

MAKING MORE DISCIPLES

“ And the Lord added
to their number daily those
who were being saved. ”



HOLYHABITS

MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES FOR CHURCHES

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Zimbabwean Fellowship

Birmingham Method



Remember the context

This Holy Habit is set in the context of ten Holy Habits, and the ongoing life of your church and community.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. **And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.**

ACTS 2:42-47

A prayer for the faithful practice of Holy Habits

This prayer starts with a passage from Romans 5:4-5.

Endurance produces character, and character produces hope,
and hope does not disappoint us...

Gracious and ever-loving God, we offer our lives to you.
Help us always to be open to your Spirit in our thoughts
and feelings and actions.

Support us as we seek to learn more about those habits of the Christian life
which, as we practise them, will form in us the character of Jesus
by establishing us in the way of faith, hope and love.

Amen

INTRODUCTION

The Acts 2 community was living out a divine commission given by Jesus to his first disciples.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

MATTHEW 28:19–20

As followers of Jesus today, we share that commission. But how do we do it? You will find ideas in the following material to help you think about and practise this habit. As you prepare to explore and adventure with **Making More Disciples**, here are two thoughts to reflect upon.

The first comes from Roger Walton in his book, *Disciples Together* (SCM Press, 2014). He concludes that for the Christian disciple, **Worship**, mission (which includes both **Serving** and **Making More Disciples**) and intentional community (or *koinonia* – **Fellowship**) are the three primary formative energies. As you journey with Holy Habits, you may find it useful to notice how each of these helps to make new disciples and deepen the discipleship of those already following Jesus.

The second thought comes from many biblical commentators, who note that the kind of Christian community Luke presents in Acts 2 is in itself highly conducive to **Making More Disciples**. As David Watson puts it, ‘it is not surprising with such a community of disciples bound together in love that God added to their number, day by day those who were being saved’ (*Discipleship*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1981, p. 37).



Resources particularly suitable for children and families



Resources particularly suitable for young people

CH4 Church Hymnary 4 (also known as Hymns of Glory Songs of Praise)
RS Rejoice and Sing
SoF Songs of Fellowship 6
StF Singing the Faith

Reflections

Jesus said, 'Go and make disciples' to the first disciples, but the command is for us too. It's not our job to bring people to faith, but we are called to share our faith at school, in our places of work and leisure, and in the communities in which we live.

The word 'disciple' means 'one who learns as they follow'. The first disciples learned to be disciples by living alongside Jesus and watching what he did and listening to what he said. They learned by his preaching and 'doing', but most of all they learned by his 'being'.

We're all called to **Make More Disciples**, and we can do that by *being* disciples, by trying to be more like Jesus, and by living and breathing our faith. We may not all be great preachers, but we don't have to be. People will know when we're speaking with honesty and integrity about our faith. We just need to have the courage to try and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Any event or activity run by the church has the potential to be evangelistic or missional (as does every encounter and every moment of our individual lives) as we share our faith in words or actions, allowing the Holy Spirit to be our Helper and our Guide.

As you explore this and all the Holy Habits, our prayer is that 'day by day the Lord [will] add to [your] number those who are being saved'.

UNDERSTANDING THE HABIT

WORSHIP RESOURCES

Below are some thoughts and ideas on how you might incorporate this Holy Habit into worship. Could you link **Making More Disciples** to your seasonal celebrations, as good times to invite others into your services?

Biblical material

Old Testament passages:

- 2 Kings 5:1–19a Naaman
- Psalm 67 Nations
- Jonah 3–4 Nineveh

Gospel passages:

- Matthew 13:31–32, 44 The kingdom of heaven is like...
- Matthew 28:16–20 The great commission
- Mark 4:1–9, 13–20 The parable of the sower
- Mark 8:34–38 Not a soft option
- Mark 10:13–16 Childlike trust
- Luke 5:1–11 The first disciples
- Luke 19:1–10 Call of Zacchaeus
- Luke 24:36–49 Jesus appears to the disciples
- John 1:35–51 The first disciples
- John 3:1–21 You must be born again
- John 4:1–42 Jesus and the Samaritan woman
- John 10:7–16 Growing the flock

Other New Testament passages:

- Acts 1:6–8 The ascension
- Acts 10:9–35 Discipleship for all
- Acts 17:16–34 Meeting people where they are
- 1 Corinthians 10:31–11:1 Be imitators of Christ

Suggested hymns and songs

- Christ's is the world (A touching place) (CH4 724)
- Come set your rule and reign (Build your kingdom here) (SoF 2756) 😊
- Give me the faith which can remove (StF 661)
- Go forth and tell, O church of God awake (RS 574)
- Go in grace and make disciples (CH4 682)
- God is love: his the care (CH4 193, RS 274, StF 403) 👤👤👤
- God of justice, Saviour to all (StF 699)
- God's Spirit is in my heart (RS 576, StF 404) 👤👤👤
- Have you heard God's voice (StF 662)
- Hear the call of the kingdom (StF 407)
- I, the Lord of sea and sky (CH4 251, StF 663)
- Jesus is Lord of all the earth (RS 234, StF 295)
- Let it be known (SoF 2753) 😊
- Lord speak to me, that I may speak (CH4 542, RS 613)
- Now let us from this table rise (CH4 675, RS 463, StF 596)
- Oceans (SoF 3167) 😊
- O Lord all the world belongs to you (RS 90) 👤👤👤
- Sent by the Lord am I (CH4 250, StF 239) 👤👤👤
- We have a gospel to proclaim (CH4 363, StF 418)
- Will you come and follow me (CH4 533, RS 558, StF 673)



Introduction to the theme

Invite willing children and adults to play ‘Follow my leader’ around the church. Or, if there’s not much space, invite everyone to shut their eyes and think of a good friend. After the game – or while eyes are still shut – ask the following questions:

- What makes for a good leader?
- What makes for a good follower?
- What makes for a good friend?
- How do you know you can trust them?
- When you’ve found a good friend/leader/follower, do you keep them to yourself or do you tell someone about them?
- Why do you think people followed Jesus?

Jesus told his disciples, his special friends, that people would find out about him by the way his friends behaved and by the way they loved one another.

We’re exploring the Habit of **Making More Disciples**. Jesus said, ‘Go and make disciples’, and that can feel like quite a scary thing to do. But if, as we follow Jesus, we can learn to be like Jesus, then people will see that Jesus is someone who makes a good friend, that Jesus is someone worth following. Then more people will become his friends, and there’ll be more disciples.

Disciple-making God,
Help us to be willing to be made into better disciples so that people will see you in us and so that more people will come to know you and your love for all people.
Amen

Further suggestions for worship

Why not get a copy of Bob Hartman’s *Telling the Gospel: 70 stories about Jesus to read out loud* and use ‘A sort of great commission song’ on pages 238–39?

Or you could use this sketch:

Person A is on stage with paper, scissors, and other art supplies and is drawing, cutting, etc. Person B walks on stage.

B What are you doing?

A Oh, I'm making some disciples.

B What do you mean you're making some disciples?

A Well, I heard that Jesus wants me to go out and make more disciples, so that's what I'm doing. See, here's a picture I drew of Andrew and James and John. I started one with Peter and Philip, but it's not done yet. I'm thinking that there needs to be more colour. What do you think?

B I think your drawings are really great, but I'm not sure that's exactly what Jesus meant when he said we should go out and make disciples.

A Oh! Maybe I shouldn't draw them! Maybe I should make them... out of clay!

B Uh, well, that could also be really nice, but when Jesus said we should make more disciples, I don't think he meant that you should make them using art supplies.

A (*Looking shocked*) But what else could it mean?

B I think he meant that we should show people God's love and tell them about Jesus so that more people might follow him, too.

A Oh, I don't know about that. I mean, loving people is all well and good, even though it's not always easy. But telling people about Jesus... that's scary. What if they laugh? What if they make fun of me or think I'm crazy?

B You're right; it can seem scary, and it's okay to be a little scared. God works through scared people all the time. You know, there's a part of the Bible that we call the Gospels, and 'gospel' means 'good news'. And the story of Jesus is good news! All you have to do is show people and tell people about how that good news has changed your life. If people can see and hear that, they may want to follow Jesus too!

A But what if they don't want to follow Jesus just because I told them about him?

B That part's between that person and God. Our job is just to show people and tell people the good news.

A Well, I guess that's not too complicated or scary.

B It might even be easier than that art project you started!

Thoughts for sermon preparation

Matthew 28:16–20

And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’

vv. 18–20

Here we see the risen Christ before he ascends to heaven telling his disciples what they are to go and do, and a general plan for doing it. What Jesus says are his last recorded words. There are books compiled with ‘famous last words’ because a parting message can have unique value, sometimes summing up a person’s life. There are rich pickings for preachers in such books. Jesus is urging his friends to make disciples by going, by baptising and then by teaching people to observe all the things that he has commanded.

Verse 18 shows that Jesus is the head of his church (Ephesians 1:22–23). Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and earth. The things we do and speak must be grounded in the authority and sovereignty of Jesus Christ over this world and over his unstoppable mission to gather the people he loves.

In verse 19, Jesus tells them to ‘go’. (Note how often we can see mission as ‘come’.) One church once painted over the door, for people to see as they were leaving, the words: ‘YOU ARE NOW ENTERING A MISSION FIELD’. Christ’s command is to go and make disciples. This phrase is in the imperative tense in Greek, conveying a sense of urgency and importance. The great commission in Matthew shows the particular sequence that is to be employed to make a disciple, which is that we baptise and teach in the name of the Trinity, as well as emphasising that every ethnic group is to be blessed in evangelism.

There are four ‘great commissions’ in the Gospels and one in Acts:

- Matthew 28:16–20
- Mark 16:14–16
- Luke 24:45–49
- John 20:20–23
- Acts 1:6–8.

Each is quite different.

This message is all inclusive; the disciples are told to take the gospel message into ALL nations (not just to Jews, or to those living in Judea and the surroundings – see v. 19). Jesus tells his disciples to teach others ALL the things he taught them (v. 20) and finally he will be with them ALL the time.

The great commission is often the great omission in the lives of many Christians.

Anonymous

If a commission by an earthly king is considered a honour, how can a commission by a Heavenly King be considered a sacrifice?

David Livingstone

The challenge of this commission is enormous. Preventive grace means that Christ goes before us; in evangelism, this is risky and exciting.

In his year as the President of the Methodist Conference, Steve Wild experienced God's preventive grace again and again with different encounters he had with people, handing them a small wooden cross as he prayed with them.

Once, on the train back to Cornwall, he sat opposite a young woman. She was a Christian and was being picked up by her husband and three children. He would have the keys for the new house they were moving into and they were going to go and visit it straight away. Steve asked if he could pray with her for the new house and gave her a little cross. She was delighted and said she'd place it in the hall to signify Christ's presence in the house. Just as Steve bowed his head to pray, a man walking down the aisle carrying a bag of crisps, bottle of wine and a glass said, 'Are you praying?' Steve said yes and the man said, 'When you've finished with her, can you pray with me, please?' Steve listened as the man opened himself and told Steve his life story and 'God-incidences', which Steve saw as preventive grace. At one point, the man told Steve of a couple of big mistakes and, as he did, he shed tears, a sign of a 'broken and contrite heart' (Psalm 51:17). He held the cross as Steve talked about Christ's love for him and led him to faith.

In your encounters this week, be open to God's preventive grace at work. With whom could you share in word or deed an expression for God's love for them? With whom or for whom might you pray this week? Is there a small gift, a sign of the gospel that you could carry and be able to share if the Spirit so prompts you to?

Prayers

An opening prayer

This could be used each week during the exploration of **Making More Disciples**.

Jesus said, 'Go and make disciples of all nations,
baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.'

Disciple-making God,
help us in our gathering today to be open to your way and to hear your voice,
so that we might know how to respond to that call.
Amen

An opening prayer

This could be used each week during the exploration of **Making More Disciples**.

As we gather today, help us remember that we come to honour you.
Help us to clear our minds of all our preferences and prejudices
so that your name might be glorified.

As we meet together, and as we live as your disciples,
help us to 'know you more clearly, love you more dearly
and follow you more nearly'
so that as others see and hear how we live out our faith,
they will come to know you.

In Jesus' name we pray
Amen

A prayer of adoration and thanksgiving

Immeasurable God,
we praise you for being bigger and greater than we can ever imagine.

Thank you for the many ways in which we can name you as we grow in our discipleship as individuals and as a church.

Sometimes we name you Creator.

We praise you for your creativity; for the beauty of the world and of each human being; and for the diversity of each community, those of which we are a part, and others throughout the world. Thank you for the ways in which you continue to create, reshape and remould us as we grow in our discipleship as individuals and as a church.

Sometimes we name you Redeemer.

We praise you for your saving grace;
for your great love for us, for all that you have done for us.

Thank you for the ways in which you continue to redeem our thoughts, our actions and our lives as we grow in our discipleship as individuals and as a church.

Sometimes we name you Sustainer.

We praise you for your always sufficient and often nourishing and strengthening presence. Thank you for the ways in which you continue to enable and empower us as we grow in our discipleship as individuals and as a church.

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer.

Thank you for the many ways in which you continue to create, redeem and sustain us as we grow in our discipleship as individuals and as a church.

May your many names be praised!

Amen

A prayer of discipleship

So what is new
about this command to love?
Surely it goes without saying
for have we not known this
since we were children?

Yet, as we hear it
once again,
it comes with fresh insistence.
'It's not about the words',
you say,
'it's about the change,
the healing and
the difference you can make
within another's life'.

Teach us, dear Lord,
to dig deeper still
into this vein
of true discipleship –
your way of love.

Amen

A prayer of confession

Gracious and merciful God,

Forgive us for those times when we have heard the command
'Go and make disciples' and not realised that meant us.

Forgive us

Forgive us and help us to be faithful disciples.

Forgive us

Forgive us for those times when we have been too scared
to witness to our faith.

Forgive us

Forgive us and help us to be faithful disciples.

Forgive us

Forgive us for those times when we have forgotten to pray or study your word.

Forgive us

Forgive us and help us to be faithful disciples.

Forgive us

Forgive us for those times when we have failed to share fellowship with one another.

Forgive us

Forgive us and help us to be faithful disciples.

Forgive us

Forgive us for those times when our words, thoughts or actions have not reflected your love.

Forgive us

Forgive us and help us to be faithful disciples.

Forgive us

Hear then the words of Jesus, 'Your sins are forgiven.'

Thanks be to God.

Amen

A prayer of sending out

Go from here to live your lives as God has called you
with the compassion of Jesus
and in the power of the Holy Spirit

So that those you meet will catch a glimpse of the glory of God
and see the difference that following Jesus makes.

Amen

A prayer of supplication

Challenging God,
You commanded us to 'Go and make disciples of all nations';
And yet, often we are frightened by that challenge.
Help us to remember that we are enabled to do all things
in the power of your Holy Spirit.

Challenging God,
You commanded us to 'worship the Father in spirit and truth';
And yet, often we evaluate worship by what we have gained.
Help us to worship you with honesty and integrity,
not just in church but in the way we live our lives.

Challenging God,
You expect us to welcome the stranger, feed the hungry,
clothe the naked and visit prisoners;
And yet, often we fail to do so.
Help us to 'do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God'.

Challenging God,
You call us to meet together for encouragement;
And yet, often we are unkind and critical of one another.
Help us to watch over one another in love so that
we might learn to live as you would have us live.

Challenging God,
You commanded us to 'love one another' as you love us;
And yet, often we fail to do so.
Help us to love one another so that everyone will know
that we are your disciples.

Challenging God,
we pray these prayers in the hope and expectation
that through our discipleship others will become your disciples.

In Jesus' name we pray,

Amen

Jesus said
he'll never
leave you or
forsake
you.

Trust in him.

Different ways of praying

Hard and sharp – a prayer of confession

Take a nail in your fingers. Feel the sharp edge and say sorry to God for the times when your actions or words have been sharp and cutting.

Feel the flat end and say sorry for the times when you have blocked God out of your life; or when your thoughts and actions have stopped others from seeing God at work in your life.

Place the nail on the palm of your hand and look at it. Nails may not be attractive and may look old and rusty, but they can still be an important part of the structure.

As you hold the nail in your hands, hear Jesus' gracious words: 'Your sins are forgiven, come follow me.'

I will make you a fisher of people: prayers for others

Take two paper fish. Think of someone you would like to know God's love and write their name on each fish.

Place one fish in the net. Take the other fish home to remind you to continue to pray for them.

Ask God how you might be the answer to your prayer.

Thy Kingdom Come

Pray regularly for five friends. The Thy Kingdom Come website (www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/9) has five ideas for praying using string, stones, a bookmark, Post-it notes or your mobile phone, as well as specific prayers you could use.

You could extend this by inviting the congregation to divide into groups of five (or whatever number works for you) and to share the names of five people each who they would like to know Jesus. Commit to praying for each of the five for each person every day or week for a month, asking God to provide opportunities for each person to share their faith story. Encourage each group of five to get together at the end of the month to share how things are going.

GROUP MATERIAL AND ACTIVITIES

Some of these small group materials are traditional Bible studies, some are more diverse session plans and others are short activities, reflections and discussions. Please choose materials appropriate to whatever group you are working with.

Commissioning and call

Matthew 28:16–20

Welcome everyone and invite them to introduce themselves by saying their names and finishing this phrase: ‘The most exciting journey I ever went on was...’

Thank God for:

- the call of Jesus to follow him
- the adventures of life and faith
- being entrusted with the commission to make more disciples.

Pray that group members will be open to each other, God’s word and the Holy Spirit.

Explain that this is the first of two linked studies – both are important for a balanced understanding. The best-known commission of Jesus to make more disciples is recorded in Matthew 28. However, Mark 16:14–16, Luke 24:45–49, John 20:20–23 and Acts 1:6–8 all record similar challenges.

Read Matthew 28:16–20.

- Read the passage from one translation while others follow in their translations.
- Read the same passage from another, quite different, translation.
- Invite people to say what they noticed/what stood out for them as the passage was read.

Present a very short explanation of the passage (use a good commentary or two for help). Points to highlight could include:

- The context – after the resurrection, mountain, etc.
- The commissioning came after they had worshipped, is directed to the whole group, and not just individuals.
- The authority with which they (and we) are commissioned.
- The core task to which they were commissioned: the making of disciples. In Matthew's Gospel, the making of disciples was the prime objective given to the followers of Jesus. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus says to Peter, 'I will build my church.' It is Jesus' job to build the church and ours to make disciples. How often do we assume it is the other way round?
- The imperative of the Greek verb which we translate as 'to make disciples' stresses the urgency and the importance of the task.
- The little word 'Go' is important. Note the disciples were sent to be where people were.
- The call to go to all nations – literally all ethnicities or all people groups.
- The place of teaching and baptism.
- The assurance from Jesus that he will be with us.

Invite conversation around the thoughts you have presented.

Ask people to consider:

- To whom do you sense a call to go?
- Do you feel a calling to work with any particular people groups in your community?
- Are there any particular challenges you might face in responding to this call?
- How might you offer the invitation to others to explore the call of Jesus to follow him (noting the root meaning of the word disciple is one who learns as they follow)?

Finish with your own prayer or one from the prayer section. Sharing the grace together involves all.

Empowering

Luke 24:35–49; Acts 1:6–8

Being asked to make more disciples might make us excited, terrified or both! What a privilege! What a challenge! Thankfully, we have the assurance of Jesus' presence in Matthew 28:20 and the promise of the Holy Spirit in Matthew, Luke, John and Acts.

- Read Luke 24:35–49 from one translation while others follow in their translations.
- Read the same passage from another, quite different, translation.
- Invite people to say what they noticed/what stood out for them as the passage was read.

Present a short explanation of the passage (use a good commentary or two for help). Points to highlight could include:

- The context – after the resurrection, disciples still fearful, etc.
- Their commissioning came after they had received peace, assurance and a session studying the scriptures
- The promise of the Spirit (see also Acts 1:6–8) and the command to wait until they receive the gift of the Spirit before they go out to witness
- The core task to which they were commissioned: to be witnesses to the significance of the suffering and resurrection of Jesus and to proclaim forgiveness in his name
- The call to go to all nations starting from where they were (see also Acts 1:6–8). Invite conversation around the thoughts you have presented.

Ask people to consider:

- The first disciples of Jesus needed assurance, teaching and the gift of the Spirit before they went out. What do we need by way of equipping to bear witness to Jesus?
- In these multicultural days, we don't have to go far to encounter different ethnicities and nationalities. How does this affect our commission to be witnesses to Jesus?
- When the Spirit did come at Pentecost, the disciples were transformed from fearfulness to boldness. In what ways do we need to be transformed?

As his followers, Jesus calls us on a journey of following (him) and going (to all peoples to bear witness to him and make more disciples). Give each person a paper footprint and together lay out a pathway to symbolise a journey. Along the pathway, place symbols from the Matthew and Luke passages wherever seems to be appropriate (e.g. a cross, a representation of the empty tomb, a Bible, water for baptism, a symbol of peace, a symbol of the Spirit).

Then invite people to stand wherever seems right to them on the pathway and pray for:

- those they would love to see become disciples of Jesus
- their witness to be fruitful
- the willingness to go where God sends
- a fresh filling of the Spirit.

Then, gather the prayers together by offering a covering prayer. You may wish to end by singing a song of commitment such as 'I, the Lord of sea and sky' or another from the list at the beginning of the booklet, and praying a sending prayer.



Being a disciple

Luke 5:1–11

The aim of this session is to help people to understand what a disciple is, how Jesus called the first disciples and how they can be disciples by telling their friends about Jesus and helping them to become disciples too.

Start by asking the group to think about an exciting time that they have experienced recently, and then to share it with the group. When something exciting happens, what is the first thing you want to do? Hopefully someone will say, ‘Tell someone else.’ Something very exciting happened to some very ordinary men in the Bible.

Read Luke 5:1–11, or watch an animated clip about Jesus calling the first disciples from www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zbyr87h. Ask the group to act out the story. For older groups, ask them how they think Simon and Andrew would have felt.

Jesus told the fishermen, ‘Come, follow me.’ He was picking them as his first disciples. Jesus told the fishermen that, from now on, they would be fishers of people. He didn’t mean that they would try and catch people like fish, but that they would be like Jesus, telling people how God loves us and cares for us. Jesus chose his disciples, who were just ordinary people, to be his helpers and also to learn about God the Father. What an exciting thing to be chosen by Jesus to follow him!

Simon, Andrew, James and John were the first disciples. Ask the group if they know how many disciples Jesus had and what their names were. Have some fun here by reading out a selection of names, including the names of the disciples, and let people pick out the names of the twelve disciples of Jesus. Ask if they can name any disciples alive now. Encourage them to think of anyone who believes in Jesus and follows him as a disciple. Talk about what sort of person Jesus chooses to be his disciples. For older children or adults, ask them to devise a job description for a disciple: what kind of person would Jesus be looking for, what tasks would they have to do? For all ages, draw out that Jesus chooses ordinary people, sometimes unpopular people, to be his disciples.

You may like to sing a song, or learn a new one, along the theme of being a disciple. One possibility might be ‘The strangest of saints’ by John Bell (Iona), or you may find it helpful to search YouTube for ‘Kids worship go and make disciples’ – for instance youtu.be/G0JeVbd5KHM or youtu.be/OUTLi2uIVGA.

Lead a discussion: What do disciples do? How can we be like disciples? The disciples spread the exciting news about Jesus to everyone they met. Do you tell your friends about church and Jesus? Be sensitive to anybody who may have been teased for going to church.

Draw out that our actions are as powerful as our words. How we live as disciples is as important as what we say. Words and actions are both important and need to be consistent.

At the end, encourage people to learn the following verse:

Go... and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

MATTHEW 28:19

Encourage the group to write out the memory verse to take home. One way to learn it together is to write the words on to individual cards, spread the words out in the correct order and then keep taking away one word at a time while people repeatedly recite the verse, until they can say it without any words in front of them.

Thank you, God, that each of us is invited to follow Jesus.
Thank you that Jesus came here for us.
Thank you that each of us can follow him.
Help us to be brave and excited about telling our friends about Jesus.
Amen

As leaders, continue to pray for the group as they share their faith and encourage them to tell you what they have done in a follow-up session.

Who am I?

For people who are familiar with the Bible, use the 'Disciple who am I?' quiz (www.biblewise.com/kids/char_topic/disciple-who-am-i.php) from the Biblewise website (www.biblewise.com) to guess which disciple is being described.



Creative storytelling

For very young children, read the story of ‘twelve special friends’ from the *Lion First Bible*, or ‘Jesus’ special friends’ from the *Lion Storyteller Bible*.

Cut out fish shapes for people to colour or decorate with stickers, glitter and other materials.

Put the fish in a net made from a washing ‘net’, washing tablet bag or other suitable material.

Close with a simple prayer.

Creative collage

Create a poster or collage together, with words and pictures that characterise a disciple (e.g. faithful, prayerful, obedient). This could be displayed in the room where you meet.

You may prefer to produce the same thing but individually and in a smaller format (e.g. a bookmark) so that people can take it home as a reminder of how a disciple should be.

Evangelism discussion

Have a discussion about why it can be difficult to talk about God.

Take a piece of flipchart paper and divide it into two halves. On one half, ask the group to write down reasons why people of their age might find it hard to talk about God to their friends, families or strangers. Discuss whether they think it's harder to talk to friends, or families, or strangers about God. Explore the reasons why that may be.

On the other half of the flipchart paper, ask the group to brainstorm ideas about how some of those problems/difficulties could be overcome. There may be some very practical ideas arising, or it may be important to acknowledge that sometimes there are no easy answers.

Evangelism action

Discuss with the group why they might or might not bring their friends to church or youth group.

Explore what events or activities they would invite their friends to at church or youth group.

Make some plans with the group for such an activity or event, and then make it happen!



Evangelism reflection 😊

Gather your group around a large piece of paper with the word 'Evangelism' written in the middle. Give each person a pen and ask them to write down any words or feelings that come to mind about evangelism. They can all write these words or phrases on to the big piece of paper so by the end you will have a collection of thoughts. Use this to spark a discussion about evangelism.

Draw out that evangelism doesn't have to be that image of a person on a street corner handing out leaflets, but rather modelling discipleship behaviour in everyday life.

FORMING THE HABIT

The ideas presented in this section are offered to help you establish or further practise **Making More Disciples** as a regular habit personally, as a church and in engagement with your local community and the wider world. You may want to consider using the ideas in more than one of these contexts.

In developing **Making More Disciples** as a regular habit, you may find some of the material in the 'Understanding the habit' section helpful too.

STORIES TO SHOW THE HABIT FORMING

How could you use these formative and transformative stories to inspire others? What stories of your own could you share?

Andrew Roberts writes, in his book *Holy Habits* (Malcolm Down Publishing, 2016):

When I worked for Ford, I let it be known I was a follower of Jesus and tried my best to live a life that honoured him and blessed others, not always doing this well, of course. Most colleagues were quite happy with this, but there was one called Gary [not his real name] who seemed to enjoy picking up on anything I did wrong and having subtle but annoying digs at my faith. I did my best to pray for Gary, that God would do something in his life.

One day, it seemed as if my prayers had been answered – when Gary was transferred to another part for the company.

A few months later, I too was transferred – to the same office that Gary had gone to. On day one at the new office, guess who was there to greet me? Fearing the worst, I was stunned and amazed when Gary bounced up, greeted me warmly and said, ‘Sue [not her real name] and I have been thinking we would like to get our boys to explore the Christian faith. Could you recommend a good local church?’ And so the adventure of discipleship began.

Tom, from the Birmingham Methodist Circuit who produced the resource on which these materials are based, writes:

When I first started going to church at the age of 17, the thing that drew me there was the people. It was because the friend who invited me was, in retrospect, full of the fruits of the Spirit. When I met her church friends, they too exhibited this character. It was this authentic friendship I witnessed and experienced with them for the first time that made me take God seriously and indeed open to the possibility that I had something missing in my life: God.

Janice Martin, from the Birmingham Circuit who piloted the Holy Habits programme, shares:

In my ministry as a Methodist Local Preacher, I have to travel to some churches by taxi. This has given me an opportunity to speak to someone not of the Christian faith as my driver was from the Islamic faith.

He asked where I was going and what I was doing there. This opened a dialogue to discuss faith. Not just mine, but his.

I explained that I work as part of a team of preachers, each one of us bringing different aspects and ways of looking at the scriptures. This keeps us following in the steps of Jesus as we try to live in his path.

He, in turn, told me about his faith and how he sees our relationship to each other. He also told me how people have abused him in his work as a taxi driver and he has built a shell around himself to not respond to this. He loves this country and would not go back to Bangladesh, for he sees that his children have a better education and more prospects when they are older.

I found that we could be honest with each other and respect each other's faith. As we live out our faith, we can tell people about Jesus in a friendly way. We should not hide but express our faith in our life.

PRACTICES TO HELP FORM THE HABIT

Here are some suggestions for how **Making More Disciples** can be part of a rhythm or rule of life in our personal discipleship and in and through the fellowship of our churches.

Roger Walton, in his book *Disciples Together* (SCM Press, 2014), identifies three key 'formative energies' for the making of disciples: mission, worship and intentional community. If we wish to see more people becoming followers of Jesus and growing in their discipleship, we need to:

- encourage people to engage in missional activity – as we step out in faith to serve and share, so we grow
- encounter God in transformational worship
- be part of a committed and supportive Christian community.

Roger then argues that Christian education or intentional learning is a fourth energy that informs, supports and develops the three primary energies.

In another of his books, *The Reflective Disciple* (SCM Press, 2012), Roger advocates the practice of reflection in particular as a formative learning process. Both books are very helpful for those seeking to make more disciples.

From these practices, make sure that you build in a mix of mission, worship and community-focused activities.

Often (daily or weekly)

Journalling

Journalling is regularly reflecting on your experiences, thoughts and encounters with God and keeping a note of your reflections. See the Holy Habits Introductory Guide for more information.

As you try to develop different ways to make **Making More Disciples** a habit, note in your journal what you have done and how it felt, and anything in particular that was a positive experience. What have you found challenging? Have you used different gifts? How has it affected your own discipleship? How has God challenged you?

Live Life 1-2-3 😊

Get the Live Life 1-2-3 App (www.livelifelife123.org) from Urban Saints to get 'tooled up' with some practical disciple-making training and devotionals. 1-2-3 is a commitment to a God-honouring future by investing in intentional, accountable, disciple-making relationships through inviting one person to be your guide, two people to be your running mates and three people who you will disciple.

Praying for individuals

As part of your daily praying, remember to pray for those you ache for, and those you may struggle with, whose lives would be made complete by becoming followers of Jesus.

Think of the people you know and love. Think of people you know about through the news. Is there anyone you can think of whose lives could be transformed by knowing the overwhelming love and grace of God?

Pray for them. Pray every day. Pray that they might come to know God's love for themselves. Pray that they might become a disciple of Jesus.

Disciple diary 👥 😊

Keep a 'disciple diary' for a week to show the things you have done to behave like a disciple. Could you continue this and review it regularly?

Tell your story

People respond to stories, so tell yours. Tell it in different contexts. Tell it in different ways. Tell the stories that have brought you to this point. Share the ways that God is at work in your life right now.

Practise your story with a small group of close friends – are you communicating what you mean to?

Be creative. Use social media. Blog it. Be yourself.

Take the Jesus story that has had the most impact on you and rewrite it with a modern twist. Blog it, or share it on social media, and see if it sparks conversations about faith.

Invite older members of the congregation into the youth group to share their stories of faith with the young people. Encourage the young people to think about how they would explain what they believe to their school friends.

Table Talk (www.table-talk.org) is a conversation game which aims to get people talking about the big questions in life. Different boxes are aimed at different groups of people and some of them are particularly appropriate for certain seasons. Table Talk for all-age Messy Moments has been a way of developing chat to explore faith with ‘Messy Women’, a meeting of Messy Church mums who wanted to discover more about the Christian faith.

The Being Good News video (youtu.be/w9N03cem6_I or search YouTube for ‘Steve Wild being good news’), featuring former Methodist President Steve Wild, is an inspiring encouragement to people to share their story of God’s love.

Courses

The Methodist course Talking of God (www.methodist.org.uk/talkingofgod), developed from the Time to Talk of God report, gives participants more confidence when it comes to sharing the stories of their faith in everyday life.

The Talking About Faith course (www.thinkfaith.net/realitybites/churches) from Thinking Faith equips participants to talk about the Christian faith in an engaging and insightful way.



Sometimes (weekly or monthly)

Regular groups

A book group might be good for those on the fringe of your church and for friends with no connection. It can be a safe place to discuss deeper issues initiated from the context of the novel.

A women's or men's group, meeting in a local pub or café, can be a good way of engaging those who are very much on the fringe of the church community. Food and discussion on a variety of topics are important ingredients.

Café/coffee morning

Start a café or coffee morning to encourage those attending other activities on the premises to enjoy a space to chat where all are welcome.

Street Pastors

Is there a Street Pastor team you could get involved with? Could you work with ecumenical partners to set up a team? (www.streetpastors.org).

Distribute the *Good News* paper

Free samples of this monthly paper are available and, at 14p/copy, it is a reasonable price for local delivery (www.goodnews-paper.org.uk).

Engage with your local schools

Could you offer to lead assemblies or provide input into in your local schools?

There are lots of good resources available:

- The Bible Society's Open the Book resource (www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book) is a project to bring the Bible to life for every child in every primary school, through themed and dramatised storytelling.
- Scripture Union's Lifepath (www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Lifepath) is a well-trying and highly successful term-time project which aims to give junior-school pupils the opportunity to explore the Christian faith through well-known historic Christians with a link to their location.
- 24-7 Prayer's Prayer Spaces in Schools (www.prayerspacesinschools.com) aims to enable children and young people of all faiths and none to explore life questions, spirituality and faith in a safe, creative and interactive way.

Create spaces 😊

Is there an area of your church that could be transformed into a prayer space or soul space for your local community?

Or look for spaces outside your church that could be transformed into an urban quiet space, or a rural prayer place.

Make these spaces available, make them known and make regular use of them.



Be creative with your worship 😊

Worship can be a transformational experience in discipleship – a missional, evangelistic opportunity.

Imagine your services through the eyes of somebody who has never been to church before: what would you do differently? Make sure you hold regular worship reviews.

Could you hold regular invitational services, or services that are particularly suitable for newcomers?

What about a Taizé-style service? Or a sensory prayer evening? What creative gifts do you have in your congregation that could be used in worship (e.g. painting, music, dance)?

Could you take your worship outside the walls of your building? Take your creativity into the community in worship and see what conversations happen.



Occasionally (quarterly, annually)

Get-out-of-church Sunday

Why not shut the church one Sunday and do some community service? If people ask you why you are doing it, share your faith story.

Eating together 😊

Invite friends, neighbours and user groups to a meal celebrating a Christian festival (e.g. Harvest, Christmas, Easter) or a community occasion (e.g. the Queen's birthday, Remembrance Sunday, a local festival).

Alternatively, invite friends to a women's or men's breakfast with a guest speaker and the opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

You could invite people for an evening of memory food: ask them to bring and share a food item with a special memory and ask them to talk for two minutes about it. It could be a parent or grandparent's favourite recipe, or the first thing you ever cooked. The stories could be full of fun or sadness, so be pastorally prepared.

Or how about holding a food and testimony evening? Invite friends along and have members of the group or congregation share their testimonies.

Community open day

Why not invite groups connected with the church and user groups to advertise their group, plus the opportunity for a short performance. Provide light refreshments. Advertise!

A season of invitation

A Season of Invitation (www.seasonofinvitation.co.uk, formerly Back to Church Sunday) offers resources for linking with your community on significant occasions.

Reflect on your faith journey

Make time to reflect on your own faith journey and how you share your story with others. One resource for doing this as an individual or with a group is the Church Army workbook, *Stepping into Evangelism* (available from www.churcharmy.org). This offers ideas and practical exercises for reflecting on how you share your faith with others.

Community consultation

Walk your local area, noticing who your neighbours are. What needs do you think you could meet in your local community? What groups run that people might want to be part of? What is missing in your provision?

Invite those using the premises or living locally to your church for refreshments. Explore some of these questions:

- Do you know what we do here? Do you see our building and what happens here as part of the community? How/why/why not?
- Do you have ideas as to how we might be able to interact better with the local community? Or get to know you better? How could we communicate better?
- Are there any ways in which we could help or support you, or your group/organisation/activity?
- Is there anything that we could pray for, for you?

Hope Together (www.hopetogether.org.uk) has many resources for community involvement, including *Hope: The heartbeat of mission*, a book packed with tried-and-tested ways of engaging with the local community to spread hope and the good news.

Pilgrimages, festivals and mission trips

Pilgrimage and festivals have long played a part in the formation of disciples, right back into Old Testament times. Similarly, trips to other countries and cultures can be a part of mission work. They are especially effective with younger people.

If resources permit, seek to make these annual opportunities for people in your church and community. If resources are limited, see if you could join with other local churches in offering these opportunities.

You might also like to arrange these activities locally. A local pilgrimage, quiet day or retreat in the city, for example, could be as formative as a trip to Iona, Taizé or the Holy Land.

If you don't have the resources for these, does anyone in your church go on a pilgrimage or to a festival or on a mission trip? Invite them to talk about their experience and how it has formed and transformed their faith and discipleship.

Could any of these become a regular feature of your personal or church life?



Northern Cross (www.northerncross.co.uk) and Living the Gospel (www.livingthegospel.co.uk) both run pilgrimages to places including Lindisfarne, Durham and Iona. St Cuthbert's Way (www.stcuthbertsway.info) is another well-used pilgrimage route. Search ReQuest (www.request.org.uk) for 'pilgrimage' for information about some other pilgrimages.

Major UK Christian festivals include:

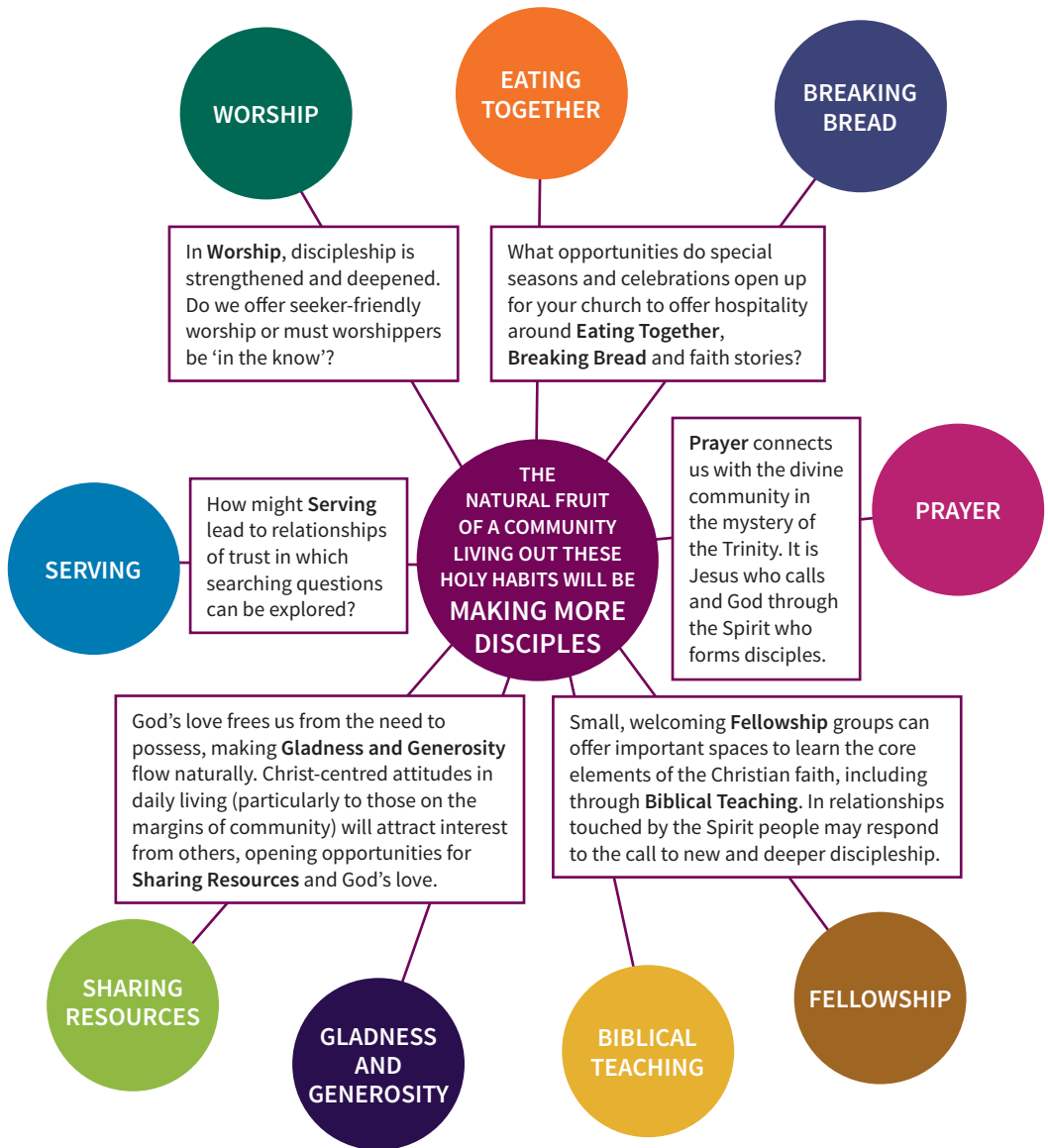
- **Greenbelt** (www.greenbelt.org.uk – faith, arts and justice)
- **Spring Harvest** (www.springharvest.org – worship and Bible teaching)
- **Soul Survivor/Naturally Supernatural** (www.soulsurvivor.com – youth and young adults)
- **New Wine** (www.new-wine.org – worship and Bible teaching)
- **Creation Fest** (www.creationfest.org.uk – music and Bible teaching)
- **Newday** (www.newdaygeneration.org – youth)
- **ONE event** (www.one-event.org.uk – worship and Bible teaching)
- **Big Church Day Out** (www.bigchurchdayout.com – worship and music)
- **ECG** (www.ecgevent.org.uk – Bible teaching).

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS A CHURCH

These questions will help your church to consider how it can review the place of **Making More Disciples** in all of its life together. They are intended to be asked regularly rather than considered once and then forgotten. You will need to determine where in your church the responsibility for each question lies – with the whole church in a general meeting, or with the church leadership, a relevant committee or another grouping. Feel free to add more of your own.

- ‘The church is the only organisation that does not exist for itself, but for those who live outside of it’ (William Temple, former Archbishop of Canterbury). Do you agree or disagree? How well does your church show the underlying message of this quote?
- Are the words we use straightforward and meaningful to those outside the church?
- Read some recent writing about discipleship. The church has been described as ‘a discipleship movement shaped for mission’ (Martyn Atkins, former General Secretary of the Methodist Church). How far is this true of your church?
- What are your plans and targets for making more followers of Jesus over the next year? How will you make that possible?
- Evangelism is a core calling of all Christians and all churches. In the Methodist Church, it is one of four sections on the Methodist membership ticket (a document that goes back to John Wesley’s day). Whatever church you are part of, do the activities, budgets and conversations of your church and its members reflect a quarter of time spent on evangelism?
- What can you do to make your premises more welcoming?
- Should you consider planting a new congregation in your locality?
- How does your church encourage and nurture new Christians in their faith?

CONNECTING THE HABITS



GOING FURTHER WITH THE HABIT

DEVELOPING FURTHER PRACTICES OF MAKING MORE DISCIPLES

Markers and milestones

Baptism

For all those who follow Jesus on the adventure of discipleship, there will be significant moments. This has been true ever since people began to follow. It was true for Jesus too, who was baptised in water, and as part of the 'great commission' of discipleship instructed his disciples to baptise others (Matthew 28:19).

Among the named disciples of Jesus, Simon Peter's story is particularly interesting and it is an intriguing question as to when he became a disciple of Jesus. Was it at the lakeside (Luke 5:4–11)? Or was it perhaps earlier when Jesus cured his mother-in-law (Luke 4:38)? As the adventure of discipleship unfolds for Peter, there are other milestone moments. His confession of Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 9:20). His restoration by the risen Jesus following his denial which poignantly ends with Jesus reiterating the call to discipleship, 'Follow me' (John 21:19). Then there is his participation in the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2) and the critical 'conversion' moment when he realises that God loves Gentiles too (Acts 10).

Every journey of following Jesus is unique but over time the community of disciples we call the church has come to recognise, mark and celebrate these in a number of ways.

In the early church, there were two key markers that signified the beginning of the journey: baptism in water and baptism in the Spirit. These were closely linked to 'conversion' or a first decision to follow Jesus (Acts 2:37–41). At times, these involved individuals and at other times whole families or households (important communities for the nurturing of disciples). It is intriguing to note how the promise of forgiveness and the gift of the Spirit is made by Peter to those who were listening, their children and 'for all who are far away' (Acts 2:39).

Today, different parts of the body of Christ mark the beginning of the journey in different ways. Baptism in particular is celebrated in a range of customs and practices. There are those who believe a conscious profession of repentance, faith and desire to follow Jesus must be made by the person being baptised. There is a very clear outworking here of Matthew 28:19 and the related commands of Jesus to make disciples, baptise and teach. Others take seriously the place of the household in the New Testament (in the book of Acts in particular – Acts 2:39, Peter’s words that the promise of forgiveness and the Spirit ‘is for you [and] for your children’) and baptise the children of Christian households. There is then a service of confirmation for those who were baptised as children and want as adults to publicly profess their commitment to follow Jesus. In some Christian traditions, including the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, infant and believers’ baptism is offered, but a person may only be baptised once. Baptism is seen as an unrepeatable event.

Peter’s story encourages us to think carefully about the services and markers that are offered on the adventure of discipleship. Some traditions do offer services to mark restorative moments for those who, like Peter, have in some way denied or drifted away from Jesus and want to redeclare their allegiance to him. Many offer services at Easter time in which people can renew their baptismal vows. Others (not just Methodists) use the Covenant Service introduced by John Wesley as an annual renewal of their commitment to following Jesus. And then there are services for marking an experience of Christian renewal.

Exploring the habit of **Making More Disciples** could be an ideal time to consider the opportunities your church provides to mark and celebrate stages on the discipleship journey and to be more intentional in offering a range of these. Such services are often very moving and a powerful encouragement to others to reflect on their own discipleship or to consider, perhaps for the first time, the call of Jesus to follow.

Believing, behaving, belonging

It used to be understood that, in the process of coming to faith, people moved from believing to behaving to belonging. That is, you had to **believe** the right things, which were taken for granted in a society and culture rooted in what has been described as ‘Christendom’. As a consequence, you would then **behave** in the right way. And, unless you believed the right things and behaved in the right way, then you could not **belong**.

John Finney, in his book *Finding Faith Today: How does it happen?* (Bible Society, 1992) began to explore a process that is now seen as much more usual. The steps towards **belonging** – in forming relationships, absorbing a sense of identity and becoming part of a particular community like that presented by Luke in Acts 2 that consciously practises Holy Habits – precede and lead to changes in **behaviour**, which then lead to, or are accompanied by, an exploration of the specifics of **believing**. The process then is from belonging to behaving and believing.

This is related to the changes in society towards ‘post-Christendom’, which have been extensively discussed in the 1990s and 2000s by John Drane, Stuart Murray and others. Grace Davie’s research into the sociology of religion at the end of the 20th century popularised the idea of **believing without belonging** as a characteristic of the secular society. Her book, *Religion in Britain: A persistent paradox* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), explores this in depth.

Baptism, as discussed earlier, offers a particular marker and milestone on the journey of Christian faith in relation to believing, behaving and belonging. It also offers a powerful symbol of transformation and change. Following the practice of infant baptism, confirmation, personal profession of faith and becoming a church member might also offer marker and milestone, but it is clear that organisations based on membership (and this is a feature of some, but not all, Christian traditions) struggle to recruit and retain members. The step of commitment to the local at a particular time and in a particular place can no longer be taken for granted.

Traditionally the Christian church has celebrated and offered three ‘rites of passage’ (sometimes referred to as ‘hatching, matching and dispatching’): baptism, marriage and funeral. Key life experiences were marked in particular ways in the liturgies of the church. In an increasingly secularised society, are there opportunities to develop other markers and milestones, particularly as we seek to respond to the challenge to **Make More Disciples**? If we observe faith as a continuing journey, and understand that the semantics of the Greek word *mathetes* (translated as ‘disciple’) indicates a literal meaning ‘who learns as they follow’, are there other markers and milestones that might be appropriate in the ongoing processes of belonging, behaving and believing?

Discipleship courses

As a church, could you run a regular discipleship course for those wanting to explore discipleship further? There are several good published resources suitable for different stages of discipleship or groups of people. For example:

- Alpha (www.alpha.org) – incorporating the Holy Habits of **Eating Together, Prayer and Making More Disciples**
- Compass (www.methodist.org.uk/deepening-discipleship/small-groups/key-resources/compass) – exploring Christian faith together
- Emmaus (e.g. www.chpublishing.co.uk/category/christian-books/the-emmaus-course-1509) – the way of faith
- Discipleship Explored (www.ceministries.org) – following Christ, what's it all about?
- Fruitfulness on the Frontline (www.licc.org.uk/fruitfulness) – imagine fruitfulness on your frontline
- Talking of God (www.methodist.org.uk/talkingofgod) – four-session faith-sharing course, encouraging natural, everyday conversations about life and faith
- Encounter (www.methodistencounter.org.uk) – a year-long programme of extending discipleship and exploring vocation. Journey with a group of fellow explorers to deepen your faith, grow in confidence and try new opportunities for mission and practice.

There are also courses to help churches explore how they make disciples, for instance:

- mission-shaped intro (www.freshexpressions.org.uk/resources-3/mission-shaped-introduction) – six-session course reimagining mission to engage with those not in the church
- mission-shaped ministry (www.missionshapedministry.org) – delving deeper into the principles of re-imagining church
- Inspire Movement (www.inspiremovement.org) – training and resources in discipleship and disciple-making leadership, and developing the spiritual life of mission-shaped disciples.

There are more resources on the DiscipleKit website (www.disciplekit.org).

Sharing your story

Could you use some of the material included in the introduction to the **Making More Disciples** booklet as a starting point for discussion in established small groups or as part of an open church meeting?

What is your response to the points raised? Does your faith story resonate with the introduction? Share your feelings about **Making More Disciples** with others. Share stories of personal experiences of **Making More Disciples** or consider in prayer how this Holy Habit will become part of who you are.

Introduce a regular slot in your services or church newsletter where someone answers the question, 'Where have I seen God at work in my life recently?' so that the Holy Habit of consciously striving to keep **Making More Disciples** becomes embedded in the life of the church.

How might you share your stories in your local community in contextually sensitive ways?

ARTS AND MEDIA

There are many films and books containing scenes about **Making More Disciples** which could be used as an illustration in worship. However, it is suggested that the following films and books are watched or read in their entirety and followed by a discussion to go deeper into the topic of **Making More Disciples**.

Films



Evan Almighty (PG, 2007, 1h36min)

A funny but thought-provoking film about one man's attempt first to run from and then obey God despite mockery from non-believers. Evan's determination and influence on others could be a good discussion starter about what it means to make disciples through faithful discipleship.

- What qualities of discipleship does Evan exhibit? Which of these qualities do you see in your own discipleship, and which might you need to work on?
- What struggles does Evan have with discipleship? Have you shared in similar struggles?

Expressions: Making a difference (2011, 185min in 28 individual stories)

This resource includes 28 stories of new forms of church **Making More Disciples**, to inspire and challenge.

- What new form of church might be needed in your area to reach people that existing churches struggle to reach?



Finding Nemo (U, 2003, 1h40min)

A father's quest to find his son provides opportunity to talk about love and friendship and what it means to make friends with Jesus.

- Who might be the Nemos in your local community? What does Nemo's father's journey say about how you might find them?

Jesus the Hero (see below, 15min)

First in a series of seven DVDs (www.sharejesusinternational.com/product/the-jesus-series-boxset).

A narration of Jesus' life by Andy Frost, director of Share Jesus International.

There is no age classification, but the graphic scenes of crucifixion may limit appropriateness. Suitable for


churches and small groups as an aid to discussion on the qualities of a hero.

- Would you describe Jesus as a hero? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?

Man Dancin' (also called *Kerrigan's Passion*) (15, 2003, 1h53m)

An ex-convict is forced to join a passion play as part of his parole. He finds religion, and the passion play becomes all too real as he comes into conflict with his past life of organised crime – amidst a cast of unlikely disciples whose lives are changed by their encounter with the gospel. Contains violence and difficult themes.

- Being a disciple is about following someone who stands for something – for example peace, justice or love. Kerrigan attracts a crowd – what would it take to do that in your neighbourhood?
- How attractive is it to stand up for what is right?
- What might a passion play look like in your context, if it were to involve people unfamiliar with the church?

 **Toy Story 3** (U, 2010, 1h43min)

This third story in the trilogy follows the group of toys and the joy and disappointment of their friendships.

- What does the film say to you about what it means to be a friend

of Jesus, and the depth of that friendship?

- What does the film say to you about repentance and forgiveness, and their place in **Making More Disciples**?

Books: fiction

Are there people in your church or local community who would like to discuss some of these books at a book club? Guidance on how to form these is widely available online, and you could also ask denominational training officers for help.

The Enormous Turnip

A traditional tale about sharing, available in various versions (for instance the beautifully illustrated Russian take on the story, *The Gigantic Turnip*, Aleksei Tolstoy, Niamh Sharkey, Barefoot Books, 2006).

- Discuss how and why the turnip was finally removed from the ground. Then explore whether there are things that happen at church that people would be happy inviting their friends to. If not, can something be planned?

The Keys of the Kingdom

A.J. Cronin (Bello, 2013, first published by Victor Gollancz, 1941)

The story of Father Francis Chisholm, an unconventional Scottish Catholic

priest who struggles to establish a mission in China.

- How do Father Chisholm's methods question or challenge the way you think about **Making More Disciples**?

The Man Who Planted Trees
Jean Giono and Michael McCurdy
(Peter Owen, 2008, 14th edition, originally published 1953)

An allegorical tale of one shepherd's long and successful single-handed effort to plant seeds to reforest a desolate valley over many years. He never gives up. When challenged, he replies that in time they will grow into mature trees. Many years later, a forest has grown and people come to see the sight. This book was adapted into an animated film by Frédéric Back in 1987, which can be watched online.


- How might we intentionally sow seeds of the gospel? What should we do while waiting for the seeds to grow?

Mr Rosenblum's List: or Friendly Guidance for the Aspiring Englishman
Natasha Solomons (Sceptre, 2010)

His eccentric ways and ambitions drive Mr Rosenbaum to attempt ever more extraordinary challenges. Amusing with an underlying serious theme – how to be accepted in a foreign land. The book could stimulate


conversation about our aims in life and the values we choose to guide us.

- How do you welcome those for whom this country may be a foreign land?

 **The Secret Garden**
Frances Hodgson Burnett (originally published by Heinemann, 1911)

A spoiled girl who learns to love life, people and nature and makes a difference in their lives. A story which shows the ripple effect that change can make.

- How do the characters in the book grow and change through being with each other?
- How have we grown and changed through knowing Jesus?
- Is there someone we could tell our story to?

 **You are Special/You are Mine**
(Wemmicks series) **Max Lucado**
(Candle Books, 2004/2005)

Both these stories are about being part of the community and the fact that you don't need to do particular things or have particular things in order to be loved by God – an important part of becoming a disciple.

- What does this story tell us about God's love?
- How could we share this message (perhaps by retelling the story) with someone else?

Books: non-fiction

Disciples Together: Discipleship, formation and small groups

Roger Walton (SCM Press, 2014)

A clearly written, engaging, research-based book that identifies key formative energies and practices for making and growing disciples.

- The author argues that relationships of companionship are particularly conducive to **Making More Disciples**. How might you encourage these and the other forms of disciple-forming relationships that the author explores?

Following Jesus: The plural of disciple is church

Alison Morgan (ReSource, 2015)

An account of what it is to follow Jesus, that affirms and examines the place of the church in this.

- How can your church be more fully a community of disciples? What part can you play in that?

Imagine How We Can Reach the UK: Whole-life discipleship

Mark Greene (Authentic Lifestyle, 2003)

A very helpful antidote to 'churchianity'. This book, and the resources associated with it, recognises that most discipleship

is lived as scattered not gathered church, and encourages and resources a discipleship lived out in the home, the workplace and the community.

- How might this book inform and shape preaching and praying in your church?

Also available as a DVD.

Making Connections: A resource book for rural churches

Jill Hopkinson et al (ACORA Publishing, 2010)

This short workbook (www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/making-connections) is designed to help small groups think creatively about their rural congregation and make the most of existing connections between the church and the wider community.

- What connections do you have? In the light of this book, how could you make more of them?

Making Disciples in Fresh Expressions of Church

Graham Cray (Fresh Expressions, 2013)

A brief but helpful overview of some of the ways in which disciples are being made in newly forming Christian communities, which are highly relevant for all churches.

- What insights do you need to learn from newly-forming churches?

Making Disciples in Messy Church: Growing faith in an all-age community

Paul Moore (BRF, 2013)

An easy read, this book explores how disciples are made and has as much to say to ‘tidy church’ as it does to Messy Church.

- How can the ideas in this book help grow faith in your church, whether Messy or not?
- How do you need to be church to enable growth? What do you need to do or stop doing?

Making New Disciples: Exploring the paradoxes of evangelism

Mike Booker, Mark Ireland (SPCK Publishing, 2015)

An extremely helpful book that reflects on the challenges and processes of making new disciples. It also reviews many of the most popular approaches to evangelism including Alpha, other such courses, Messy Church and other forms of fresh expression, and evangelism through traditional churches.

- Is there an approach or resource here that would be helpful as you seek to **Make More Disciples**?

Mission-Shaped Evangelism: The gospel in contemporary culture

Steve Hollinghurst (Canterbury Press Norwich, 2010)

A thorough study of recent culture and how that affects the ways we need to go about making disciples today.

- How do the challenges and opportunities of our culture affect the way we **Make More Disciples**?



Stories Jesus Told: Favourite stories from the Bible

Nick Butterworth, Mick Inkpen (Candle Books, 2005)

Fabulously illustrated and beautifully told versions of some of the parables of Jesus. A great way of introducing the young (and not so young) to the God who loves them.

- How could you use some of these stories in baptismal services, or on other occasions when many visitors are present, to celebrate and proclaim God’s love for them?



Ten Boys Who... /Ten Girls Who... (Lightkeepers series)

Irene Howat (2004–11)

Inspiring, true short stories to challenge young people in their faith.

- Which boy or girl has inspired you to do something differently?
- How has their story shaped the way you live out your faith?

Articles and online media

Tell, Show, Be

A short video about ways to pass on the message of Jesus to others. Simple, straightforward and effective (www.vimeo.com/27531792, 1m50s).

Making Disciples

A powerful short video about reimagining what it means to make disciples (youtu.be/oJWkQ9UP_m8, or search YouTube for 'Making disciples yueyangrob', 1m58s).

Contemporary Methodism: A discipleship movement shaped for mission

Two booklets by Martyn Atkins for Methodists and non-Methodists alike: 'Contemporary Methodism: A discipleship movement shaped for mission' (www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/intra-contemporary-methodism-280611.pdf) and 'Discipleship... and the people called Methodists' (www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/pubs-intra-discipleship-120710.pdf). They examine the history, heritage and practices of one group of Christians seeking to be and make fruitful disciples.

Talking Jesus

Look at this research for some encouraging statistics about how open people are to hearing about Jesus (www.talkingjesus.org). Use the two-minute video as a discussion starter.

Sticky Faith

Advice from the Fuller Youth Institute on helping children and young people grow in their discipleship (www.stickyfaith.org).

Good News Stories

Leamington Peace festival (youtu.be/s-L2hDcbVac or search YouTube for 'Good News Stories with Nick').

Church Where the People Are (Car Boot) (youtu.be/qP50g8KtdUo or search YouTube for 'Good News Stories with Nick').

Music

The following musical items may help you to explore and reflect further on this habit.

Follow You, Follow Me Genesis, 1978

You Will Never Run Rend Collective

Poetry

A number of poems are referenced below. Choose one to reflect on.

You may wish to consider some of the following questions:

- What does this poem say to you about **Making More Disciples**?
- Which images do you find helpful or unhelpful?
- How is your practice of **Making More Disciples** challenged by this poem?
- Could you write a poem to share with others the virtues of **Making More Disciples**?

Seeking the Christ of St Ives

Ian Adams, from *Unfurling*
(Canterbury Press, 2015)

Psalm 80A Redux

Carla Grosch-Miller, from *Psalms Redux* (Canterbury Press, 2014)

The Task Is Ended

Pádraig Ó Tuama, from *Readings From The Book Of Exile* (Canterbury Press, 2012)

Our God for All People



John Muafangejo (1943–87):
linocut, 1981, 35 x 33 cm.

From the Methodist Modern
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from: [www.methodist.org.uk/
artcollection](http://www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection)

In this work, there are two images of Christ, both of them half black and half white. In the upper one he stretches out his robed arms, while in the lower one the arms are naked on the cross. The artist's homeland was Ovamboland: what he described as an 'artificial boundary' between Angola and Namibia. After his mother converted to Christianity, John attended the local missionary school in Namibia and later worked as an art teacher at the mission school in Odibo. He is regarded as one of southern Africa's best-loved artists.

- Muafangejo did not live to see the independence of Namibia but the violent struggle for it, and the harsh apartheid regime of his time, formed the background for his art. How do you imagine this linocut (dated 1981) might have been received in Africa during the years up to Namibia gaining independence in 1990?
- How does this relate to your community? What images or stories of faith would either attract people in your community to engage with the love of God in Christ or alienate them?
- Read Galatians 3:27–29 and also the words that Muafangejo has chosen. Do you think his text enhances the message of the artwork?

Allotment seedlings



The seedlings need the right conditions, care and attention to take root and grow to maturity. How do we, as individuals and churches, create the right conditions and provide care and attention? The allotment can be a place of **Fellowship** and **Sharing Resources** and gifts, but also of learning from each other's experiences and mistakes. What are the parallels as we seek to **Make More Disciples**?

Credits

Contributions to this booklet came from: Deborah Humphries (lead Birmingham Circuit Editor), Ben Clymo, Brian Dickens, Rachel Frank, Caz Hague, Lis Helliar, Jill James, Maureen Knight, Janice Martin, Sarah Middleton, Tom Milton, Tricia Mitchell, Tony Moodie, Meg Prowting, Andrew Roberts, Stuart Scott, Andi Smith, Joy Wadsworth, Karen Webber and Steve Wild.

Quoting from Holy Habits

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‘This set of ten resources will enable churches and individuals to begin to establish “habits of faithfulness”. In the United Reformed Church, we are calling this process of developing discipleship, “Walking the Way: Living the life of Jesus today” and I have no doubt that this comprehensive set of resources will enable us to do just that.’

Revd Richard Church, Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship), United Reformed Church

‘Here are some varied and rich resources to help further deepen our discipleship of Christ, encouraging and enabling us to adopt the life-transforming habits that make for following Jesus.’

Revd Dr Martyn Atkins, Team Leader & Superintendent Minister, Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

‘The Holy Habits resources will help you, your church, your fellowship group, to engage in a journey of discovery about what it really means to be a disciple today. I know you will be encouraged, challenged and inspired as you read and work your way through each chapter. There is lots to study together and pray about, and that can only be good as our churches today seek to bring about the kingdom of God.’

Revd Loraine Mellor, President of the Methodist Conference 2017/18

‘The Holy Habits resources help weave the spiritual through everyday life. They’re a great tool that just get better with use. They help us grow in our desire to follow Jesus as their concern is formation not simply information.’

Olive Fleming Drane and John Drane

‘The Holy Habits resources are an insightful and comprehensive manual for living in the way of Jesus in the 21st century: an imaginative, faithful and practical gift for the church that will sustain and invigorate our life and mission in a demanding world. The Holy Habits resources are potentially transformational for a church.’

Revd Ian Adams, Mission Spirituality Adviser for Church Mission Society

‘To understand the disciplines of the Christian life without practising them habitually is like owning a fine collection of soap but never having a wash. The team behind Holy Habits knows this, which is why they have produced these excellent and practical resources. Use them, and by God’s grace you will grow in holiness.’

Paul Bayes, Bishop of Liverpool

‘The Holy Habits resources are a rich mine of activities for all ages to help change minds, attitudes and behaviours. I love the way many different people groups are represented and celebrated, and the constant references to the complex realities of 21st-century life.’

Lucy Moore, Founder of BRF’s Messy Church



Transforming lives and communities

Christian growth and understanding of the Bible

Resourcing individuals, groups and leaders in churches for their own spiritual journey and for their ministry

Church outreach in the local community

Offering two programmes that churches are embracing to great effect as they seek to engage with their local communities and transform lives



Teaching Christianity in primary schools

Working with children and teachers to explore Christianity creatively and confidently

Children's and family ministry

Working with churches and families to explore Christianity creatively and bring the Bible alive

parenting for faith

Visit brf.org.uk for more information on BRF's work

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The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) is a Registered Charity (No. 233280)

HOLY HABITS is an initiative to nurture Christian discipleship. It explores Luke's model of church found in Acts 2:42–47, identifies ten habits and encourages the development of a way of life formed by them. These resources, which include an introductory guide, have been developed to help churches explore the habits in a range of contexts and live them out in whole-life, missional discipleship.

Biblical Teaching
 Fellowship
 Breaking Bread
 Prayer
 Sharing Resources

Serving
 Eating Together
 Gladness and Generosity
 Worship
 Making More Disciples



Edited by Andrew Roberts, Deborah Humphries, Neil Johnson and Tom Milton



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