

GENERAL SYNOD

**Report from the Evangelism Task Group
and the Evangelism and Discipleship Team**

Summary

This paper contains the final report of the Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group following their last Report to General Synod in February 2016 (GS2015). It also includes an initial report of the newly formed Archbishops' Council's Evangelism and Discipleship Team outlining its priorities in evangelism for the initial stages of the Teams work. This is in response to part of the motion of GS2069 *National Support for Local Churches: Report from the Archbishops Council*, which called on the Archbishops Council and the House of Bishops to report back to the General Synod on a regular basis the progress in developing national support for local churches in evangelism, outreach and mission.

The motion: That this Synod:

- a) welcome the range of evangelism and growth resources provided by the national church in support of local churches;*
- b) note the progress made to support Life Events ministry since it was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council in 2012;*
- c) agree to encourage dioceses and parishes to engage with these areas of work through prayer and practical action; and*
- d) call on the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops to report back to the Synod on a regular basis on the progress of these areas of support (GS2069)*

The paper sets out the details of the considerable progress made by the Evangelism Task Group over its four-year mandate and how the areas of its particular brief are being pursued into the future.

The work of the Evangelism and Discipleship Team seeks to build on and develop the work of the Evangelism Task Group so momentum is not lost in these crucial areas ensuring therefore that the Church is a growing church for all people in all places.

The Evangelism Task Group Report

1. The first meeting of the Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group was held in March 2014, with a four-year brief to identify and work for culture change in the Church of England in evangelism and witness. On 24 May 2018 the group met for the final time. The intention was always that the ETG would have a short life – not because the challenge isn't huge, not because the task isn't important, not because the call is easily or readily achievable – but because the group saw its vocation being to identify, provoke and advocate.
2. Over 15 meetings the ETG has focussed on specific ministries in the life of the church and sought to reflect, learn and strategies together for effective engagement in evangelism. The areas are
 - Prayer for evangelism – ["Thy Kingdom Come"]
 - Evangelism for, by and among young people

- Lay witness
- The witness of BAME Anglicans
- Witness and evangelism on our Urban Estates
- Ordained Ministry: Selection and Training in the area of evangelism and witness
- Evangelism in the context of Chaplaincy

The membership of the group in May 2018 was Chair – Archbishop Justin, The Archbishop of Canterbury, Vice-chair – Bishop Paul Bayes, The Revd Malcom Macnaughton, Bishop Philip North, The Revd Beth Keith, The Revd Richard Springer, Ms Alison Coulter, Canon Mark Russell, The Revd Barry Hill, The Revd Andy Croft and The Revd Al Gordon.

We are grateful to all others who served for some part of the life of the Task Group including Bishop Michael Beasley, Bishop Geoffrey Pearson, The Revd Rico Tice, Mrs Amy Orr-Ewing, The Revd Annie Kirke, The Venerable Liz Adekunle, The Revd Dr Jules Gomes

It was regularly staffed by Dr Rachel Jordan – National Mission and Evangelism Adviser, Emma Buchan – Archbishops’ Evangelism Task Group Leader, The Rev’d Canon Dr Malcolm Brown – Director of Mission and Public Affairs Division, Jimmy Dale – National Youth Evangelism Officer-The Revd Canon Chris Russell – Archbishop of Canterbury’s Adviser on Evangelism and Witness.

Thy Kingdom Come

3. The ETG recognised from the start that the work of evangelism is the work of God. It is only by the work of the Holy Spirit that eyes and hearts open and minds and hands receive the gift of God’s transforming love in Christ. Our first work was to call the Church to pray. Thy Kingdom Come was conceived as a setting-apart of the days between Ascension and Pentecost to seek the empowering of the Spirit for our effective witness.
4. The global prayer movement for evangelisation, “Thy Kingdom Come”, is now in its third year after starting as a simple call to prayer from Archbishop Justin Welby and Archbishop Dr John Sentamu. This year, Christians from nearly every denomination took part across more than 110 countries. Across churches in England tens of thousands of individuals took part, parish churches, chaplaincies and Fresh Expressions held particular events, and 35 cathedrals had some kind of ‘Beacon’ event. This year was the strongest year yet in terms of ecumenical reach working particularly closely with the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. Archbishop Justin Welby, said of this year’s wave of prayer: *“What’s really excited me about this year’s Kingdom Come, is the sense of gathering momentum of people knowing that they have met with Jesus Christ and that they have this sense that they want to share what being a Christian means for them – with those whom they love and those whom they know.... I can’t remember that being something that seems to be gripping so many people, from every part of the Church. We just see God at work in so many wonderful ways and so, I am hugely grateful for the grace of God that comes undeservedly and that moves amongst us. It really has been the most exciting period I can remember for many, many, years.”*

5. A wide range of resources were produced and made available, seeking to reflect and enable participation across the traditions. They ranged from Novena's, Morning and Evening Prayer, Messy Church, Youth Journals, service plans, prayer stations, podcasts and most popularly films. Much was made freely available and reach was extended internationally by offering resources into 10 different languages, in response to the growing demand, including Arabic and Urdu. We have been profoundly moved by the stories and signs of God working in our midst during these 11 days. It's remarkable to see how many churches and individuals from across the traditions and denominations, from around the world, have been affected by prayers during Thy Kingdom Come. We continue to commit to pray that family, friends, neighbours and colleagues might know for themselves the recreating love of Christ.

Evangelism for, by and among young people

6. Recent research tells us that whilst young people are open to faith nearly half (48%) of our churches have fewer than 5 under 16-year olds. *From Anecdote to Evidence* stated that hiring a youth worker was the single most important investment a parish could make to enable church growth, yet we see a diminishing number of youth workers, either being trained or employed across the church. The ETG wants Synod to be aware of the sheer scale of the challenge the Church of England faces in reaching and discipling young people. The ETG has worked to deliver structural change, Bishop Paul Williams is now our lead Bishop for evangelism to and with young people and the Archbishops' Council have appointed Jimmy Dale as Youth Evangelism Officer. We have helped launch initiatives such as Mission Academy Live, which has around 5000 young people committed to pray for and witness to their friends, and we have encouraged dioceses to use SDF funds to enable youth evangelism. The ETG will now pass the baton for championing this crucial work to the new Youth Evangelism Task Group chaired by Bishop Paul Williams which reports to the newly formed Evangelism and Discipleship Steering Group.

The witness of BAME Anglicans

7. The Young Citizens pilot research project emerged out of the ETG's BAME stream, with Archbishop Justin's catalysing power and support. This research action project run in CE secondary schools in the Stepney Area of the Diocese of London, has shown that BAME young people are open to new or deepening faith when they discover the Jesus of the Gospels in parallel with actively challenging real injustices they and their communities face. We have seen a remarkable percentage of the BAME young people the pilot worked with indicate that they would seriously consider working in and for a Church of England that was serious about this kind of ministry.
8. The ETG has learnt that BAME communities fairly consistently choose CofE secondary schools for their young people. This presents a wonderful opportunity to invest, develop and grow these relationships and encourage discipleship, service and witness. The *Young Citizens Pilot Research Project* emerged out of the ETG's BAME stream, with Archbishop Justin's catalyzing power and support. This research action project runs in CofE secondary schools in the Stepney Area of the Diocese of London. It has shown that BAME young people are open to new or deepening faith when they discover the Jesus of the Gospels in parallel with actively challenging real injustices they and their communities face. In the pilot project we have seen a remarkable percentage of the BAME young people indicate that they would seriously consider working in and for a Church of England that was committed to this kind of ministry.

9. Although presently it is not clear where the development, resourcing and delivery of key themes identified in the BAME strand of the ETG will now be housed, this is clearly a priority to be addressed by the Evangelism and Discipleship Team and the wider Church. It is clearly recognised that this work needs to be capitalised on, to realise the opportunities and build replicable and integrated church structures. It presents a significant opportunity for nurturing disciples and developing vocations.

Lay Witness

10. The research presented in the *Talking Jesus Report* found that 67% of non-Christians knew a Christian – someone they worked with, a friend, neighbour or a member of their family, but only 1% knew a clergy person! The ETG have recognised the priority of empowering and equipping the whole people of God to be confident, faithful witnesses to the living hope that is ours in Christ, that each person is able to give testimony to their faith. This is reflected in the Thy Kingdom Come focus which encourages everyone to pray for their friends and family to know Jesus, and to spend a dedicated time each year focusing on praying for our personal witness.
11. The challenge going forward is to make sure that it remains focused on the whole people of God. We have welcomed the work that has previously come to Synod to encourage lay witness and so have linked with the work of the Setting God's People Free steering group, looking at how the gathered Church equips and empowers the sent Church to be effective witnesses. Michael Jinkins says of Christian baptism, "we are soaked to the skin in the death of Christ. Our union with Christ drips from us.... We trail wet footprints of the drenching wherever we go; we never dry off....". It is of paramount importance that we prioritise how we help people drip their wet footprints into the people and places of their lives, 'spreading the aroma of the knowledge of Christ everywhere.' (2 Corinthians 2:16). It is encouraging that this work will be taken forward by the Setting God's People Free Steering Group and Action Plan, and particularly through the work of the Diocesan Learning Communities which are a key part of SGPF.

Ordained Ministry: Selection and Training in the area of evangelism and witness

12. The ETG has sought to take steps to ensure that the call to be witnesses is seen as the heart of ordained ministry rather than as a peripheral activity for the few. This has been motivated by research from 2014 by the Continuing Ministerial Education Panel which suggested that clergy were giving very little time to intentional evangelism and felt inadequately equipped for it. It is our contention that if evangelism is seen as an option in training for ordained ministry there can be little surprise if it is seen as an option in ordained ministry. Dr Beth Keith's doctoral research suggests that selection processes favour those who show a theoretical grasp of evangelism over those with practical experience of sharing their faith with others.
13. The ETG has therefore worked with Ministry Division, Common Awards and other partners in seeking to:
 - Heighten the importance of the Evangelism Criterion in selection, something which shows signs of being achieved in the recent review of criteria
 - Ensure that evangelism is an integral part of ministerial training for all candidates for Ordination Training and is a non-optional part of Common Awards

- With Common Awards, run the Beautiful Witness project which documents the stories of people or individuals who have engaged in practices of evangelism that have brought others to faith over the past five years.
- Work with Dioceses to embed evangelism in IME2 and CMD.

14. The review of the criteria for selection and the processes by which vocations to Ordained ministry are discerned continue to be under review. The ETG takes the view that, to minister evangelistically to an entire nation, the Church of England requires a priesthood that reflects the diversity of that nation. Whilst responsibility in this area will continue to lie with Ministry Division, we hope that the current review will allow for many more BAME candidates and those from non-professional backgrounds to discern a call to priesthood and receive formation that releases them to be witnesses to the Resurrection.

Evangelism in the context of Chaplaincy

15. The Evangelism Task Group has provided an opportunity to raise the profile of Chaplaincy, encouraging a wider understanding and value of the place of Chaplaincy within the ministry and witness of church and insisting to those involved in Chaplaincy that evangelism and witness is a vital part of this ministry. The group has at times recognised the difficulty for some chaplains of feeling separated from the church and isolated in their ministry. Whilst this is still the case for some there is also evidence that Chaplaincy is being increasingly recognised as a vital component of the church's ministry and mission. Chaplaincy has always been and is increasingly diverse, but is still recognisable as a particular approach to the church's vocation. There is great potential for chaplains to play a part in evangelism in different communities and contexts. Even within the recognised limitations of secular institutions chaplains have much to offer when working in partnership with others from within the church and often provide a way into areas of society where the church is not present.

16. There is still considerable work to be done to enhance the recognition, support and effectiveness of chaplaincy, lay and ordained. A Chaplaincy strand is being created within Renewal and Reform which is aiming to

- Support the growth and development of chaplaincy, across different sectors and using different models, as an integral and valued component in the church's ministry and mission to the nation in a renewed and reformed Church.;
- Build confidence and creativity among chaplains;
- Ensure the continuing availability of a healthy network of clergy and laity who are enthused by, and prepared for, the ministry of a chaplain.

Evangelism and Urban Estates

17. The Renewal and Reform Task Group on estates evangelism has arisen out of the Evangelism Task Group. This has generated much interest and energy, and has become the focus of capacity funding to enable strategic work to go ahead under four strands:

- Championing Estates Ministry – renewing the Church's vision for urban estates

- Theology and the Public Voice – listening to God in the voices of those on estates.
- Leadership – fostering and encouraging lay and ordained ministry from and for estates.
- Resources – estates to be at least as well-resourced as elsewhere – people, finance, buildings, training, evangelism discipleship materials, etc.

18. The work began with a gathering of practitioners at Bishopthorpe in March 2016, which led to the development of an initial Commitment to Action under the four strands, above. This was followed in May 2016 by the Relaunch of the National Estates Churches Network with a stronger focus on evangelism. By September 2016 the Renewal and Reform Task Urban Estates Evangelism Task Group was formed. In October 2017, 25 partner organisations gathered for a conference to pray and take counsel together at Launde Abbey, which concluded with each organisation present expressing a commitment to the ongoing work and agreeing to mutual accountability in delivery. By November 2017 a detailed action plan was prepared, and a capacity grant was awarded to enable to take the work to the next stage.

19. Dave Champness was appointed as programme coordinator, and has so far focused on

- Launching the Action Plan with a video for wide release, outlining the vision and the four strands of work to be undertaken.
- An Estates Theology Project – under strand 2 of the programme, this focuses on the question ‘What is the good news on the estates?’
- Harvesting examples of good practice in estates evangelism and then offering consultancy in sharing these with Dioceses.
- Otherwise supporting implementation of the Action Plan, along with relevant partners.

20. Early signs are that already the narrative is changing. Ordinands are expressing increased interest in serving on estates. More imagination and effort is going into raising up and training local leaders. There are remarkable stories of transformation and hope from urban estates. The challenge has been acknowledged – if the Church of England is to be renewed and revived – then it will be from the Urban Estates, from the margins, that this new life and growth will come.

Evangelism and Discipleship Team.

21. This newly formed team which began in January 2018 is building on the motion agreed by Synod in *National Support for Local Churches, Report from the Archbishops’ Council (GS2069)*. The report centred on how the national Church can best provide ongoing support for local churches in evangelism, outreach and mission so that the Church can be resourced and equipped to share Gods great message of hope and love in Jesus Christ. This will also serve the overall impetus of Renewal and Reform to *be a growing church for all people in all places.*

22. The team is also seeking to develop some of the areas outlined by the Evangelism Task Group so that as a Church we are not losing the momentum which has been

building around evangelism and discipleship. There has been close integration and collaboration with the Evangelism Task Group as four members of the Task Group are also members of the Evangelism and Discipleship team.

23. The team is also developing its strategic purposes so that it is supporting the Archbishops Council objectives 1 and 2.

- Evangelism. To bring more of the people of England to the faith of Christ through the Church of England
- Discipleship. To strengthen the Christian faith and life of all who worship God in the Church of England

24. To support these objectives *The Archbishops' Council's 2017 Annual Report* stated that in 2017 £46.6m was spent on the Evangelism objective mostly through Strategic Development Funding and £1.1m on the Discipleship objective. In addition the dedicated budget for the Evangelism and Discipleship Team for 2018 is £679,775 which includes £211,000 for Life Event projects.

25. There is a core team of seven people, Rachel Jordan, National Mission and Evangelism Advisor, Jimmy Dale, National Youth Evangelism Officer, Sandra Miller and Suzanne Gray from the Life Events team and the Programme Director for Setting God's People Free, Nick Shepherd, our Team Administrator Agi Donovan and the Director of the Team, Dave Male.

26. There is also a wider team of ten people. They are key members of the team and work closely across all areas of the team's work. They greatly enhance our integration and collaboration as although they are important members of the Evangelism and Discipleship Team they are located in Ministry Division, Lambeth Palace, the Digital Team, Mission and Public Affairs, Education and the Strategic Development Unit. This gives great coherence across many Departments within the NCIs and blends together complementary roles in advancing the Council's first two objectives of Evangelism and Discipleship. There has also been close working and collaboration with the Director of Renewal and Reform and the Director of Communications to ensure we are developing collaborative, coherent and focussed solutions.

27. The aim of this newly formed team is to continue this momentum in evangelism and discipleship through enabling a strategic national approach by

- a) Developing specific interventions and resources to enhance evangelism and discipleship at the local level recognising that we should only do nationally what is done best nationally
- b) Spreading, enabling and supporting good practice in support of diocesan, parish or networks initiatives
- c) Directly resourcing people of all ages in their churches and communities.

At this stage in the life of the Church we cannot afford to lose pace in our aim to be a growing church or squander the huge work done by the Evangelism Task Group.

Overall priorities for the new Evangelism and Discipleship team

28. In its first four months the Team has identified three specific areas to concentrate on initially

a) **Changing behaviour around evangelism** through helping to mobilise our regular million worshippers to articulate their faith confidently in every area of their lives. In the words of the Lambeth Conference Resolutions, a dynamic mission emphasis requires 'a revolution in the attitude to the role of the laity' which views every Christian as an agent of mission. Building on the work of the ETG around 'lay witness' they are our key resource in growing the church and helping people to move from awareness to respect, to engagement and to commitment.

b) **Shifting the focus for those million from church attender to faith in all of life.**

This will be primarily delivered through the Setting God's People Free programme.

("Setting God's People Free" A Report from the Archbishops' Council. GS2056)

There is a very close interconnection between evangelism and discipleship as our evangelism is an overflow of our life in Christ as his disciples. SGPF sums this up very well in its aim to be *a programme of change to enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life, Sunday to Saturday.*

c) **Ensuring that our structures fully support the emerging mixed economy of parish and other forms of church** including fresh expressions, church plants and missional communities so that we are truly present in **every** community. As Making New Disciples (GS Misc 1054) comments '*A new direction requires spiritual and cultural change, but it also needs the structures and resources to be deployed in different ways to signal the change in direction and reinforce it.*'

Developing our work to change behaviour around evangelism.

29. The team has been concentrating initially on how we can develop the work of the Evangelism Task Group while progressing interventions already generated by the team

30. The work of the team has been influenced guided by two pieces of research and one key fact.

a) **67%** of adults in the UK know a practising Christian and are generally positive about them so the *Talking Jesus Research* has discovered. So, the problem is **not** how do we get our people to connect with those outside the church. It is happening!

b) **70%** of church people said they could think of someone they could invite to a church event according to Michael Harvey's research as part of his work in creating *A Culture of Invitation*

c) But of those 70% who could think of someone to invite **85-95%** said they had no intention of doing this.

The main issue the research highlighted was a lack of confidence in talking about faith at any level. This confirms the importance of renewing confidence highlighted both by the ETG and SGPF.

31. **The good news is that some small behavioural changes for our million regular attenders could make a huge difference.** If one person in 50 from our regular attenders invited someone to a church event and they started attending, it would totally reverse our present decline. Nationally the church would grow by 16,000 people per year, offsetting the current net loss of 14,000.

Four possible interventions to help encourage the million regular attenders

32. **Developing a growing confidence in evangelism across the church** to enable people of all ages to think and act differently in articulating their faith through the whole of their lives. As the ETG has discovered *Thy Kingdom Come* plays a key role in enabling churches to build an increasing capacity for witness. Discipleship materials

are essential for confidence building. The Digital Evangelism Team's #LiveLent campaign reached 3.54 million people and spanned print and digital. The Digital teams planning for Christmas 2018 includes helping church members to engage with people evangelistically.

33. **Helping churches to be a more welcoming church to everyone in their community.** Led by The Life Events team and what they are learning through 'occasional offices' we will continue to develop insights, materials and resources to enable our churches to be more welcoming which we can share with dioceses and parishes.
34. **Practically equipping and resourcing the million to be effective and confident witnesses in the whole of their lives.** Rachel Jordan and the Hope Team have developed the six week *Talking Jesus Course* which uses practical video based sessions. This course, which has benefited from Strategic Development Unit funding, aims to help people and their churches articulate their faith confidently. It has been recently released and was previewed at the National Mission Network gathering in May. Chichester Diocese has already ordered a course for every parish which will be accompanied by a short video from the Bishop of Chichester. Input from the Digital Team will be important as well as other resources and forms of training we can use across all the church traditions so we are not simply telling people to do this but effectively training them to be witnesses in all their lives.
35. **Identify, train and release a new cohort of 1,000 Anglican evangelists** of all ages and traditions. The role of the evangelist is vital in creating the right climate for developing confidence for all our worshippers in articulating their faith. These are ambitious plans which seek to work with key groups and organisations across the church.
 - a) There have been positive initial discussions with the *Archbishops College of Evangelists* around both capacity and what a contemporary Anglican Evangelist might look like.
 - b) Working with *Advance 2020* which is seeking to promote and stir up the gift of the evangelist through training and mentoring.
 - c) Linking with Hope's *Mission Academy Live* which seeks to develop young evangelists and developed through the work of ETG. We would hope that many of our evangelists will be young people and young adults.
 - d) Working with evangelists from the BAME community to learn from their perspective and identify and develop more evangelists from a variety of BAME communities.
 - d) Joining forces with key organisations such as Church Army, Fellowship for Parish Evangelism and those working with Anglo Catholic evangelists through various consultations.

Leadership capacity is vital in developing confidence and changing behaviour.

36. Most research suggests that if our leaders, both lay and ordained are not leading in sharing faith then it will not happen in their churches. Both our Archbishops have provided great examples for other leaders to follow. Training of leaders so they can equip, enable and envision their congregations will be key if we are to release the million to confidently share their faith. Initial discussions have begun with Ministry Division and some TEIs around the best way to take this matter forward so that our leaders at every level can do this. This also builds on the ETG's work on selection and training.

Conclusion

37. In November 2013 The General Synod called upon the Archbishops to set up an Evangelism Task Force to generate energy, enthusiasm and confidence in this vocation. The group sought to be provocative, in order that effective evangelism may become a constant feature of ministry and mission across the dioceses and parishes of the Church of England. It has been a wonderful catalyst for the delivery of effective evangelism in many areas of its work and its impact will live on for many years beyond the life of the group.

38. The newly formed Evangelism and Discipleship Team is one of the ways the Church is seeking to build upon this work and to continue to develop and deepen it. Intentional Evangelism GS1917 reminded us that,

'We need to be intentional about evangelism in this next period of our life as the Church of England, not for a five or ten-year period but for a generation or more in order to reverse the decline we have seen over the last century and to lay a foundation for the growth of the Church in this land in future generations.'

This is not a quickly fixed problem and will need the Church to keep this vision for evangelism at the centre of its life for many years. The newly formed Evangelism and Discipleship Team is very aware of the need to take seriously this is a long-term project that requires us to work together collaboratively at every level of the Church as we all seek together to build on the enormous work of the Evangelism Task Group.

The motion;

'That this Synod, welcoming the report from the Evangelism Task Group and the Evangelism and Discipleship Team (GS 2098) and affirming that the making of new disciples is central to the call of the Gospel:

(a) ask the Evangelism and Discipleship Team of the Archbishops' Council to work with the House of Bishops, Dioceses, Parishes and Fresh Expressions of Church to carry forward the recommendations contained in the report;

(b) encourage Dioceses to find (fresh) ways to inspire lay and ordained people to be more confident in the sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives;

(c) affirm the importance of prayer in the work of evangelism and call on every parish to be involved in the 'Thy Kingdom Come; initiative; and

(d) ask the Evangelism and Discipleship Team to bring a report to the Synod on the progress made on carrying forward the recommendations made in GS 2098 no later than February 2020.'

The Revd Canon Chris Russell, Archbishop of Canterbury's
Adviser on Evangelism & Witness

The Revd Canon Dave Male, Director of
Evangelism & Discipleship

June 2018