



The Church of Scotland
Presbytery of Hamilton

Plan Ahead

Courses, Programmes,
Events and Retreats

*When Noah built the Ark
it wasn't raining!*

Plan Ahead

We're here to help

The themes of the Noah story are not only ones of moral warning and the destructive powers of nature but of 'promise': that God would promise never again to destroy humankind, but would enter a new covenant with his people.

Jeremiah expresses this covenant (7:23) "I will be your God and ye shall be my people as the promise of a loving and faithful relationship between God and us."

In all activities that we do in the church, including the courses and programmes offered by the Adult Education Team and Congregational Development Officer, we are seeking to develop this covenant by making the connections between God's presence and everyday congregational life.

In each themed section of this booklet you will find an introduction to the resources available from us that can:

- build up existing skills and expertise;

- offer courses on core topics to expand on our experience in these fields;
- invite new ways of developing church activities at a challenging and deeper level.

These courses are flexible and adaptable for many different groups and situations:

- Courses and support for Kirk Sessions, leaders groups and church members in the Presbytery of Hamilton.
- Area groups or neighbouring churches who may sponsor individual events or courses in their community.
- Varied timing for courses: i.e. stand alone or part of a series.
- Available to suit the timetable of the congregation involved.
- Away-days, retreats, church conferences and events open to the community.



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A new website with further information
will be coming online soon:
www.church-works.com

Churches Without Walls

invite
dare to take risk
live with the gospel
renew our prayer life
encourage sabbatical time
work in teams and partnerships
recover the role of the evangelist
develop paths for the journey of disciples
encourage new initiatives with special funds
integrate young people and create a new church
to review our overall financial strategy and priorities
engage leaders in worship, pastoral work, and mission



Eldership

A righteous man... who walked with God

Noah, a man and his family who was willing to serve God in the most challenging of situations.

Based on the 'Caring for God's people' material this course is primarily aimed at potential and new elders; it is suitable for a conference setting or up to 4 or 5 individual training sessions.

The course can cover the following areas:

1. Why me?

DVD material produced by the Church of Scotland that explores the eldership and its 'calling'.

2. Why you?

The key tasks and duties of eldership, a biblical and historical perspective, the qualities we are gifted and share in Christian leadership.

3. Why we?

DVD material on pastoral care, including caring for the elderly; dementia sufferers and their families; the terminally ill; and a look at appropriate use of prayer.

4. Why us?

'Bridging the Gap': on church and culture today, a DVD / discussion on reactions to Christians and the church and the challenges we face in today's society.

5. Why now?

A review of the vows taken when entering the eldership in the Church of Scotland.



Effective Christian Leadership

Why and how did they build an ark?

Noah could have been the founder of 'forming, norming and storming', for the manner in which he built a Great Big Boat.

An invitation for ministers, church leaders and leadership groups to examine and explore

- how they lead;
- effective 'management' in a church context;
- how they can add to their existing gifts and vision for leadership.

Stewardship-Servant-Shepherd

Biblical models of leadership as they relate to our current environment.

'F/S/N-orming': the Religious version

A look at how our 'role' in leadership shapes how we are able to effectively provide the vision, pastoring, teaching, mentoring, and administering of the church organisation.

- Examining the effects of group dynamics on spiritual behaviour.
- Redefining and understanding the correct use of 'power' in order to empower others.
- Discovering how to implement the cycle of experience-analysis-reflection-action to become more accomplished leaders.



Discernment

How do we understand or map what God's will might be for us and the community we serve?

By the use of some basic Ignatian rules of discernment we can learn a way forward in our understanding.

Through methods of reflection in our ministry and service, we can deepen and strengthen the manner in which we serve and find God in what we do.

Discipleship

They went, 'Two by two!'

Noah expressed unfashionable counter cultural opinions, and ultimately led creation to the point of a new relationship with God.

In these modules we attempt to help church members and leaders build their confidence as disciples in order to help them tell others about their faith relationship and to show it in their lives.

Learning in Today's Culture

- A module using DVD materials from Mind: Bridging the Gap between Christianity/Church and people today.
- A module using the Imagine DVD materials we raise the challenge of being Christian in our daily lives.



- Foundation21 is a web based programme that uses a journal-based format which helps us connect with other Christians both locally and through the web.

Visually Aided Exercises

In this exercise people are asked to express their thoughts / feelings / impressions / knowledge of Jesus through art works and attempt to create that 'picture in the mind' of Jesus. This helps us to own the reality of Jesus for our lives today.

Contextual Bible Study

Looking at the different images of God as expressed through the scriptures by use of

contextual bible study asking:

- what surprises you in the text?
- what would you like to know more about?
- what would you like to share with others?

Faith Into Action

Who am I in Christ? Turning our faith into action by exploring:

- through group exercises;
- parables for today: make one yours;
- the values basis for our faith.

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples.

People

People are like stained glass windows: they sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is light from within.

—Elizabeth Kübler-Ross

Faith

Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see that you believe.

—St Augustine

Life

This life was not intended to be the place of our perfection, but preparation for it.

—Richard Baxter

History

All history is incomprehensible without Christ.

—Ernest Renan

Character

Parents can only give good advice, or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands.

—Ann Frank



Enhancing Effective Pastoral Care

He did all the Lord commanded him

At the heart of the Noah story is the command to care for the future of all creation.

The church is often at its best when caring for others. These courses help us do this more effectively:

- To encourage pastoral carers to develop their skills.
- To explore methods of providing pastoral care.
- To deepen the relationships which

occur through visiting and caring.

- To develop a shared ethos that will foster growth in meaningful relationships.

We can offer both introductory courses and courses which build upon the existing expertise and previous training undertaken, tailored to the needs of congregations:

- for Kirk Sessions and Groups involved in pastoral care;



- available to area groups of churches;
- courses can be stand alone sessions or part of a series;
- each session to last between two and two and a half hours in length, with refreshment break optional;
- available weekly, monthly or quarterly, evenings or weekends.



Session Themes

1. Introduction to Pastoral Care

A chance to consider both what pastoral care is, and why it is important. What provides our motivation? What can we offer? How can relationships grow? If we feel lacking in confidence, or stuck in a rut, what can we do about it?

- Developing awareness
- Levels of communication
- Why visit?
- Deepening relationships

2. Listening

The discipline of listening—to one another and to God—is the foundation of our pastoral care and what enables it to grow. So how do you do it? Is it common sense or a special skill? What makes listening difficult? How do we feel about praying with others as well as for them? Lots of questions and some signposts towards answers.

- Key listening skills
- Praying with others

3. How can we be a Caring Church?

Moving beyond the cliché of ‘we’re a welcoming church’ to becoming a truly caring church for all people.

- Tackling those values that are blocks in our relationships with others.
- Exploring ways forward in mission through pastoral care.
- Accepting all in the fellowship of the faith.

4. Prioritising for the Local Need

We would invite Kirk Sessions/ Groups to choose from a range of specific pastoral needs for further training, these include:

- the elderly;
- those with dementia, and their families;
- the bereaved;
- those in need of support during loss and change;
- the long-term and terminally ill.

The ABCs of Vision and Mission

Land Ahoy!

Some have seen the church like a boat tossed on the sea of life. Noah never gave up trusting in God and trying to find dry land.

The ABCs of vision and mission attempts to offer differing strands and strategies to build a realistic church boat that floats!

A Authentic - Appropriate - Action

Exploring the basic principles of vision by making our mission authentic, appropriate and action-based.

B Believing - Belonging - Behaving - Becoming

Examining the four basic principles of evangelism.

C Communicate - Consult - Co-operate - Co-create

Based on the writing of the business guru Paul Senge and applied to a religious setting, these four Cs help us explore how we take the message of the gospel to areas we may not have explored.

D Define - Discover - Dream - Design - Deliver

With the tools of Appreciative Inquiry we

use our past experiences to move towards future possibilities. It helps us sharpen our awareness of how our traditions shape our model of church, cultural patterns and the effect this has on the appropriate form of mission needed. We seek a 'values based' mission approach and use questions of discernment to aid us in our understanding of God's path for us.

E The E-Circle

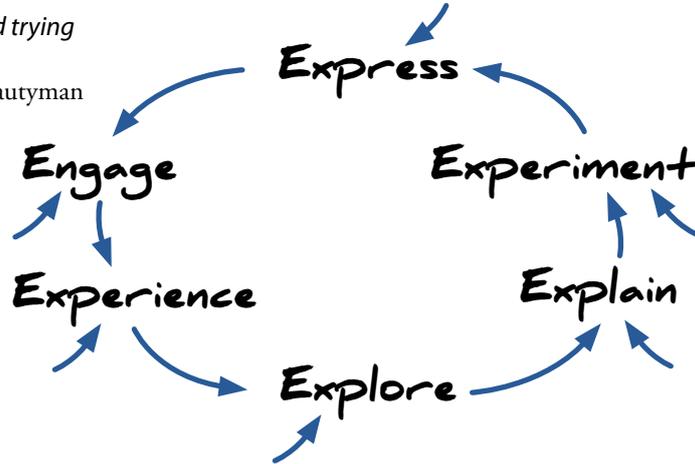
Using the e-circle we reflect upon our church and how we can be open to the opportunities for evangelism in a society



The E-Circle

It's like putting on a big coat and trying it out for size.

—Paul Beautyman



where up to 40% of the population have had no contact with the church at all.

The e-circle is a tool which can help us relate to all people, especially those with no church background, and help them on their own faith journey in the context of today's society. Key questions that are asked are:

- How do we realistically **engage** with people?
- How do we offer and share **experience** with God and **explore** what this might be about?

- How do we **explain** what the gospel is in the context of our culture?
- How do we help people to **experiment** with their faith?
- How do we help people **express** their faith with their peers?

F Forward Planning

Forward planning as we seek to discovering the realities in our Churches:

- where to start,
- classical vision and mission statements,

- going backwards: from identifying needs to establishing vision,
- plan-do-check-act: making it happen,
- community/congregational audits.

G Grace - Gospel - Gifts - Greeting

Many churches do the basics well, but how do we grow as a community and tap that deeper well of spiritual gifts? We examine through bible study key themes of mission.

Prayer and Spirituality

The Dove with the Olive Branch

These symbols in the Noah story are essential ingredients as we offer a series of reflections on peace and hope.

These materials can be offered as a course, as stand alone sessions or as part of retreat days.

Spiritual Exercises

Learn how as an individual in private prayer or as a prayer group to develop the time we focus with God so as to deepen this essential relationship of life. Prayer gives us the energy to live to the full!



- Daily Prayer awareness exercises
Let the Word shed light on your experience.
—B Palecsny
- The use of the Pendulum of Prayer helps us understand the movement from consolation to desolation and from desolation to consolation.
I look at my world. Everything co-operates to give me life and strength.
—David L Fleming
- The use of imagination and prayer to reflect upon the scriptures.

When we enter silence there are many voices that come into our heads. Listen to them and set them aside, deal with the immediate concerns and then move on to the hard work!

—Gerard Hughes

- Becoming a good listener.

Good prayer begins with words and ends in silence. God speaks to the listening heart and we experience his reply in peace. We feel loved. And worthwhile.

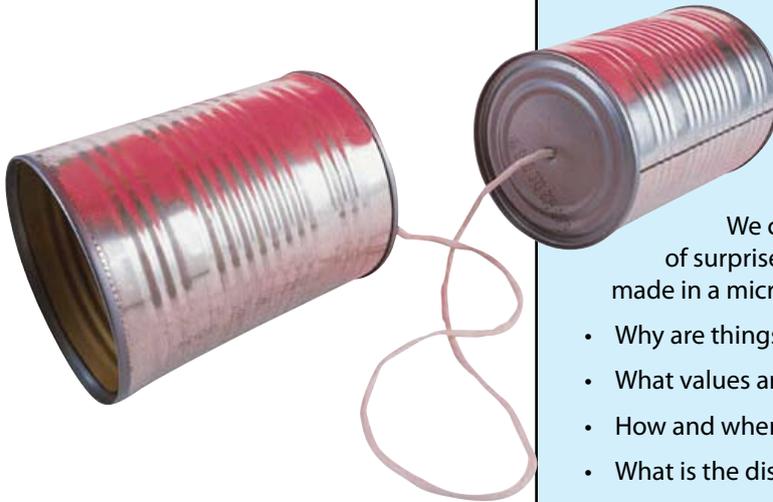
—Hugh Lavery

Learning dialogue

It is often hard to define what we mean by spirituality. By adopting the approach of a 'learning dialogue' we have the opportunity of approaching it relationally. God's love is relational and is inviting us as Christians to exist, commune and communicate in this manner.

To learn from our experience we must learn from our reflections simultaneously in order to take action.

—Mink



In 'learning dialogue' we learn to think together in relationship and listen to the possibilities, relax the gap on certainties and this leads to creative possibilities. By listening we come to be aware of self without reflecting what 'I' want to hear and resist a desire to change others, opening a dialogue to engage with them spiritually.

We consider the assumptions we make and encourage the element of surprise of a self shared in dialogue with others: our response is a 'choice' made in a micro second.

- Why are things done in a certain way?
- What values are being manifested?
- How and when do we choose to speak and interact with others?
- What is the discrepancy between what is being said and what is being done?
- Get in touch with this gap!

The theory of relation to one another in dialogue.

—Mink

Worship

Rise and shine and give God his glory...

Anyone who has sung the children's favourite about Noah with 'twozies oozies animals' will recognise the celebratory promise of worship. Our worship section offers different ways to help churches develop that celebratory promise.

How to start and develop your worship teams

- the basics, developing good practice
- patterns to encourage creativity and commitment
- what is right for you
- engaging with the congregation

- exercising guidance as a worship team leader

Is your worship EPIC?

- **Experiential**
- **Participatory**
- **Imaged-based**
- **Connected**

A form of congregational worship that has evolved over the last 10 years in many churches who sought to offer differing



patterns of worship. It may fit into a traditional pattern of presbyterian worship or offer forms of worship that express God's Word in a diverse manner. Sometimes called 'workshop worship', its aims are:

- to be focused on how the living Word of God encounters the individual through all their senses;
- to allow everyone present to use their gifts to participate in experience-sharing worship;
- to be led by a group and to encourage everybody present to take part at whatever level they feel comfortable;
- to invite people to make the connections between the *divine* and their *everyday* lives.

The use of music and imagery in worship

- the Taizé experience: the use of meditative space, symbols and song
- multi-media in worship
- where to find web-based materials



The dialogue of preaching

A chance for preachers and worship groups to explore their styles and how to allow their preaching to have greater effect.

How can preachers help their congregations engage with the message at all levels from mind and heart to soul.

Contextual bible study

An opportunity to study bible passages in a way that helps us engage mentally, emotionally and spiritually .

It can be used in worship or with bible study groups to

- look behind the text: at the social historical background, who wrote it, to whom, and why it's written;
- examine the text: by key words/ images/characters/emotions/styles;
- find the metaphors and symbols that are revealed to us of God and link the Word to our daily lives and culture.



www.church-works.com

Presbytery of Hamilton
Parish Development Committee

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