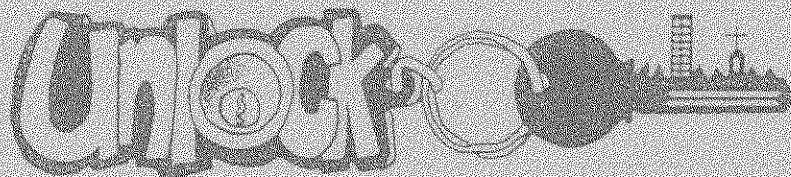


**7 True to Life stories
to help Christians
manage church activities**

Jenny Richardson

based on "Managing or
muddling through"
by Jim Hart

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7 True to Life stories to help Christians manage church activities

Many churches activities grow from

- Tradition
- Reliance on outside programmes that will be the answer we've been looking for.
- Muddling along

The approach of this pack aims to develop the effectiveness of a group of church leaders, giving structure while allowing space for the creativity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the group.

It's designed for use in an inner city or housing estate
—but the methods could be used in other places!

WE'LL MANAGE IT

Who is this pack for?

- This pack is designed for any group of Christians (8-15 people) who want to run their activities better. It's suitable for groups like a church council, committee, elders, or deacons who want to develop their management ability.
- It can also be used by one person to think about his/her own way of running things. If you use the course on your own, it's best to read the story and answer the questions first and then read the leader's notes afterwards.
- It's an introduction to managing activities in the church, based on Unlock's methods of story and Bible reflection. It does not include theoretical frameworks for management and leadership, which are available from other sources. You could include theory and analysis of this sort alongside the questions about the "True to life story", before moving on to Bible reflection and action.

How do we use the pack?

Each true to life story has 3 pages:

- A story and question page (☐)
 - A Bible page (☐)
 - Leaders notes, to give you a few ideas of things that can be drawn from this story.
- You may photocopy the case studies and Bible sheets for use in your group.

The symbol ☐ shows the page may be copied.

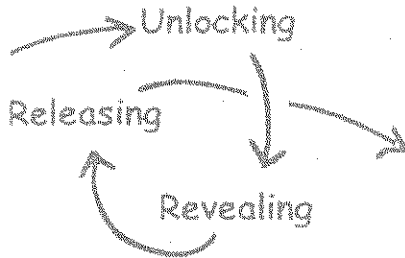
Leaders notes are for the leader only, not the group.

You will need plenty of large sheets of paper and a large marker pen. If you can, at each session display the previous sessions' sheets round the room. The group can refer to them, and be reminded of the things learned.

The stories can be used flexibly in any order, or a selection made of those you consider to be most relevant. Each story illustrates a church situation (which may be like something you know!) and is included to draw out different management points. Working on all 7 will develop a wide range of Christian management principles.

The Method

is based on Unlock's approach of ...



Unlocking real life stories of urban people.

Read the True to Life story, ask the group to respond to the questions given. (📖)
The questions are to guide thinking, and need not be asked in the order given.
Highlight key things arising. (You might like to use a large piece of paper and marker pens in the middle of the group, encouraging anyone to note things that seem important to them.)
Ask the group "Does any of this relate to our church?" Encourage the group to share their experiences, and again highlight and note down any key issues.

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

Ask the group to read the given Bible passage (📖) and ask whether there are any connections with things in the true to life story, or in the real life situations you've shared.



Releasing life changing skills and confidence

What have we learned about the way we run our activities?
What do we want to do differently?
Make a plan of action! Who? What? When?!

And then, after a couple of months review the activity, using the same process ...

- What has happened since we last met?
- What are the key things that we think and feel are important?
- What Bible passages connect for us?
- What action will we take?

If you feel that Unlock workers may be of help to you, to encourage your group to begin or continue a process of review and action, then contact:-
Unlock House
336A City Road
Sheffield
S2 1GA

True to Life story A group of young adults

WE'LL MANAGE IT

The story so far

You are a married couple in your thirties with two young children.

You are members of St. Mary's Church.

You are concerned about a group of about eight young adults, men and women, aged from about 18 to 21 who are always standing outside the 'Red Lion' in the shopping centre near your home. You have begun to get to know them, talking to them when you pass by.

You have discussed the group with the church council, and it has been agreed that you will invite them to your house every Thursday evening.



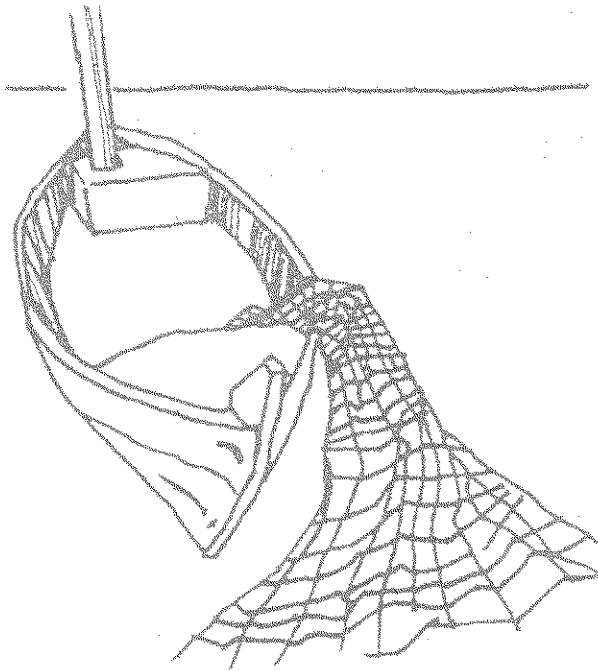
1. How will you put your invitation?
2. What is the purpose of inviting them?
3. What will you do on the Thursday evening?
4. What developments might you expect over a year or so?
5. What strains will be put on you?
6. What problems might arise?
7. What support will you need, and who will supply it?
8. How will the church manage you?
9. How will the group relate to St Mary's?

WE'LL MANAGE IT

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. "The right time has come," he said, "and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!"

As Jesus walked along the shore of Lake Galilee, he saw two fishermen, Simon and his brother Andrew, catching fish with a net. Jesus said to them, "Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people." At once they left their nets and went with him.



He went a little farther on and saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in the boat getting their nets ready. As soon as Jesus saw them, he called them; they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and went with Jesus.

Mark 1 verse 14-20

A group of young adults Leaders notes



Questions 1-4 encourage the couple to **plan carefully in advance**. They would need training - maybe visiting others working in similar way to learn from their experiences. Using an off the shelf Bible study probably won't work!

Questions 5 and 6 prepare the couple for the **inevitable strains and problems**, such as:

- They get difficult behaviour
- The neighbours complain
- The young adults are never away from their door
- They get emotionally and physically drained
- They run out of ideas
- Their own children resent the visitors

Question 7 is about **support** which every Christian worker needs, which must be planned, and used regularly.

Support could be from:

- Another couple working with young adults.
- A steering group of concerned Christians who meet regularly.
- A clergyperson, a youth worker or another church worker.

Support may include somewhere to:

- plan new ideas
- receive more insight to face problems that arise
- check out legal issues
- share openly about the balance between the young adults group and family life
- identify areas where the couple need training/skill development.

Questions 8 and 9 raise the Christian principle that **it is the church which is responsible** for the group of young adults, not only the couple.

- There might be a prayer group for the work.
- The couple may share the work in the congregation and invite prayer for themselves, the group, and for individuals (but take care of issues of confidentiality).
- The church might help pay for outings and equipment.
- Some other individuals in the church may be able to offer specific skills—for example a 'music night' to have a go at guitar, drums etc.

What is 'success' and 'failure'? Is there an expectation that the young adults should become regular church goers?

The Bible passage may help you focus on the question of "calling" the young adults to begin to meet together.

True to Life story A church youth club in trouble

The story so far

Netherwood is an edge of town council housing estate.
There are 'loads of kids' and few facilities for them.

The deacons of the local Baptist Church have decided that the Church 'must do something for the kids!' Two men in their thirties—Tony and Ron, have agreed to run a weekly youth club in the Church Hall.

After three months things aren't going very well. Every time the Women's Fellowship Group meets, they find cigarette ends! A toilet cistern was smashed, and the roller towel pulled off the wall. Whenever Tony or Ron try to lead a "God slot" the kids shout them down.

Tony and Ron are fed up.

Everyone is criticising them.

The kids, 'don't want to know about the Gospel'.

The deacons think that the club should be closed.

WE'LL MANAGE IT



1. What went wrong?
2. What training did the church offer Tony and Ron?
3. What management agreements were made?
4. How are Tony and Ron supported? What support do they need?
5. How are the church members kept informed about the work, and encouraged to pray for it?
6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of a club in the church hall?
7. What do you think is the aim of the club?

Jesus Heals a Paralysed Man

WE'LL MANAGE IT

One day when Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of the Law were sitting there who had come from every town in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was present for Jesus to heal the sick. Some men were carrying a paralysed man on a bed, and they tried to take him into the house and put him in front of Jesus. Because of the crowd, however, they could find no way to take him in. So they carried him up on the roof, made an opening in the tiles, and let him down on his bed into the middle of the group in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the man, "Your sins are forgiven, my friend."

The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who speaks such blasphemy! God is the only one who can forgive sins!"

Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Why do you think such things? Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" So he said to the paralysed man, "I tell you, get up, pick up your bed, and go home!"

At once the man got up in front of them all, took the bed he had been lying on, and went home, praising God. They were all completely amazed! Full of fear, they praised God, saying "What marvellous things we have seen today!"



Luke 5 verse 17- 26

A church youth club in trouble Leaders notes

WE'LL MANAGE IT

What is the purpose of Christian youth work?

- ? to get the young people to Church?
- ? to "make disciples"?
- ? to get the young people off the street?
- ? to help the young people develop their potential?

The Church Deacons wanted to share the gospel with the young people, but left the job with two keen but inexperienced members. The Deacons and the church need to think about what their attitude to the young people is, learn what working with young people involves, decide what the cost is, and whether they are prepared to pay.

Questions 2-5 repeat the points emerging from the story of the young adults. In the same way as the young couple working with a group, Tony and Ron also need training, support and love from the Church. The Church has not been sharing the responsibility for the young people. It has blamed Tony and Ron for the failure.

Question 6 illustrates an important management issue. **Decisions are sometimes made the wrong way round.** A conventional model of youth work, the club, was often adopted because it was the only idea available to the Church. Asking questions like ...

- ? What are the needs of young people?
 - ? What hinders us from meeting them? (we're judgmental; we don't understand them etc.)
 - ? What resources have we got? (Tony, Ron, Church hall)
- ... may lead to a different conclusion.

The story could have been:

- ✓ The Church Deacons realised that young people need love, attention, adults, and that they meet in groups and so on.
- ✓ Tony and Ron spent six months getting as wide a range of ideas about youth work as possible—visiting workers, attending training courses.
- ✓ Tony and Ron reported to the Deacons: 'We could run some activity groups. We could train some local adults to work with kids. We could invite the young people to our homes'
- ✓ Tony and Ron reported to the Deacons about the cost to the church: 'We will get vandalism so we'll need money for repairs. We'll need funds for a mini-bus'.

(Training for the youth workers and research for the church.)

The Bible passage may help you focus on the tension between care for a building and the extension of God's kingdom.

For more information about youth work contact:
Frontier Youth Trust
Frontier Centre
4th Floor
70-74 City Road
London EC1Y2BJ



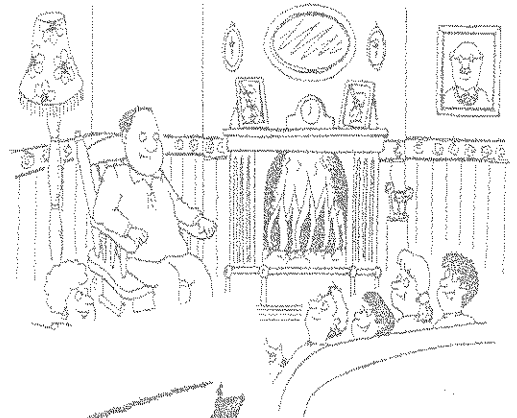
True to Life story A new house group

The story so far

St. David's Church is surrounded by a council estate. The houses are semi-detached or in short terraces. The estate has a reputation for being a "good area" and people try to move here from other areas of the city. Two church members are a middle aged couple who live on this estate.

They know a lot of the neighbours, and plan to invite some of them to a weekly house group. The vicar and church council are keenly supporting this initiative.

The couple haven't had much experience of running groups and are rather nervous about how it will go.



WE'LL MANAGE IT

1. How will the couple put the invitation?
2. What is the purpose of inviting the neighbours?
3. How might the group develop over a year or so?
4. What strains will be put on the couple?
5. What problems might arise?
6. What support will they need, and who will supply it?
7. How will the church manage the group?
8. How will the group relate to St. David's?

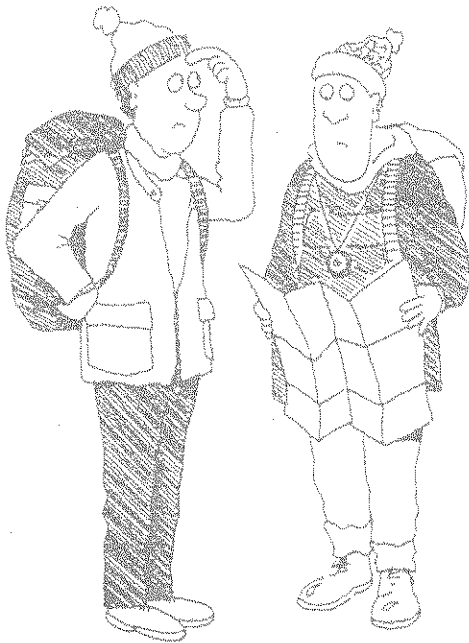
72 go out and 72 come back!



Going out ...

After this the Lord chose another 72 men and sent them out two by two, to go ahead of him to every town and place where he himself was about to go. He said to them, "There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. Go! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Don't take a purse or a beggar's bag or shoes; don't stop to greet anyone on the road. Whenever you go into a house, first say, 'Peace be with this house.'

Whenever you go into a town and are made welcome, eat what is set before you, heal the sick in that town, and say to the people there, 'The Kingdom of God has come near you.'



And returning ...

The 72 men came back in great joy. "Lord," they said, "even the demons obeyed us when we gave them a command in your name!"

Jesus answered them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Listen! I have given you authority, so that you can walk on snakes and scorpions and overcome all the power of the Enemy, and nothing will hurt you. But don't be glad because the evil spirits obey you; rather be glad because your names are written in heaven."

Luke 10 verses 1-5, 8-9, 17-20

A new house group Leaders notes



All of the points raised about work with young people and young adults apply to this adult work.

- ✓ In this case the couple are inexperienced. They need to share their work with, and be supported by, others in the church.
- ✓ Even those with long term experience still need to know that others are behind them but they are more likely not to bother.
- ✓ The Vicar and Church Council are also aware that training and support will be needed.
- ✓ Will the couple keep up the work? Will the vicar and Church Council keep up the support?

Encourage the group to explore the nine questions in depth.

A question for the church is

**“When someone becomes a Christian,
will we demand that he or she attends our Sunday services?”**

Are we concerned mainly about enlarging our institution and saying “you can only worship God if you do it with us and like us?”

Would we tolerate different people being Christians in different ways from ourselves?

If these issues can be faced before the group starts, it may prevent later misunderstandings.

The Bible passages may help you focus on the idea of people 'going out' from the church in pairs, and then returning to tell their story, to be encouraged and to learn from their experiences.

True to Life story Good News on the flats

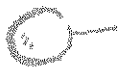
WE'LL MANAGE IT

The story so far

The vicar and P.C.C of St Cleopas' Church are concerned for the people who live in some council flats next to the church. The only two church members who live there are old and in poor health. Most of the church members drive into church from the private homes nearby.

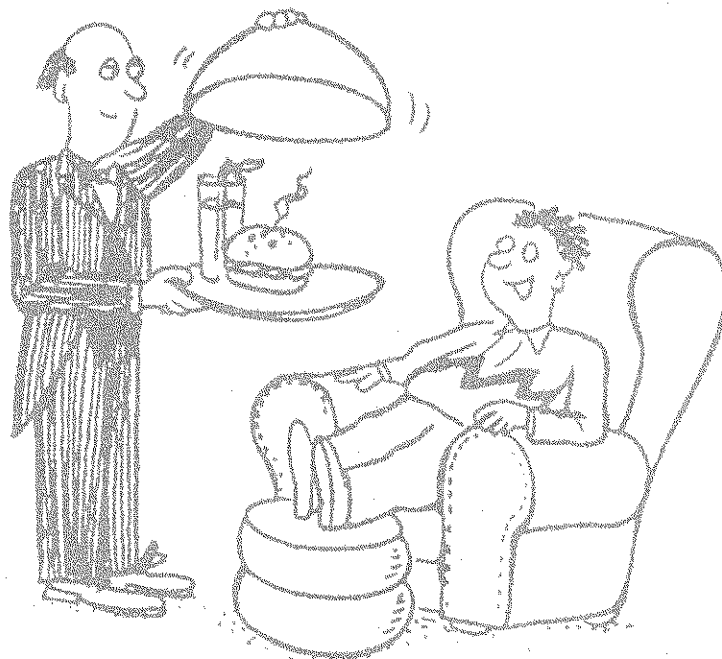
The flats are run down, and the area is dirty and vandalised. The residents are mostly apathetic and demoralised. Few are working. There is a wide spread of ages with quite a few families. Many children have only mum at home. Most people on the flats are keen to move away.



- 
1. How would the church plant a new group in the flats?
 2. Where would they meet?
 3. What would the purpose of the group be?
 4. How could the people there discover the Good News?
 5. How could the group demonstrate the Kingdom of God?
 6. Who would run the group?
 7. How could that person be managed?
 8. How will the group relate to St Cleopas' Church?

WE'LL MANAGE IT

Peter's dream



As they were on their way and coming near Joppa, Peter went up on the roof of the house about noon in order to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat; while the food was being prepared, he had a vision. He saw heaven opened and something coming down that looked like a large sheet being lowered by its four corners to the earth. In it were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and wild birds. A voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat!"

But Peter said, "Certainly not, Lord! I have never eaten anything ritually unclean or defiled."

The voice spoke to him again, "Do not consider anything unclean that God has declared clean." This happened three times, and then the thing was taken back up to heaven.

Good News on the flats Leaders notes

WE'LL MANAGE IT

The situation here is one that many churches struggle with. This not because those in the flats 'refuse the Gospel', but because the Church's structure and ways of behaving (culture) are alien to the local people:-

- × Local people are not familiar with Church language and customs.
- × Church members travel in from private housing, and come from different social backgrounds.

In this case the Church is 'concerned' and question 6 is critical:

Who is available and suitable for leadership?

Questions 1-5: The Church needs to work at understanding the culture of those in the flats, and learning ways of working with them. Do the church members *respect* those in the flats and *love* them? Do they enjoy just hanging around at local events in the neighbourhood, in the local pub, etc.?

Question 8: *The Bible passage may help the group focus on the fact that Non-Jewish Christians do not have to adopt Jewish ritual and law in order to be a Christian.* This can be linked with the issue of how an established church relates to a new and different group of Christians.

(Unlock's pack, "Tracy's story", would help a group explore this issue in more depth.)

True to Life story A visiting scheme for the elderly

The story so far

Main Road United Reformed Church is in a run down part of the town. Its congregation mostly travels in from more wealthy areas several miles further out.

A group of women have decided to start a visiting programme among the many elderly people around the Church, who are likely to be lonely and poor. They start knocking on doors and introducing themselves, but do not get much response. The elderly people seem reserved. Even when a woman is invited in, she has a job to keep conversation going. The scheme fizzles out after a few months.

WE'LL MANAGE IT

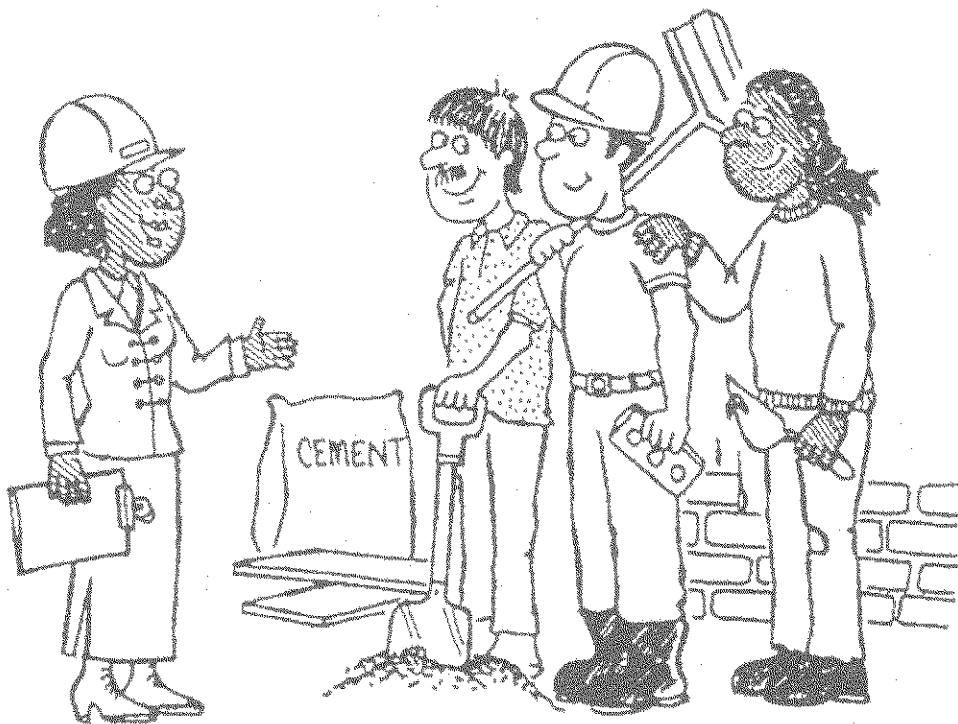


1. If the women from the church told their story of what happened, what might they say?
2. If the elderly people told their story of what happened, what might they say?
3. Why did the scheme go wrong?
4. What sort of training would have helped the women to have been more effective?
5. How could they have supported each other?
6. What difficulties did they face trying to befriend people with a different social background, living in a different part of town to themselves.
7. Might there be better ways for the church to have worked with the local elderly people?

WE'LL MANAGE IT

The Two House Builders

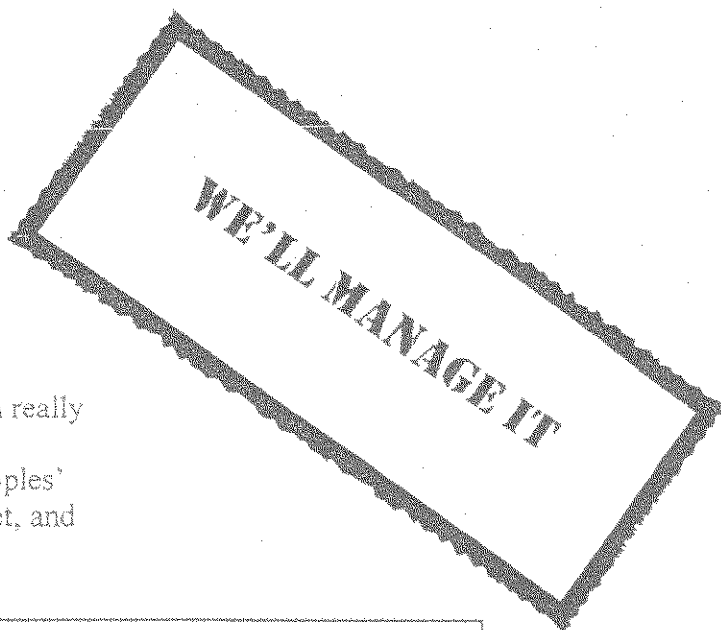
"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and yet don't do what I tell you? Anyone who comes to me and listens to my words and obeys them—I will show you what he is like. He is like a man who, in building his house, dug deep and laid the foundation on rock. The river overflowed and hit that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.



But anyone who hears my words and does not obey them is like a man who built his house without laying a foundation; when the flood hit that house it fell at once—and what a terrible crash

Luke 6 verse 46-49

A visiting scheme for the elderly Leaders notes



This is a classic story of 'do-gooding' which really means doing harm!

The women have barged into the elderly peoples' lives, raised expectations which were not met, and then faded out.

The church women's story might include:-

- × We wanted to do something
- × We failed
- × We are depressed
- × We are discouraged
- × We are less confident than before

The elderly person's story might include:-

- × I am lonely. I'd like a friend
- × She's called. She wants to be my friend. I'm pleased.
- × She's stopped calling. She only came twice. I was just beginning to like her.
- × I feel lonelier than ever.
- × I wish she'd never knocked in the first place. I never asked her to.

This could have happened for the church women:-

- ✓ We thought it out
- ✓ We learned skills
- ✓ We set up good management
- ✓ We're doing it well
- ✓ The elderly people like us. We like them.
- ✓ We are useful
- ✓ We feel good



... with the outcome of

- ✓ a sustainable visiting scheme
- ✓ strengthening relationships
- ✓ elderly people who feel cared for
- ✓ Good News in the area!

A management issue in this exercise is that even what appears to be a 'natural' thing, visiting and befriending elderly people, needs **careful preparation and support**.

Questions 4-6: If the Church had started with thinking about, 'what are the needs of our elderly people?' and then, 'How can these be met by us or by other groups in the community?' they would have been able to develop a wider range of options. **Research** is needed here.

The Bible passage may help you focus on the need for strong foundations for any "project".

True to Life story Work with children

The story so far ...

St Mark's Methodist Church has Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, a Sunday School and a Sunday Evening Youth Fellowship. These are all run down. Most of the children only go because their parents are church members. The teaching and activities follow programmes issued by the denomination and uniformed organisations.

The leaders have been around a long time; the Sunday School Superintendent is in her 70's. The leaders don't see the need for any changes. They feel "It's the parents and kids round here. They don't want to know about religion."

A young Minister arrives. He thinks that the children's organisations no longer meet the needs of the young people who are bored, and that the Sunday School Superintendent should gracefully retire.



-
1. How could the minister encourage the leaders to improve their performance?
 2. How could new growth be achieved in the children's work?
 3. How can these leaders be accountable to the church as a whole?
 4. How can we help traditional things not to become dull and lifeless?

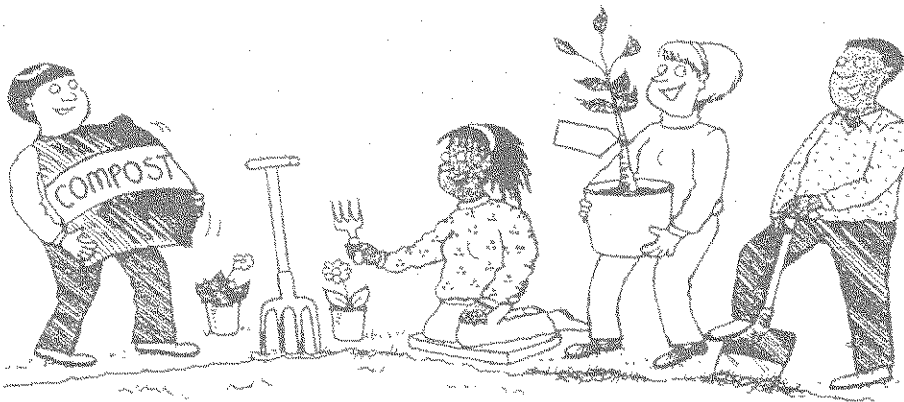
WE'LL MANAGE IT

Jesus the Real Vine

"I am the real vine, and my father is the gardener. He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit. You have been made clean already by the teaching I have given you. Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me."

"I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me."

John 15 verse 1-5



New Truths and Old

So he replied, "This means, then, that every teacher of the Law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who takes new and old things out of his storeroom."

Matthew 13 verse 52

Work with children Leaders notes

WE'LL MANAGE IT

An issue here is **the power of tradition** within a Church. In this example the tradition has become lifeless and has ceased to meet the needs of the 'clients', in this case children. To suggest change is to cast doubt on the entire period of work of the leaders. They defend their present failure by blaming the local parents and children.

Unlock encourages leaders to creatively respond to local needs, and to rely less upon tradition and external programmes. But tradition can be reformed and revived as well as discarded; this is an issue that comes from this story.

Question 3 is about **accountability**. Leaders entrenched in traditional roles don't make themselves accountable. They say 'I have a right to occupy this office, whether I'm succeeding or failing.'

The Bible passage may help you focus on the need for accountability. The branches are there to bear fruit. If they don't—they are pruned!

NB It's essential that the church complies with current legal requirements, and good practice in terms of adults working with children—contact relevant denominational officers for up to date guidelines.

More information and ideas for those working with children in inner-city and housing estate areas can be obtained from:

CURBS (Children in Urban Situations)
PO Box 344
Redhill
Surrey
RH1 3FG



True to life story A divided church leaders group



The story so far ...

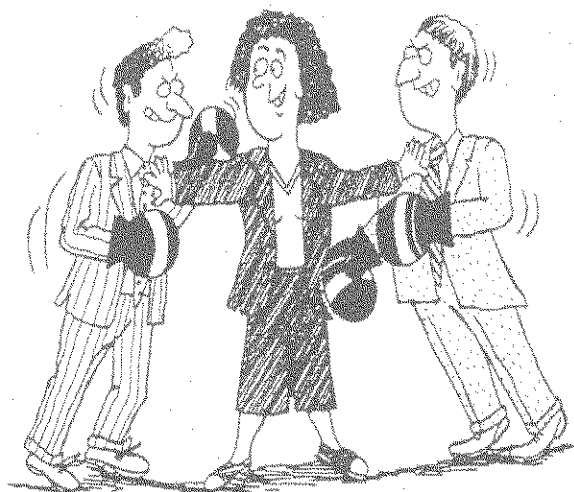
The church leaders group meet six times a year. There are twelve leaders but two particular older leaders usually get their way. They are both retired managers and can always count on the support of two others. The remaining leaders rarely say anything.

The church is run on traditional lines, and the minister has found it hard to change anything.

Three younger people have recently become leaders. They say that Sunday services are boring, and not suitable for children and young people. They commented that the church isn't doing anything in the community.

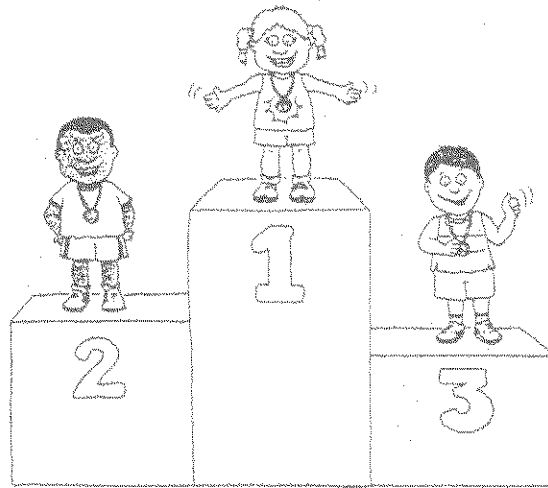
Now there are heated arguments at meetings of the church leaders. The two older leaders are scarcely on speaking terms with the rest of the leaders group.

The minister agrees with the new leaders but feels that she must not take sides.



1. How can the minister help the church leaders group to perform more effectively?
2. How can she encourage the quiet leaders to play more part?
3. How can the established, powerful group, and the new members be helped to relate to each other?

Slaves in the first place!



Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "there is something we want you to do for us."

"What is it?" Jesus asked them.

They answered, "When you sit on your throne in your glorious Kingdom, we want you to let us sit with you, one at your right and one at your left."

Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup of suffering that I must drink? Can you be baptized in the way I must be baptized?"

"We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup I must drink and be baptized in the way I must be baptized. But I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. It is God who will give these places to those for whom he has prepared them."

When the other ten disciples heard about it, they became angry with James and John. So Jesus called them all together to him and said, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the heathen have power over them, and the leaders have complete authority. This, however, is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, he must be the slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people."

Mark 10 verse 35-45

WE'LL MANAGE IT

A divided church leaders group

Leaders notes

The power of tradition to block progress turns up this time with the group of church leaders. **Decision making bodies in the church can only effectively work if they work as groups.** Time needs to be spent building relationships within the group. Social events may help—and/or an outside facilitator help the group work through its tensions.

Question 2: In this story more than half of the leaders are not giving of their best to the group. This leaders' group needs to resolve the clash between the traditionalists and those are pressing for liveliness, relevance and outreach.
... this will enable the whole group to release its energy, information and skills and become more effective at its job.

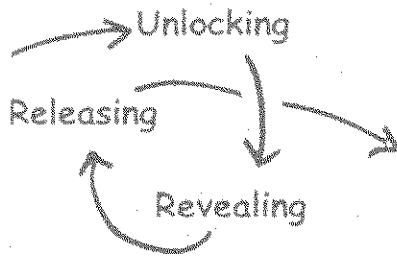
The Bible passage may help you focus on the issue of power within the leaders group.

Using this pack of stories, questions and Bible reflections may have helped the group building process of the group doing them! .

If appropriate, ask:

"In what ways have relationships in this group developed through using these stories?"

Managing in real life Leaders notes



These notes may help you move on to apply the management principles of this pack to real life!



Unlocking real life stories of urban church life

Draw a diagram (or diagrams) showing all of your Church's activities. Encourage discussion from the group on:-

- How do they relate together?
- Which groups are divided by age and sex? Is this the best way to demonstrate the Church as the 'Family of God'.
- Explore how all the groups could be encouraged to relate together. (children, elderly, men's, women's, different congregations, music group...)
- How do we pray for and support our activities?
- Divide all the groups and activities into:-
 - Those which are traditional
 - Those which depend on outside programmes
 - like Sunday School notes or Alpha courses.
 - Those which we developed ourselves in response to a local need.

Take any selection of your church activities, and apply any of the questions from the True to Life stories. The questions can help the group tackle important questions about activities.

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

What Bible passages link with the issue(s) important in your situation. Use one of the passages from the pack—or find something different.

(A group "brainstorm" will usually provide plenty of ideas!)

Releasing life changing skills and confidence

Decide on improvement, or new activities to be studied, as a result of this course.

Unlock is able to offer you help with consultations, training and support, either about Church life as a whole or in connection with a particular activity or problem.

Unlock
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Handsworth Road
Sheffield
S13 9BZ
Tel: 0114 2939060



The activity is determined **after** research, planning and training.

Workers need initial and ongoing training to prepare them for difficulties.

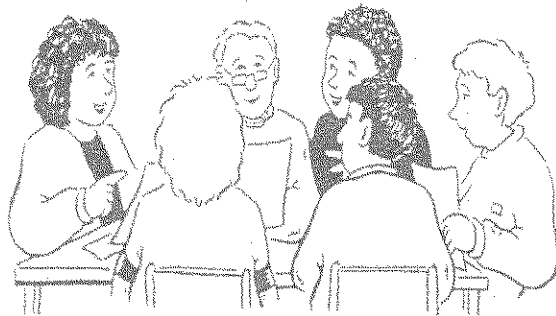
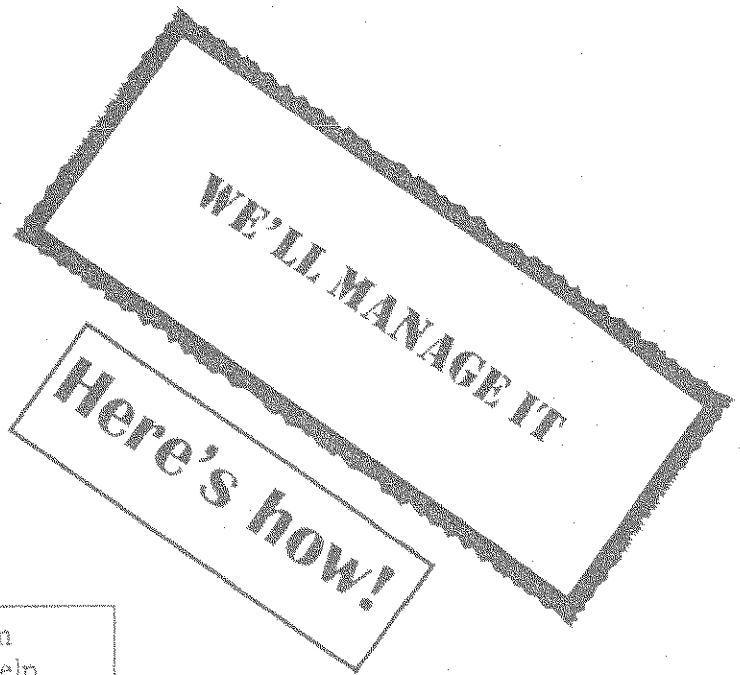
An activity needs 'management'

- ✓ It is accountable to the whole body.
- ✓ It's performance needs review.
- ✓ Goals are reviewed and changed.

Workers need ongoing support to sustain them through difficulties, to encourage them, and help them develop the work.

Every Christian activity should be seen as the corporate responsibility of the 'Body of Christ'. The leaders share the work with the church who prays for them and finds time and money as needed. Any group's relationship to the existing congregation must be thought about and principles defined. How important is the church's 'sanction' - it's permission or 'say so'.

A Christian group needs a theology, Christian principles for the activity. A Christian activity **demonstrates** the Kingdom of God and **proclaims** the Good News of the Down to Earth Christ.



Unlock's method has been used with these stories. Beginning with true to life stories, it encourages a group to look at real life experiences, and move on to exploring a Bible passage and action.

Workers and managing groups can continue to use this model, to provide regular reviews of the work.

- ? What has happened during the last month or so?
- ? What are the key issues that come out of this
- ? What Bible stories seem to link with these issues.
- ? And so what action do we need to take?



The text of the Bible studies in the course is taken from the Good News Bible
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published by the Bible Societies and Collins,
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