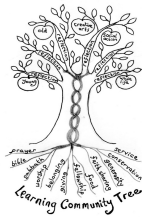


## Reimagining Rural Ministry

Establishing a Learning Community Tree at the heart of multi-parish rural ministry

Rev'd Tim Treanor

Team Rector  
Wellington & District Team Ministry,  
Diocese of Bath & Wells



• The Model:  
Learning Community

• Why?  
• What is it?

• Our first steps  
• Emerging lessons

## Reimagining the ministry of all God's people

'Released for Mission: Growing the Rural Church' (2015)

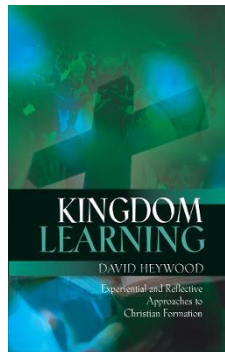
"... a deepening of discipleship was rarely mentioned as taking place" (para 70)

Bright Field Community at Hilfield Jan 2016

"A laboratory for the rural church"

'Setting God's People Free' (2017)

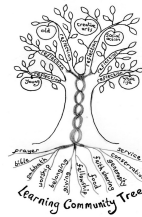
"How does what we do as a church, ordained and lay together, enable God's people to grow in their capacity to live out the Good News of Jesus in all of life - in service in the church and in the world?" (para 1.1)



'Kingdom Learning:  
Experiential and  
Reflective Approaches  
to Christian  
Formation'

David Heywood

SCM Press (2017)

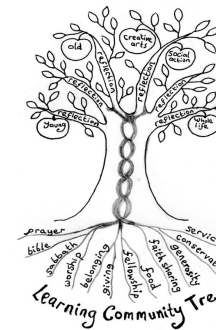


## The Learning Community

Spiritually-maturing disciples  
in mission (fruits)

supported by:

- Christian practices (roots)
- Enabling structures (trunk)
- Theological reflection (branches)



## Christian practices (roots)

Christian practices that have  
rooted people in the love of  
God and all of His creation for  
over 2000 years.

### Enabling structures (trunk)

- Mission fund hosted by 'Resource Church'
- Governance Handbook
- Evaluation Model
- Sessional posts
- Changing role for ministers

### Theological Reflection (branches)

The Pastoral Cycle

- 1) Name the experience  
What is happening?
- 2) Look at the wider information and implications  
Why is it happening?
- 3) Where is God in the experience?  
What does it mean?
- 4) Bringing change  
How shall we respond?

### Maturing disciples involved in mission (fruit)

1. Growing younger
2. Going on growing in later life
3. Creative arts to explore and share the Christian story
4. Social action for the common good
5. Supporting whole life discipleship

### Investing in people

- Sessional posts
  - School Chaplain (3 hours a week paid)
  - Artist-in-residence (unpaid)
  - Administrator (additional hours - paid)
  - Going on Growing Chaplain (unpaid)
  - Music Chaplain (paid)
- Training (eg. Godly Play, The Spiritual Exercises)
- Resources (eg. new hymn books, display boards)

### Early Steps

Bake bread for today

or

Plant for tomorrow?

### Early Steps

- Team Vicar's post became 100% Missioner
- Reader-in-Charge of 4 rural parishes
- NSM Priest in charge of 2 rural parishes
- PTO colleagues
- Raise money (pour on nutrients)
  - Legacy and local fund raising
  - Grant-making trusts
- House-for-duty stipend invested in lay ministry

## Emerging Lessons

- Build upon existing learning and experience
- Release the energy of God's people
- Fragile, vulnerable
- Messy, individual, particular
- Collaboration

