

United Reformed Church ~ Synod of Scotland

Intentional church ~ bulletin # 6

Stirring that porridge!

Northern Area Council spent some time at their last meeting exploring how to get the intentional church conversations going in the local church. Here are some of the ideas bubbling in the north!

Some congregations are discovering the connection between what they are already exploring and the intentional church process. The idea being to discover how the conversations can add to rather than distract from the local church's explorations.

One congregation has identified people who have 'slipped' and arranged to invite them to supper with folk involved in the life of the church. They are training people to lead these groups, particularly by listening carefully. Supper groups of between 16-20 people are planned and thus far the number saying yes means there will be at least 20 supper groups.

Another church is beginning the discussion of intentional church in the deacons meeting.

One of the churches is taking a financial approach. First there is a decision to separate the day to day finances of running the church from a 'project fund'. People are asked to submit ideas and money to the project fund to encourage lively thinking about what the church might 'get up to!' ideas can come from anywhere and the church meeting will decide on criteria by which to choose between projects. Conversation about ideas are being encouraged by local church leaders.

Each church is trying different ways of not losing focus.

One church was placing emphasis on trusting and enabling the young people and children to take part in church life and thinking about the emerging church.

One church wants to have a further evening with an outsider exploring how to get going and are suggesting a different approach more suited to the congregation.

One church has embarked on a major refurbishment and having explored ways of relating creatively with the surrounding city.

Others talked about sharing stories of congregations they have visited on holiday

Five churches = five + ideas!

It's no surprise at all that with five congregations in the Area discussing ways forward there were more than five ideas and approaches! The above are merely the highlights.

One person asked a fascinating question as a conversation-starter: '*which colour would you use to describe our congregation?*'. It's a simple question; many answers, none of them wrong. Or try it with other starter-questions: '*which animal best describes our congregation?*' or

'which image/ flower/ shape or . . . best describes our congregation?'

How about having a display of people's images of church as experienced (both from within and from outwith the congregation) and as they imagine it becoming.

[Journeys have begun in the north, let's have news of others too!](#)

John Humphreys 9th May 2006