



LEADING EVANGELISM

LEARNING HUB

Connect Model Order Mobilise

SESSION 5
APRIL 2024



WELCOME

Welcome to the Leading Evangelism Learning Hub. This is the fifth of our eight sessions together. We hope today will be fun, informative, and helpful. If there is anything we can do to help the day go better for you please ask.

Overview of the Day

Dwelling in the Word	3
Nurturing a Faith-Sharing Culture	7
Discerning an Appropriate Plan	23
Your Next Steps	29

A Reminder

GUIDELINES FOR OUR HUB

- Learning together.
- Minimise guilt.
- Participate .
- Confidentiality.
- Reality check.
- Next step.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD ZOOM ENGAGEMENT

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

TIMINGS

09.45	Welcome and Session 1
11.00	Coffee
11.25	Session 2
12.45	Lunch
13.35	Session 3
14.35	Tea
15.00	Session 4
16.00	Depart

Timings are for guidance only, apart from the end time. We will finish by 4pm.

GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Head over to our [Classwork for Leading Evangelism Learning Hub - CPAS Cohort 3 \(google.com\)](#). You will find there all sorts of resources related to our theme this term, and it is also a place where we can share ideas, discuss things, and ask questions.

LEAD ON

Sign up today for a free monthly email with articles, resource recommendations and reviews for all interested in improving their leadership. Either scan the QR code below or sign up at www.cpas.org.uk/leadon.



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PART 1

DWELL IN

THE WORD



DWELLING IN THE WORD

JOHN 4:4-14

You will be familiar with the format by now. It's something we're trying to do each time. Dwelling in the Word is a process that many people are using to listen to Scripture, to each other and to God. It's not about sharing information or seeking scholarly answers or even the right answers to the issues raised in the text, but it is about listening well to one another and discerning what God is up to amongst us.

We invite the Holy Spirit in prayer to open our ears, hearts and minds. We listen to the passage read out loud and notice where our attention is drawn – a verse, phrase or single word. We then remain in silence for a minute or two, staying with the place in the passage that stood out for us.

JOHN 4:4-14

⁴ Now he had to go through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Will you give me a drink?' ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?' (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'

¹¹ 'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?' ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?' ¹³ Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'

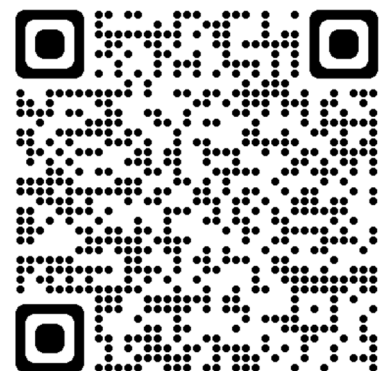
- 1** We each turn to a person in our group. If there is someone you don't know so well engage with them.
- 2** We listen to that person as he or she says what they heard in the passage in a particular verse, phrase or even single word. They may mention something they'd never heard before, something odd or something comforting, or something about which they'd like to find out more about.
- 3** Listen well, because your job will be to report to the rest of your group what your partner has said, not what you yourself said. Some people even take notes to help them focus and remember. Share what you heard them say. Each one takes their turn when they are ready to speak.
- 4** If there is time a conversation develops around what God is saying to us today from the themes arising in the whole group. Please ask someone to post your insights to the Jamboard using the link in the Chat function or the QR code on the screen.

Space for Your Reflections on the Passage



Core Themes

Use the link in the Chat or the QR code below to post your core themes from your group onto the Jamboard. Please post with your Church name first and then your comment.



A PRAYER

God of Mission
Who alone brings growth to
your Church,
Send your Holy Spirit to give
Vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions,
And power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
In spiritual commitment to you,
And in service to our local
community,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

(From LYCIG)



PART 2

**NURTURING A
FAITH SHARING
CULTURE**

Why is Shaping Culture Important?

CHURCH MATHS

WHAT IT REQUIRES

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

Sam Chand

- Clear thinking.
- Concerted effort.
- Enormous courage.
- Creative consistency.

What is Culture?

- Dictionary – sum of attitudes, customs and beliefs that distinguish one group from another.
- ‘Organisational culture is the personality of the church.’ (Chand)
- ‘Culture consists of group norms of behaviour and the underlying shared values that help keep those norms in place.’ (Kotter)
- ‘Culture is... the basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of the church and operate unconsciously, defining the church’s view of itself.’ (Schein, adapted)

Culture is how we live out our beliefs and values in our context: ‘the way we do things around here.’

A Way of Mapping Culture

THE CULTURAL WEB

Here is one approach developed by Johnson and Scholes used in organisations to map the culture of an organisation. It is a way of seeing and understating the different influences that affect organisational culture. It can be used to map existing culture, and it can also used to map future culture based on the question: 'what does the culture need to look like to make this change happen?' The two maps can then be compared in order to promote discussion and highlight what, where and how change can be implemented.

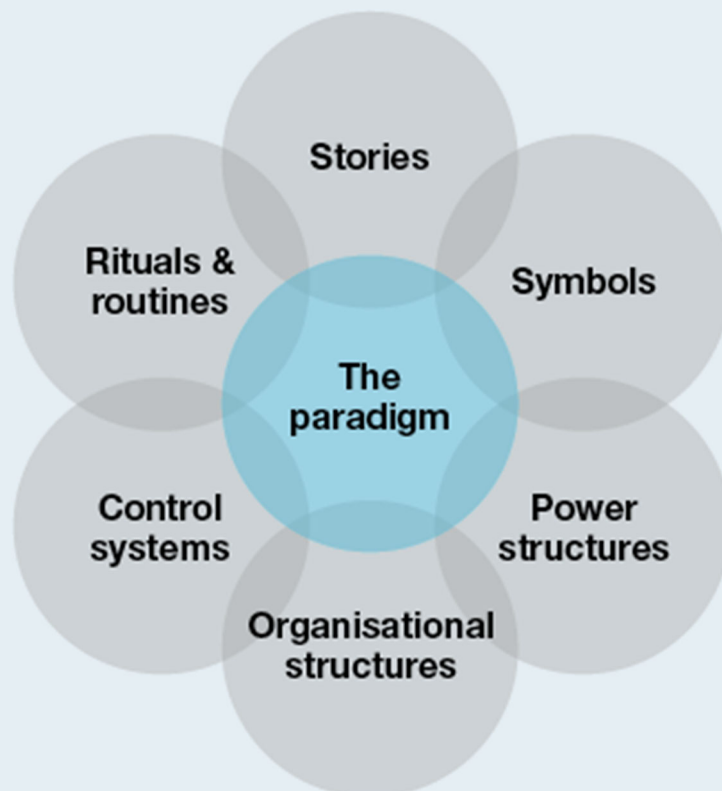
Mapping culture is useful in three ways:

- **Surfacing** How and why things are done.
- **Barriers and alignment** Highlighting sticking points and supporting factors.
- **Planning changes** Planning future actions and changes.

CREATING THE WEB

The paradigm is the core of the web, and is the core beliefs and motivations of the organisation. It is supported by the following six cultural influences.

- **Stories** How an organisation understands and explains itself.
- **Rituals and routines** The accepted norms and practices.
- **Symbols and physical artefacts** The unofficial and official representations of culture.
- **Organisational structures** Formal structures and hierarchy, as well as the informal routes of power and influence.
- **Power structures** The people and the systems who have the power to get things done.
- **Control systems** How an organisation controls how things are done.

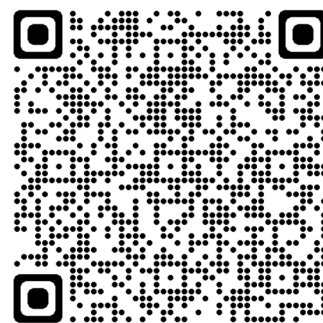




EXERCISE

Imagine you moved area and joined a church with a healthy, vibrant faith sharing culture, what would you observe?

Identify someone in your group to post your thoughts to the Padlet board, one idea per post. You can also comment on or like other groups' posts.

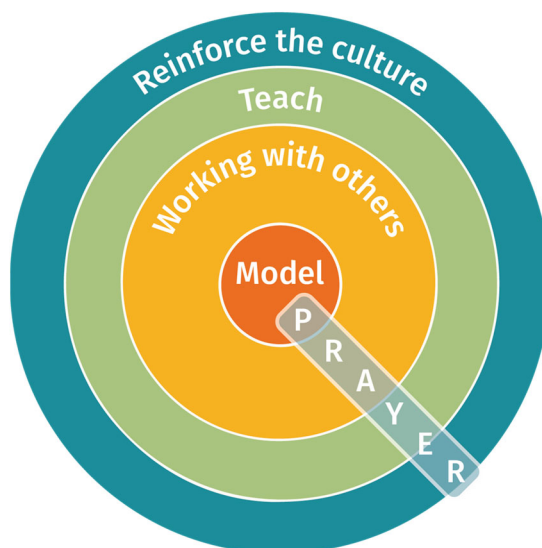


How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture?

A faith sharing culture is nurtured when leaders **model** in their own lives the change they want to see in others (which is why sessions 3-4 focused on this), they **work with others** to bring about the desired culture, they **teach** about the beliefs, values and practices that are at the heart of a faith sharing culture, they **reinforce that culture** through stories, celebration and embedded practices, and they **pray** throughout, because ultimately only God can bring about the change we long to see.

‘In a sense, culture-creation encapsulates what leaders need to do: it is by far the most important responsibility of leaders.’

Church leader



FOR MORE ON THIS

Watch the video using the QR code, read pages 12-15 of this workbook, or read chapter 3 of How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture, James Lawrence (CPAS).



A Way to Shape Culture

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. We have to get involved. We have to get our hands dirty.

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. 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.

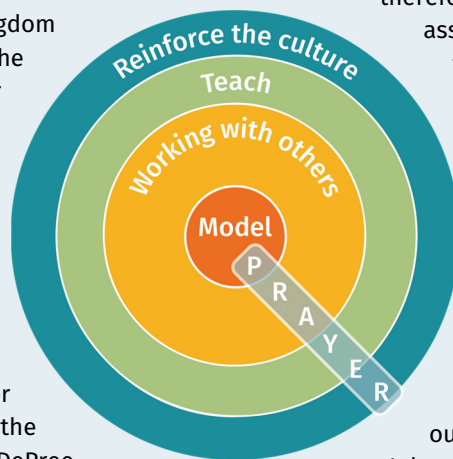
Right at the start of his ministry Jesus set out his culture change agenda: 'Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news"' (Mark 1.14-15).

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 disciplining 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:

- 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').

- 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.

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 help people to have 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 (don't forget to 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.

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?

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

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.

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, teach, work with others, reinforce and pray throughout.

Adapted from *How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture*, James Lawrence (CPAS)





EXERCISE

As you listen to the ways Sue is nurturing a faith sharing culture in her churches, note anything that relates to the various aspects of the framework below.

FRAMEWORK	WHAT SUE DID
Model	
Work with others	
Teach	
Reinforce the culture	
Prayer	



EXERCISE

PART 1 (15 MINUTES)

As you reflect on nurturing a faith sharing culture in your context, imagine it is the end of 2024 and you were making a video like Sue's about how you have nurtured a faith sharing culture in your church(es), what is the story you would tell? Capture the various aspects of your story using the different parts of the framework below.

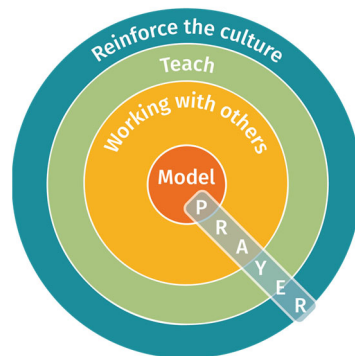
- Model

- Work with others

- Teach

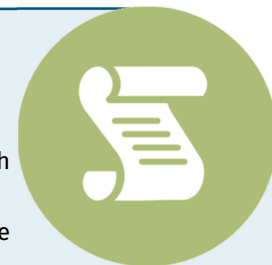
- Reinforce

- Pray



PART 2 (5 MINUTES)

Be ready to present your 'story' to the wider group when we return back to the main room. You will have two minutes. Be as creative as you like: you could use a PPT slide or two, the whiteboard, record a quick video, present it as a rap or a poem. Remember, you are telling a story about how you have nurtured a faith sharing culture from now till the end of the year.



Practice 3 – Tell Faith Stories

SUMMARY

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

EXPLANATION

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 LICC: 'Tell us how you came to faith'.¹ 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 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.
- 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,

“

'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

the local newspaper, on your website? Can they be shown or shared at the home group meeting, children or youth group?

“

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

Pam Macnaughton,
Associate Minister

RESOURCES

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

- www.christianityexplored.org. Nicely produced variety of stories.
- www.eauk.org. Again, good variety of stories.
- www.waldringfieldbc.org.uk, 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. Great variety of stories with good ethnic and age mix.
- www.reachingthenones.org. 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.

TIPS FOR FILMING STORIES ON YOUR PHONE

Here are some tips for getting those all-important videos on your phones.

- **Location** If inside, try to find either a large window/ patio doors (north facing, or cloudy day if south facing) which you can stand near with the camera looking back from the window towards the person you are filming. Their face should then be in strong, even, diffused light (but not any sun shining on their face to create unhelpful shadows). Alternatively film outside in shade or on a cloudy day, again with strong even light on their face.
- **Backdrop** place them at least five feet from any background so there is space behind them. Ideally the backdrop will have some ‘life’ in it but not be distracting. A plain wall is a little dull.
- **Orientation** Ideally shoot the video in landscape orientation, not portrait, as this will play better on a normal laptop or project better in church on your screens.
- **Framing** This a head and shoulders type shot. Be sure to have their eyes on the upper third (imagine the

viewfinder divided into thirds) and not in the middle of the image. Check around the edges of the image to make sure they aren’t any obvious distractions ie bright light, flower coming out of head of person, open door etc.

- **Posture** Ideally get them to stand as that brings some natural energy to the shot, or if they are sitting get them on a bar stool type chair (which looks a little more relaxed) so they are upright without any of the chair showing behind them. If they can sit or stand with their body at a very slight angle to the camera, and their face turned to the camera, that often looks better than straight on, but only a slight angle.
- **Shirt/blouse/top** Plain colour not too dark works best. Thin stripes is ok, but avoid checks and white shirt.
- **Sound** If you are outside, be sure there is no unhelpful background noise, especially wind. If inside try to find a room with lots of soft furnishings or one that is big so there isn’t an echoey feel to the sound. The weakest point of phone cameras is the sound, so make sure they speak up and do a sound check to make sure their voice is loud and clear. If it isn’t, get them closer to the phone and encourage them to speak up, or add an external mike.
- **Camera** Be sure they are looking at the camera and not at you or the themselves on the screen. Alternatively if the format is an interview with two people get them to look at each other and not the camera.
- **Takes** Generally the first take is the best, although if they dry up or stumble badly, stop and start from the beginning again (ideally, you want to minimise any edit of the video). Hold the phone as still as you can.
- **Check** After filming check it looks ok and the sound is good. If not, retake.
- **Editing** Hopefully the editing required will be minimal. Most phones have a basic editing facility built into the video App. Alternatively, Canva.com has some great video editing tools and is free to use.



You are not looking for broadcast quality, rather something that has reasonable sound and picture quality and fits in the genre of selfie videos/TikTok.

For more on this see:

- Shooting Engaging Video on your Phone www.open.life.church/training/802-shoot-engaging-videos-on-your-phone
- Or this video from Manchester Diocese www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOdQXbVNrVA&list=PLOrX44ZU-F3Z7awPsGitXEpu_b-zgVbKV&index=7

Checklist for Feedback on Story



OFFERING FEEDBACK

As you listen to someone telling their story of how they came to faith, use this checklist as a way of capturing feedback that might be helpful for them. Remember to be positive about the good things and not to only focus on the areas for improvement.

Perhaps the best way to use this list is to read through this form before you hear their story to familiarise yourself with what to listen out for, then listen to the person telling their story, and then take a few minutes after that to complete the form before offering your thoughts.

What was helpful about the way they told their story?

Now grade the following sections on a scale where 0=not at all and 5=very.

How succinct was their story (we're aiming for no more than three minutes)?

0 1 2 3 4 5

If it was too long, what could be cut out (repetition, unnecessary detail)?

How clear was their story?

0 1 2 3 4 5

If it was a little 'fuzzy', what would help it to be clearer (removing hidden assumptions, irrelevance)?

How free of religious jargon was their story?

0 1 2 3 4 5

If it contained jargon, which words would it be good to change (religious language or names of things that someone outside church life wouldn't understand)?

How much did it come across in a humble way?

0 1 2 3 4 5

If it was a little arrogant, what might need to change (criticism of others, exaggeration, arrogance)?

AND FINALLY

Overall, do you think this story will make sense to someone who knows little or nothing about the Christian faith? YES/NO

Does the story focus on the difference Jesus has made in the person's life? YES/NO

Any other reflections that would be helpful for the person?

REFLECTING ON A CULTURE OF EVANGELISM

‘A loving community committed to sharing the gospel as part of an ongoing way of life, not by the occasional evangelistic raid event.’

J.Mack Stiles

WHAT MIGHT THAT LOOK LIKE?

Stiles suggests 11 characteristics of a church culture that has evangelism as an ongoing way of life – taken from *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus* (Crossway).

1. A culture motivated by love for Jesus and his gospel (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).
2. A culture that is confident in the gospel (Romans 1:16).
3. A culture that understands the danger of simple entertainment (Ezekiel 33:30-32).
4. A culture that sees people clearly (2 Corinthians 5:16a).
5. A culture that pulls together as one (Philippians 1:3-5).
6. A culture in which people teach one another (1 Peter 3:15b).
7. A culture that models evangelism (2 Timothy 2:2).
8. A culture in which people who are sharing their faith are celebrated (Philippians 9:19-22).
9. A culture that knows how to affirm and celebrate life (Colossians 1:3-4,7).
10. A culture doing ministry that feels risky and is dangerous (Philippians 1:12-13).
11. A culture that understands that the Church is the chosen and best method of evangelism (acts 2:46-47).



REFLECTION

What do you make of these characteristics?

What would you add?

What might such a culture look like, sound like, feel like in your church(es)?



PART 3

**DISCERN AN
APPROPRIATE
PLAN**

Nehemiah – a Good Example

‘When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.’

Nehemiah 1:4

- He prays.
- He thinks.

Four Aspirations to Shape our Planning



Tools to Help with Planning

'Strategic planning is the work a congregation does to (1) identify the activity of God (2) make the personal and congregational adjustments needed to join in that activity.'

Herrington, Bonem and Furr

TOOL 1 'WHEN STATEMENTS'

A popular tool (as recommended by Chew and Ireland in their book on Mission Action Planning) is the 'when statement'. This will happen when...

It seeks to work backwards from a desired state to identify what needs to happen before you can get to that end state. It is a helpful exercise to do with a PCC/your planning group – we will be able to get to goal X WHEN... For example...

Goal: we will attract more young families to church – **when**:

- We start a toddler group – which we will do **when** we find a leader; we decorate the hall; we recruit helpers; we write policy and procedures; we advertise; we talk to baptism families.
- We have monthly family service – which we will do **when** we have more modern worship songs; we have a kids' worship leader; we find a suitable liturgy; we have more lay leaders.
- We improve our welcome – which we will do **when** we train sidespersons; we create a welcome pack; we decorate the porch; we improve the entrance lighting.
- We get advice from others – which we will do **when** we invite the children's' adviser to speak to the PCC; we visit the next door parish and look at what they do.
- And so on....

TOOL 2 SMART GOALS

Many will have come across the SMART goal approach:

- **S**pecific (simple, sensible, significant).
- **M**easurable (meaningful, motivating).
- **A**chievable (agreed, attainable).
- **R**elevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- **T**ime bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

More recently this has been developed into SMARTER, adding Evaluated and Reviewed. Others have made them SMARTIE, adding Inclusive and Equitable.

Like all tools it can be overplayed, but as a way of reflecting on your goals to ensure they are clear and include manageable steps, it can be a good tool to use. Here is a classic example.

If you start the year saying, 'My goal is to exercise more,' you probably won't make much progress. For starters, what does it mean to 'exercise more'? What counts as exercise? How much more do you need to exercise to reach this goal – an extra 30 minutes per day or per week? Or does 'more' mean that you need to do more types of exercise, like combining cardio with weightlifting? And how will you know when you've achieved this goal? Is there a deadline by which you need to be exercising more?

A SMARTer goal would be to resolve that by April 30, you will:

- Incorporate 30 minutes of cardio into your regular workout three times a week;
- Add an extra 15 minutes of activity to each day, such as taking the stairs or walking around the block during lunch; or
- Gradually work your way up to bench-pressing a specific amount of weight that is ambitious but achievable.

In work and in life, we tend to set more vague goals like 'exercise more.' The challenge is to push ourselves to turn a vague goal into a SMART goal, so that we have a better chance of success.

Every Church a Pathway to Faith



Chose four people. Ideally choose some of your Pray for Five people who live in your area, or think of other people who live in your community. Briefly describe their profile (age, life stage, occupation, connection with church, interests and so on). How could your church be a pathway to faith for them? How would thinking about this person influence what you did in services? What you prayed? What you offer the community?

PERSON 1 Profile Pathway	PERSON 2 Profile Pathway
PERSON 3 Profile Pathway	PERSON 4 Profile Pathway

Every Child a Chance to Explore Jesus

Think of all the under 18s in your context, how will they get the chance to explore Jesus? In their homes, schools and colleges, and the gathered life of the church? What might this look like?



IN HOMES

Resource link: [Faith at Home](#)

IN SCHOOLS

Resource link: [Schools Ventures](#)

THROUGH THE GATHERED LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Resource link: [Dr Sarah Holmes](#)

What Makes a Good Plan

- **God inspired** We're trying to discern what God wants, which is why study of his word, prayer and fasting are so important (see Nehemiah 1).
- **Preferable future** A good plan is oriented to what might be, and inspires people to want to see that become a reality.
- **Kingdom honouring** This is so important, because sometimes a plan can be about the ego of the leader or the preferences of the congregation. Neither are appropriate. It is about what God wants, what is good for his people, and serves the community.
- **Clear and compelling** Clear so that people can understand it, they know exactly what is involved. Compelling so that people want it to happen.
- **Connected with reality** It is about an inspiring future, but it also needs to connect sufficiently with reality (our story, context and circumstances) for people to be able to see how it is possible to travel from here to there.
- **Broken down into implementable steps** With a clear and compelling destination in view, how do we actually get there? What is the next step we are going to take and how are we going to take it?



COMMON ERRORS

Remember the three common errors when making an action plan:

1. Trying to do too much too quickly.
2. Not being clear enough about what you are actually planning to do (what you are going to do, who is going to do them, when they are to be done by).
3. Being too fixed in the plan: not being able to adjust as new things become clear, new opportunities open up, lessons are learnt from things that don't go well.



PART 4

NEXT STEPS

Review of Practices – Individually

PRACTICE 1: PRAY FOR FIVE

How many people who aren't yet Christians have you identified to pray for? (circle the relevant number)

0 1 2 3 4 5

How often do you pray for your five?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Around once a month
- ☐ Around once a week
- ☐ Around two to three times a week
- ☐ Pretty much every day

How often are you praying for your five when you meet as a group?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Most times we meet

Have you introduced pray for five to others in your church(es)?

Yes / No

What would help you with this practice?

PRACTICE 2: PRACTISE FAITH CONVERSATIONS

How often are you having a go at practising faith conversations when you meet as a group?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Most times we meet

Have you introduced practicing faith conversations to others in your church(es)?

Yes / No

What would help you with this practice?

BONUS PRACTICE: ENGAGE WITH GOD

Before you started the Hub, were you already regularly spending time with God each day?

Yes / No

If no, have you been able to establish a pattern of engaging with God each day?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Have made some progress
- ☐ Am managing around two to three times a week
- ☐ Pretty much every day

We suggested 15 minutes a day might be a good target to aim for, but for some that will be too much. Others perhaps too little. How long on average do you spend intentionally engaging with God?

- ☐ 5 minutes
- ☐ 10 minutes
- ☐ 15 minutes
- ☐ 20 minutes
- ☐ 25 minutes
- ☐ 30 minutes
- ☐ More than 30 minutes

Have you found any resources particularly helpful?

What would help you with this practice?

BONUS PRACTICE: DWELL IN WORD

How often are you dwelling in the Word when you meet as a group?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Most times we meet

Have you introduced dwelling in the Word into other groups in your church(es)?

Yes / No

What would help you with this practice?

Review of Practices – As a Group

What insights have we gained through reflecting on our own personal engagement with these practices?

What are our next steps to further embed some or all of these practices:

- In our own lives?
- In the life of our group?
- In the life of our church(es)?

Practice 2 – Practise Faith Conversations



'Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders. Make the most of every opportunity...'

Colossians 4:5-6

This practice is the one that groups often find most difficult to implement, so in addition to the suggestions in session workbook, here are some scenarios that you could use to practice faith conversations.

Either take one of the scenarios below and in your church group talk about how you would respond in that situation; or bring a scenario from your own experience and share it with the group to explore how to make the most of that opportunity.



Scenario 1 A family member shares they are going through a hard time: how to offer to pray with or for them.



Scenario 2 A colleague asks what you got up to over the weekend: how to own up that you go to church.



Scenario 3 A neighbour comments that they wish they had your faith: how to respond and perhaps invite someone to read a booklet, watch a video, or come to an event.



Scenario 4 An online contact notices you have made a change in your online posts (since becoming a Christian, although they don't know that is the reason why): how to speak of the difference Christianity has made in your life.



Scenario 5 At a social event a person you've just met asks 'what do you do?'



Scenario 6 A friend who is a parent and who brings their child to a parade service once a month: 'It's good for her to learn about right and wrong...'



Scenario 7 At a school governor's meeting, over coffee someone says to you: 'Why is the church so homophobic?'



Scenario 8 Travelling on a train reading a Christian book or Bible someone sits across from you and makes conversation: 'We buried my niece last week, she was only 14.'



WORKING ON YOUR PLAN

REVIEW YOUR ACTION PLAN

Where are you up to?

What progress have you made?

How clear are your plans?

REFLECT ON TODAY

1. What from today do you want to integrate into your plans (culture change, embedded practices, ideas on planning)?

2. Ask yourselves where would you like to be in nurturing a faith-sharing culture by the end of 2024?

REFINE YOUR NEXT STEPS

1. Distil all your ideas down to two to four clear goals.

2. What are your next steps (be sure to be clear about the step, who is going to action it, and by when)?

3. What would you like others to pray for you? Please post to the Padlet board.



BY THE END OF YOUR TIME MAKE SURE...

- You have identified your next step(s).
- You have identified your next meeting date as a team (ideally every 4-6 weeks).
- That everyone has session 6 in their diary, **Tuesday 18th June 7.30-9.30 online.**

RESOURCES

THE ONE TO READ

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

TOP READS

- Cracking Your Church's Culture Code, Sam Chand (Jossey-Bass)
- Evangelism; How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus, J.Mack Stiles (Crossway)
- Culture Shift, Kirsty Bashforth (Bloomsbury)
- Creating a Culture of Faith Sharing in Your Local Church, Andy Frost (Share Jesus International)

OTHER RESOURCES

- PCC Tonight, [Leading Your Churches in Evangelism](#): six sessions to use with your PCC to help shape churches around evangelism.
- Great Commission [website](#): packed full of resources, stories and articles, it is a great place to find helpful things.
- Check out our [Google classroom](#).



Lead On

A free monthly email with articles, resource recommendations, reviews for all interested in improving their leadership. Sign up at www.cpas.org.uk/leadon.



Grove Leadership Series

CPAS has partnered with Grove Books to produce a series of leadership books. Each one is 10,000 words and offers thought provoking insight on a wide variety of themes, everything from how to leave well to leading with Gen Y. You can find them at the shop on the [CPAS website](#).



Venture and Falcon Holidays

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



Making Mission Possible

CPAS enables churches to help every person hear and discover the good news of Jesus. We are a registered charity working with individuals, churches and dioceses to resource local churches for mission in the UK and Republic of Ireland. To support our work or find out more, please visit www.cpas.org.uk or contact 0300 123 0780.