

Leading Your Church into Growth and Start

The quick and easy way to describe the course is 'inspirational'.

The course is run with a slickness which many a professional course could learn from. The content is well thought out, well-rehearsed and delivered with passion. The days are long but the audience is skilfully brought back and engaged time after time through clever intro's - from what music Harry be playing when we enter the room, personal interviews of one presenter to another, and carefully chosen video clips.

So, what did we gain from the course?

Firstly - time to sit back and reflect from afar where we are going as a church. We were encouraged to think afresh who is in our Galilee? Who are we trying to engage and serve?

Secondly, we were reminded of why we should try and grow our churches. Forget for a moment trying to cover costs such as the Parish Share and repairs to aged buildings and remember that we should be sharing all that we have in the love, hope and comfort of following Jesus and not keeping that to ourselves. We looked at the interplay between numerical, spiritual and missional growth and how approaching growth from all three angles could help us grow our churches. It was also a good reminder that church is not always a Sunday and that in today's society we need to continue to look at more varied mission.

One of the most powerful messages we took home is the power of the personal invite. Many of us are not good at sharing our faith but could be helped using easy techniques such as the 3 w's - who are you? (getting to know someone), where are you? (does God play a part in your life/what do you think about God), and would you like to? (a personal invite to attend an event or worship with the church). We have since organised more social events (green events) to cast our nets wider and gain personal contacts with a wider population whilst also thinking about how we can engage our occasional users such as baptism and wedding families more.

As part of our improved awareness of personal invite, we have been more vigilant to 'Seek the Seeker'. We purchased the Start Course whilst in Derbyshire and have since run our first group. It was a small group of 3 people with two of us facilitating. We enjoyed how much the course links teachings of Christianity to modern day life making it relevant and clear how faith can work

today. Following the course, two members were confirmed at St Albans Cathedral whilst the other has become a regular Sunday worshipper.

Going forwards, those of us who attended the course continue to meet monthly as we try not to let go of the momentum created on the course. We regularly think about what we need to do on the 12 steps towards growth.

We plan to present the LyCig Local material to the PCC in September and then later to the congregations. Our Mission Action Planning Team meets every 2 months and we use what we have learnt to refresh and review our planning. The course would be a brilliant place to start a Mission Action Plan from. We very much look forward to attending the local LyCig follow up day in November.