



Discipleship Resources: Foundations, Exploring Discipleship, Next Steps

‘And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.’ (Heb 10:24-25)

This paper is an initial response to the call for the DMLN to, ‘identify and develop clusters of resources which reflect particular points of transition in Christian life.’¹ While *developing* such resources will be a separate piece of work, this paper *identifies* discipleship resources aimed at groups that cater for different stages of discipleship. The resources included are those widely used throughout the Connexion, or those that could be so used. While such a list of resources can be a useful reference for those within the DMLN and beyond, it can also be a helpful guide for those wishing to develop new resources, allowing them to avoid replicating resources that already exist or in helping them identify ‘gaps’ within the existing resources.

The pathways paper suggests a helpful division of resources into three categories that link to points of transition in Christian life (see appendix A):

- *Foundations* include evangelistic and catechetical resources that are designed for those considering Christian faith or for those at the beginning of their Christian life.
- *Exploring Discipleship* include resources that encourage growth in discipleship and witness.
- *Next Steps* include resources that focus on discernment in and for life and ministry, as well as resources that help participants cope with life transitions.

Although these categories group resources based on their audience and purpose, they also overlap. Those exploring faith for the first time, for example, may access a resource targeted for mature Christians, while those who have been Christians for many years may choose to revisit the essentials of their faith through a ‘foundations’ resource.

The following list includes key Methodist resources, including those adopted from the United Methodist Church. It also, however, includes resources widely used within Methodism that have been produced by para-church agencies or other denominations. To signify the distinction, an asterisks (*) will signal resources produced specifically by the Methodist church (including by the UMC).

The list also includes resources for children and young people, and it is widely recognised within the Methodist Church that the provision of good quality resources is needed for this age group. The abbreviation C&Y will be used to signify resources specifically designed for children and young people.

¹ Quotation taken from *The Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network: Pathways and Development Fields*, a paper submitted to the Ministries Committee in 2014. This document will be referred to as the ‘pathways paper’.

The following list of resources is by no means intended to suggest that accessing such material is the only or best way to nurture disciples!² They remain, however, an important part of the life of many churches and of the faith journeys of many Methodists throughout the United Kingdom.

Growing Disciples: Foundations

*Process evangelism courses and various forms of catechesis leading to baptism / confirmation / membership.*³

| Resource | Description | Notes |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Compass * | Compass is a six-week course that introduces the Christian faith to those who wish to explore its meaning, and includes a particular focus on Methodist identity. It could be used as a membership course, or for those exploring faith for the first time. | The Leader's guides are available for download at www.methodist.org.uk/deepening-discipleship/small-groups/key-resources/compass , and participant's workbooks can be ordered for £5 each (+ P&P) from Methodist Publishing. |
| D:Sign* | A series of 12 postcards that combine Scripture, questions and conversation with the striking artwork of Ric Stott to provoke conversations about discipleship. | An accompanying resource is found at www.methodost.org.uk/dsign |
| Table Talk | <i>Table Talk</i> is a conversational game that creates an opportunity to explore some of life's biggest questions with friends. A range of 'games' are | Tabletalk can be ordered from www.theuglyducklingcompany.com A Table Talk 'app' is also now available! |

² For a broader discussion of what nurtures disciples, see the recent work of Roger Walton who points to mission, worship and community as the key 'energies' of discipleship; see Roger L. Walton, *Disciples Together: Discipleship, Formation and Small Groups* (London: SCM Press, 2014).

³ For a helpful survey of some of the evangelistic resources listed below, see Mike Booker and Mark Ireland, *Evangelism – which way now? An evaluation of Alpha, Emmaus, Cell Church and other contemporary strategies for evangelism* (London: Church House Publishing, 2003)

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| | available, including <i>Table Talk for Easter</i> , <i>Table Talk for Blokes</i> , and <i>Table Talk for friends</i> . | |
| Pilgrim: A Course for the Christian Journey | Recently developed by the Church of England <i>Pilgrim</i> is made up of a series of 6 session courses – some for those new to faith and some for those who wish to go further. Several of the courses are modelled around key texts within Christianity (e.g., the Creeds, Lord’s Prayer, Beatitudes). | For details of Pilgrim, and to purchase the course, see www.pilgrimcourse.org |
| Alpha | Alpha, an ‘opportunity to explore the meaning of life’, is a 10-week course – and a weekend away – covering the basics of Christian faith. Each session of the course typically includes an ‘Alpha Supper’, a talk or presentation (often a video), and discussion in small groups. | The theology expressed within Alpha has been shaped by the charismatic movement, though the course has been a hugely useful tool that is used by a range of churches. For further information and to purchase materials, see www.alpha.org |
| Youth Alpha (C&Y) | Modelled on the same structure as Alpha, Youth Alpha similarly includes 10 sessions on the basics of Christianity. | For further information and to purchase materials, see www.alpha.org |
| Christianity Explored | Christianity Explored is a seven-week introduction to Christianity, with three ‘bonus sessions’ held during a day/weekend | For further information about the course and to purchase material, visit www.christianityexplored.org |

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| | <p>away. The course is based on a study of Mark's Gospel, and also includes video/presentation material. Churches are encouraged to hold the course after a meal together.</p> | |
| <p>Christianity Explored also offers two 'youth' versions. (C&Y)</p> | <p>'CY Nano' has been designed for 11-14 year olds 'CY' has been designed for those aged 15plus.</p> | <p>For Christianity Explored youth resources, and other material (such as 'Discipleship Explored'), see www.ceministries.org</p> |
| <p>Start!</p> | <p>Start! is a basic six-session introduction to Christian faith designed for those who have no previous knowledge of anything Christian. It uses a mix of DVD input, discussion activities, and space to reflect.</p> | <p>For details about the course, visit www.startcourse.org.uk</p> |
| <p>Puzzling Questions</p> | <p><i>Puzzling Questions</i> explores six of the most popular questions asked by those outside the church but interested in spirituality, with course material presented through magazine style TV programmes.</p> | <p><i>Puzzling Questions</i> has been developed by the Ugly Duckling Company, and details about the resources can be found at www.puzzlingquestions.org.uk</p> |
| <p>4Life (CellUK)</p> | <p>CellUK has 4Life as a resource for 1-1 meetings with a new Christian. It can also, however, be used in small groups over a 10week period.</p> | <p>For further details, and to purchase material, visit www.celluk.org.uk</p> |
| <p>The Y Course</p> | <p>An eight week evangelism course that focuses on key</p> | <p>For further resources and to purchase the material, visit www.ycourse.com</p> |

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| | <p>questions that spiritual seekers might ask. Includes 'chat show style segments' on DVD and over 100 questions to stimulate discussions within groups.</p> | |
| Emmaus | <p>A 15 session course for those exploring Christian faith. There are also, however, Emmaus courses for those new to faith ('nurture') and for those growing in faith ('growth'). The material has been developed within the Church of England, but is easily adaptable to Methodists contexts, that helps</p> | <p>For purchasing resources for Emmaus, see http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/category/christian-books/the-emmaus-course-1509</p> |
| Youth Emmaus (C&Y) | <p>A course designed to help those aged 11-16 explore the basics of the Christian faith. A second book, Youth Emmaus 2, explores more topics connected to discipleship.</p> | <p>For purchasing resources for Emmaus, see http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/category/christian-books/the-emmaus-course-1509</p> |

Exploring Discipleship

Resources nurturing and encouraging growth in discipleship and witness

| Resource | Description | Notes |
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| Disciple* | <p>Disciple is a 34-week 'high-commitment, transformative Bible study programme' that takes participants through the sweep of salvation history from</p> | <p>For details of disciple, see www.methodist.org.uk/disciple</p> |

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| | <p>genesis to Revelation.</p> <p>Participants follow a disciplined pattern of daily home study leading up to a regular group meeting.</p> | |
| Christian Believer* | <p>Adopting a similar format to Disciple, Christian Believer takes participants through key Christian doctrines by providing citations from the Christian tradition.</p> | |
| Talking of God* | <p>A free small-group resource produced by the Methodist Church to help Christians develop confidence in sharing the stories of their faith in everyday life. The resource comprises 4 sessions and a concluding act of worship, and can be used over consecutive weeks or within one day.</p> | <p>For a free download, see www.methodist.org.uk/talkingofgod</p> |
| Navigate* (C&Y) | <p>A short course for 10-15s to enable them to explore the basics of the Bible and how they might engage with it. Produced by Methodist Children and Youth and the bible Society www.methodist.org.uk/navigate</p> | <p>To download the course, see www.methodist.org.uk/navigate</p> |
| Lyfe (Bible Society) | <p><i>Lyfe</i> have produced over 30 small group (6-week) sessions based around six key themes: Prayer, the Holy Spirit, Scripture, Authenticity, Compassion, and Everyday Life. Sessions include supporting video interviews. <i>Lyfe</i> also produced a resource for the Methodist Deepening Discipleship website.</p> | <p>See the LYFE website at www.biblesociety.org.uk/about-bible-society/our-work/lyfe</p> <p>For the resource produced for the Methodist church, see www.methodist.org.uk/deepening-discipleship/small-groups/group-material/the-spiritual-practices-of-jesus</p> |
| Life on the Frontline | <p>This six-session DVD resource aims to inspire and equip Christians to make a difference on their 'frontlines', where they</p> | <p>Life on the Frontline is one of a number of resources developed by LICC to help nurture whole-life discipleship, and details about the course can be found here: www.licc.org.uk/resources/2012/04/08/life-</p> |

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| | spend most of their time. | on-the-frontline |
| Fruitfulness on the Frontline | Fruitfulness on the Frontline is a six-session DVD follow-up course to Life on the Frontline, and aims to help disciples make a difference in their daily life. | For details of the course, produced by LICC, see www.licc.org.uk/splash/index.html |
| Faith at Work: Spirituality and Discipleship for today's world | A 6-week study course, launched in Feb 2014 by Lincolnshire Chaplaincy Services, that aims to help participants relate their faith to what they're doing in their daily lives. | For details about the course, see www.faithatwork.info |
| H+ Making Good Sense of the Bible | H+ has been developed by the Bible Society as a ten-week course on biblical interpretation (though, based on feedback, it will soon be shortened to 6 weeks). | Currently, those leading the course need to attend a training session – though the Bible Society is changing the course so that it is available for anyone to be able to pick it up and run. For details, see www.biblesociety.org.uk/about-bible-society/our-work/h-mgsofb |
| The Prayer Course | A six session course on the Lord's Prayer, developed by 24/7 prayer. The course includes interactive videos and discussion guides. | To access the course, visit http://www.prayercourse.org |
| Just People? (C&Y) | A course for 6 weeks around discipleship and justice aimed at older teenagers. Comes with a DVD so clips can be watched, and includes a range of activities. Aimed at older teenagers. | Search at http://resources.tearfund.org |
| Manmade (C&Y) | A course for boys, produced by Share Jesus International, that seeks to help boys discover what it means to be a male disciple. Suggests that a boys weekend could be part of the course. | For details of the resource, see http://www.sharejesusinternational.com/product/manmade/ |
| Scripture Union – Substance | A whole range of these books covering different topics. Include a range of activities to | For Scripture Union resources for young people, see |

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| (C&Y) | choose from within the resource. | www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Light/42705.id |
| Journey to Faith: A Local Church Training Course | Journey to Faith is a tool to equip rural churches in reaching out in evangelism and mission, and can be run over two half-days. The resource has been developed by the Arthur Rank Centre. | All the resources are freely available at www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-evangelism#Downloads |
| Unlock Bible Studies | Unlock provides a number of small-group Bible study resources designed for those within 'non-book' or 'text-shy' cultures. | Studies can be downloaded from the Unlock website at www.unlock-urban.org.uk/resources.php |

Next Steps

Resources that support vocational exploration, including resources focused on discernment, discipleship and life transitions, and moving into forms of representative ministry.

| Resource | Description | Notes |
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| Encounter* | Encounter was developed by the Methodist Church in Yorkshire as a 'programme of exploration into discipleship and vocation. Encounter includes twelve sessions which include a mix of organised and personal activities. | See www.methodistencounter.org.uk |
| Step Forward* | Designed to be run over a 12 month period, this course encourages participants to feel more confident in their life, ministry and mission. Written by Mark Wakelin (President of the Methodist Conference, 2012/2013) in response to the 'Extending Discipleship and Exploring | <i>Step Forward</i> has been passed over to the DMLN by the Guy Chester Centre, and a way forward is being explored within the Discipleship Development team. A training day will be offered later in the year. |

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| | Vocation' within the Methodist Church. | |
| Participate!* (C&Y) | A seven week course exploring discipleship and vocation. Aimed at 9-14s, but could easily be adapted for older young people. Available from BRF Course Book: £11.99 Journal: £3.99 | Participate was written by Meg Prowting, Penny Fuller and Mike Seaton and includes an 'active participatory section' where young people take on a placement role for a number of weeks. To purchase, see http://www.brfonline.org.uk/9781841018546/ |
| The Chaplaincy Everywhere Course* | A seven session course that aims to help a group set up a local, congregation-led chaplaincy within their community. | The course can be downloaded at www.opensourcechaplaincy.org.uk/course/ |

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Appendix A

3.6 Points of transition – there is a need to identify and develop clusters of resources which reflect particular points of transition in Christian life, e.g. the identification and development of quality resources related to initiation and induction, the nurture and growth of disciples in living and witness, and the development of calling and commitment in relation to service in the world and in representative ministries in the Church. A series of learning style and age-appropriate resources needs to be developed or adapted in relation to the following areas (illustrative titles):

- **Growing Disciples: Foundations** – a spectrum of resources including process evangelism courses and various forms of catechesis leading to baptism/confirmation/membership. It is worth noting that Faith and Order conversations about the nature of membership could helpfully flow into developments in this area.
- **Exploring Discipleship** – a mosaic of resources nurturing and encouraging growth in discipleship and witness. One particular aim in this area will be to identify and develop resources which contribute to a ‘balanced curriculum’ (e.g. resources which enable spiritual exploration and growth; extend knowledge and understanding; engage with scripture and tradition; address missional, ethical, political, public and apologetic issues, etc.), which can be delivered in a variety of different contexts, and are designed in a way which reinforces the growth of a discipleship *habitus*.
- **Next Steps** – a cluster of resources that support vocational exploration from broadly based discernment programmes, to programmes supporting discipleship at particular points of life transition (e.g. changing job, moving into retirement), and programmes supporting movement into particular forms of representative ministry (e.g. Regional Candidates’ Support Groups).