



# PARTNERSHIP FOR MISSIONAL CHURCH

GOD IS AT WORK

YOUR CHURCH CAN JOIN IN

**CHURCH  
MISSION  
SOCIETY**



*The call in action*



## Faith in Research 23.5.18

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# What is PMC?

TI say;

‘PMC is a process for churches designed to help them connect with the activity of God, each other, their mission and their local area.’

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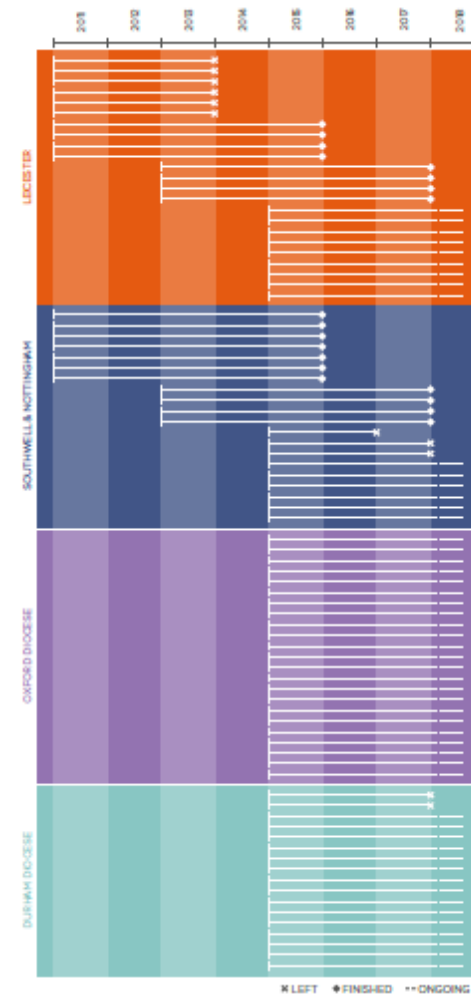
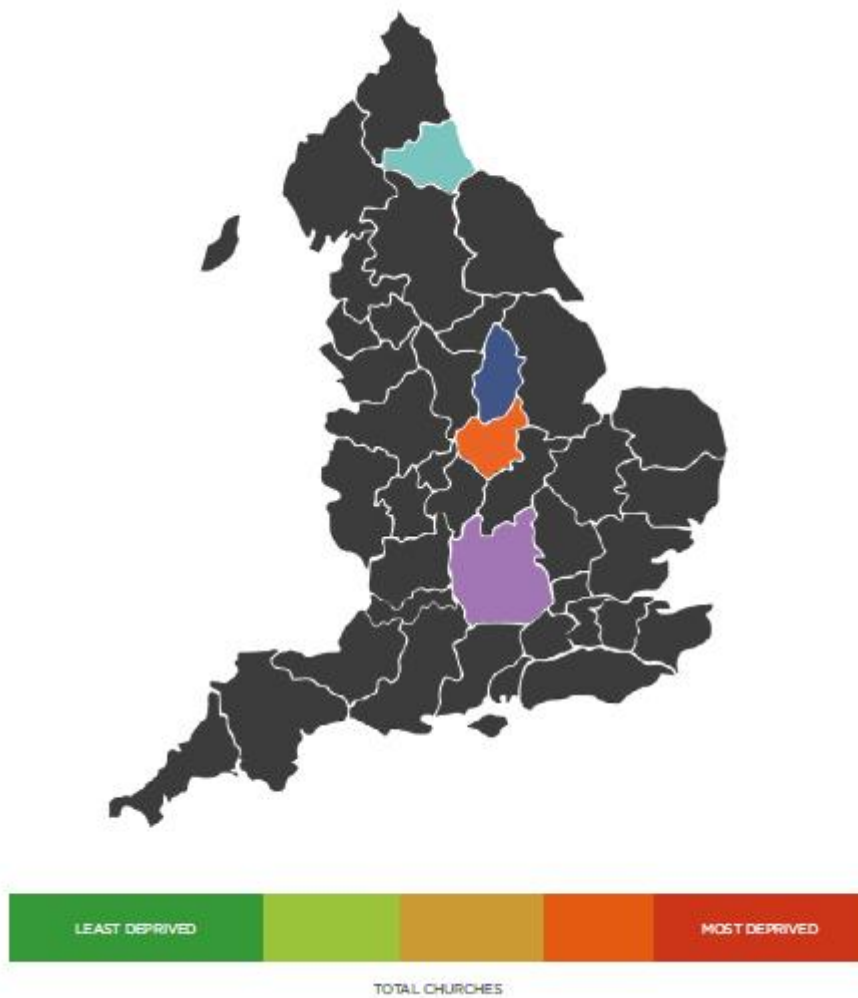
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# What is PMC?

- Clusters of 10-15 churches follow a 3 year process;
  - 1) Listening & Discovering Partners
  - 2) Experimenting
  - 3) Visioning for Embodiment
- Six 'faithful disruptive' spiritual practices are introduced corporately over first two years

# Where has PMC run?

- Dioceses of Durham, Leicester, Oxford + Southwell & Nottingham
- A small number of Methodist churches
- A wide range of contexts and deprivation levels
- A wide range of worshipping traditions
  - 82 Churches since 2011
  - 50 currently involved
  - 19 have completed the process & continue
  - 13 dropped out before the end



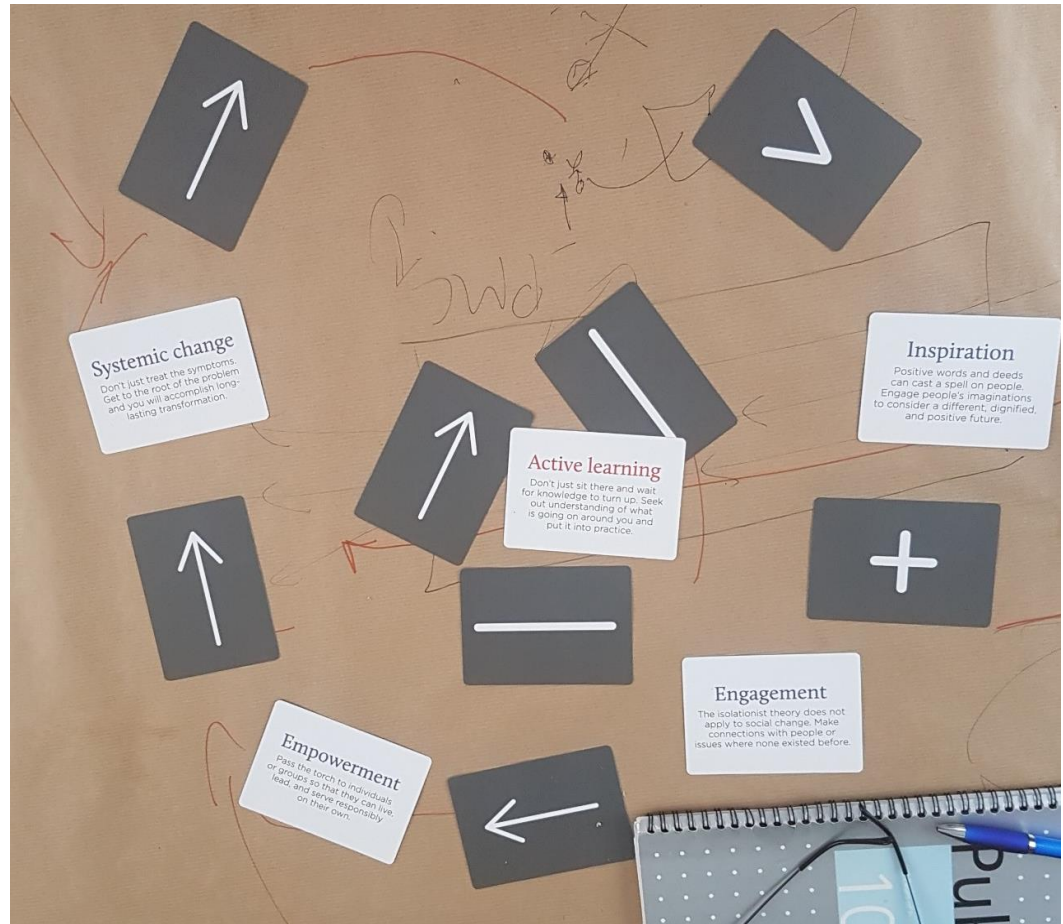
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# TI “Theory of Change” for PMC

- Inspiration
- Engagement
- Empowerment
- Active Learning
- Systemic Change



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# TI – Looking for?...four areas;

- **Active learning** - the whole process is characterised by ongoing, active learning and experimentation. This is a crosscutting theme.
- **Church and community conversations** – the conversation within churches and with their surrounding communities should change in nature. PMC seeks to inspire and engage church members who can in turn engage with people within and beyond the church in inspiring ways.



# TI – Looking for?...four areas;

- **Mission together** – the capacity and confidence of churches to engage in mission should grow. Lay and ordained leaders should feel empowered to participate.
- **Wider impact and integration** – PMC aspires to influence the wider interactions of local church, community and diocese. Ideally, its effects become mainstream and are integrated across this system, so the effect is more than the sum of its parts.

# TI – data collection

- Engagement with stakeholders to create the theory of change
- Identifying numbers of churches, location and deprivation data
- Surveying all participating churches including the ‘drop-outs’ led to 109 individual responses
- Four Case Studies, one in each diocese conducted by visit and interviewing
- Review meeting with participating dioceses

# Findings

- **A Virtuous Circle: Inspiration-Engagement**
- **PMC inspires churches to engage with their local community (which further inspires them).**
- 90% of survey respondents said their church had started new partnerships
- 72% of survey respondents said that they felt more confident in receiving hospitality
- 75% of survey respondents felt that their church was now more confident in taking risks
- ‘Mission with’ rather than ‘mission to or for’



# All Saints, Wokingham Adaptive Challenge

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# “Cake bombing” in Wokingham

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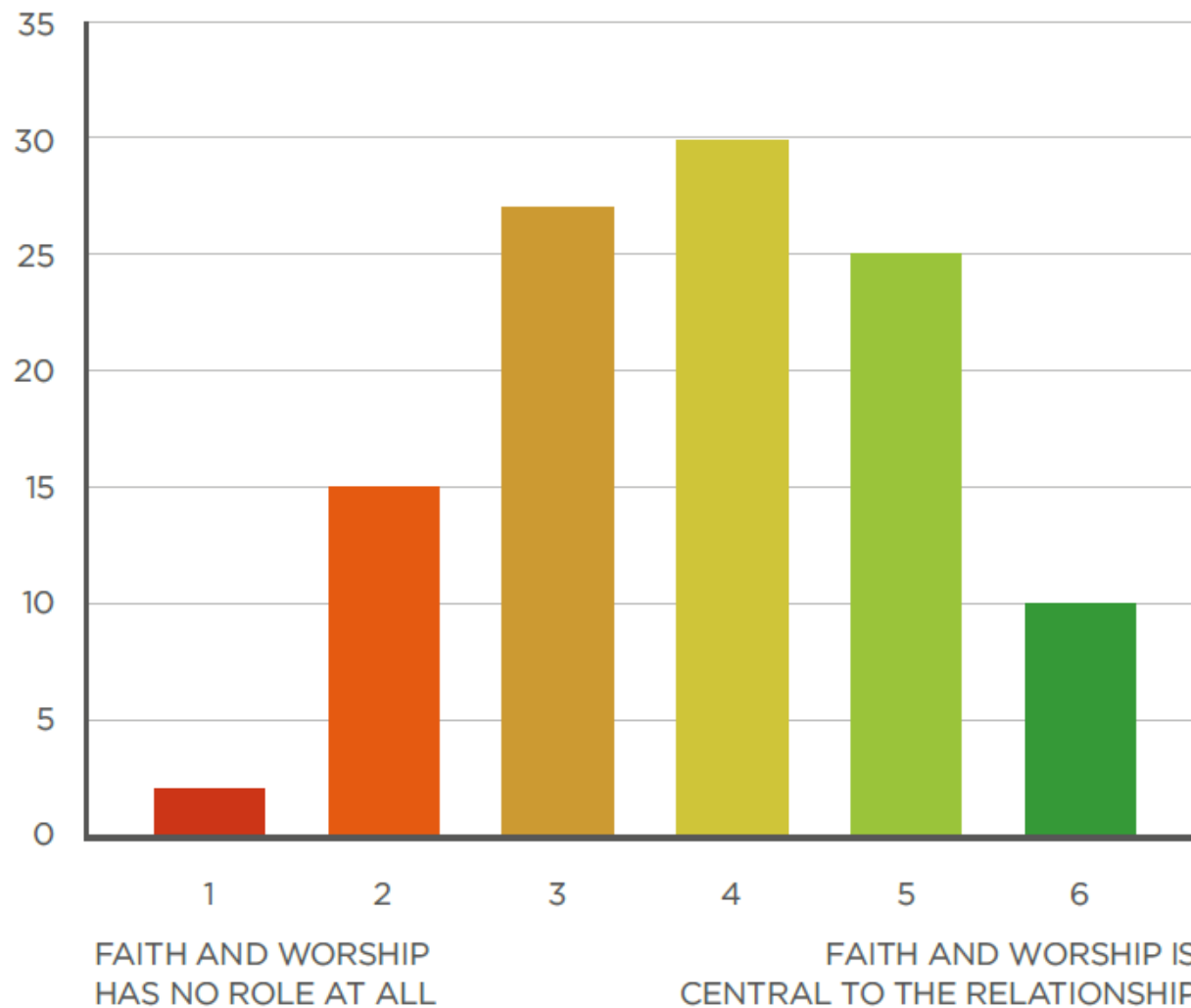
# Findings

## **PMC fosters partnerships that help share faith.**

- 72% of survey respondents said that PMC had a positive impact in growing partnerships outside the church, *with a majority reporting that faith is an explicit part of them.*
- I name this effect ‘public Christian witness’
- Leads to re-imagining evangelism:  
“I now feel far more confident when sharing my faith within the mums and babies group I helped to set up and run. I feel that this group is, for many mums THEIR church experience.”



### *Explicit or implicit role of faith in relationships*



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# Findings

## PMC strengthens lay involvement & discipleship.

- 71% of respondents said that PMC had had a significant or very significant impact on their discipleship
- 76% of survey respondents had taken on new roles or responsibilities
  - 37 directly linked to PMC
  - 40 directly linked to the church
  - 17 in the community



# Findings

## **PMC changes the relationship of laity & clergy**

- Laity own and act on the vision of the church
- So process can continue through changes in clergy
- Role of clergy is more 'oversight' and 'balcony view'
- 'not needing to be in control or involved in everything'

# Findings

**PMC encourages churches to experiment and learn**

As congregations 'learn how to learn' from their action as a community they are able to address and overcome obstacles that arise



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# Findings

## **PMC engages the wider church system**

- A 'two way flow'
- The importance of bishops
- Times of transition have to be negotiated

# Findings – case study quote

Due to the organic, open, relational, grass roots nature of PMC, there has been no sense of 'shifting our agenda' at any stage, no pressure to shoe horn in the anticipated reciprocity of 'getting people back into our church building' or asking for money! We have redefined what 'church' is and might be; yet because we have been upfront about who we are and whose we are, using the Luke 10 passage particularly, the relationships have just grown (and conversations about faith followed naturally....) within this free space - without any feel of a 'process' or ulterior motive. We have genuinely let go and yet received far more than we could ever have imagined - and without having so much of the 'doing'. Thank you for opening our eyes to God's collective adventure, promised plan and purpose for our communities.

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# TI Recommendations

- **New language/'jargon' requires checking** by CMS and adjustment by local churches (*and* culture change implies language change)
- **Continue the inter-church learning** & relationship building between & after the formal process events
- **Further research** (based on this foundation)
- **Training, briefing & handover** is key in long-term
- **'Trust and respect the process** and its local adoption – there is a strong body of evidence that PMC strengthens discipleship and the sharing of faith in local communities'

# Implications

- Local churches of varying sizes, resources, contexts and traditions can embody the *missio Dei* in their life together (partner with God)
- Lay discipleship development is through corporate spiritual practice (with *praxis* – action & reflection)

# Implications

- Possible re-imagining of evangelism as 'public Christian witness'
- Learning how to walk *with* adults to a public identity in Christ & baptism (missional catechesis?)