

COMMUNICATING FAITH

GOAL:

To gain an understanding of the various ways individuals and the church make the Gospel relevant to everyday life.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- a) After completing this module, participants will be able to:
- b) Identify a range of models of mission and evangelism, including partnership in mission.
 - (i) explain the advantage and disadvantage of three models in three different contexts
 - (ii) demonstrate a partnership approach to evangelism and mission
- a) Describe a context within which they work, and develop a model for communicating faith which is appropriate to that context.

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WHAT TO DO

Step One	Starting with your own understanding	30 mins
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1.
 - a. Find a way of illustrating how the Christian faith was communicated to you in a helpful way. Read the Introduction pages 4-5
 - b. What is your understanding of the words “Mission” and “Evangelism”?

Step Two	Knowing your context	30 mins
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The way we engage in Mission and Evangelism is shaped by the environment we are in. It is vital to first understand our context. Use the work you did for the “Know Your Context” Module to help with this.

2. Briefly answer the following questions, highlighting what you see as the most significant things for Mission and Evangelism in your area.
 - a. What kind of people are there in your local Church/Faith Community?
 - b. What kind of people are there in your community/town?

Step Three	Understanding different approaches	1 hour, 30 mins
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Read Resource Material pages 5-13: “Approaches to Communicating Faith”

3. Analyse all five Approaches. For each one write at least one paragraph on:
 - a. the advantages of that Approach. What are the benefits of that approach? In what settings? Why?
 - b. the disadvantages of that Approach. What do you see as its limitations?

Step Four	What fits in your context?	2 hours
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What happens in your Faith Community? What programmes are running to communicate faith? How does your faith community understand Mission and Evangelism?

4. Visit someone who can give you an overview of the mission and evangelism that happens in your faith community. Find out from them what happens and why.
5. Write a description of your Faith community’s involvement in Mission and Evangelism.
6. Consider your findings in terms of the Approaches discussed earlier. Which approaches do you see happening? How? Write a page on this.

Step Five	Understanding Partnership	5 hours
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Read Resource Material pages 10-13: “Partnership in Mission”

7. Analyse the power dynamics operating in the youth ministry in your faith community.
 - a. Who are the partners in the youth ministry? Who are the interested parties? Draw a diagram of the different groups involved, showing the relative size/importance of each, and how they relate to each other.
 - b. Write your response to:
 - i. Who is the ministry done for? (who are the ‘receivers’ of mission?)
 - ii. Who is the ministry done by? (who are the ‘givers’?)
 - iii. Who makes the decisions about what happens in youth ministry?

- iv. How are decisions made? ... when? where? who is consulted? what process of decision-making is used?
8. Write approx 500 words on the following questions
- a. Assess the youth ministry in your faith community against the principle that “Partners in God’s mission are inter-dependent, equal, and mutually supportive and accountable.” (Loudino Yuzon)
 - b. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of your faith community in relation to this principle.
 - c. How could the youth ministry in your faith community move towards greater partnership by building on strengths and improving weaknesses?
- 9.
- a. Discuss your thoughts in 8 with the youth leadership team or parish minister. With them, work out at least 2 practical ways of developing your youth ministry in this direction.
 - b. Write these up, and send in for assessment.

Step Six	Learning by doing	5 hours
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Choose one thing out of your Strategy from Question 9 that you could do as a Project for this Module. It needs to be one small step; achievable, measurable, specific. Once you have decided what to do:

- 10.
- a. Write up your Objectives. What do you want to achieve?
 - b. Consult with everyone who will be involved in running the project.
 - c. Do any preparation needed, for example publicity, getting resources.
 - d. Ask two people to evaluate the project, and give them each an Evaluation Form (you will need to copy it).
 - e. Run the project
- 11.
- a. Talk to the people who evaluated the project, and get the filled out Evaluation Form from them
 - b. Write a summary of what happened.
 - c. Write your reflections on it. Evaluate the project: did you achieve your objectives? What worked? What could have been done better?

RESOURCE MATERIAL

INTRODUCTION

What are Mission and Evangelism?

For many Christians, these words provoke a curious mixture of excitement and guilt. Excitement because most of us have been thrilled by what we have heard of “missionaries”, out in the jungles of the world, living faith to the max, challenged by life and death situations, having a conviction of faith that often seems to elude us at home. Even less dramatic experiences of mission bring out the best (and sometimes the worst!) in the Christian church. Feeding the hungry, preaching Good News to the poor, challenging unjust structures, proclaiming Christ. Sounds wonderful, doesn't it!?

But how does all this fit into our everyday lives, churches, jobs and youth groups? Too often, we are left with a vague sense of guilt that we are not getting out there more, converting more people to Christianity, doing something more about the problems in our city.

- Ç Where do Mission and Evangelism fit in our youth ministry?
- Ç What do we mean by those words, anyway?

Both concepts start from the assumption that we have some measure of Christian faith, which inspires us enough to make us want to live it out in some way in our lives. We are loved, totally and wonderfully, by the One who made us, and like the magic penny of the old song, love is meant to be given away. Love opens our eyes to the needs of others, and once we have seen, we cannot just turn away.

Mission happens when we see the needs of others, and act to meet those needs. God calls us to serve, to help, to be there for people, to do faith. Our faith is communicated through our actions, so is hidden within who we are and what we do.

Evangelism happens when we communicate our faith. This can happen directly, by talking about Christ, putting the case for God, or indirectly, as we share of ourselves, and encourage others. We communicate by meeting people, and finding ways to share, listen and be understood.

Mission and Evangelism sit together as vital expressions of our Christian faith. Without them, we easily stagnate, retreating into our comfortable corner of the world, to shrink and die a cosy but inevitable death. They need each other, even if they don't always fit together easily. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, the body needs hands and a mouth, so the Church needs those who will act as much as those who will speak. The important thing is that both start and finish with love.

This Module will explore both these concepts, how they interact, and how we can apply them in our youth ministry.

THEOLOGY OF MISSION

“There is but one gospel of Jesus Christ, and this gospel came to us in a manger, not in Herod's palace. I have found that sharing the gospel with factory workers enables me to understand God much better than sharing it with those from comfortable, well-to-do families. I suppose this is what we mean when we say that the poor have good news for us, and that, in evangelising, we also become evangelised.”

Raymond Fung

APPROACHES TO MISSION AND EVANGELISM

Each approach is described by answering these questions:

what motivates people to be committed to this form of mission/evangelism?

what beliefs and assumptions underlie this approach?

what principles are important in guiding how things are done?

what sorts of practical action might be an expression of this approach?

what are the limitations of this approach?

1. Social and Community Service

Social services provide for immediate needs of those who struggle to survive. Community development provides the opportunity for people to gain new skills and support each other.

- a. *Motivation*
 - i. Care for people in need
 - ii. Enjoy working with people
 - iii. Wanting to see people empowered to make more out of their lives
 - iv. Jesus' commands to care for the poor and the oppressed
- b. *Beliefs*
 - i. That all people have equal worth
 - ii. That the Church is meant to be there for those in need
- c. *Principles*
 - i. The importance of consulting with the target people, to ensure that services provided are appropriate to their needs
 - ii. Networking with other groups and people is also important
 - iii. All services we offer must enhance the dignity of the people we are serving
- d. *Expression (Some examples)*
 - i. food banks for poor families
 - ii. second-hand clothing shops
 - iii. budget advice and training
 - iv. child-care
 - v. drop-in centres for elderly, or those with mental illness)
- e. *Limitations*
 - i. Social services are limited because they find it hard to address the root causes of poverty. This is expressed by Stephen Booth, a young person from Wellington, speaking about a course in social service transformation that he did:

“One question that was raised from visiting social service agencies, was whether these groups are working with the powerless, or for them. We perceive that some of these groups are providing an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. They are providing social services but not encouraging community development. They patch up problems and solve them in the short term, but they do not try to stop people falling off the cliff again. Their clients experience the shame of being recipients of charity.”

2. Social Justice and Political Action

A Social Justice approach to mission arises out of the conviction that meeting immediate needs of those who are disadvantaged will not bring about any real change in their lives if the systems that made them poor do not change. A deep dissatisfaction with the way our society and world is set up

leads people to work for change at a political level, striving to ensure that those in power make decisions that do not further disadvantage those at the bottom of the heap.

This perspective is from Nancy Whitehead, worker for the Methodist-Presbyterian Public Questions Committee.

a *Motivation*

- i When you look at all the people hurting, and at the systems that hurt and oppress them, I want to do something to change the way things happen. It starts from the basic theology that all people are created equal, but some people get the raw end of the deal, through no fault of their own. I value people as people, and am very concerned about what happens to people at the bottom of the heap.
- ii I am not motivated by guilt. I don't personally feel guilty about what my ancestors did to the Maori people, but I do feel passionately about the injustice that was done, and I am committed to doing what I can to help put it right.
- iii If we are Christian, therefore we are followers of Christ, so we are called to follow Christ's commitment to bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free, as expressed in Luke 4:18-21.f

b *Beliefs*

- i I start with the goodness of creation, including human beings. And the example of Christ, who treated people as people, regardless of ethnic background, gender, or status in society. He challenged the powerful in his time, and empowered those who were oppressed.
- ii Although working for social justice can feel like you're pushing water uphill with a rake sometimes, I believe that I can do something. Individual people do make a difference. Politicians do listen to letters they receive, people can be challenged, even in ordinary conversations. However, it is hard to get far on your own. Networking and grouping with others with similar aims is essential.
- iii White middle-class people do have a role to play. We are given skills and education, and have a responsibility to assist others less fortunate.

c *Principles*

- i Keep well informed. Have a good foundation in accurate information.
- ii Nobody can be fully informed on everything. It is important to choose an area you are especially interested in, and keep your focus clear.
- iii Be passionate about it. If you don't really care, you probably won't have much impact.
- iv Develop skills in writing, so that what you write will be read by the right people. Write for a busy audience, so say what you want to say quickly. Stick to the facts, and avoid waffle.
- v Work with other people. Network. Consult ... with other church bodies (for example the Public Questions Committee, or the social service agencies), and non-church organisations that are addressing similar issues.

d *Expression*

- i Write letters to people in power
- ii Research into the impact of Government policies on those who are poor, or particular cultural groups
- iii Work in a food bank, to get to know how the other half live. Find out what's happening for other people.
- iv Lobbying Government, your local MP

- v Educating Church members into the realities of life in our society
 - vi Writing articles
 - vii Supporting financially groups who are working in this area
 - viii Be well read; keep newspaper clippings on your topic
 - ix Network with other groups
- e *Limitations*
- i It is possible to get so far into working for justice that you get away from your theology. It is important to stay grounded in the gospel.
 - ii You can get so enthusiastic about issues that you put other people off.
 - iii It can become too intellectual, involving the brain in political processes. As I said before, staying passionate about people is essential

3. Evangelical Proclamation

This approach to evangelism has as its prime goal to bring all people to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It emphasises God as the same yesterday, today and forever, and the importance of the Bible as the foundation of our lives. It invites people to faith through repentance and conversion.

a *Motivation*

"The evangelical emphasis upon evangelism arises naturally from four considerations:

- i First, the need for a personal faith leads to the question of how that personal faith arises, and the responsibility of believers towards that development.
- ii Second, the evangelical proclamation of the majesty of Christ as saviour and Lord naturally expresses itself in a concern to extend his kingdom.
- iii Third, the concern to remain faithful to Scripture means that the great biblical injunctions to proclaim Christ to the world (such as Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1,8) are taken with the utmost seriousness.
- iv And fourth, the intense joy of knowing Christ makes it natural for evangelicals to wish to share this experience with those whom they love, as an act of personal generosity and consideration." (McGrath, p70)

b *Beliefs*

Alister McGrath sets out what he sees as the six fundamental convictions of Evangelicalism:

- i The supreme authority of Scripture as a source of knowledge of God, and a guide to Christian living.
- ii The majesty of Jesus Christ, both as incarnate God and Lord, and as the saviour of sinful humanity.
- iii The lordship of the Holy Spirit
- iv The need for personal conversion.
- v The priority of evangelism for both individual Christians and the church as a whole.
- vi The importance of the Christian community for spiritual nourishment, fellowship and growth. " (McGrath, p 51)

c *Principles*

"True evangelism is the Way of the Cross. The church must proclaim and live out the real meaning of the Cross of Christ. There is no "cheap grace". True evangelism is empowered by the Holy Spirit. We are profoundly aware of the need of us all to seek the Spirit's leading and empowering. Our plans will not bear fruit if they are not of God, and implemented without God. " (Diocese of Wellington)

d *Expression*

The Diocese of Wellington's Council for Evangelism and Church Growth define evangelism in this way: "The Great Commission specifically commands Christians to go to the whole world to make disciples. In other words, Christians are sent to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom with a hope that men and women will accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Evangelism is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally, and so be reconciled to God, to one another, and to creation. The results of this evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his church, and responsible service in the world. "

This might mean, in specific terms:

1. individual Christians being encouraged and trained to speak about their faith to other people, and invite them to attend evangelistic events large rallies, which include a challenge for people to make a commitment to Christ;
2. age and gender-specific programmes, to communicate the Christian message in a way that is appropriate to people;
3. public proclamation of Gospel, eg singing and preaching on the street, or on television
4. worship and teaching which focuses mainly on praising God, and confessing our human sinfulness;
5. small home groups to provide an 'entry point' for non-church people that nurtures Christian faith.

e Limitations

- i. "Without the Spirit, evangelism can become manipulative recruiting, and evangelistic planning can be reduced to a form of marketing management, to a merely human work." (Diocese of Wellington)
- ii. It can be difficult to make links between the world of the Bible, if taken very literally, and the world we live in today. This can lead to debates over such things as masculine language, the creation of the world, and sexual standards, that can alienate non-church people. As Martin Luther said, "If you preach the Gospel in all aspects, with the exception of the issues which deal specifically with your time, you are not preaching the Gospel at all."
- iii. There is a danger that we can speak more than we listen to people, if our own convictions about what is right do not allow for other ways of encountering Christ, and so imply arrogance and narrow-mindedness.

Books referred to:

Alister McGrath, *Evangelism and the Future of the Church*, 1988, Hodder and Stoughton
Anglican Diocese of Wellington, *Council For Evangelism and Church Growth*, 1993 Report.

4. Relationship Evangelism

This approach to evangelism seeks to share the good news of Christ with people through relationships of openness and mutual understanding. It emphasizes mutual sharing, listening more than talking, and believes that the content of the faith we share must be shaped by the context of the people we are sharing with, and the personal journey of individual people.

a. *Motivation*

- i. A conviction that Christ gives us good news to share, that can make a difference in people's lives.
- ii. Love and respect for people.
- iii. A sense of call to ministry with people.

b. *Beliefs*

- i. Relationships are the place that evangelism happens. "The Gospel finds its form and content in and through the close and caring relationship." (Saxbee, p92)
- ii. There is more than one valid way of understanding God.
- iii. The Bible is very important, and is best understood through study of its

context and liberating message.

- iv. "We are most truly the Church when we move out into God's world - moving out not as imperialists to conquer the world with the Gospel, but in the vulnerability of love.... People will only want to change if they hear, see or experience, something that corresponds to their needs. " (John Drane, record of a World Council of Churches School of Evangelism, 1990)

c. *Principles*

John Saxbee writes about three principles for liberal evangelism:

- i. "It puts hearing before speaking.
- ii. It expects what has been heard to influence not only communication of the gospel, but also its content. Encounters with various cultures and individuals reveal gospel claims in a new light and uncover gospel truths as yet unrealised and unacknowledged.
- iii. It encourages evangelistic responses that are specific, selective, and original." (p43)

Where we are has a large impact on the way we live as Christians. This means that the words and images used to express our faith will be constantly adapted, and drawn from our modern life, and the land in which we live.

d. *Expression*

- i. Being there for others in a mutual way. "We can all participate in one another's mission by "being there", and through being there we help to open one another's eyes and hearts." (Butler, in Saxbee, p60)
- ii. Being there for people at times of crisis or transition. "It is when people feel that their story has been heard, their heart-felt feelings articulated, and their hopes and fears addressed, that they come away with a sense of being encountered by something or someone beyond themselves at a vital stage in their journey." (Saxbee, p63)
- iii. Caring is good news, and this good news can be shared in even the briefest of encounters." (Saxbee, p64)
- iv. Speaking of our own faith, but only after we have 'earned the right to speak' through caring for people. This involves making connections between people's lives, the Bible and the gospel of Christ.
- v. Building groups and communities of people who grow together in faith and knowledge of the Christian life.
- vi. Teaching and worship which focusses mainly on affirming the goodness of people, and acknowledging the presence of God in all of life.

e. *Limitations*

- i. Relationship evangelism puts caring for people alongside proclaiming a particular message. There is a danger that the message of Christ can get lost in constantly responding to people's needs.
- ii. Because no one single way of interpreting the Gospel is consistently proclaimed, people outside the church can feel confused about what the message actually is.

Books referred to:

John Saxbee, *Liberal Evangelism*, 1994, SPCK.

5 Partnership in Mission

Partnership in Mission is an approach to mission that comes from an understanding that Jesus calls us to be in relationship with each other, as equals. It emphasises the need for mission to be a two-way

sharing, that empowers all partners to be fully empowered and involved.

a. *Motivation*

- i. Living out the faith. Respecting the call of Christ
- ii. A concern or feeling based on a personal experience with people who are on the bottom of the social/economic scale. This is an experience of sitting where they sit, standing in their shoes (or sandals). 'Because I've been there I can see the world from their perspective.'
- iii. Caring about other people, because you are in relationship with them. Being friends!
- iv. Righteous indignation! Getting angry with systems that are unjust and affect the lives of people you care about.

b. *Beliefs*

"To me, the primary characteristic of the person of Jesus Christ whom we communicate is not his saintliness, his miraculous power or his wisdom, but his solidarity with people, especially those rejected by society, those who have no place under the sun.... "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us" ...these are the dynamics of the person of Jesus, the manifestations of his being. To point to this being requires a method of solidarity from Christians." (Raymond Fung)

i. **Jesus Christ calls us to new relationships of love**

"Love your neighbour as yourself" is a core Biblical imperative (Matt 19:19, Rom 13:9, Gal 5:14). The Jewish law interpreted this as applying only to people within the religious community, and separated people along a scale of blessedness'. Less and less people became acceptable to be part of the religious 'in crowd'. The specific teachings of Christ and his example all point to a new understanding that people are equal and in relationship with each other. "There is no longer Jew or Greek ..Slave or Free.. Male or Female, for all of you are one in Jesus Christ". (Galatians 3:28). This means loving people, regardless of whether or not they are "acceptable", "sane" or "normal" to our eyes.

ii **God is on the side of the poor**

God loves all of creation. However, God's special concern is for those people who are poor, oppressed, disadvantaged or alienated.

Michael Riddell is a kiwi Baptist minister. He writes in his book 'Godzone': "In order to love kids equally, you have to treat them differently. As long as there is injustice in the world, some will get more attention than others. God has a special bias to the little people, the ones who get habitually done over. The poor, the disabled, the unloved and the unlovely all find favour with God." (Riddell, p65)

Jean Vanier writes from his experience of ministering with handicapped people. "I think we can only truly experience the presence of God, meet Jesus, receive the good news, in and through our own poverty, because the kingdom of God belongs to the poor, the poor in spirit, the poor who are crying out for love. " (Vanier, p20)

iii **It is essential to look hard at what has happened in mission.**

There have been bad failings in mission when it is based on a power imbalance, and a failure to recognise the power relationship between 'givers' and 'receivers'. Analysis is a key part of working in partnership. This involves asking hard questions about why we are motivated to be in mission, and what our goals are. We have to face up to our hidden prejudices and assumptions, and the insidious power of systems such as racism, colonialism, and sexism. The goal of partnership in mission is mutuality, and building the dignity of those who are crushed. Hearing their perspective is vitally important.

c. *Principles*

- i. Partnership begins in a growing understanding of our need for each other. We need to grasp the concept of our interdependence, and to be connected in relationship.

- ii. Mutual respect is essential. This means working towards understanding of different cultures, and world views.
- iii. The best way to understand someone else's point of view is to be there with them. To sit where they sit, and to see the world from their perspective.
- iv. True mission happens when there is a two-way flow of gifts and resources between both partners.
- v. There are imbalances in power between partners in a mission situation, and it is the partner with the most power that has to address that.
- vi. The partner with the least power needs to be enabled to determine the agenda. The critical test of partnership is 'Who makes the decisions?'

"The concept of partnership in mission may be illustrated by two images at a meal table. In a Western style meal, at a rectangular table, the host who provides all the food gives appropriate signals on when to commence eating, and on how one should eat. The host cuts the roast into pieces and distributes it around the table. In a Chinese-style meal, on a round table with a 'Lazy Susan', all present are situated at an equal distance in relation to the food, placed in the centre of the table. At any time, anyone, guest or host, is made to feel free to turn the Lazy Susan around to a position appropriate for his/her, to get his/her share of the food.

"Historically, mission has been characterised by a one-way movement of human and other resources from sending churches and agencies in the West to receiving people in 'mission fields'. Those who receive become the objects of mission, not partners. Those who send make the decisions, and wield considerable power over their clients in receiving countries. Not only do they have the money, they also claim to have the right theologies that legitimise what they do in the name of mission.

"Partnership outgrows the 'patron-client' relationship. It implies that partners in God's mission are inter-dependent, equal, and mutually supportive and accountable. Partnership is not to be understood in terms of one church doing something for another, but in terms of what churches can do in, for and with the world together. Partners are simultaneously givers and receivers. It assumes that no church is too affluent to be unable to receive, and not too poor to be unable to give.

"Partnership implies that every place is a mission field which is not something "out there". Mission is both local and global; hence, one should think globally but act locally, anywhere, anytime." (Yuzon)

d Implications

On the face of it, Christ calling us into relationship with one another and for that relationship to be an equal one, is logical and easy to understand. However these principles have a radical and far reaching impact on the way:

- i. Christian people relate to each other,
- ii. structures within the local church relate to each other,
- iii. the local church relates to its community,
- iv. national and regional church structures relate to each other,
- v. Christian aid agencies relate to their receiver countries
- vi. national churches relate to each other internationally

These principles lead us to ask questions about the nature of the kinds of relationships that we and the church are in. Are the relationships equal and balanced? Who has the power or say? Who controls the money? Who has the knowledge and understanding? Who receives the information? If in any relationship there is an imbalance to one side in any of these areas then the relationship is not a true partnership.

Partnership in Mission is about not only what people do in response to call of God but also looks at how the things are done.

e Expressions

- i. A reassessment of all ongoing mission and development projects that are in other countries, enter in to dialogue with the host

- countries/churches as to whether these projects are still serving the needs of the local people, how effective they have been, and discuss any changes that need to be made. Set up new time frames for the reviewed project and if not already there, put in place processes for further review by the receiver country.
- ii. A reassessment of all our ongoing mission and development projects in New Zealand and repeat the process of consultation review and dialogue in to the effectiveness of them. Thus helping to develop the partnership relationships with those people and organisations that we are already relating to.
 - iii. Two-way sharing of resources. For example inviting someone from a third-world country to come and minister with us.
 - iv. Local mission projects arising out of a mutually beneficial relationship between two groups e.g.: a Faith community and a Marae working together on a youth programme.

As well as particular projects or mission activities, Partnership in Mission is an approach which can be applied in any ministry relationship. Some examples might be:

- pastoral visiting where there is an equal relationship between those visiting and being visited, so that the person being visited feels totally affirmed and valued.
- youth ministry that involves young people in setting the agenda for the activities, which builds relationships of trust and respect on both sides.
- counselling for families which teaches skills, and empowers them to make changes in their homes, and in the wider society, by helping them feel an active and important part of their own therapy.

Partnership in youth ministry

Using this approach in youth ministry opens up key questions that need to be addressed, such as:

- What does the church give to the youth group?
- What does the youth group give to the church?
- Who makes decisions about what is given or done?
- What resources are available?
- What is exchanged?
- What model of making decisions? ... arbitrarily deciding ... consulting ... whose WAY of making decisions?
- Who's basic assumptions are you operating by?

The hard thing is realising that young people bring a new perspective of the world. This is essential information, but is often not acknowledged. Too often the church can't see or appreciate the gifts that young people have to offer the church, because they don't fit the traditional assumptions.

f. *Limitations*

Partnership in mission is hard. We are often having to put right a past wrong, before we can move in to a position of partnership. We need to recognise the unequal power dynamics that we are part of and recognise that often we are in the dominant power position. The 'talk' is easier than the 'walk'. Because we first have to see and take responsibility for the negative patterns of mission that the Western church has set up in the last 300 years. This creates significant resistance from those who have benefitted from the way things have happened. For many people, even those who 'mean well', it is a struggle to let go of control. With Partnership, things may not turn out how we expect them to, as we let the priorities of the partner group take precedence over our own.

Partnership in mission takes time. It is about building right relationships, rather than doing quickly what seems obvious to us. This can feel frustrating, but the fruits of partnership will last, and really work for those we hope to serve.

Resources referred to:

Michael Riddell, *Godzone. a traveller's guide*, 1992,
Reed Books
Jean Vanier, *From Brokenness to Community*, 1992, Paulist Press
Lourdino Yuzon, *Towards a Holistic Theology of Mission*, a paper from the Council for Mission and Ecumenical Co-operation, 1994