



Healing Wounded Churches

A Resource for Renewal

An Outline Summary of the Process

Introduction

The goal of the process is to assist the church community in renewing its commitment to be the church that God has called it to be.

The process therefore consists in locating, understanding and owning the stories and their issues and outcomes which currently shape the church.

All whom the church community deem necessary to participate in the process are welcome to do so.

The process will not include any preconceived conclusions as to the nature and content of the issues that the church needs to explore as this will be shaped by the responses of the church community to the dialogue anticipated.

The process will consist of a mixture of teaching with opportunities to explore and apply the insights gained and taking appropriate actions to enable healing and reconciliation and renewal in the life of the church so that it can move forward together.



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The Process: Stage 1 Meeting with the Church Leadership Team

A meeting with the church leadership to outline the details of the process ahead and to meet and engage with the facilitating team. A time-table for the process will be agreed at this meeting. If it is possible, individual listening sessions with the leadership team will be provided or at another time as soon as can be arranged. The church is to be notified of the time-table and process agreed. In preparation for this meeting a list of individuals to be interviewed can be agreed.

The Process: Stage 2 Individual Interviews

The facilitation team will offer a confidential interview of one hour maximum duration. There is no limit as to the number of people eligible for these interviews although the greater the number involved the longer the amount of time it will take. Those conducting the interviews will be trained listeners and will have been trained by the Acorn Christian Healing Foundation. It will be for the leadership of the church or the church community itself who will decide who is to be interviewed. Those interviewed can also include those who have left the church for whatever reason and former clergy are also welcome to take part if the church community and leadership are happy for them to do so. The issues arising from the interviews with the leadership team will also be included in the written Report which will contain the major, consensus issues arising from all the interviews. The form of the interview will focus on the response to the question "What would you say are the most important stories currently shaping your church?"



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The Process: Stage 3 The Written Report

Once all the interviews have been completed, the facilitation team will produce a written Report summarising the major issues ensuing from those interviews. Although doubtless the individual interviewees will mention certain individuals they deem responsible for factors in the church life, the Report will focus upon the ensuing issues that remain in the life of the church community. The reason for this is that individuals are indeed accountable to God and others for their actions, yet the road to healing lies in working with the legacies and issues that remain to influence the church. In this sense these legacies belong to the church and need appropriate ownership by the church. The Report will contain the names of everyone interviewed though their individual contributions will not be identified. The Report is to be made available to the whole church community, the Diocesan Bishop who has commissioned this process and others that the church community wish to participate in the process. The Report will also recommend actions for the church community to consider and implement.

The Process: Stage 4 Meeting with the Church Community

This takes place when the church community has had sufficient time to read the Report and make their own reflections. Ideally a day or two evenings will be needed for this part of the process. The event will consist of teaching focusing on the issues from the Report and offering ways of owning the issues that have arisen. Some of the teaching will address subjects such as:

- The purpose of Jesus' dialogue with church stories.
- Examining how stories shape churches.
- Reflecting upon the founding vision of the individual church and how the church currently relates to this.



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- The purpose and power of Representational Confession
- Ownership of stories to celebrate and ownership of stories that wound the church.
- The Christian Day of Atonement; a service to heal the place of ministry to be the place of ministry.

This part of the process will consist of ministry opportunities to work towards healing and reconciliation.

The Process: Stage 5 A concluding service of Renewal and Reconciliation

This would normally take place during a Sunday Service. The focus is to renew the church community to re-own the ministry given to it by Jesus and to include blessing the ministries of the church and their locations in the church building. The form of this service is to be agreed with the leadership of the church and would offer everyone an opportunity to take part either for their own agenda or that of the church community. It is hoped that this part of the process would take place as soon as possible after the meeting with the church community.

The Process: Stage 6 Opportunities for follow up

The facilitation team would make themselves available for any further work deemed necessary by the church leadership team.

