

Study Leave Report

**Mission, Team Leadership and Preaching –
Worship for the under 50s**

Study Leave
29 April – 20 July 2011

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Introduction

From 29 April until 20 July 2011 I was away on Study Leave. This was time for refreshment and learning in 3 specific areas :

- 1. Christian Leadership particularly leading –working with a team ,given our new structures at St Andrews Geraldine.**
- 2. Mission –Evangelism -how to be missionally effective as a church both from a Biblical – theological perspective and practically.**
- 3. Preaching –worship –especially as it applies to those under 50.**

For all of the month of May I was studying at Regent College Vancouver. I attended the Pastors Conference there with the theme 'Leading with the leader –community, character and charism'. I audited three courses – Dynamics of Church Leadership (Dr Rod Wilson), Evangelism and Apologetics for the Third Millenium (Dr Krish Kandiah) and Pastoral Care for those who suffer. (Dr Marva Dawn). I also attended a prayer retreat led by Regent staff my last weekend in Vancouver. During my time in Canada I travelled down to Seattle from Vancouver and worshipped in a large Presbyterian Church – First Presbyterian , Bellevue and interviewed 2 of the staff . (Membership -2987 –average attendance 2290! First Bellevue has an annual budget of \$6.2 million –which has doubled in the past 10 years!) I also was able to attend the staff meeting of Bethany Presbyterian in Seattle.

Upon my return to New Zealand I spent 3 and a half weeks based in Wanaka reading a variety of books (see appendix) related to leadership, mission and preaching –worship. It was great to have time to read some key books in such a lovely area and I am grateful to the library in Wanaka for a place to read each day .

From 28 June to 13 July I was able to attend the Caleb Ministries' Team Builder Leadership course in Alexandra. Following this I had a few days writing up this report and concluding reading based at Bob and Jackie Morrison's 'hut' at the mouth of the Rangitata River. Thank you Bob and Jackie for the use of the hut.

Each Sunday throughout Study Leave I attended a different church. And it has been wonderful to participate in a whole range of worship experiences from a liturgical Sunday evening 'Compline' in a Cathedral in Seattle USA packed out with mostly young adults to a House Church (Baptist) at Hawea to a couple of the larger Presbyterian Churches in the South Island (Calvin Church, Gore and Hornby (Christchurch)).See theAppendix for a list of the churches I worshipped at. Also throughout Study Leave I 'interviewed ' a number of ministers about their church structures, leadership, worship, preaching and mission.

I am grateful to many people who have enabled me to take this time 'aside'. (As the sign outside the St Andrews Church inviting people to come in says –Mark 6:31 *Then Jesus said 'Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.'*) Study Leave has been a real gift to me and an opportunity to reflect on the journey in recent years in Geraldine and to focus study in some key areas. Thanks to Jacinta for the encouragement to take study leave and the constant encouragement and help. Thank you too to the church staff in Geraldine, the elders and ministry team and others who have assisted in my absence. This has been greatly appreciated. My thanks to the Presbytery of

South Canterbury for approving my Study Leave and Rev Hamish Galloway for supervising my Study Leave and meeting with me to plan it and reflect upon key learning. I am also grateful for several groups who have provided financial assistance for course costs and travel – Presbyterian Savings and Development Society , Bill Best Travel Fund, Knox Centre Study Grant and St Andrews Church Geraldine.

Mission

My first Sunday on Study Leave I attended U Town Church on the campus of the University of British Columbia –a church plant aimed at reaching students and their families. The preacher was a graduate of Regent College now pastoring in St Andrews in Scotland . He had been involved in the church plant a few years ago. He preached on what has become somewhat of a missional text for that church and many others as they consider God’s call to mission –Jeremiah 29:4-14- the message from God for the captives in Babylon. These verses speak of family and economic life, working for the peace and prosperity of where we are placed, praying for God’s peace where we live, and being careful about what we hear where we live (false prophets and mediums –v 8-9) . These verses also speak of God’s plan for the future and hope for His people despite 70 years of captivity. And that there would be restoration and a gathering out of the nations. And this was so true for U Town Church with members from several different countries and the morning I was there a young couple were interviewed about their call to serve God in the future in South America in cross cultural mission. Here was a church plant in one the most secular cities in the Western world making inroads for the Kingdom.

When I interviewed Dr Scott Dudley the Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Bellevue, Seattle one of the questions I asked him was ‘What theological convictions lie under why you as a church do what you do and how you do it?’ He gave me the same answer his Missions Pastor had quite independently given me 40 minutes before –‘do stuff to provoke the question –the answer to which is Jesus.’ The day before the interview I had worshipped at one of their 5 worship services where they had profiled 2 of their ministries –‘auto angels’ (fixing up and giving away cars to those in need) and Eastside Academy mentoring (a programme run by the church for at risk teenage students). This is a church with a huge commitment to serve in the name of Jesus both in their community and internationally through partnership with a number of mission agencies.

All the pastors I interviewed were very clear about what their mission was –what God was calling them to. And this was informed by their understanding of what Scripture calls God’s people to and their context.

Understanding context was a key aspect of the course I did at Regent –‘Kinetic Christianity – evangelism and apologetics for the Third Millennium’ with Dr Krish Kandiah. Kris suggested 3 major shifts in worldview –from solid to liquid, public to private and Christendom to Post Christendom. And so solid church is about things like attendance at services equals faithfulness, size counts and one size fits all(Henry Ford’s maxim –‘You can have any colour as long as its black’) As Lesslie Newbigin writes there is this dichotomy between public and private ‘Our values, our views of what is good and bad, are a matter of personal opinion, and everyone is free to have his own opinions... here is the core of our culture.’ (Newbigin , L (1985 ‘Can the West Be converted?’ Princeton Seminary Bulletin)This works itself out in our kiwi context as the high value placed on tolerance and almost

the biggest 'sin' is being perceived to be intolerant. And the huge shift from Christendom to post Christendom has meant all sorts of things including : the church moves from the centre to the margins, Christians are in a minority not a majority, Christians relinquish control and embrace witness, the church emphasises mission and not maintenance and the church moves from institution to movement.

Chris Wright's book The Mission of God's People was a helpful read in thinking through what it means for the church to engage in God's mission in the world and it answers the question –'What are we here for?'

The answer comes in affirming that mission has to do with 'the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world –and that means using the whole Bible.' (p206) Of course central to God's way of working out His purpose is the church –'It is not so much the case that God has a mission for His church in the world as that God has a church for His mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission –God's mission.' (p24)

In chapter two of his book Chris summarises the Biblical story in four parts as creation, fall, 'redemption in history' and new creation. This phrase 'redemption in history' is a interesting one for he argues that rather than identifying redemption with the arrival of Jesus it in fact goes back at least as far as the call of Abraham . This is a constant theme of the book –that our mandate and call for mission goes much further back than the Great Commission at the end of each of the four Gospels. There is a very interesting quote from Philip Greenslade on the need to "indwell" this story as "we stop trying to make the Bible relevant to our lives and instead begin to instead find ourselves being made relevant to the Bible. We give up the clumsy attempt to wrench the ancient text into our contemporary world and instead bring our world back into collision with, and cleansing by, the strange new world of the Bible.' In chapter six Chris engages the Exodus event with a simple thesis – 'exodus shaped redemption demands Exodus shaped living'. And the redemption is holistic – political, economic, social ,spiritual and so must be the mission as well. And, reflecting on the cross he sees it as the 'fulfilment of the exodus, including within its accomplishment final liberation from all that enslaves and oppresses humanity.' (p111) Quoting from his earlier book (The Mission of God) ' we need a holistic gospel because the world is in a holistic mess.'

In Chapter 11 'People who proclaim the Gospel of Christ' Chris unpacks Isaiah 52:7-10- God Reigns, God Returns, God Redeems and 'the gospel is on its way' (186) First he demonstrates how 'Jesus was and is 'God reigning' and how 'Jesus was and is God returning' and how 'Jesus was and is God redeeming' before engaging with Paul and asking 'How did Paul think and speak of the gospel ?' From a study of every use of the word 'gospel by Paul Chris come sup with six features of Paul's Gospel . He suggests that the Gospel for Paul is:

- 1 The story of Jesus in the light of the Scriptures.
- 2 A New Redeemed Humanity, a Single Family of God.
- 3 A message to be communicated to the whole world.
- 4 Ethical Transformation.
- 5 Truth to be defended.

6 The power of God transforming the Universe.

In chapter 8 Chris writes of the lives of followers of Jesus 'People who attract others to God' . As he puts it (p129) 'God's people are to live in such a way that they become attractors –not themselves but to the God they worship.' As Paul Windsor puts this -'being distinctive with distinction.'

And what we do in church on a Sunday is important –p272 –'People don't go to church on Sundays to support their pastors in their ministry. The pastor goes to church on Sunday to support people in their ministry.' (out in the 'Public Square') And part of this ministry will be living lives that glorify God. As Chris wryly observes, 'We often sing, 'Shine Jesus shine'. I sometimes hear a voice from heaven muttering 'Shine yourself, why don't you?'

Chris Wright's understanding of mission is very broad and comprehensive. He suggests we have a mission as broad as the earth for which we are commanded to care, and as extensive as all the nations, for whom we are to be agents of God's blessing. God longs to fulfil His promise to Abraham that all nations should be blessed is bound up with the people of God (which now includes all those in Christ) living in God's way in righteousness and justice. We are redeemed and called to live redemptively in the world in ways that mirror God's own act of redemption. As Christians we represent God to the world and are intended to be those who attract the world to God by the quality of our transformed lives. We are live our mission.

And mission demands a loyalty to the truth of the one Living God whom we have come to know Therefore the heart of our message, the word we are to declare alongside the way we live, is communicated in word and deed. The church is sent into the world in the power of the Spirit to bear witness. However the church that is sent into the world is already in the world , for all believers live within the public arena of the society in which God has placed them and the majority of them work and earn their living in the marketplace.. And so we need to see our mission as some thing that happens in and for that public world for it is the place of God's creation (though desperately fallen) and God's redemption in Christ.

God's people are those He has loved, chosen, called, redeemed, shaped, and sent into the world in the name of Christ. I wonder if sometimes we forget these great realities and need to recover the reality that Christians are to 'Gospel people.' This requires humility –it is the Gospel that is great and glorious and we are its humble servants. As I sat in Tenth Church in Vancouver on a warm Spring evening in May I was reminded of this. A guy in his thirties was being interviewed prior to his baptism and he pointed us all to the reality of what God had done in his life through Jesus Christ. And as he made a public declaration of His desire to follow Jesus after some years in the 'far country' he pointed us the fact that God had drawn him into a living relationship with Christ. And as He was baptised that evening it was a reminder for me of what our mission is about –pointing people toward Jesus Christ –that they come into a saving knowledge of Him and relationship with Him. Earlier in the same day in another church a couple and their little one had been welcomed into membership in another church and the guy had written very honestly about his story of God's work in his life. This guy born into a missionary family struggles with ill health and sometimes depression. He wrote for the church bulletin that morning –'I don't think I am meant for great feats of evangelism, or even surgery. I want to be as good a husband to my wife and as good a father to my daughter, as I in my imperfection can. That is as much as I can discern of God's plan. As I go on I have more questions than answers. I don't know why God allows His creation and indeed His very body to

be so utterly broken. If I confess anything at all it is an idea bigger than my experience, one that Christians of every denomination and variety have affirmed throughout history in every part of the earth –that God at least did not spare Himself the experience of human life: that our Lord Jesus Christ for us and for our salvation came down and was made incarnate, suffered, was buried and on the third day rose again.’ This surely is an example of the combination of the great and glorious Gospel alongside a humble servant.

In terms of the church there is a picture used by Michael Frost and Allan Hirsh, two Australians and proponents of the Emergent Church in their book The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st- Century Church. (p47) *‘In some farming communities, the farmers might build fences around their properties to keep their livestock in and the livestock of neighbouring farms out. This is a bounded set. But in rural communities where farms cover an enormous geographical area, fencing the property is out of the question. In our home of Australia stations are so vast that fences are superfluous. Under these conditions a farmer has to sink a bore and create a well, a precious water supply, in the Outback. It is assumed that livestock, though they will stray, will never roam too far from the well, lest they die. This is a centred set. As long as there is a supply of clean water, the livestock will remain close by.’* Some churches are bounded set – you are either in or out and there are clear fences to keep everyone in. They are defined by their boundaries. But other churches are centred set – defined by core values and people are not seen as either in or out but by their relationship to the centre. Frost and Hirsh suggest these churches are Christ centred. They suggest that centred –set churches see the Gospel as so refreshing that lovers of Christ will not stray too far from Him and outsiders will be drawn into the community like thirsty pilgrims seeking water. And as people are drawn to the well Christ’s church is a safe place to question and experience the love of God. Here these thirsty pilgrims are given space where there are no boundaries to keep them out. Jim Belcher in his helpful book suggests that this is one aspect of the deep church –‘Our confidence is in Christ –not in ourselves... we confidently proclaim the existence of the well in our midst. Through our preaching, liturgy, weekly Lord’s Supper and a community of believers united in Christ, we want to provide a cup of living water to a dying world. We want to see others drawn to Christ.’ And so in a centred set church there will often be ‘belonging before belief’ whereas in a bounded set church it will be belief before belonging.

If we look at the Gospel s we have really 2 circles of people around Jesus, the Well of living water. The outer circle is the seekers, those hanging around as part of the larger community who are learning about Jesus and His message. But at some point, Jesus calls for commitment, for belief. His disciples respond. They move closer to the well –the inner circle. We could illustrate this with the story of the rich ruler in Luke 18. This is an example of Jesus Himself challenging someone who has joined the community. The rich ruler comes to Jesus clearly thinking that he is in the inner circle (a true believer in Jesus and part of God’s family). In the conversation Jesus demonstrates His love and concern that the Rich Ruler not be deceived about where he stands by challenging him. Jesus calls the ruler to follow Him so that the ruler would realise that he is not in the inner circle. This demonstrates that although Jesus was in favour of inviting people into the community, He also challenged them to know whether or not they were truly following Him. Belonging is important. Jesus invited many into His community. That is what got him into so much trouble with the Pharisees (the original bounded set people?) But at the same time He did not shy away from the truth of the Gospel and the need for followers to repent of their idols. He calls those in the outer circle to come into the inner circle, to be close to the Well.

Roland Allen's book Missionary methods: St Pauls or Ours? Is a helpful little book which has been a classic text in the area of mission. Allen after a very comprehensive overview comes down to 2 principles which underlie all of Paul's practice. First, Paul was a preacher of the gospel not of law. He lived in a dispensation of Gospel as opposed to law and his method was a method of Gospel not of law. People needed life and Christ came to give that life and Paul came as the minister of Christ, to lead people to Christ who is the life, that in Him they might find life. His Gospel was a Gospel of power. And he aimed at convincing their minds and stirring their consciences and so persuasion was important rather than command. This is really important –that at the heart of our missional engagement with other is the grace of God. And secondly Paul gave a central place for Christ –he was always glad when his converts could make progress without his help. And to do he followed through on his belief in the Holy Spirit not vaguely as some sort of spiritual power but as a Person in dwelling his converts. And so Paul believed in his converts –he could trust them and trust the Holy Spirit at work in them.

In October 2010 in Cape Town 2010 there was The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization and it brought together 4,200 Christian leaders from 198 countries, and extended to hundreds of thousands more, participating in meetings around the world, and online. Its goal? To bring a fresh challenge to the global Church to bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching - in every nation, in every sphere of society, and in the realm of ideas.

In the Capetown Commitment (see www.lausanne.org/ctcommitment) we read *Almost everything about the way we live, think and relate to one another is changing at an accelerating pace. For good or ill, we feel the impact of globalization, of the digital revolution, and of the changing balance of economic and political power in the world. Some things we face cause us grief and anxiety – global poverty, war, ethnic conflict, disease, the ecological crisis and climate change. But one great change in our world is a cause for rejoicing – and that is the growth of the global Church of Christ. In a world which works to re-invent itself at an ever-accelerated pace, some things remain the same. These great truths provide the biblical rationale for our missional engagement.*

- *Human beings are lost. The underlying human predicament remains as the Bible describes it: we stand under the just judgment of God in our sin and rebellion, and without Christ we are without hope.*

- *The gospel is good news. The gospel is not a concept that needs fresh ideas, but a story that needs fresh telling. It is the unchanged story of what God has done to save the world, supremely in the historical events of the life, death, resurrection, and reign of Jesus Christ. In Christ there is hope.*

- *The Church's mission goes on. The mission of God continues to the ends of the earth and to the end of the world. The day will come when the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ and God will dwell with his redeemed humanity in the new creation. Until that day, the Church's participation in God's mission continues, in joyful urgency, and with fresh and exciting opportunities in every generation including our own.*

And there are 3 loves

- *Our love for the whole Church, as God's people, redeemed by Christ from every nation on earth and every age of history, to share God's mission in this age and glorify him for ever in the age to come;*

- *Our love for the whole world, so far from God but so close to his heart, the world that God so loved that he gave his only Son for its salvation.*

- *Our love for the whole gospel, as God's glorious good news in Christ, for every dimension of his creation, for it has all been ravaged by sin and evil;*

In the grip of that three-fold love, we commit ourselves afresh to *be* the whole Church, to *believe, obey, and share* the whole gospel, and to *go* to the whole world to make disciples of all nations. The Lausanne Statement would be helpful for study for any church as they seek to engage in a missional way and is a far reaching mandate.

Christian Leadership –in a team

George Cladis begins his book Leading the Team Based Church 'The most effective churches today are the ones that are developing team based leadership.' And interestingly he begins with the picture of the Trinity . In the seventh century John of Damascus ,a Greek theologian described the relationship of the persons of God in the Trinity as *perichoresis*. Perichoresis means literally 'circle `dance' and John depicted the three persons of the Trinity in a circle. In a circle we can see each other. No one is left out. We are all interconnected –we hold each other up. A *perichoretic* image of the Trinity is that of the three persons of God in constant movement in a circle that implies intimacy, equality, unity, yet distinction and love. On the front of this report is the 'icon of the Old Testament Trinity' by Andrei Rublev (c 1410). And this representation of the Trinity in joy, freedom and equality implies an invitation to fellowship at the table. And in building ministry teams for Cladis this picture of the Trinity can be the foundation on which we build our teams which can become 'houses of love'-love for God and for each other. In his book George Cladis describes team ministry in terms of covenanting together, forging vision, creating culture, learning to collaborate and work together, empowering one another and establishing a learning environment, And so, the missional church consists of team based communities that 'covenant to be a fellowship together and live out the love of God –within the team and the broader community'. This my dream for the Ministry Team, staff and elders -3 teams of people I work with in St Andrews Church , Geraldine.

The team needs both cohesion and momentum to keep its members together. When a church is divided into ministry teams, each member of the team brings a specific sense of mission that is unique to their own activity and yet fits within and supports the larger vision of the whole church . Cladis also remarks that churches with ministry areas loosely held together and competing with one another need a strong common vision to unite them , otherwise there is lots of activity without much synergy. Sometimes in Geraldine I wonder if we do too much as a church and there doesn't seem to be too much synergy. Synergy is actually a wonderful thing –it is Stephen Covey's sixth 'habit'. He defines it (p263) as meaning that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It means that the relationship which the parts have to each other is a part in and of itself'. The essence of synergy is to value differences –to respect them and build together on strengths. Now this is not mere psycho babble –it involves teamwork, team building and the development of community. In fact we were made for community –in Genesis 2:18 "And the LORD God said 'It is not good for the man to be alone...' –we were created for community. Another word we could use for this is 'collaboration'. Cladis reminds us that a team is a very powerful unit of ministry when it learns how to discern the individual gifts of the team members and how to have members work together, pray hard and share information and energy in order to move toward a sharply defined mission. To facilitate this collaboration which is needed for team work, individuals must understand that they are appreciated for their distinctive contribution to the bigger picture. Paul affirms this connection between the respective contributions and the mission we are called to as a whole –'To EACH [individual] , he explained to the Corinthian church 'the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the

COMMON GOOD.' (1 Corinthians 12:7) The dangers to avoid are being 'siloed' –so focused in one area that we fail to co-operate with others for the common good. Or we can insist on too much uniformity which will kill the creativity of individuals. Unfortunately often creative people struggle to work well with others.

During Study Leave time and time again I witnessed the power of teams working well together serving the Lord with a common vision and sense of purpose. Two examples –firstly, the Caleb Ministries teachers were a wonderful team who modelled the power of working together –all moving in the same direction, affirming each other, each having specific roles that helped equip those of us who were learning. Secondly, when I visited the staff meeting of the Bethany Church in Seattle it was very obvious to me as an outsider that they were a team who really valued , appreciated and loved each other. I saw this in how they listened to each other, honoured one another, shared food with one another, read and discussed Scripture together ,evaluated worship and prayed together . The pastor told me that this had been the most unified, loving church she had served in- in over 20 years of ministry and several pastorates.

The image of the Trinity kept coming up for me all the way through Study Leave .The Rublev 'picture' of the Trinity is on the front of Gary Marquand's study leave report. At the end of an evening worship service in Vancouver –three people stood in the circle and the pastor in the middle –and he sent us on our way with the blessing of the Triune God –Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the reminder that not only God is with us but that we have each other as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to support and help one another. When I attended the very upbeat Westside Church in a movie theatre in Vancouver the worship team begin the service with the Doxology ('Praise God from who all blessings flow, Praise Him all creatures here below, Praise Him above ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.') At the Pastors Conference at Regent Ross Hastings reminded us that we face huge challenges in leadership in the church with numerical decline and often high expectations for those in leadership which is informed by modernity and not by the Scriptures. The church is to be a sign , servant and messenger of the Kingdom. Sadly, internal drives and external pressures are burning out pastors. However, Kingdom leaders will lead for the long haul with others and out of intimacy with the Triune God. Those in Christian leadership can offer participatory Trinitarian leadership. In the sending of the Son there is incarnational leadership and this can be the leadership of the servant –for instance Jesus washing the disciples' feet. (See also Philippians 2:5-11) And there is a combination of both structure and the giving of the Spirit –pneumatological (Spirit led) way of leadership –combining structure and Spirit together –the 'being' and 'doing' together ('I only do what I see my Father doing' –Jn 5:19). Christian leadership is participation with the Triune God. In 1 Corinthians 3 God's co workers are participants with Christ –'you are of Christ and Christ is of God.'(v 23)And so we can lead out of communion with the Trinity in the koinonia (fellowship) of the church –to lead into and out of participation with God. And we can do this really well in teams. So this leadership is Trinitarian participation –leading as we follow –leaders are to be good followers of Jesus. And so it is not all about us and what we can or cannot do but rather seeing where God is at work and working in participation with Him and so one of the tasks of leadership is discernment – discerning where God is at work and what He is doing.

Irenaeus pictured God as having 2 hands –the hand of the Son and of the Spirit. And there are 2 feet walking together –action AND contemplation –one foot that leads into Scripture and toward Christ and another that leads out into the world. The 2 hands are God revealed to us in the Son and by the

Spirit. And so leaders and their teams follow Christ into the structures and messiness of life. And this can be cultivated in incarnational and pneumatic ways. Some love structures and the 'earthiness' of leading with decisions to be made etc whereas others appreciate the pneumatic –the unseen work of the Spirit and being led by Him . Both structures and the work of the Spirit are important. And working in teams can help maintain that balance of both being led and guided by the Holy Spirit and also having structures. 'Jesus knew that the father had given Him authority over everything and that He had come from God and would return to God.' (John 13:3) What Jesus did flowed out of a relationship with the Father .Now, we are not God but we are able to participate in the life of the Trinity –through Christ and by the Spirit. All ministry is God's ministry first and an important aspect of leadership is to see what is God up to and how can I hitch a ride in what He is doing.

In Rod Wilson's course at Regent in the dynamics of leadership there were helpful reminders of a number of important things to consider as we lead others and work together. If these factors are overlooked it can result in significant dysfunction in Christian leadership and teams functioning well:

- *Embrace integrity* –leading out of who we really are –not copying or imitating others . This reminded me of Bill Hybels 3 Cs to consider when appointing leaders –Character (so important in Christian leadership –see 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9), Chemistry and Competency .
- *Be a 'wounded leader'* who chases away perfection and embraces brokenness. In doing this we follow in the footsteps of the apostle Paul –see 2 Corinthians 4:7ff. In this we discover the paradox that Paul discovered – 'When I am weak –then I am strong ' (2 Corinthians 12:10)
- *Understanding our family of origin* is important because we lead out of who we are . A clear understanding of both the blessings and woundedness that comes to us from our family of origin is important. And in this we can discover God's capacity to bring divine good out of family pain. Remember the story of Joseph –Genesis 50:19-20 : *But Joseph said to them 'Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.'*
- *Making sense of the grace of God (see 1 Corinthians 15:9-10)*. We serve ('perform') because we are accepted. Some leaders 'perform' in order to be accepted. Yet if we look at Paul's letters we see that identity precedes performance.
- *Watch out for issues of power* . In Henri Nouwen's book In the name of Jesus he writes 'the temptation of power is greatest when intimacy is a threat. Much Christian leadership is exercised by people who do not know how to develop healthy intimate relationships and have opted for power and control instead. Many Christian empire builders have been people unable to give and receive love.' This relational aspect of love is so important –see John 13:34-35.

All of this impacts on the teams of which we are a part and in which we have leadership responsibilities

In Gordon Millar's Leadership letter, May –June 1999, he writes about 'building a winning team' within the context of kiwi churches. He suggests a number of steps on how to build a team that will follow and work toward a vision:

1. *Start with gift and character testing yourself and your present leaders.* There is a variety of material that can help with this including the Willowcreek Network course and a number of people are finding 'Strengthbuilders' material to be helpful in building teams. We are to build strong, well balanced teams for no one person has all the gifts. Gordon suggests starting with the leaders who are already there. When their gifts have been identified and they are using them then get them mentoring others with the same gifts with the result being more leaders coming on in advance of needs. This will result in the primary leader gradually withdrawing from much of the day to day business of the church and shift responsibilities toward leading the church, preaching and team building. The other leaders work with the people day by day and caring for them.
2. *Throughout the process put great emphasis on growing and mentoring team members.*
3. *As the team is built, gift and character test the people you are considering adding to your team.* People should not be appointed because they fill a gap or because they seem at first glance to have the right gifts. Gordon suggests they should only be appointed if they are people of integrity, loyalty and teachability.
4. *Give a wide birth to single issue people with private agendas.*
5. *Have people in leadership who excel in Bill Hybels 3 Cs –character , competency and chemistry.* I have already written about character. Competency means that they are competent for the job. Of course for some this may well include potential. Whatever the size of church Gordon suggest going for people in teams who are FAT –'faithful, available and teachable.' The third C is chemistry –that is people who have the right relational fit with the rest of the team

Almost as Postscript Gordon Miller reminds us that all this takes time –'you won't build a team like this overnight.

In an article in Candour in March 2007 one of my mentors in ministry, Jack Foster, raises the issue of pastoral visiting especially as it applies to the minister. Jack raises the important question of priorities and expectations placed on ministers –'How do we fulfil the pastoral role as well as be a leader, preacher and looking after our family and ourselves also including meetings, funerals, weddings....' Jack goes on to say after exercising a very pastoral ministry if he had another chance at ministry, pastoral visiting would not be the most important priority of his time. He sees the visiting role in the context of a team rather than left to the individual. And so, he suggests, that the minister needs to spend time in mentoring and encouraging people in their gifts. Jack writes – 'Releasing people in their ministries and helping them to function effectively for the Lord is so positive and rewarding.' Jack goes on to write that teams are a good idea for a church and they allow people to use their gifts working alongside others and to be involved. He writes 'It's great when you can hand over a particular task or request to a team leader and leave it with them. And then the minister's role is to keep the teams functioning as well as excited about what they do and are doing'. Jack is not saying no visiting for there is some visiting that ministers need to undertake. But his concern is that if pastoral visiting takes more time than growing our leadership, growing our people to love and serve Christ, preparing our messages and worship, then we need to reassess our role. Of

course a pastoral team can handle a lot of the routine visiting where people can use the gifts the Lord has given them.

Teams are key in ministry as is leadership and when both of these factors come together there can be real growth and mission in the advance of the Kingdom. People need to have a clear understanding of their roles and also need to be mentored and equipped and trained. Murray Robertson suggests that one of the reasons churches stop growing is controlling leadership. Far too many, he suggests, who are in Christian leadership understand this to mean 'I am in control' rather than 'I can empower others'. When we look at the ministry of Jesus we see that His ministry is about empowering others rather than controlling them. Now some may get nervous at this point and ask the natural question – who is in control? The answer is that it is the vision and values of the church that provide the ultimate standards. And this requires a high level of trust at all levels of leadership.

Now all of this assumes that alongside the creation and leadership of teams within the church there will be a lively faith in Jesus Christ, empowered by the Spirit of God. This means that the spiritual disciplines of the faith including prayer, Scripture reading and reflection, worship and Sabbath rest will be worked on in the lives of leaders modelling a Christ centred life to teams. This will avoid us descending into what Gordon Mc Donald calls the 'driven life' instead of living the 'called life'.

Preaching –Worship for the under 50s

During the time away from Geraldine I worshipped at different churches each Sunday (see notes under Appendix two) –often chosen because I had heard they were making inroads with the under 50s. If there was one word to describe the worship –it would be **variety**. To use a New Zealand example –on my last Sunday of Study Leave at Hornby there was a more reflective style of worship with the speaking in 4 different sections during the worship. At both the morning worship services there was good use of technology, carefully chosen songs (led well by music team including about 8 singers) tied in with the theme –'The Sabbath –God's maintenance schedule' and even Communion was related to the message –not simply an 'add on'. On the Sunday evening (6 for 6-30pm service) starting with soup and rolls there was to be a dramatic presentation on 'What it means to be human.' In this post modern age the idea of 'one size fits all' in the area of worship doesn't seem very workable. I was intrigued with the large crowd (mainly of young people –young adults) at the very traditional, non participatory 'Compline' service in the Saint Marks Cathedral, Seattle. Although, this fits with what some of the Emergent Church people are saying about the rediscovery of the sacred and sacred spaces and some of the classic liturgical traditions as being a way of connecting with younger people.

In length of time for worship services there was quite variation from the shorter 'compline service' to an hour to hour and a quarter to hour and a half. Generally each church had reasons for the length of their worship and it tended to be the same length from week to week.

Central to these churches was relevant

Bible based preaching. (see below)

Music is important too –carefully chosen, obviously well practised, well led, with a mixture of well known songs and new ones. New songs were well taught from the front. Usually the musicians were in teams and there was quite a range of styles offered even within one particular worship event.

Technology is important too with well run sound desks and data projection without being intrusive. This helped create often seamless worship service that flowed from one part to the next without distractions. In one of the churches there was obviously someone new on the sound desk and they didn't seem to be able to play a clip-and after a while someone came and helped the new operator.

Several churches were offering opportunities for people to serve in this area. One of the churches made an interesting statement re films –they are ‘books’ people read these days and were offering a series on Sunday nights on modern films. And it was not just watching films or clips of them but discussion and using these in a missional way. Calvin Church in Gore were offering a film night with a Christian film –‘Faith like potatoes’ starting with a light tea at 5pm.

Creating community There all are all sorts of ways that churches with under 50s in their midst worked at creating community. Those who opted for creating various worshipping groups within the one church seemed to opt for creating community within each of the worshipping groups. For example the ‘Third Service’ (see appendix on churches visited) were quite clearly a community within the 10th Church (the church offered 3 other worship services each Sunday) All of this under one vision for the church –‘to be a place where people of all different backgrounds can find Christ. A community of healing for the broken, And a mission sending base into Vancouver and throughout the world.’ At the 10th ‘Third Service’ they used the mnemonic –‘EPIC’ –Everyone Participating In Community. This went beyond the Sunday night event –encouraging everyone into 3 expressions of community life – 1) A community of *hospitality* . Every Third Sunday of the month –a potluck dinner - 5-7pm –bring a friend and a dish.2) A community of *service* -opportunities to serve within the church, ministry to the poor in the city and a Christian environmental group – A Rocha. 3) A community of *relationship* Their desire was to see ALL members of the 3rd service involved in a supportive spiritual community –by joining a small or mid sized community. And that church has at least 3 ‘age specific’ groups – ‘the Lounge’ (18-25 –College Ministry), Resonate -25s to 30s and Link – ages 30 to 40.

Creating community happens in all sorts of ways before, during and after worship. Most churches visited were really good at providing hot drinks for people and in their bulletins there were events advertised associated with food (including something we have at St Andrews – ‘Guess who’s coming to Dinner’).The night before I worshipped at Calvin Church Gore –the Mainly Music group had had a meal and time with families together. Within worship there were things like celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, and other achievements as well as recognising bereavements and praying for people. At Hornby Church along with dedication of the offering there people involved in ministry were publicly thanked and prayed for . And of course like 10th Church small groups –all sorts and shapes – were key in this area of people being supported and growing in their Christian walk.

Good Kids Programmes Churches ministering with the under 50s seem to put a lot of people and financial resources into what happens with children on Sundays. And they have good spaces for this –at Calvin I was shown their newly developed crèche area –where they have a brightly painted open area with new equipment, good heating and safe environment for their growing group of pre schoolers on Sunday mornings. And the new equipment there was purchased with a HEHA grant from Southland District Health Board. The Children’s Pastor at Bethany Presbyterian in Seattle spoke with me about the critical importance of what happens on Sundays with children both in worship and when they go out to their kids ministry time –she believes that quality Bible based programmes (they were finding the ‘godly play ‘ material helpful) were essential –staffed by volunteers who weren’t ‘out every Sunday’.

Prayer with people At virtually every church I went to in one way or another prayer with people at the end of worship was offered. It wasn’t unusual at all to see people being quietly prayed with in the church at the end of worship.

Youth in worship Most of the worship services I went to were in the mornings and there young people there –often involved in music, use of technology or sitting with their mates worshipping.

Several churches have Youth led services on Sunday nights where the young people take the whole service –including the preaching being by the kids themselves.

Bible based preaching is key. Most of these churches were systematically working their way through books of the Bible or being just after Easter they were reflecting on the resurrection. There were a range of common things I heard and saw. Clear use of Scripture and working systematically through passages of Scripture in a relevant helpful way was central to the churches I visited. Length wise preaching varied from 20 minutes to 40 minutes. Some used PowerPoint and some did not. There were often outlines, room for taking notes and quotes in the church bulletins. The use of story (personal illustration –own stories and others gleaned from all over the place and some historical) and humour were common. And it was common to hear the linking of the preaching with the mission of the church. In terms of preparation -a couple of the preachers preached their message to a smaller group before the Sunday to get feedback and made some adjustments. At Bethany Church the exegesis was done jointly with a group –bringing insight to the Scriptures to be preached. The use of practical objects was common in illustrating points in the message. Hamish Galloway at Hornby preaching on ‘embracing’ elements of the Sabbath pulled several things out of a basket to illustrate what he was preaching on and pulled a handheld palm out of his pockets as he spoke about some the dangers of technology. The use of Scripture in preaching was often shown to be within the ‘bigger picture’ of the message of the Bible.

A lot of this is very similar with what Graham Johnston writes about in his book Preaching to a Postmodern World. There is of course the huge challenge of engaging with listeners in a way that they rightly hear the Good News. Helmut Thielecke used to say ‘The Gospel must constantly be forwarded to a new address because the recipient is repeatedly changing place of residence.’ One of the chapters in Graham Johnston’s book is entitled –‘Toto we are not in Kansas anymore’ –from the Wizard of Oz. Things have changed but there is still the twin challenge to reach listeners with the message of Christ and at same time uphold the Word of God faithfully and with integrity. This is hugely challenging in an age where there is often a rejection of objective truth and scepticism about authority. In addition there are also challenges (and opportunities!) with the blurring of morality, the media and the search for the transcendent. In terms of actually engaging with people Johnson suggests rightly that we must have triple knowledge –knowing the one from whom the message comes, knowing the message and knowing the ones to whom the message will go. And so this means asking the question –‘Do the words and ideas here have relevance and meaning?’ Part of the key to preaching to this age group is the relational dimension and so dialogue can be really helpful –several of the churches I visited provide small group studies for people to continue the dialogue after the Sunday message and ask their questions and of course this has been a key element of the Alpha Course where people can ask their questions without fear of being shot down. Apologetics in this context means not assuming or presuming too much about the listeners’ Christian worldview. And there is what Jack Stackhouse calls ‘humble apologetics’. He explains how pluralism, post modernism, consumerism and a host of other factors create resistance to the Christian message. And in this environment the perception of arrogance or dogmatism on the part of those who proclaim the Christian message can alienate rather than attract potential converts. He argues that the crucial experience of conversion cannot be compelled –all we can do is lead another to a point where an actual encounter with Jesus can take place. So displaying an attitude of humility rather than merely trying to win religious arguments will help us offer our neighbours the gifts of Christ’s love. Johnston quotes Haddon Robinson –‘If listeners know you love and identify with them they will let you say strong things. Most people are asking that you just be aware of them and not write them off.’

But as important as objective truth is the point has to be made that in post modern times , what people hear will be drowned out by the what they see in the lives of Christians. For people today are

weary of words. Here the focus moves from the credibility of the faith, that something is deemed true intellectually speaking, to the plausibility of the faith, that something is experienced as true in the way we live. And so a ministry that lacks grace, compassion and sincere interest in affirming people will overshadow the words of the message. This is very similar to the character stuff of leadership –in terms of integrity of character.

The preacher cannot attempt to command a response by making a pronouncement about the way things ought to be. Preaching involves winning over the listener to respond. This means among other approaches –the use of humour appropriately and also story. A properly used illustration can go a long way to persuading a listener. And preaching that can break through some of the barriers is that which can be grace filled and full of reality and authenticity. In the wider worship experience there is a real longing by many for authentic community so if the preaching and worship can create some loving Christian community that can be very powerful and effective. For me being in worship at 10th Church in Vancouver alongside some homeless people and also some upwardly mobile young adults together was a wonderful thing. In this context it can be as Calvin Millar suggests the value of the relational and casual approach –‘draw up your pew and let’s have a coffee and doughnuts conversation.’

Inductive preaching is another approach that could be used. This involves laying out the evidence, the examples, the illustrations and postponing the declarations and assertions until the listeners have a chance to weigh the evidence, think through the implications and come to the conclusion with the preacher at the end of the message.

In terms of illustrations and examples the use of the visual alongside stories is important. This can include audio visuals (clips from internet including U Tube or like the Rob Bell Nooma material), and drama. Art is another visual aid that can be used with effect. Hornby Church are having a service around a whole lot of art creations in September this year from people in their own church that will sit alongside their journey this year through the book of Exodus . One of the speakers at the Pastors Conference at Regent spoke of the importance of a recovery of the arts and their use in worship.

And, in terms of the ‘how’ of preaching in our New Zealand context, Paul Windsor suggests that in our delivery we can be ‘lucid’ –laid back,, understated, conversational, informal and self deprecating. He writes about Transformational preaching. This is about taking the stories of the listeners, the world, and the preacher and weaving them around the Biblical story. Transformative preaching he suggest is about bringing to the exegesis (unpacking) of the listener, the world, and the preacher the very same skills of exegesis we bring to the Biblical text. And we must never forget that transformational preaching is pursued in dependence on the Spirit of God because He can be relied on to superintend the whole process. Paul suggests that in preaching we are finding suitcases in each of 4 corners and unpacking them – 1 The text (The Spirit who inspires). 2 The listener (The Spirit who illuminates) 3 The world (The Spirit who convicts) 4 The preacher (the Spirit who anoints).

So in the area of worship and preaching that connects with the under 50s there are some real challenges and opportunities.

May we be faithful in sowing the seed in a life giving way and may some of that seed fall on the good soil. (see Mark 4:1-20) And as Darrell Johnson says in his book on preaching –‘The word itself (or Himself) softens hardened hearts, deepens shallow hearts , integrates cluttered hearts and flourishes in receptive hearts.’ And in our worship may there be a real sense of the presence of the Living God amongst His people.

Caleb Leadership Course

From 28 June to 13 July I attended the Caleb Leadership Course, a residential course held in Alexandra.

Fifteen students gathered from as far afield as Auckland and Invercargill. The participants in this particular course were mainly pastors with 2 OAC workers as well.

In addition there were 8 trainers. Rex Booth is the main teacher and is employed by Caleb Ministries. The other 7 gave their time to lead coaching groups, answer questions, guide and mentor students and deliver some of the teaching.

Course Content

This leadership course is designed to build participants' confidence, enthusiasm, peace of mind and character.

The main areas of study were:

Relational skills

- Listening
- Learning to converse and to deepen conversations with the hope that they lead to some form of ministry
- Affirmation

Communications skills

- Remembering names
- Storytelling, including using our own stories
- Modular speaking

Motivation Skills

- Communicating so as to lead people from rejection to commitment
- Public relations
- Knowing what motivates individuals

Creativity and Decision-making

- Creative thinking. "Green lighting" (creative thinking) and "red lighting" (judicial thinking)
- Decision-making
- Handling controversy and criticism
- Team meetings

Training skills

- Leading workshops
- Learning styles
- Internal and external processors

Management skills

- Management v leadership
- The five functions of management:
 - planning,
 - organising,
 - directing and co-ordinating,
 - supervising
 - Evaluating/accountability
- Systems thinking
- Emotional intelligence

All of this was down in an atmosphere of affirmation. People’s efforts were applauded and the trainers made a point of thanking those who had led devotions etc. and of commenting on specific things they had appreciated.

As well, Stephen Covey’s book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People was required reading and summary questions were to be answered and discussed in groups each day.

A “Ministry Management Plan” provides a framework for the future implementation of the skills learnt.

Content Delivery

The fifteen days of the course were very full. They start at 8:00 a.m. concluding at about 5:00 p.m. although evenings were taken up with homework for the next day.

Most content is delivered in workshop format with material being taught but with many opportunities for interaction. Considerable effort is made to provide variety including:

- Questions to be answered by individuals or by table groups after discussion
- Role plays, practicing the techniques being taught
- Practical exercises such as short talks prepared and presented
- Ministry opportunities through conversation and prayer
- “Stacks” – sequences of images and actions designed to enable students to remember sequences of concepts
- Group exercises e.g. planning the promotion of a church camp and then presenting that in drama.

Other tasks included:

- Personal Bible study time followed by group reflection.
- Leading worship. People were rostered on to lead the singing, pray or give a short talk.

As an example of a stack, the following describes the different areas people might address in conversation, leading from the least threatening to the possibility of significant ministry.

Image	Action	Conversation opener
Large name plate	Hands outline a large rectangle	What is your name?
House (sitting on the name plate)	Forearms form the shape of a roof	Where do you live?
Family (standing on the roof)	Hands raised and fingers wiggling	Tell me about your family.
(The family is holding a) Clock	Hands outline large circle	What do you do with your time?
(Coming out of one of the hands of the clock is an) Aeroplane	Hand, with fingers pointing forward, moved across body and as if launching into the distance	Where have you travelled?
(Spinning around on the front of that plane is a) Tennis racquet.	Extended forefinger makes circle motion	What do you do for relaxation?
(Screwed in and holding the tennis racquet on is a) Light bulb	Hand does screwing motion	What do you think about...? i.e. eliciting ideas, opinions
(Sitting on the light bulb is a) Chicken For Christmas	Slight squatting position with hands tucked under armpits	Challenges, Frustrations and Concerns

	and arms flapping	
(In the steam above the chicken are some) Dreamy goalposts	Hands raised in front of body in wavy motion.	Dreams and goals
(Stuck onto the goalposts is a) Trophy	Two hands as if holding sides of trophy plant it down on the goalposts	Accomplishment
(Growing out of the trophy is a) bunch of flowers	Hand move up from together outwards	Affirm, affirm, affirm
(Down in the bunch of flowers is a) Man calling for help	Swimming motion	How can I help you?
Over the top are praying hands	Praying hands	Ten second prayer

As well, there were “homework” exercises such as finding unsuspecting people with whom the students would have conversations, practising moving through the stack above.

Highlights

For me ,approaching strangers in the street seeking a conversation, was a challenge but it is good to be pushed out of our comfort zones. On the other hand, achieving that several times was a highlight and certainly increased my confidence.

For me much of the material was not new. Having said that, it was very valuable hearing it taught from another angle. There were other aspects that were new and that plugged gaps in my understanding and skills. For example, the modular speaking, with its emphasis on building a reserve of short modules that can then be put together to create a talk and the importance of reflecting on one’s own stories and having these ready to use as modules, was a new approach for me and increased my appreciation of the value of telling one’s own stories.

Much of the management material was familiar but I benefitted from the teaching on supervision and accountability – areas of weakness for me.

The concept of Position Results Descriptions (as opposed to job descriptions)with Key Result Areas and Performance Standards(‘I know I have done a good job when....’) was really helpful and one I plan to work on in Geraldine for myself and then with staff and key volunteer roles .

Appreciating the different ways people operate (such as internal and external processors) and the importance of knowing the personality type, temperament, spiritual gifts etc. of an individual in order to know what will motivate that person, was a very valuable reminder for me.

Even “systems thinking”, which I probably would never refer to in those terms with other people, helped me look at some situations I was facing, with a new perspective. I am sure it will help me to think about other processes in the life of the church.

A particular highlight for many on the course was a 24 hour period of solitude in which to reflect on a “Life Management Plan” and to further apply some of the key areas of teaching to our own lives.

Impressions

I thoroughly enjoyed the course and appreciated meeting the other students and trainers.

It is hugely valuable having 15 days to learn and reflect. I would recommend the course unreservedly. My effectiveness in leading must be enhanced, although that will depend on my determination to go over the material again, reflect on it, and implement it.

The material is certainly relevant for those in church leadership, leadership in other Christian organisations and for leaders in any context. The faith and enthusiasm of the trainers, as well as their familiarity with church leadership, helped the students apply the teaching to real situations. Their genuine interest, encouragement and prayers demonstrated their valuing of both the material and the students.

I doubt if any Christian leader would not benefit significantly from doing this course.

For some topics the material was only introductory and served as a stimulus to do more research and learning.

Occasionally too, most of the material arose from discussion. One wonders then how valuable it is, or whether it is simply a sharing of ignorance. Again, my response is simply to want to research it further.

The course requires fairly strict adherence to the particular methods being taught. While this sometimes made the students feel like they were being treated as children, the stated rationale was that if we were to carefully learn a method, we could later adapt and change that.

I am very grateful for the opportunity that this course provided. I want to thank Rex Booth and his team as well as all those others who made it possible for me to attend.

Appendix One – Books and Articles read, CDs Listened to.

1 Books read / gleaned

About Mission:

Roland Allen Missionary Methods: St Pauls or Ours? Eerdmans American Edition 1962 (originally written 1912)

Lesslie Newbigin The Gospel in a Pluralist Society Eerdmans 1989.

Lesslie Newbigin Foolishness to the Greeks, The Gospel and Western Culture Eerdmans 1986.

John Stackhouse Humble Apologetics Defending the Faith Today, Oxford University Press 2002

Jim Belcher Deep Church A Third Way beyond Emerging and Traditional, IVP, 2009.

Christopher JH Wright The Mission of God's People A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission Zondervan 2010.

John Stott The Living Church Convictions of a lifelong pastor IVP 2007.

About Leadership:

Harold Myra and Marshall Shelley, The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham, Zondervan, 2005.

Gordon Mac Donald Ordering Your Private World, Thomas Nelson, Revised Edition 2003.

Henri Nouwen In the Name of Jesus, Reflections on Christian Leadership, Darton, Longman Todd pub, 1989 (reprint 2010)

George Cladis Leading the Team Based Church, How Pastors and Church Staffs can grow together into a powerful fellowship of leaders, Jossey –Bass, 1999.

Wayne Cordeiro Doing Church as a Team, Regal Books 2001.

Eddie Gibbs Leadership Next, Changing Leaders in a changing culture. IVP, 2005.

About Preaching –Worship

Michael J Quicke 360 Degree Leadership, Preaching to Transform Congregations.

Graham Johnston Preaching to a Postmodern World, a guide to reaching Twenty First Century Listeners, Baker Books 2001.

Darrell W Johnston The Glory of Preaching, Participating in God’s Transformation of the World, IVP, 2009.

Eugene Peterson The Pastor, A Memoir, Harper One 2011.

Miscellaneous Books

Eric Mataxas Bonhoeffer-Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy Thomas Nelson, 2010.

Bob Buford Halftime Changing your Game Plan from Success to Significance. Zondervan 1994.

William Paul Young The Shack Where tragedy confronts reality, Hodder and Stoughton, 2007.

Marva Dawn Keeping the Sabbath Wholly, Eerdmans 1989.

Marva Dawn Being Well When We’re Ill Augsburg Books 2008.

Christopher JH Wright The God I don’t understand, Reflections on the tough questions of faith. Zondervan 2008.

Stephen Covey The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People The Business Library 1989.

2 Articles read

Gary Marquand ,Study Leave Report, 2009 ‘Mission, Community and Worship’ - Public Worship in a post Christendom Missional Context.

Timothy Keller, Redeemer Presbyterian Church New York, ‘Leadership and Church Size Dynamics’

Murray Robertson ‘The Church : A Redemptive Community’; ‘Why churches stop growing’

Gordon Miller World Vision Leadership Letter –May-June 1999 ‘Building a Winning Team’;
September –October 2000 ‘The Making of a leader’; May-June 2001 Leading 21st Century Churches.

Willowcreek Association New Zealand , ‘Leader to Leader’ : August 2010: ‘Soul Satisfaction’, by John Ortberg; ‘From here to there’ by Bill Hybels ; November 2010 ‘The Mentor Leader’ author unknown.

Christian Swartz ‘The ABC’s of Natural Church Development’

Bob Barrett ‘Preaching and Teaching’ booklet.

Mary Jane and Chris Konings ‘Mentoring –the Penguins Guide’ pub PCANZ 2007.

Ron Hay ‘Kiwis are out of step’ Ron Hay in ‘Good Living’, the Press Christchurch, June 2 2011.

Crux –Quarterly Journal of Christian Thought and Opinion published by Regent College, Winter 2009
–theme –‘The Shack’ also an interesting article on ‘The Spirituality of FF Bruce’

3 : CDs listened to

‘Let my People Grow’ Murray Talbot’s addresses at the Ministry Conference, East Taieri Church, May 2011 , -The Leader’s Journey, Spiritual Dynamics, Barriers to Growth, Overcoming Malaise, The Upside of Tension.

‘Why I’m not a Christian’ –8 talks about objections people have to the Christian faith -First Presbyterian Church Bellevue, Seattle USA.

Dr Rod Wilson ‘Emotional Intelligence’ –lecture give at Regent College.

Alister Mc Grath “Why God won’t go away –reflections on Christianity and the ‘new atheism’ ”
lecture at Regent College

Appendix Two –Churches attended

May 1 U Town Church –Church Plant on the campus of University of British Columbia
Vancouver www.utownchurch.com A very lively worship service with a clear focus on mission –
meets in a lecture room on the campus of University of British Columbia . With it being Summer
recess the numbers at worship were down. See under ‘Mission for comment on preaching’.

May 8 9am Peace Portal Alliance Church, Surrey British Columbia 9am Traditional
Contemporary style www.peaceportalalliance.com A large Christian Missionary Alliance church. The
worship had a very Contemporary ‘feel’ to it – it was mothers Day a-ll mothers were prayed form
and there were 2 infant dedications –one taken by the Children’s Pastor. The Pastor preached a very
good sermon on Luke 24.

7pm Tenth Church ‘3rd Service’ www.tenth.ca A really interesting service aimed at
18-35 year olds –a mixture of young adults who seemed quite sophisticated alongside a number of
street people who attend this church. Very upbeat music –excellent preaching (Senior Pastor -Ken

Shigematsu –no use of powerpoint but used several objects –map ,compass....) and also some good community building things happening here. One of the pastoral team has special responsibility for growing this worshipping community. Bulletin included sermon notes.

May 15 10.30am Fairview Presbyterian, Vancouver www.fairviewchurch.ca A fairly traditional worship service for all ages –with Kids Church for school aged children. Had a choir. The worship was led by the minister assisted by a couple of others. They had a choir. During the singing of the last hymn the minister invited any forward who would like to be anointed –a sort of blessing and nearly the whole congregation went forward and each of us were anointed and a short prayer of blessing prayed over the around 150 at worship that morning. They had a printed order of worship around 4 main parts -1 We are called to worship. 2 We hear God’s Word. 3 We respond to God. 4 We are sent out.

May 22 9am Traditional Worship, First Presbyterian, Bellevue, Seattle (the first of 5 worship services on a Sunday), www.belpres.org Very large Presbyterian Church –led by 2 of the elders, quite tightly structured –they got a lot in during the just over hour we were in worship –including 2 sharing slots ,a choral item by a gowned choir of about 40 kids who seemed to be about 11-14 years old –the choir led the congregational singing. There was a printed order of worship around 4 different areas -1 God calls us to worship. 2 Life together. 3 God’s Word to us. 4 Our Response. The Minister Dr Scott Dudley preached very well using a lot of stories and a concise PowerPoint outline. He left to go to another service in another part of the building before the end of worship.

9-30 pm Service of Compline – St Marks Episcopal Cathedral. Seattle (see comments elsewhere) www.saintmarks.org

May 29 9am First Baptist Church, Vancouver www.FirstBC.org Quite a lively Traditional service with a printed order of service –led by the Pastor –Darrell Johnston, who had been a lecturer in Pastoral Theology at Regent College. The Preacher was Rev Sam Chase , General Secretary of Canadian Baptist Ministries. Sam spoke on ‘the next chapter’ –trends looking ahead in global mission –very interesting. Several new members were introduced tot he church –the couples and a family were prayed for and given a verse of Scripture -and there was biographical details about each of them in the bulletin. A large choir led the singing with a band and a mix of traditional hymns and contemporary songs.

10.45am Westside Church www.churchoonthewestside.com (meets in 5th Ave Cinema)-the second service in the cinema that morning. The church also has a worship ‘campus’ on Granville Island This is a Mennonite church plant (although you wouldn’t know it –denomination was not mentioned)meeting in a movie theatre in quite a busy part of the city.. As I arrived I was warmly greeted –given some info about the church –there was real coffee available for everyone as they arrived. The place was packed out with mainly young adults and some young families. The service started with some quite upbeat Christian music –actually I was offered earplugs (for the music –not the preaching!) as I went in. The church has a strong focus on small groups, use of technology and all sorts of groups in the Great Outdoors as a means of fulfilling their mission. One interesting thing they did was as the children went out –on the screen at the front there was info one slide about the kids ministries –what ages, where etc. The main part of the service was verse by verse exposition of a passage in Acts 13 –for 40 minutes. Someone I met at Regent had met with the leadership of this church and told me she was really impressed about what and how they were engaging in mission.

7pm Tenth Church 3rd Service See comments above. Interesting that at the start of this service a big group of about 25 people came through –they had been praying together before worship. And the first song led by the music group was the Doxology.

June 5 9.30am Upper Clutha Presbyterian , Wanaka. Pentecost Sunday –a fairly elderly congregation. The minister Diane Gilliam Weeks preached a very good sermon on the gift of the Spirit.

June 12 11am Central Baptist Church Invercargill www.icbc.org.nz This was the second of 2 very similar services Central offers each Sunday morning. Both services have children's ministry programmes. They had just begin a series of messages on Ephesians –which will go for a number of months. Colin Wood the Assistant Pastor preached a very good message on Ephesians 1-he used a 'model' at the front of the church and attached different 'stick on labels' as he worked his way through the passage of Scripture- 'In Christ we are blessed, chosen, holy, blameless, loved...' A band of musicians led the worship with Contemporary Christian music. There was also someone using 'sign language' all the way through the message for the hard of hearing. Like the 2 Presbyterian Churches I worshipped at overseas a member of the church led in prayer for others.

June 19 10am Wanaka Baptist Church (Housechurch) –meets at the home of Rhonda and Warren Judkins, Hawea. A small gathering in Warren (Pastor –school teacher) and Rhonda Judkin's home. It was good for Jacinta and I to touch base with them –Rhonda used to be in our Youth Group in Edendale and Ian took their wedding about 3 years ago.

June 26 9am Traditional Service and 10-30am Family Service at Cromwell and Districts Presbyterian. Mission Sunday –with input from Sandy Potter (married to Malcolm- missionaries from Thailand who St Andrews Church support) and Carl Pilkinton (SIM Missionary who was in Burkina Faso –spoke about the 'Milk Powder project that St Andrews Sunday Kids Alive supported until recently) At the Family service they celebrate kids achievements -kids can come forward and share achievements at school , in sport etc.

July 3 9.15am Traditional Worship and 10.30am Contemporary Worship , Calvin Community Church (Presbyterian), Gore www.calvinchurch.org.nz A small group meet in the old church (smaller area) –fairly Traditional Worship at 9-15 am but a good sense of community within it. The much larger Contemporary service is held in the auditorium –led by a worship team -did a very interactive promotion of a new ministry. The church are going through a passage of Hebrews each week at the moment.

July 10 Caleb Ministries Course 'Day of Solitude' Alexandra

July 17 9am and 10.30am Hornby Presbyterian Community Church www.hpccc.org.nz The church care working through the book of Exodus each week this and are at the 10 Commandments at the moment . Hamish Galloway preached a very good message on the Sabbath and both services were much the same with the same worship team and a more reflective style of worship –teaching – same music team and also kids ministries at both services. (2 different Kids ministry teams) There was a coffee time after both services which a good number of people seemed to stay for.