your church Facebook page, YouTube channel, Insta account and so on? Can a written version be included in the parish magazine, the local newspaper, on your website? Can they be shown or shared at the home group meeting, children or youth group?



RESOURCES

Here are a variety of places you can find stories of people coming to faith.

- www.christianityexplored.org/Groups/276318/CE_ORG/Real_Life_Stories/Real_Life_Stories.aspx. Nicely produced variety of stories.
- www.eauk.org/great-commission/personal-evangelism/stories. Again, good variety of stories.
- www.waldringfieldbc.org.uk/testimonies/, Waldringfield Baptist Church, less polished, but still good.
- www.iamsecond.com/film/. Very professionally produced and American, but has a helpful facility to search by stories according to category i.e. identity, addiction.
- www.westminsterchapel.org.uk/our-stories/. Great variety of stories with good ethnic and age mix.
- www.reachingthenones.org/videos. Interviews with those from Gen Z and Gen Y talking about their experience of coming to faith, filmed as part of the Reaching the 'Nones' project.



For stories of people living out the Christian faith in their Monday to Saturday lives LICC have produced a great video series based on their 6Ms.

Practice 6 – Resource Faith Sharing



SUMMARY

Once a term, resource your congregation members with something to share that helps people they know to find out more about the Christian faith.



EXPLANATION

What we can expect from our congregation members when it comes to sharing their faith? CPAS have identified four things: Pray, Serve, Own up and Invite (see Guide 1). Practice 6 is one way of resourcing the 'own up' element of faith sharing.

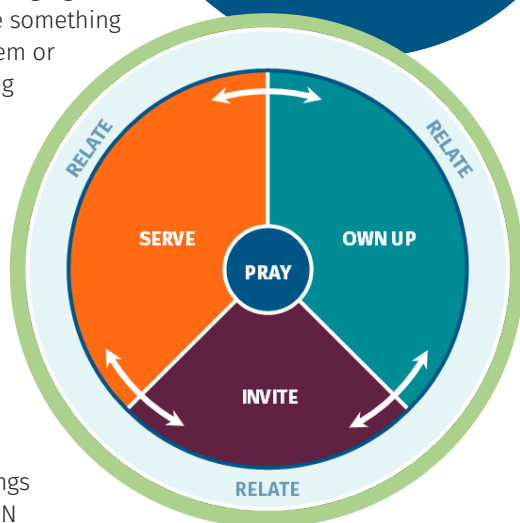
In John 1:45 Philip says to Nathaniel, 'We have found the one Moses wrote about...' and shares with his brother what he has found in Jesus. In a similar way we want to enable our congregation members to 'own up' to what they have found and have something to offer as a way of backing that up. This could be an item or suggestion. So, rather than expecting them to give a long spiel about the Christian faith, they can simply say...

- To someone who is struggling with anxiety, 'I have found my faith has been a real help for me, and this leaflet helped me to find hope in uncertain times.'
- To someone who is stressed by all the preparations for Christmas, 'I have found my Christmases are different since I discovered what it is really all about and this booklet (or other item) was a real help to me.'
- To someone who has shown interest in spiritual things previously, 'I found that conversation we had about N really interesting and thought of it when I came across this and wondered if you would like a look?'
- To someone who thinks that science has dismissed the need for faith, 'I have found that my scientific background and faith aren't at odds with one another after all. This podcast explains why the two are complementary.'
- To someone who loves reading about the lives of other people and thinks Christianity is only for a certain type of person, 'I have found it fascinating how the Christian faith isn't for a certain type of people, but for all people, and this magazine has some great stories in it that illustrate that.'
- To someone who asks what you did over the weekend, 'I had a great weekend, thanks. On Saturday I went swimming with a bunch of friends and then out for a meal in the evening. On Sunday I went to church, which I have found is such an important part of my week as I try to make sense of my faith and everyday life. Here's an invite to a special service we are holding. I'd love you to come.'

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But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have.

1 Peter 3:15



The idea is to identify an item for congregation members to share with others at the start of a term (see below for some examples). Encourage people to pray for an opportunity to give the item or share the link with someone during the course of the term. Be clear that 'success' is a willingness to pray for this opportunity and the courage to take it, rather than how people respond to the offer, because of course some people may not be interested, be offended or decline. In order to help your congregations know how to face potentially difficult responses, be sure to equip them with helpful ways to share the item or link, and how to handle any negative comeback. This isn't about running a training course, but rather some simple one- to two-minute suggestions each time you talk about the idea. For example:

- If when you offer someone a booklet or link they politely decline, don't take it personally. Just smile and say, 'No problem, but if you ever want to know more about why my faith is so important to me, I'd be happy to chat.'
- When offering someone a magazine, be positive not apologetic: 'I thought you might be interested in this as it has some really fascinating stories of how knowing God has made a difference in people's lives, including N, the actor/sports person/reality TV star you really like.' Don't say people's 'no's' for them. Expecting people to at least have a look is better than: 'I don't know if you would be interested in this, and I hope you don't mind me sharing it with you, and I quite understand you might want to say no...'
- When inviting your five to, for example, your carol service using an invitation card, why not welcome them to your home for mince pies and mulled wine beforehand (or to the pub if that is more appropriate)? Be straight about it, so people know what you are asking: 'We've got our carol service in two weeks' time and I love it as a way of kicking off the Christmas celebrations. Would you like to join me and come along? I'm having mulled wine and mince pies at my place for a few friends before we go, you'd be most welcome.'

If you have some drama types or video creators, they could have fun putting together some quick sketches or videos that illustrate both good and bad practice. Encourage people to try out some scenarios with church friends to get over their fears.



TIPS

- Try to identify resources that will work for most people in your congregation. For example, in a non-book culture, books may not be a good idea, but a video link might be.
- Remember to resource your children and young people as well as adults of all ages.
- It may be best to offer two or three options each term, but be careful, because the more options there are the easier it is to actually not choose any.
- There is a difference between encouraging people to do something and brow-beating people to do something. It is tricky: what for one person is a gentle encouragement, for another feels like unhelpful pressure. It is good to have identified some people to offer feedback on how it comes across when leaders up front 'encourage' people to make the most of the opportunity to share such resources.
- Give loads of practical examples of how people might offer a resource, so they can see themselves doing it.

- Each time you launch ‘the offer’, find a creative way of praying about it as a whole church.
- Build in help and accountability to whatever paths you normally use to help people in their discipleship (small groups, emails, prayers on Sunday, one-to-one conversations).
- Try to have some fun with this termly idea. If there are stories of it going wrong in an amusing way, share those stories. Adopt a light touch.
- Be sure to get lots of feedback, and tell stories that encourage people.
- Persist, because it may well take three or four terms for people to understand and join in with how this works.



RESOURCES

Here are some examples of the resources you can give to your people to share with others:

- An evangelistic booklet, for example Why Christmas, Hope in Uncertain Times, The Eggcellent Egg Hunt, or The Real Jesus.
- A link to a helpful website, for example, www.christianity.org.uk/.
- A link to a YouTube video (for example Phil Knox, Lament⁴⁴, or a spoken word about Christmas), or perhaps something on your own channel.
- A link to a podcast, for example the Unbelievable Podcast by Premier radio.⁴⁵
- A magazine, for example the HOPE magazine⁴⁶, or the magazine linked to the Queen’s platinum celebrations.
- A gospel, for example a copy of Mark for adults⁴⁷ or young people⁴⁸, or the Uncover materials produced for students.⁴⁹
- A pen with your church’s name and website address.
- An empty pizza box with an invitation to a special service and a voucher for a local Pizza place.
- Create your own.

Practice 7 – Budget for Evangelism



SUMMARY

Include an allocation for evangelism in the annual budget.



EXPLANATION

Most churches have a formal budgeting process. Normally, once a year, a budget is constructed and then agreed by the relevant body. The shift here is to ensure there is a budget line for evangelism. This is distinct from a budget line that might be called ‘mission’ or ‘mission support.’

This latter mission budget might be the money we give to mission agencies, or to people we know who are active in mission in another part of the country or world. It might be focused around

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All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.

Acts 4:32

projects in the community that serve people, for example, a homeless shelter, or engagement with a wider concern, such as A Rocha and climate change.⁵⁰ We rightly set aside funds to help support such projects, and many churches give a tithe or set percentage of their income to mission.

A budget line for evangelism is different. It is specifically for the nurture of evangelism through our church or congregation. There are two reasons why this helps shift the culture to be more evangelistic. Firstly, we tend to allocate funds to what we value. Whilst theoretically PCCs might agree that faith sharing is an important part of church life, you will discover if they really think that when you suggest allocating money towards it. It will also require decisions about what level of funds to allocate, which will prompt a helpful discussion about both why this is appropriate and what you are trying to achieve.

Secondly, there are many helpful resources available to facilitate evangelism, but most of them cost something. For example, there are a range of helpful materials to help people Pray for Five, but giving them to congregation members will involve some expense.



TOP TIPS

- Explain the 'why' as well as the 'what'. When deciding your budget, it is a great opportunity to reinforce why there is a line for evangelism, as well as to discuss what it will be used for. It is often the case that the 'why' for things gets lost (people forget), or is never known (new people have joined the PCC and it hasn't been explained).
- The amount is often not as important as the fact that there is a line in the budget because you have thought about the priority of resourcing evangelism. Some churches may only be able to allocate a small amount, others a much more substantial sum. However small, allocate something.
- Be sure to spend it. Not needlessly, but thoughtfully and wisely.
- Report back on how the money was used. Often with other items in the budget the result of the spending is visible and fairly obvious. For example, the budget for flowers is spent and visible every Sunday. The money for decorating the church hall is clearly observed when it looks great as a result. Spending on evangelism can be less obvious, so be sure to tell stories which are related to the outcome of the expense.



RESOURCES

The money in the pockets of your congregation members!



For a downloadable pdf to use with your PCC.

CHAPTER 5

SEVENTY SIMPLE IDEAS

The Core Shifts are probably the best place to start for most contexts, but if you already have those shifts in place, or if they don't fit in your context, try some of these simple ideas. Again, identify one or two to start with that are likely to work where you are, and build on those over time. It is always better to do a few things well than many things poorly.

We have put these ideas into the following categories:

- For church leaders to model sharing their faith.
- For church leaders to encourage others in evangelism.
- For leaders of worship services.
- For PCCs and Group Councils (or equivalent governance bodies).
- For leaders of church groups (all ages).

Quotes, stories and ideas in this chapter are mainly taken from those who kindly responded to our invitation to share their ideas. Where they are from other sources they are attributed. Occasionally I have repeated an idea across two sections as they apply in more than one context.

Ideas for Church Leaders to Model Sharing Their Faith

1. Be sure to pray for your five, and daily ask God for opportunities to show and share the faith. Write your own prayer for them that you use every day.
2. Put one hour a week in your diary for personal evangelism. Use it in whatever way works for you. One church leader decided to take this further and tithed his working time to evangelism.
3. Whenever there is an event that you are encouraging others to bring a guest along to (for example, a Christmas carol service, an Alpha course, a social event) be sure to invite people yourself.

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How can I expect my church to evangelise if I am not?

I was speaking at an evangelistic men's breakfast. It started at 8am. The vicar asked to meet with me at 7am to chat over the details and pray together. I thought that was a little early, but agreed. When I arrived a variety of people were busy setting up tables and preparing food. At 7.30 the vicar brought our prayers to a close, went over to one of the tables and crossed the knives and forks at each of the six places. He then explained he would be back in about 20 minutes. He was off to pick up all the guests he had invited. He returned and all but one of the places on his table was taken. Others arrived with their guests over the next 15 minutes. It was no surprise to me to discover later that the ratio of guests to regulars at that event was the highest I had ever encountered at any of the evangelistic events I'd spoken at over many years. The vicar modelled what he asked others to do.



4. Each week, prayer walk an area of your community, looking for opportunities to connect with people and being attentive to the prompts of the Spirit. Ideally take others with you.
5. Whenever possible, take someone with you if you are going to see someone who isn't yet a Christian: pastoral visit, hospital visit, Baptism visit, funeral visit, engagement with local council or service provider, schools or conversation with someone whom you are hoping to invite along to something. Doing so will have two outcomes: it will model to someone else a way of engaging with someone who isn't yet a Christian; and it will help you keep sharp. Faith sharing is caught as much as it is taught.
6. Just as you encourage others to make the most of opportunities that might come their way on their frontlines, make the most of opportunities your role gives you to talk about God with people. For example, how do you tell your story of why you do the job that you do? Does it open up more conversation? Could you try new ways of telling it? Do you offer to pray for people as often as possible, including non-churchgoers?
7. If you lack confidence in sharing the faith one-to-one or feel ill-equipped (and many church leaders do), ask someone to mentor you, get some training, read some books and try out faith conversations with others. Then practise, practise, practise until it becomes natural for you.
8. Get to know one new household in your street or neighbourhood every term. Look for ways to bless or serve them. Ask them for help with things. Invite them round.
9. Volunteer alongside a local initiative that is non-church based. Aim to build relationships for open conversations.
10. Play sport with those who aren't yet Christians rather than with friends at church or a local Christian team.

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If you are not regularly giving time to non-Christians, the church family will not think it is important. So do it. Model whatever you are asking others to do. The minister has to do it – and be seen to be doing it. This is the most important thing for a leader who wants to lead their churches in evangelism.



Listen to a church leader talking about why modelling faith sharing is so important.

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Evangelism in the realm of your own hobby has its own fuel. I want to paint and I want to hang out with artists, so we are putting on an art exhibition.



One church leader created a map of his street with all the houses in the front of his journal. As he got to know people he listed their names and any relevant information (jobs, pets, concerns and so on). He prayed for each household on a rolling basis.

11. Always have something with you to give away to people, for example a Why Jesus? or a gospel.
12. Use a hobby to connect with and bless others outside the church community – for example carpentry, baking, film-watching, reading etc.

Ideas for Church Leaders to Encourage Others in Evangelism

1. Set aside 10 minutes in your weekly prayer rhythm to pray for five specific members of your churches or congregations about their faith sharing. For example, pray for:
 - A growing heart of concern for those who aren't yet Christians.
 - Opportunities to show and share the faith.
 - Courage to take those opportunities when they come along.
 - Growing wisdom in knowing what to say.

See if you can identify an activity to link such praying with. For example, you could do this as you swim lengths in the pool, one length for each person, or as you walk the dog.

2. Don't talk about evangelism from the opportunities of your role as a church leader. Most people don't get the opportunities you get. Instead talk about it from the perspective of things in your life that others can relate to. For example, encounters with neighbours, family members, friends, people you play sport with or share a hobby with.
3. Lead enquirers courses together with others and then ask them to lead them with your support only if they need it.⁵¹ A new curate could also do this as soon as they arrive. Of course, this assumes you are running such a course. It doesn't have to be big in terms of numbers, but running a regular course creates a 'maternity ward' for those interested, and also keeps us alert to those we might invite along.
4. Visit your congregation members in their weekday context – according to Everyday Faith⁵², this is a powerful action that affirms churchgoers in their daily tasks, spurs them to be open about their faith, and can be the catalyst for good conversations. The visits could be shared among other leaders in your churches too; but visiting a different person every six to eight weeks would be a good target.
5. Teach through the encounters of Jesus in the gospels with other people, perhaps in blocks through a year, exploring what we can learn about how we might engage well with others.
6. Keep talking about talking about Jesus. In sermons, at PCCs and meetings, in small groups, in prayers, in planning for events and groups and with teams and leaders. Keep talking about it, talking about how to do it, telling stories of where it is being done well, giving tools for people to use, and raising the expectation of sharing faith at every opportunity (but see 2 above).



I was a few months into my curacy and leading a four-session course for those interested to find out more about the Christian faith. I was both terrified and excited. I met with my incumbent each week to talk about how it had gone and to pray for the next session. It was amazing. Over the three years of my curacy I led many similar courses and we saw a steady trickle of people come to faith in Christ.

7. Contact three (or whatever number is realistic for you) congregation members via text or WhatsApp over three weeks:
- Week 1 ask 'What are you facing this week that I could pray about for you?'
 - Week 2 ask 'Could I join you in prayer for the people you are praying for?'
 - Week 3 ask 'What is your single biggest struggle when it comes to sharing your faith that I could pray about for you?'

If you want to go the extra mile, send them an encouraging card mid-way through. Take a week off, repeat with another three people.

8. Try to demythologise 'evangelism'. Speak about it naturally and often, not as a Big Thing that we must focus on or else, but as something normal which just comes out of who we are. Talk about 'being witnesses', or 'sharing our faith', or 'talking with people about Jesus.'
9. Every Monday morning, message your congregation to pray for one local street or area this week, or for the frontline of someone in your congregation (perhaps the person who was interviewed for This Time Tomorrow).
10. It helps to speak of evangelism in the context of prayer and the work of the Spirit, otherwise it can become guilt inducing and heavy. Invite people to set an alarm for 10.02 each day, explaining that when it goes off it will remind us of the other Lord's prayer (Luke 10:2) – and prompt us to pray for God to send workers out into the harvest field, shaping us into those workers.
11. Many within our congregations have never been helped to speak about their faith, so no wonder they struggle to do so. Run an online or onsite course to help people learn how to share their faith in a relaxed, natural and helpful way. There are a variety of resources to help with this, we've assessed most of them and have a top five we recommend (see Guide 4). Do this every year.
12. Conduct a survey among your congregations about what church events they would and would not invite their contacts to. For example, would they invite them to a service? Other events, meetings or groups? What would have to change for them to do so? How would they like to be involved in new initiatives to make church life attractive to their contacts?

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'A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path...' (Matthew 13.3). Only God knows who will be open to him. It's not your job. Just scatter the seed and see what happens. Relax!

We wanted to encourage everyone to be involved in something, so we started a 'vacancies' spot in our church service and on our noticeboard. In our context people tend to lack confidence, so we appointed a 'talent-spotter', someone proactively looking for where people might serve and asking them to have a go at something. It made a big difference. For example, people were invited to get involved in our food bank (practically, and to offer support as well as prayer for those who used it); in varying support groups we run (for example for those suffering from domestic violence); in Alpha and Knowing Jesus; in various Fresh Expressions of church we run (Messy church and Sweaty church); in Stay and Play; in the marriage course and so on. We link their involvement to a once-termly training on how to talk about God to people. We encourage people to give their testimonies about why they help with these activities – and that inspires others to consider getting involved.



13. Give everyone a fridge magnet, nicely designed and produced, with the words, 'Who are you praying for?' as a visual reminder to pray for those they know who aren't yet Christians as they open the fridge door. Provide some prayers they could use around the themes of 'bread of life' (John 6:35) and 'spring of water' (John 4:14). (Canva.com is great for design and VistaPrint for magnets.)
14. Create a card with a prayer based on Colossians 4:2-6 (see Guide 2) that they can tuck in their Bibles, journals or prayer books, stick on a mirror or fridge door, and pray each day. See www.cpas.org.uk/77 in the materials' section for printable downloads.
15. Create a resource depository of books, articles, podcasts and videos on sharing your faith for people to access. Be sure to have a regular slot promoting this in all the different ways you communicate with your congregations' members (see Guide 4 for ideas).
16. Invite people to use the 'Evangelism Examen' as a way of reflecting on sharing the faith at the end of each day or week.⁵⁴
17. Create a year of invitation. Identify something people could invite people to for each month (or every other month) of the year and set the challenge for all to offer invitations to at least three events within the year.⁵⁵ The events don't have to be large or complex, just attractive and accessible for people to come to, and appropriate for churches to run. Ideally, some would be linked with secular events, and some with the church calendar. For example:
 - January – Christingle.
 - February – Valentine's day or Pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.
 - March – Mothering Sunday.
 - April – Easter events and services.
 - May – Pentecost.
 - June – Fathers' day or Wimbledon.
 - July – Family fun day or beer festival.
 - August – Holiday club for children, or holiday at home for the elderly.
 - September – Back to Church Sunday (or alternatively Try Church Sunday).
 - October – Harvest or foodbanks.
 - November – Bonfire night or Remembrance or a light party at Halloween.
 - December – Christmas events or services.
18. Invite people to set up prayer triplets. They meet for 30-40 minutes once a fortnight online or onsite. Each person has 5-10 minutes to answer a few key questions, one of which is about how they are doing in sharing their faith. Then they are prayed for by the other two people.
19. Arrange to lead a faith-sharing weekend in a friend's church. Take a small team with you. Include young people if you can – they have loads to offer. People often come back transformed by such an experience and much more confident about their faith sharing. The three stages of such a weekend are preparation, engagement, reflection.



I found that being part of the mission team had a big impact on my confidence in talking about my faith. It probably helped in some ways that I was talking to people I didn't know, so there were no preconceived ideas or expectations of me and I could dare to step out and have a go. But the impact lasted after I got home. I felt more confident and a bit braver about sharing what I believed and why. I realised that people are generally not looking for 'stock answers' to faith questions – they are looking for authenticity, and for someone really human to talk with about their struggles to make sense of life. I also stopped trying to do it 'perfectly', and allowed myself to be fallible (what a relief!). This seemed to help people feel more at ease, and allowed more space for God to show up in the cracks of my conversations.



20. Hold an event for church members of all ages, inviting them to bring along their best ideas for reaching the community with the good news of Jesus. Divide into groups to discuss and rate the ideas, including those from children. Hang up a large white sheet and invite each group to paint on it their top ideas. Then get people to vote on their favourite idea and take the top six (vary number according to size of group) and invite people to gather around one of those ideas to discuss how would they make that idea become a reality. Ask them to write up their suggestions on a flipchart sized piece of paper. Take all the ideas and decide one you are going to action together.

21. All-age paper plane prayer activity:

- Each person gets a piece of paper.
- Each person writes down the name of one non-Christian contact.
- Fold the paper into a paper airplane.
- Stand in a circle and fly the planes towards someone else in the group.
- Each person picks up an airplane.
- Get into groups of two or three and pray for the people written on the airplanes.

22. Many are concerned that evangelism could be a manipulative exercise, pushing people to do things they don't want to do. Below is an 'Evangelism Ethos' that you could adopt or adapt.⁵⁶ You could use it as a basis of a teaching series, design and print it on a card to give everyone and refer to one point from it whenever talking about faith sharing (for example, '... and the reason we are doing this is because it relates to one of the core principles of our evangelism ethos'):

- Prayerful: at all times looking to God not yourself.
- Present: being fully there for others.
- Prepared: ready to give honest answers.
- Persistent: eager to do good, to serve others, at a cost to ourselves.
- Polite: responding gently and respectfully.
- Person-centred: loving not stereotyping.
- Personal: authentic to who we are in Christ.
- Pointing: signposting to Jesus.



For a great sermon series by John Mark Comer on sharing the gospel today.

Ideas for Leaders of Worship Services

Remember that the ideas here aren't focused on how to share the faith with visitors or regulars who aren't yet disciples of Jesus (important as that is), but how to create a culture that nurtures the ministry of evangelism. Also, if we do these things just once they are unlikely to bring about much change. Either do one thing consistently and creatively over a significant period of time, or put together a series of ideas and thread them through a term.

1. Put a mirror in the middle of the mission noticeboard to make the point that we are all missionaries (LICC).
2. Slightly adjust the ending liturgy of the Eucharist (heretical I know) to, 'Go in peace to love, serve and share the Lord.'
3. For one term, have an attractive box for anonymous questions about evangelism, clearly labelled 'Evangelism – what is it and why is it necessary?' If you have a Facebook page or use other social media, create the equivalent online. Tackle one question a week (or two or three a month) – perhaps in a special Q&A slot in your service.
4. For one term, at every service share a two- to three-minute top tip on sharing your faith just before the dismissal. They need to be practical, doable for the majority of your congregation that week, and ideally fun. Create a 'How did it go?' slot for feedback and celebration of anyone who tried one out.
5. Provide opportunities in gatherings for church members to speak to one another about how faith impacts their everyday lives, thereby increasing their confidence to do this. For example, in the middle of a sermon, ask people to pair up for a couple of minutes, or pop them into breakout rooms, to share how a part of the passage would influence their engagement with people they encounter during the week. Or, during the prayers of intercession, invite people into pairs to describe to each other those they are likely to meet through the week, then gather people back and pray for all those encounters.
6. Train intercessors in services to include, as well as praying for the sick, time for people to pray for their friends and neighbours to become Christians (see Practice 3 for further details). Include praying for teachers, local shopkeepers, police and so on.
7. Whenever you preach, make a conscious effort to try to address the question: 'If a non-Christian was listening, what would the passage say to them?' and include the answer in your sermon using phrases like: 'If we were talking to someone this week who isn't yet a Christian, this passage helps us by...' or 'I imagine that someone who isn't yet a Christian may ask of this passage N, and here is how we might respond', or 'Some of you here will not yet be clear about Christian faith, and here is perhaps what the passage may mean for you...' Train other preachers to do the same.
8. Have a 'commissioning' Sunday each January – where everyone is commissioned to be a missionary in their Monday to Saturday lives.

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Preach the gospel to the church. Help Christians to encounter God and be ignited by the fire of the Holy Spirit as they grow in knowing Jesus.

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If we are not talking with people about God on Sundays we are unlikely to talk with people about God Monday to Saturday.

9. If you have a family news or open mike section in your service, invite people to share any opportunities they have had that week to show or share the faith with someone, whether it went well or not. Be honest – acknowledge that it can feel hard, that we can get nervous, that sometimes it doesn't work out, and that's fine. You could offer anonymity too, with the church leader sharing on a member's behalf during a service.
10. Publicly praise even the smallest of steps that congregation members make. If someone feels unable to share their faith but invites someone to church, then praise that; if they don't feel able to invite someone to church but will mention at work they are a Christian, then praise that – praise the small steps, no matter how seemingly tiny.
11. Role play five-minute 'faith-sharing' conversations with a variety of scenarios and people for all to see. Perhaps record them beforehand and play them in the service. Follow them up with a few minutes of discussion in pairs.
12. Encourage understanding about belief from different perspectives. For example, interview a sympathetic atheist, agnostic, or member of another faith group to understand their thinking and mindset. The questions would clearly need to be carefully thought through so that Christians were left better understanding the 'roadblocks to Christianity' that these people feel.
13. Invite churchgoers of varied ages to be interviewed up front to answer some simple questions about their Christian faith, in order to highlight and help people understand that there are different approaches and different words that people use to describe their faith.
14. Pray for places elsewhere in the world. Research by the Transform Europe Network suggests that when we are praying for those in other countries, it increases our enthusiasm for mission in our own area.
15. Be sure to include in your worship planning team those who are engaged online and encourage your congregation in sharing links and likes through their social media connections. If it is just you doing the planning, then find someone to come alongside you who can help in similar ways, however small.

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Always start by asking more questions than giving answers. That's the way to engage the person you're speaking to.

Rachel Jordan-Wolf, Executive Director HOPE

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You can see online church as an obstacle or an opportunity. Since pretty much everyone you want to reach is online, though; that makes it a pretty big opportunity.

Carey Nieuwhof, church leader



Ideas for PCCs and Group Councils (or Equivalent Governance Bodies)

1. Take the PCC through the six PCC Tonight Leading Your Churches in Evangelism sessions produced by CPAS to help them explore evangelism in your context (each session is just 35-40 minutes and is designed to be used as part of a normal PCC meeting).⁵⁷
2. Assign 5-10 minutes in every PCC meeting for small groups to pray for their 'Five' people who are not yet Christians (see Practices 2 and 4 for more on this).
3. Explore with your PCC what percentage of the annual budget should go on evangelism, and then set that figure. Or, draw up a list of things that would help the church in its evangelism and create a budget around that (see Practice 7 for more on this).
4. For each item on an agenda be sure to ask the question 'What are the implications of this item for our outreach to others?' Make it a thread which runs through everything you do, rather than something which just features when 'outreach' or 'evangelism' is a specific item on the agenda.
5. If you have a church mission statement or vision statement or Mission Action Plan (MAP) that encapsulates evangelism as part of your sense of what God is calling you to, create a summary and design it to feature on your meeting agenda template.⁵⁸ Then regularly connect items on the agenda with the overall direction you are heading in as a church or group of churches. For example, 'Our next item is the refurbishment of the Church Hall. This is an important issue as we want to use the hall increasingly as a way to connect with our community and hold some events we can invite people along to so that (name something from your mission, vision or MAP here). Right now, it isn't fit for purpose.'
6. Avoid agenda suppression. There is always an array of priorities that PCCs have to deal with, everything from the church boiler to GDPR, from service patterns to finances. If you have a particularly big issue, for example a building project, it is easy for this to dominate the agendas of the PCCs over a long period of time, and for other important matters to get 'suppressed'. To prevent this from happening, either link evangelism into these matters, or allocate time for evangelism to every agenda, to demonstrate it is a priority for you as a church.
7. Explore specific pathways for people to come to faith that your churches could offer. Once a term, think of a 'typical' person you have contact with who is outside church life, and imagine what their journey to faith might look like and how you could aid that through an appropriate 'pathway to faith'.⁵⁹ This might include events, groups, courses, visits, practical help... what would a step-by-step pathway look like in your context?



I try to keep the PCC intentionally focused on 'making Jesus known'. For every decision we make, I ask, 'How does this make Jesus known to the people in this parish and those in our networks beyond?' If it detracts from 'making Jesus known', then we reflect on whether we should be doing it.



Pathways to faith: one church uses the analogy of Gardens, Dining Rooms and Kitchens. They invite others to Garden events – open, low-key and friendly; they develop connections through more intimate occasions with smaller numbers in the Dining Room, including opportunities to encounter God; they encourage friendships and exploration of joining in with kingdom ministry through the Kitchen. It's a progression. What pathways could you offer? What would suit your context?

8. Plan the overview of your PCCs' agendas a year at a time, trying to identify what needs to be addressed when in the course of the year. This helps PCCs to be a bit more proactive and not simply reactive to the pressing needs of the moment. You can build flexibility in for immediate things by allocating only one main item per agenda across the year. Ensure that evangelism features as part of the plan.
9. A great question to ask on an ongoing basis: 'What do we need to stop in order to give space for evangelism?'
10. Set up an annual task group to review your relationship with the surrounding community and report back to the PCC. For example, what are the priorities and worries of the people in your community? What engagements with church do they appreciate? How might the answers to these questions impact our thinking, praying and planning for connecting with the community over the next year? Are the community demographics reflected in the church leadership, activities and contacts? How can we be intentional about diversity, appropriate to our context?



Take a look at the introduction to the PCC Leading Your Churches in Evangelism Resource.

Ideas for Leaders of Church Groups (All Ages)

It is very easy for small groups in churches to default to being about those within the group. That might be appropriate in some instances, but often it will lead to an inward-looking, potentially myopic, self-interest, where the focus is on looking after one another. Such groups can be pastorally focused rather than discipleship focused. Building in an element to the group meetings that explores how we show and share the faith with others on our 'frontlines' (the places where we spend most of our time) is one way to remain other-focused.

Children and young people normally find themselves pretty alone as Christians on their frontlines (school, friendship groups and clubs they attend). I remember discovering, when my middle child was at primary school, that he was the only child in his year (and it was a big year group) who attended church. Let's help our young people by ensuring that the groups we run for them include many of the activities below to help them share faith appropriately.

“

As overall leaders, teaching our group leaders to do some of these evangelism ideas, and modelling it by doing it with them, are great ways to nurture a more evangelistic culture in groups.

Prayer Ideas

1. Each time you meet, take 10-15 minutes to pray for opportunities to share faith (include Pray for Five if you are doing this), and ask if anyone has had such an opportunity and what happened (doesn't matter if it went well or not). Be encouraging and then explore learning points from this experience, to be ready for similar opportunities in the future (see Practice 4).
2. Buddy up in pairs for one month at a time, and during that month don't just pray for your five, but pray for the other person's five as well. Take a month off, and then repeat.
3. Buy a holding cross for each adult, young person or child in the group, invite them to write the name of someone they long to come to faith on it, and then pop it in a pocket, so that each time they feel the cross they can pray for that person.
4. Give each adult or child in the group two pieces of A5 paper and a marker pen. Invite them to draw a picture of two people they are praying for who aren't yet Christians. The drawings can be as basic as people like. Invite them to lay them down on the floor or on a table in the middle of the group. Have two or three minutes quiet to pray for these people, and then conclude the prayer time with a person reading one of the prayers in Guide 2. Do this each time you gather, and each time ask a different person to say one of the prayers at the end. In between, invite people to take the drawings and stick them somewhere to remind them to pray through the week.

“

The fact is that you are in relationship with God because someone, somewhere, at some time talked to someone about Jesus.

Dave Landrum, director of advocacy, EA

Other Ideas

5. When preparing for a session, ask yourself 'How does this passage, theme or topic influence the way we share our faith?' Include the insights in the session through a question, story or idea. Encourage young people to expect God to be at work in the lives of their friends at school or college by telling or showing stories of young people who have come to faith.
6. Ask your adult or youth group: 'What most helped you come to faith in Christ?' Most of the time it is relational – having conversations with Christian friends, family, colleagues, teachers, and so on. Ask them what difference that makes in thinking about how they could talk to others. What could they try?
7. Create a survey together of leading but non-threatening questions about God that would work well in your community, workplace, school or college (perhaps with an offer to pray for any concerns at the end). Practise asking each other the questions, then go and do it. Share how it went and discuss what it showed about those you asked.



8. Ask your adult or youth group this question: 'What stops us from talking about our faith and inviting others to explore it for themselves?' It is likely that a range of possible things may be mentioned. For example, fear of rejection, fear of not knowing what to say, concern about putting someone off, not having any non-Christian contacts, uncertainty about whether we need to share faith with others, and so on. Take each one mentioned and spend some time as a group addressing the issue. Some groups find using the HELP approach useful:

Honesty Be honest about how the issue impacts you. Almost certainly others in the group will share your concerns and struggles.

Explore Take time to tease out why this stops us sharing our faith.

Learn Work out together what can be done about it. How might the Scriptures help us as we think about this barrier? What practically could we do to address it?

Pray Bring the issue to God in prayer, and commit to praying for the people struggling with that issue over the coming week.

9. Run a course with your group on how to talk naturally about your faith.⁶⁰ Communicate your own confidence in the gospel, and your confidence in the group members (especially young people).
10. Pray for places elsewhere in the world. Research by the Transform Europe Network suggests that when we are praying for those in other countries, it increases our enthusiasm for mission in our own area.

“

As long as you have shared your faith sensitively and with compassion, then remember that their response is not your responsibility. We are called to share with grace and truth, and we leave the rest to God.

Carolyn Skinner,
CEO Third Space



One great idea adopted by one of our small groups was to leave an empty chair each week for 'Steve' (the unchurched husband of one of the group members) for whom they were all praying. I recall attending the group one week when we did this. I also recall visiting one year later... when Steve himself was sitting in the chair, having come to faith.

11. Create a safe space 'to be' for young people where they can 'ask anything' of the leaders, and invite them to bring their friends. Encourage a healthy honesty, and model offering to pray for people too.
12. Invite someone into your group once a term who isn't a Christian. Be really clear that you are genuinely interested to hear about their view on life, and don't try to share faith with them on this occasion. A possible format would be to invite them to a part of your gathering, probably the start, and begin with refreshments, introducing them to each person. Then interview them or invite them to speak about some of the questions below for around 20 minutes. If they are happy to, allow 10 minutes of further questions from the group. Then thank them (a small gift always goes down well) and let them go on their way. Afterwards, take some time to talk about what you heard and how you might respond if someone said similar things to you in a one-to-one conversation. Ask them to speak about any or all of the following:
- Their current beliefs.
 - Their experience of church.
 - How they make sense of life in all its ups and downs.
 - What advice they would give a young person who is setting out in life.
 - Whether they have any so-called 'spiritual experiences' they are prepared to share with you.

CHAPTER 6

TAKING IT FURTHER

77 More Ideas

The ideas in this book will help to bring to life an evangelistic culture in churches. But there are bound to be many more creative and fabulous ways to do this and we would love to make them available. We've created an online depository of such ideas that you can contribute to and draw from. Please do send us your best ideas so we can post them up to leadership@cpas.org.uk. We would love to have another 77 ideas to share. If you want to take a look at those additional ideas you will find the link at www.cpas.org.uk/77.

Further Resources from CPAS

Over the last year we have worked on a number of things to help leaders lead their churches in evangelism, of which this book is one.

Leading Evangelism Learning Hub

This exciting new initiative helps church leaders think through how to nurture the ministry of evangelism within the life of churches and congregations. The online learning hub consists of eight sessions run over four terms (14 months), a day and evening each term. It is attended



by the church leader and 2-5 other leaders. There is a brochure with more details about the content and timeline for a hub on the CPAS website at www.cpas.org.uk/hub, or scan the QR code.

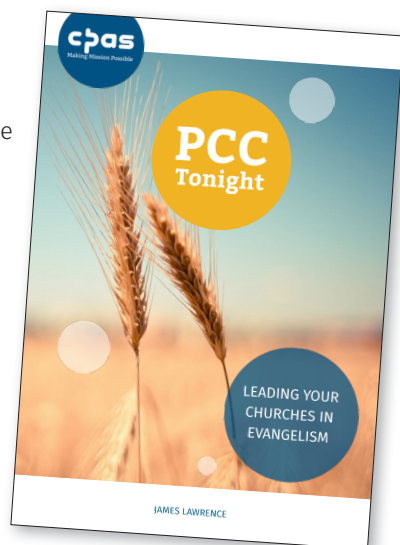


PCC Tonight: Leading Your Churches in Evangelism

The ministry of evangelism can all too easily take a back seat in the busyness of church life and the many responsibilities that PCCs (and equivalent bodies) carry. These six sessions focus on how to develop evangelism as part of your normal way of being church, and enable PCCs to explore their role in leading churches and congregations in evangelism (www.cpas.org.uk/pcc).

The six sessions are based on the format of the original PCC resource, PCC Tonight (also available from www.cpas.org.uk/pcc), which helps PCCs to review their purpose and working practices. If you haven't yet done these you may like to start there. The Leading Your Churches in Evangelism sessions cover:

1. Is it really necessary: why think about evangelism?
2. Stereotypes and stumbling blocks: what is evangelism?
3. Surely that's the minister's job: who needs to be involved?
4. How to order and mobilise a community around evangelism: shaping.
5. How to order and mobilise a community around evangelism: focusing.
6. How to order and mobilise a community around evangelism: enabling.



Each session is around 35-40 minutes long and can be used in a number of different ways.

- You can use a session at the start of a PCC meeting as the first item on the agenda, doing one each time you meet over several meetings, or perhaps every other meeting.
- You can easily expand a session to make it a longer item, up to 60 minutes.
- You can link several sessions together and use them on a PCC away morning or day.

All the resources you need to run the sessions are included in the downloadable materials:

- Leaders' guide.
- Handouts.
- Activities.
- PowerPoint.
- Video.



You can take a look at the introduction to the sessions on the CPAS website, and purchase the downloadable resource.



Leading in Evangelism

Leading in Evangelism



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

In partnership with the Evangelism and Discipleship Team from the Church of England, LYCIG (<https://www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/>) and the AMEN network (<https://www.amenanglican.org.uk/>), we have created an online learning resource for busy church leaders who want to prioritise evangelism. Digitally delivered, in-your-own-time training for you and two to three others, helping you to plan for, create and sustain a culture of embedding evangelism in your churches or congregations.



There are 12 Getting Started sessions with optional Going Deeper sessions, each around 60-75 minutes long. These video-supported sessions are accessed via a digital learning platform which can be found at www.leadinginevangelism.org.uk.

Lead On



Our free monthly email Lead On provides stimulating ideas and practical tools for busy leaders.

Sign up using the QR code or at
www.cpas.org.uk/leadon.



And Finally...

Nurturing an evangelistic culture, as previously mentioned, takes clear thinking, concerted effort, enormous courage and creative consistency. But the good news is that small ideas can lead to big changes.

I think of a church that wasn't in a good place. Morale was low, tensions were commonplace, evangelism non-existent. A new vicar arrived. Four years later, I talked to a member of the congregation. He told me how things had shifted so much in those four years, and that core to it all was a change in the culture, the way things were done around there, brought about by a number of new practices.

It started with the vicar. She modelled the change she longed to see. The focus of the prayer life of the church started to revolve around how they could serve the community and connect people with God. The changes influenced the teaching, both at the services and in a few small groups that were set up. She shared her leadership with the PCC and others, and gradually more and more people caught the possibilities of what could be. They shared stories and celebrated gains around showing and sharing the faith, and just as things were really gathering some momentum... the pandemic hit.

Like every church, they had to rethink how they did so many things, but interestingly, because the culture had already begun to change, they didn't focus inwards on themselves, but outwards towards their community. As a consequence, as services have returned to the building, they have more people attending than before lockdown hit. Many of these people are new to church life, having connected online during the pandemic.

Small shifts, big changes...



PART 3

GUIDES

“

‘Jesus’ call to be his witnesses, it turns out, really is a joyful invitation, not a sober sentence.

Don Everts, Author

GUIDE 1

EVANGELISM EXPECTATIONS

Identifying appropriate expectations for all Christians when it comes to sharing faith is important for two reasons. It helps us to know what to expect of each other, and also helps us to identify what 'training' to provide.

One way of thinking about evangelism for churches is to use the analogy of a football team. Inevitably, the analogy will work better for some than others, but it can be a helpful one. Think more local league or school team than championship league:

- Football is a team sport played by individuals.
- There are some baseline requirements for everyone on the team; for example, that they turn up when needed, can kick a ball, and are reasonably fit.
- People play in different positions, but everyone works towards the same aim, to score goals and stop the other team scoring goals.
- Players commit to training to help them improve their abilities and fitness.
- In the early years of playing, players may try several positions before they find their best fit.
- There is a player-coach who heads the team and guides it.

So too with evangelism in church life:

- Evangelism is a body ministry where everyone has their part to play.
- There are some baseline requirements for everyone on the Christian team, identified below.
- People play different parts, but we all work towards the same goal, helping people become disciples of Jesus (Matthew 28:16-20).
- We commit to training to help us get a little better and to improve our overall 'readiness' for opportunities that come our way.
- We may 'have a go' at a variety of parts until we find our best fit.
- There is a player-coach, Jesus, who heads up the team and guides us.

“

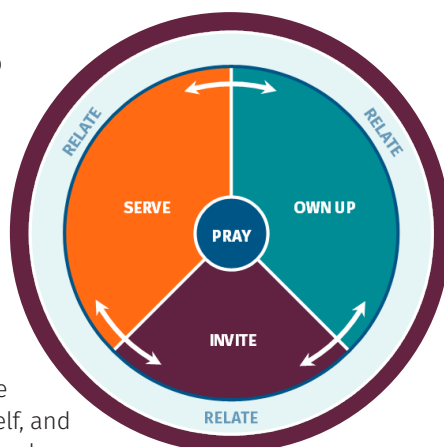
Everyone has a part to play, and we need everyone to play their part.



So what are the ‘baseline requirements’ when it comes to sharing faith? Here are some suggestions. You don’t have to agree with them, but you do need to be clear in your own context what expectations you have of ordinary congregation members when it comes to their witness in everyday life.

Pray

Prayer is the heart of the ministry of evangelism, as we know God’s activity in other people’s lives is somehow linked to our praying. In prayer we express our dependence on God, our desire for him to draw those we know to himself, and our recognition that ultimately God is the only one who can change people’s lives. For more on how to pray, see Guide 2.



Serve

We serve others by caring for people through kind words (there is a reason why the Bible has so much to say about the use of our tongues), offering to help others whenever we can (a willingness to go the extra mile), and sharing what we have (because ultimately nothing we have is ours, we are simply stewards of what God has given to us).

Own up

It is much easier to keep quiet about our faith, but God invites us to ‘own up’ to our faith in simple but significant ways. These include mentioning the fact that we go to church, sharing about the difference our faith makes in our daily lives, and being prepared to tell our story of how we came to faith.

Invite

A relatively easy way to play our part is to invite people to things. Here are some suggestions:

- To a **connecting event** A coffee, a drink down the pub, a meal out, a meal in our home, a social event with others from church, an online gathering.
- **To join us in serving the needs of others** A foodbank, night shelter, lunch club, overseas mission trip, street clean.
- **To consider Jesus** Through giving them a gospel to read, or a blog post, article or book; inviting them to watch a film or YouTube video, or listen to a sermon, a spoken word or podcast; encouraging them to attend a service, event or enquirers’ course geared for those who are not yet Christians.

We may also want to invite people to connect with Jesus themselves by talking with him in prayer.

Resource people

Whatever we decide our ‘baseline requirements’ are, that is what we focus on helping people to do, through consistent modelling, constant encouragement, appropriate training, and creative ideas.



GUIDE 2

PRAYER AND EVANGELISM

This material is available as a downloadable handout from www.cpas.org.uk/77.⁶¹

Pray Without Ceasing...

Prayer is our starting point when it comes to sharing our faith. In prayer we express our dependence on God, the one who is the evangelist, who draws people to himself, and who enables us to show and share the faith in our daily lives. But sometimes people express an uncertainty about what or how to pray.

Why Pray?

Here are some of the reasons why prayer is so important when it comes to sharing our faith.

- Christians believe that in some mysterious way God's activity on earth is linked to our praying, so one of the most loving acts we do for another human being is bring them to God in prayer, asking him to reveal himself to them.
- The Scriptures show us that God is the evangelist (John 15:16), so we express our dependence on the work of his Spirit in people's lives by asking him to do what he alone can do, and, by being open to his nudges, to join in with what he is doing in people's lives (John 15:26-27). This may involve a prompt to phone someone, to walk across a room to speak with someone, to ask a particular question or share a particular comment when in conversation with someone.
- We recognise that people coming to faith can provoke a spiritual battle (2 Corinthians 4:4), and prayer is one of the weapons we have in this battle.

What do we Pray?

When it comes to evangelism, a number of Bible passages inform what we pray.

Luke 10:2 – for Christians

This is known as 'the other Lord's prayer'. Jesus specifically instructs us to pray for God to send workers out into the harvest field, because the harvest field is ripe and ready for harvest. So we pray for God to do that, for him to raise up people with a concern for those who don't yet know him, and a willingness to engage with those people wherever they might be. And of course as we pray this prayer, we realise we are praying for ourselves as well, for we are sent onto our frontlines to show and share the faith – we are the 'workers' in our spheres of life.

Colossians 4:2-6 – for ourselves

Paul urges the Christians in Colossae to pray for him in his role, and then encourages them in their role. Specifically, we pray for those who lead our churches that they would have courage and clarity in their gospel proclamation. And for ourselves, we pray for opportunities, eyes to see them, courage to take them, and wisdom to know what to say.

“

Talk to God about people before you talk to people about God.

John 14:12-14 – for not yet Christians

Jesus tells us we will do what he was doing, and that if we ask for things in his name (according to his will and purposes, and to glorify him and his Father) then he will do it. Jesus showed and shared the faith, so by implication he will long for us to do the same, and will help us to do just that. So we pray for those who aren't yet Christians, for them to come to know the grace and truth of Christ in their own lives, believing that we are praying according to his will.

How to Pray

Here are a few prayers and ways of praying we could include in our regular prayers.

Five a Day

The Thy Kingdom Come initiative encourages us to pray regularly for five people we are in contact with, who don't yet know Christ. See Practice 2 for more on this.

The Lord's Prayer

Many Christians pray the Lord's Prayer each day. Archbishop John Sentamu⁶² suggests that we pray it for someone we know who isn't yet a Christian.

Some Prayers

Make my life a sign of your engaging love:

may my heart be penitent,
my actions generous,
my words be sensitive.

Fill me with longing to share with others the good news I have received,
And anoint my life with your Spirit that Jesus be formed in me:

his tongue to speak in me,
his hands to work in me,
his heart to beat in me.

And so through all I do, and all I am,
and with the people where you call me to witness,
may Jesus be known
and his kingdom established.

Amen

Stephen Cottrell, *From the Abundance of the Heart*.



Heavenly Father,
Please give me opportunities this day to share you with others.
Give me the eyes to see them,
Courage to take them,
And wisdom to know what to say.
Amen

James Lawrence, *Lost for Words*.

Lord Jesus Christ, I am no longer my own but yours.
In gratitude for your saving death on my behalf, I offer my life to you afresh.
Call me to the mission of your kingdom and open my eyes to the spiritual need of those around me.
Give me your love and compassion for the lost, and strengthen me with your grace to serve them
and be a blessing to them.
Send me in the power of your Holy Spirit to witness to the gospel and reveal you to those I meet.
Teach me how to make disciples and where I need to change my attitudes, lifestyle and habits.
I freely and wholeheartedly commit myself to this call, knowing that in everything you will give me
your inspiration, strength, and grace.
Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
Let this covenant now be made on earth and be fulfilled in heaven.
Amen

John McGinley, *Mission Shaped Living*.

Heavenly Father
I thank you that you love X and that you long for them to know you.
I ask you to stir up a spiritual hunger within them, help them to discover your truth, convict them of
their need of you, and reveal Jesus to them.
Direct their steps so that they may come into contact with other Christians, and speak to them
through the circumstances of life.
Bless my relationship with them and use me to draw them closer to you.
And in your good time, may they come to faith in Christ, and know him as Saviour, Lord and Friend.
Amen.

Unattributed



**You can download prayer cards for each of these prayers
to print off for your congregation.**

Things to Pray For

Use these questions to deepen your sense of what it might be helpful to pray for someone:

- What Scripture might I pray for them?
- What passion or power is directing their life?
- What priorities shape their diary? Who or what determines their schedule?
- Who is important to them?
- How are they doing in various aspects of their life?
 - Physically?
 - Intellectually?
 - Socially?
 - Emotionally?
 - Spiritually?
 - Mentally?

Keep a record of your thoughts and prayers, and in particular any answered prayers, for your encouragement and guidance.

Best of All

Write your own prayer for yourself and those you are praying for. It doesn't have to be long or eloquent, just heartfelt and meaningful.



GUIDE 3

IDEAS FOR PRAYING FOR FIVE

These resources are adapted from Thy Kingdom Come www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources.

Piece of String

Take a piece of string or cord, and tie five knots in it to represent each of the five people you have committed to pray for. You could carry the knotted string in your pocket, tie it round your wrist or place it somewhere that you'll see it regularly. Use the knots to remind you to pray for each person on your list.

Small Stones

Find five small stones (light-coloured ones are best) and write each of the people on your list onto each of the stones. Place them on your desk, bedside table or fireplace as a reminder to pray. Alternatively, you could place each stone in a different room of your home and pray for each person as you enter or leave the room.

Business Card or Bookmark

Grab a piece of card that will easily fit inside your wallet, purse or book. Write your list of five names onto the card before putting it in your wallet or book. Use this card as a daily reminder to pray for them.

Prayer Alerts

Add your list of five people to the alerts section of your phone and set reminders to pray for them. You could choose one name per day, or pray for all five across your day. Remember to set alerts for a suitable time where you can stop to pray for your list.

5 In 5

Suggest praying 5 in 5 – praying for your Five in 5 minutes, buddying up with another Christian to do so at the same time each day. Text to remind each other.



Post-it Notes

Use five post-it notes and write one name onto each. Stick them onto your mirror, above your bed or somewhere you'll see them regularly and will be reminded to pray.

Paper Fish

Invite children to write names of people they want to pray for on fish shapes, and stick them on the fridge. Pray for one a day at breakfast.

BLESS Cards

Print cards for your congregation with the text below, including spaces to fill in with the names of their five, to encourage them to use the BLESS acrostic as a way to pray.

Body health, protection, energy

Labour employment/unemployment, retirement, adequate income

Emotional inner peace, joy, wisdom, insight, patience

Social healthy relationships between spouses, parents, children, friends; reconciliation; love

Spiritual repentance, salvation, obedience, faith



www.thykingdomcome.global/prayer-resources.

CREATING A RESOURCE BASE

Creating a 'library' that people can access, be it physical or digital, provides resources to help people with their faith sharing.

Books for Everyone

- Story Bearer: How to Share your Faith with your Friends, Phil Knox (IVP).
- Living His Story, Hannah Steele (SPCK).
- From the Abundance of the Heart: Catholic Evangelism for all Christians, Stephen Cottrell (Darton, Longman & Todd).

Books for Those who Want to Explore Deeper

- Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable, Sam Chan (Zondervan).
- Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World, Frances S. Adeney (Baker Academic).
- The Word's Out: Principles and Strategies for Effective Evangelism Today (Revised and Updated edition), David Male and Paul Weston (BRF).
- Evangelism as Exiles: Life on Mission as Strangers in Our Own Land, Elliot Clark (The Gospel Coalition).
- Stay Salt, Rebecca Manley-Pippert (Good Book Company).
- Questioning Evangelism, Randy Newman (Kregel).

Courses to Equip People to Share Faith⁶³

- **Living and Telling** (Agape, Free) Well-produced, thorough and inspirational, a journey of understanding, motivation and helpful tools to learn how to share faith for young people and adults. Small group material available online with videos included. Find out more at, www.livingandtelling.org.uk.
- **Story Bearer** (EA, Free) Great new resource based on book of same. Based on the power of our stories, overcoming obstacles and being real and creative. Doesn't go as far as Mission Shaped Living, but a good opener for getting Christians on board with evangelism. Small group material for adults. Youth version on YouTube. Downloadable material at, www.storybearer.com/story-bearer-sessions.
- **Mission Shaped Living** (New Wine, £45.00 for group pack) John McGinley's eight session course. Practical, biblical, clear, inspiring. Based on the book Mission Shaped Grace. Already proving popular and helpful. Great mix of input, biblical truth and application. For adults and older youth in small groups. Includes leader's guide and workbooks. www.re-vived.com/collections/mission-shaped-living.

- **Faith Pictures** (Church Army, Free)
First class resource, gentle but imaginative way in for Christians to learn how to share their faith. Brilliant concept built around the use of images. For adults and older youth in small groups. Available online at, www.churcharmy.org/resources/faith-pictures.
- **Talking Jesus** (EA, £24.99) Superb training resource for helping Christians to 'talk about Jesus'. Simple, accessible, effective. For adults in small groups. DVD or USB for videos, plus participant booklet. Find out more at www.talkingjesus.org.



Resources for youth and sharing their faith

- **From Equip People courses' list above** Those which include youth-specific material are Living and Telling; Talking Jesus; and Faith Pictures.
- **Mission Academy Live** (HOPE Revolution, price varies) Empowering young people as missional disciples within a small group context. Focus on peer to peer evangelism. See www.hopetogether.org.uk. Other good youth and evangelism resources there too.
- **Life Explored** A good course to enable conversations about the topics relevant to their peers. www.thegoodbook.co.uk/outreach/life-explored.

Giveaways

Gather your favourite booklets, gospels, videos, podcasts and so on. Encourage people to give them away to others (see Practice 5 for ideas).

Other Resources to Link To

- www.disciplekit.org from CPAS which collates, rates and reviews the best of resources and links to them for you. Just punch in your search term – or explore under themes.
- The Great Commission website is packed full of resources, stories and articles, it is a great place to find helpful things, www.eauk.org/great-commission.
- Thy Kingdom Come website has lots of tools to help with prayer and evangelism for all ages, www.thykingdomcome.global.
- Hope Together has materials and resources for all ages as it seeks to catalyse mission throughout the UK, www.hopetogether.org.uk.
- There are loads of ideas for evangelism on a Padlet Board we have created (think online information wall), www.padlet.com/jlawrence65/kvdjfcdsmtnytuqm.
- The Everyday Faith webpages have resources and prayer to help people live out their faith in everyday life, www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/everyday-faith.

Family Faith

- The Faith at Home webpages have resources to help grow faith in homes, www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/faith-home.
- Great course to help families, www.disciplekit.org/resource/raising-faith.
- Changing the world with small acts during Lent www.40acts.org.uk.

Children and Faith

- See Scripture Union resources for great ideas to help children discover faith, for example, www.content.scriptureunion.org.uk/easter-alive.
- CPAS holidays for children and youth, www.ventures.org.uk.
- Holiday club material from various publishers, including The Good Book Company, Scripture Union. See www.disciplekit.org.
- www.energize.uk.net resources from Urban Saints include inspiring sessions for both sharing faith and building faith. Subscription based.



CPAS Invites...

CPAS warmly invites you to join with us as we enable churches to help every person in the UK and Northern Ireland hear and discover the good news of Jesus Christ. We are praying that the future will see:



You could pray for leaders and churches on the front line of mission – visit www.cpas.org.uk/pray for prayer resources, find us on PrayerMate or follow @CPASnews on Twitter for prayer points.

Please give towards this ministry, so that even more men, women and children can hear the good news of Jesus. Your donation will enable us to develop materials, resources, and programmes to help churches grow, run Venture, Falcon and School Venture residential holidays for 8-18s, and, as a patron to almost 700 churches, support the appointment of mission-minded clergy in the heart of their communities.



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Together, we can reach thousands more people, and our thanks will be on behalf of all those who come to faith.

END NOTES

- 1 - Living His Story, Hannah Steele, (SPCK) p.70
- 2 - Names have been changed for each of these stories.
- 3 - www.ventures.org.uk.
- 4 - Talking Jesus Report 2017, p.4.
- 5 - Talking Jesus 2017 Research 'Two-thirds (67%) of non-Christian adults in England say they know a practising Christian – and that person is most likely to be a friend (40%) or family member (33%).' p.4.
- 6 - Living His Story, Hannah Steele (SPCK) p.12.
- 7 - Rick Warren, in The Purpose Driven Church, suggested five areas of church life: worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and mission. Others have suggested alternative lists (for example Up, In, Out and Of; or the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development; or the nine marks of 9Marks), but the point is that evangelism is just one aspect of church life that a leader of a church has to give attention to.
- 8 - See PCC Tonight: Leading Your Churches in Evangelism, James Lawrence (CPAS).
- 9 - If you'd like to explore this further, we have produced some guides on the theology of evangelism and a typology of terms (www.cpas.org.uk/77). Many others have written extensively on the topic, for example The Mission of God, Chris Wright (IVP) or Transforming Mission, David Bosch (Orbis).
- 10 - British Government national census 2011 reported a drop of 4.1 million in the number of Christians in England and Wales since the 2001 census, especially among five to fourteen and thirty to thirty-nine year olds, despite overall population growth.
- 11 - Meet Generation Z, James Emery White (Baker Books), p.64.
- 12 - ONS report in 2018.
- 13 - Report to General Synod 2019 GS2161.
- 14 - See the Church Army report 'Evidence About Fresh Expressions of Church in the Church of England', www.churcharmy.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=138729 and The Day of Small Things www.churcharmy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/the-day-of-small-things.pdf.
- 15 - 'To be a church where mixed ecology is the norm – where every person in England has access to an enriching and compelling community of faith by adding new churches and new forms of Church to our parishes, schools and chaplaincies.' A vision for the Church of England in the 2020s. www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/emerging-church-england/vision-church-england-2020s.
- 16 - Gen Y (also known as Millennials) born approximately between 1980 and 1996, Gen Z born approximately between 1996-2010.
- 17 - THE XYZ of Discipleship, Marjorie and Nick Allen (Malcolm Down), p.52. See also Changing Shape, The Faith Lives of Millennials, Ruth Perrin (SCM).
- 18 - Talking Jesus Report 2017, p.6
- 19 - Stats taken from Savanta ComRes study 29 Jan to 7 Feb 2021; Youthscape unpublished research; Church of England survey of 2008 adults about grief and COVID.
- 20 - www.eauk.org/assets/files/downloads/is-the-missing-generation-still-missing.pdf. The appendix contains a helpful summary of research conducted throughout the pandemic.
- 21 - Catholic Evangelism, Stephen Cottrell (DLT).
- 22 - Ibid, p.127
- 23 - Jennifer Saunders review in The Times.

- 24 - For a good theological and technical overview of organisational culture and the implications for leadership see *Understanding Christian Leadership*, Ian Parkinson (SCM), chapter 6.
- 25 - If you want to explore this further we have created six sessions you can use with your PCC (or equivalent body) to explore how the church sees evangelism. Each session is around 35-40 minutes long and can be run as part of your normal PCC meeting, or several sessions can be put together and used a part of a PCC away morning or day. The sessions are available at www.cpas.org.uk/PCCTonight.
- 26 - *Cracking your Church's Culture Code*, Sam Chand (Jossey Bass), p.137
- 27 - CPAS runs training session on 'Leading with Courage', see www.cpas.org.uk/events.
- 28 - *Leadership, A Critical Text*, Simon Western (Sage), p.116
- 29 - *The Word's Out*, Dave Male and Paul Weston (BRF), p.125
- 30 - *Leadership Jazz*, Max de Pree (Crown Business), quoted by Walter Wright www.cardus.ca/comment/article/the-legacy-of-max-de-pree/.
- 31 - For more on this see *Leading Well with Others*, James Lawrence (Grove Leadership Series 40).
- 32 - For more on this see www.licc.org.uk/resources/this-time-tomorrow/.
- 33 - www.licc.org.uk/resources/getting-started-now/.
- 34 - www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/EverydayFaithForChurchesWeb.pdf.
- 35 - If you want to explore further, take a look at *Atomic Habits*, James Clear (Random House) and *The Power of Habit*, Charles Duhigg (Random House).
- 36 - See John Ortberg, John Mark Comer, Marva Dawn, Mark Sayers.
- 37 - ComRes 2017.
- 38 - *The Common Rule*, Justin Whitmel Earley (IVP) p.7
- 39 - For more on this see *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*, Tony Reinke (Crossway Books), *The Tech-wise Family*, Andy Crouch (Baker), and *How to Break Up with Your Phone*, Catherine Price (Trapeze).
- 40 - www.thykingdomcome.global/stories/pray-5.
- 41 - More recent iterations include Mission England Matthew Project, Springboard Oikos cards, HOPE pray for 5.
- 42 - See PCC Tonight Leading in Evangelism sessions for more on this.
- 43 - Where will you be 'This Time Tomorrow'? What do you do there? What are your challenges and joys? How can we pray for you?
- 44 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3wZdBmzBvU.
- 45 - www.premierchristianradio.com/Shows/Saturday/Unbelievable/Episodes.
- 46 - www.hopetogether.org.uk/Shop/Categories/12088/Hope_Together.aspx.
- 47 - www.thegoodbook.co.uk/marks-gospel-niv.
- 48 - www.thegoodbook.co.uk/marks-gospel-niv-soul-edition for a very contemporary look. www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/349093/Marks_Gospel.aspx.
- 49 - www.uccf.org.uk/uncover.
- 50 - www.arocha.org.uk/.
- 51 - There are a wide range available. The three most widely used are probably Alpha, Christianity Explored and Pilgrim. Research done by Mark Ireland discovered the most effective ones are normally the 'home grown' ones.
- 52 - www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-labs/blogs/everyday-faith-connections-visiting-church-work
- 53 - Go to, www.cpas.org.uk/browse-everything/leading-evangelism-resources.
- 54 - The Evangelism Examen is part of a new course produced in partnership with a number of agencies and it can be found at www.leadinginevangelism.org.

- 55 - See Season of Invitation for more resources on this, www.seasonofinvitation.co.uk.
- 56 - For more on this see Doing Evangelism Ethically, Gavin Wakefield (Grove Evangelism Series 108).
- 57 - www.cpas.org.uk/PCCTonight.
- 58 - Example agenda templates are available as part of the original PCC Tonight resource, www.cpas.org.uk/PCCTonight.
- 59 - See Pathways to Jesus, Crossing the Thresholds to Faith, Don Everts (IVP). We have produced a grid that you can use to map people's journeys, www.cpas.org.uk/browse-everything/leading-evangelism-resources.
- 60 - See the CPAS guide to courses on how to share your faith, www.cpas.org.uk/browse-everything/leading-evangelism-resources.
- 61 - This material is available as a handout you can share with others, www.cpas.org.uk/browse-everything/leading-evangelism-resources.
- 62 - www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/day-6-prayfor-archbishop-sentamu-prayed-five-people-last-year-and-was-astounded-result.
- 63 - For links to more detailed reviews of each of these courses and other recommendations, www.disciplekit.org.



Small shifts, big changes

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What if evangelism was a ministry of the whole church, not just a few? What if it was central to the life of a church rather than something done on the margins? What if it was part of 'the way we do things round here'?

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James Lawrence is the Leadership Principal at CPAS. Building on CPAS' work with thousands of church leaders and years of experience of equipping missional leaders, James teaches and trains on leadership and evangelism. He is author of several books, and writes a monthly leadership email – Lead On. He is passionate about resourcing the local church to be well led and mission focused, is a semi-professional photographer, and loves ironing.



For further resources and
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