

RESOURCING RENEWAL

Autumn Newsletter 2024



RESOURCE

ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT
ACTIVE IN MISSION

Multi-Parish Challenges

Exploring the promise of Learning Communities

Giving and Receiving

Sharing encouragements in the Alongside Scheme

Capturing Memories

Insights for today's church from the history of renewal



ReSource exists to support local churches in spiritual renewal. With Anglican roots, we work in the Church of England and beyond, with a particular focus on 'little, local, ordinary' churches and their leaders, lay and ordained.

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 @resourcingrenewal

 @ReSourceARM



Think of a typical Church of England parish. What do you see?

If, somehow, you were able line up all the CofE's parishes, in order of the size of their average weekly attendance, I wonder what size groups of people you might be expecting to encounter?

The latest statistics show that at the halfway point along this line, the average attendance figure is 25 people. This 'median' parish has 23 people worshipping on a typical Sunday. Statistically speaking, just one of those people is aged under 18.

Even if you travel up the line to the 75th percentile of parishes, average weekly attendance is still fewer than 60 people, with 45 at Sunday worship. In other words, three quarters of Church of England parishes typically gather fewer than fifty people for Sunday worship.

I mention this because I do wonder if, quite often, we need something of a reality check about the size of most churches within the Church of England. (I realise you may be reading this from a non-CofE setting, but the picture is similar across most mainline denominations in the UK).

My sense is that charismatic renewal has often become associated with larger churches, attracting gathered congregations from across a wide geographical area. But if the church is really to be renewed in our generation,

Photos: Christopher with Suzan Williams and Mark Miller (New Wine rural and urban network leads)



it will be because much smaller, locally-focussed churches have found new life in the Spirit.

It was a real honour to be invited to explore some of these themes at a session at this summer's New Wine festival, called 'God at work in smaller churches'. I actually began by inviting those present to keep standing up, depending on the size of church they represented. The significant numbers still standing with Sunday congregations of 30 or fewer was fascinating. Mark Miller, who heads New Wine's 'Urban' ministry (with a particular focus on estate churches) said he thought all the churches in that network had fewer than fifty people on a typical Sunday.

Using Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4, I invited people to consider three elements of that narrative in relation to the reality of seeking God's renewal in smaller settings, often without many financial or staff resources. We noticed that:

- Jesus begins with one person. One changed life that then impacts many, many others. **Do we have the faith of the mustard seed for such individual transformations to happen in our home context?**
- The woman is probably a social outcast – she certainly has little social

standing or obvious influence. **Are we seeking out such people as bearers of gospel hope?**

- Jesus' own prophetic insight concerning her five previous husbands was a key moment in the encounter, and had a deep impact on her. **Are we seeking to nurture our own spiritual gifting, and looking to exercise prophetic ministry in our everyday setting?**

It's so easy to think of smaller churches in terms of what they don't have – particularly in terms of people and money. But, as we reminded ourselves at New Wine, a satsuma is not a failed orange. I am praying for renewed belief in what is possible in smaller settings: for transformational encounters, and for churches overflowing with hope to their local communities.

*God of power,
may the boldness of your Spirit
transform us,
may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,
may the gifts of your Spirit equip us
to serve and worship you
now and always. Amen.*

Christopher Landau

Director of ReSource

Giving and receiving in the Alongside Scheme

We continue to thank God for the steady growth of the Alongside Scheme, offering church leaders a prayerful, prophetic Companion to support them in ministry. Some of those who have benefited from the Scheme have subsequently become Companions themselves – including Revd Naomi Barraclough.

What are the kinds of challenges you see clergy and others in church leadership facing?

I recognise two challenges at the moment. One is the ability to be faithful and obedient to the call God has put on our lives. The other is how close many are to burnout. I do think that these are often linked together.

There is so much potential all around us! God is at work everywhere we turn, and it is easy to feel like we are not doing enough. Fewer clergy, less people coming through vocational exploration, and the societal narrative of needing to be useful and always working... these can drown out God's promise. Like the boy with his picnic, when we offer what we have, it is God who will miraculously and generously turn it into an abundance.

When jobs need filling and tasks need completing, it is easy for this to become a driving factor – rather than responding to the specific callings, gifts and skills God has provided.

How has the Scheme made a difference for you in ministry?

The regular meetings with my Companion give me space to continue to process, pray through and consider what it is that God is calling me to. Sometimes vocational exploration or conversations seem to stop once someone is recommended for priesthood or has been ordained, yet God does not stop continuing to guide us. My Companion meetings give me a space to continue those conversations; waiting on the Spirit, listening to God for what God is calling me to, and how to live it out in the context and circumstances I find myself in at that time.

Why did you make the decision to offer yourself as a Companion?

I appreciated and valued the conversations with my own Companion, and felt that I had experienced few other spaces that were similar. I particularly found the opportunity to be honest, to ask questions, to process, and to continue thinking about who God was calling me to be - and what God was calling me to do - especially helpful. I wanted to be able to offer this to more



people. To offer the space to not just think practically but to listen spiritually. I also value being part of something bigger, with intercessors praying for each meeting and a whole ReSource family to be part of!

How have you witnessed the Holy Spirit at work through your relationship with your Church Leader?

One of the things I find so encouraging is God's faithfulness to His people. It is an utter privilege to witness this as part of the companion relationships. To see God at work in a church leader, in who they are and the place God has called them to, is encouraging in a way that then equips my own ministry.

I love seeing how the Holy Spirit turns up powerfully time and again in our meetings, shedding light, revealing truth, showing compassion and love. Even when I feel I have nothing to offer and nothing to bring, it is amazing to see that it is not dependent on me. God is already at work. Seeing the Holy Spirit

at work in this way reminds me that it is God's power and God's kingdom – that God longs to show up in the exciting and the mundane details of our lives, and honours the space we make vulnerably and openly to come before God and one another!

What would you say to others who may be thinking of joining the Scheme, whether as a Church Leader or as a Companion?

As both Church Leader and Companion this scheme is a blessing, a joy and an encouragement. It gives vital space to think, pray, process and wait on the Spirit. Everyone should have the opportunity for this!



Naomi Barraclough

Pioneer Minister,
Blackburn Diocese

Find out more about the Alongside Scheme, and how to apply for a Companion (or to explore becoming one) by visiting www.resourcingrenewal.org/alongside

Resourcing Rural Renewal

The particular challenges facing churches in rural contexts are not always recognised by national initiatives – so ReSource is exploring how we might offer ‘learning communities’ to support some such churches in their life and mission. Our Courses and Resources Editor, David Heywood, has been part of the conversations so far...

Roughly two thirds of Anglican churches are in rural areas. Of these, the vast majority are the ‘little, local and ordinary’ churches that ReSource is especially called to serve.

While the Church of England is rightly concerned about its mission and ministry in urban areas, a question from Archdeacon Stewart Fyfe, one of our ReSource Ministers, at the General Synod of July 2023 revealed that up to that point only four dioceses had included rural churches in their bids for strategic funding. Answering Stewart’s question, the Archbishop of York said that he hoped that many more dioceses would be looking to find ways to revitalise the life of their rural parishes, including forming learning communities to support one another.

“through these communities, we hope that, along with others working in the same area, we can make a contribution to the renewal of the Church’s life and witness in rural communities across the nation.”

Because of the declining number of clergy, most rural churches are grouped in benefices or teams of anything from three to more than twenty churches. Such numbers make it virtually impossible for clergy to fulfil local expectations of a ‘traditional vicar’ for all the churches and communities in their care. There is a crying need to reimagine patterns of ministry and leadership.

At the same time, the Church is gradually coming to recognise the importance of what is becoming called ‘everyday faith’: the call to all God’s people to be active in Christ’s service in the spheres of their daily lives – at work, at home, and through their voluntary activities and leisure pursuits.

In this time of transition, we believe that ReSource has a role to play. Our plan is to draw together learning communities of perhaps three or four rural benefices over a period of eighteen months. Our purpose can be summarised within three themes:

Renewal

Churches experiencing fresh encounters with God, confident in the work of the Holy Spirit among them, filled with hope and inspiration for the future.

Reimagining

God's people confident in their call to serve Jesus not just in the church but in all the spheres of everyday life, churches led by teams bound together by friendship and common purpose, and clergy relieved of an impossible task and able to focus on their own gifts and calling.

Resourcing

Through our three core courses, *Saints Alive*, *Alive in Christ* and *Your Shape for God's Service*, we would hope to see many in the churches filled with the Holy Spirit, confident of God's love, rooted in his grace and empowered for service. These courses would be offered in conjunction with our new resource, currently in preparation, called *Reimagining Ministry*, a step-by-step transition to a pattern of shared ministry rooted in dependence on Christ and friendship with one another.

ReSource can offer support through Sanctuary Days and Alongside companionship. Within the learning community, we will aim to guide churches through this period of renewal and reimagining, providing advice and facilitating mutual support and accountability.

Much of the detail is still to be finalised. We need to agree the shape of the learning community. We need two or three more leaders for the communities. We need to discern and secure funding from churches, dioceses and potentially the national Church. We need bishops and senior staff willing to work with us. And we are looking for churches ready to commit to this journey in faith.

But through these communities, we hope that, along with others working in the same area, we can make a contribution to the renewal of the Church's life and witness in rural communities across the nation.



David Heywood

Courses and Resources Editor

Alive in Christ: across the generations

We have been delighted to hear about our new course 'Alive in Christ' being used by churches around the country – and it was especially good to hear how, in a group of Yorkshire churches, it has been adapted for use with their youth group. Sarah Clark explains...

Having moved to a little, local, rural and ordinary church with my vicar husband Dave, life in church became quite different. Not because the beliefs had changed, but the style and culture were a completely new mindset. I had to begin to accept that I could still worship the Lord through sung liturgy and very old hymns.

Language and style. It's massive, but sometimes it's just about adapting. The message is still the same. The truth is still the same. And yes, Jesus Christ is still the same – yesterday, today and forever. But what we have learnt very much is to *adapt style to fit our culture*.

After hearing that there was an organisation reaching out to churches like ours, people like us, I began to get more and more interested in ReSource.

Its ministry is a gift to those of us who often feel isolated, and tired with constantly bringing the message, and praying that the Holy Spirit will breathe new life into these remote places.

When I heard about a new course, 'Alive in Christ', being written by my friend Alison Fleetwood, my ears were burning. A way to bring spiritual life, security and identity in Christ – using language and familiar texts that folks in our churches can relate to? Significant truths via familiar stories? YES! Bring it on!

I got a few lovely folks together from our churches to pilot the course literally as it was being written. Weekly I could see their faces light up. The course uses the familiar, yet the Holy Spirit sheds new light. One lady described it as connecting with all parts of her humanity. The mind, heart and soul! They particularly loved the musical suggestions, which relate very

well to different styles and cultures; and the artwork was tangible, and very powerful in provoking responses.

This led to release in spiritual freedom for these ladies, and a knowledge of being unconditionally loved by a merciful father, forgiven for past sin and then equipped to deal with temptations and habits that frequently hold us up as Christians. Wow! And all in five weeks. The Prodigal Son and the Lord's Prayer are used powerfully in the course to convey and work out these truths for individuals.

Last Lent, we decided to do the (by then fully published) course across our benefice.

At the same time, we were wanting to find a course for our young Pathfinders, aged 9-13. We couldn't find anything that was just right for them in their quite sheltered backgrounds, living on the farms and in the villages of the Yorkshire Dales. Yet I knew more than anything that these children needed to feel secure and loved by God – they needed to know they could have help when tempted, and what forgiveness really means. They needed to know their identity... they needed to be Alive in Christ!

We took the bare bones – the familiar scriptures, the basic truths – and we adapted the course for our very committed young people. Five weeks and fifty pizzas (yes fifty!) later, after much creativity, the children were really learning. Not just in their head,

but in their heart and soul too: how the Loving Father gives unconditional love, and that they don't have to *earn* their identity and security in life. They can feel safe, and they can take all temptations and addictions to HIM. They were becoming equipped as we gave them toolkits with Bible verses for being lonely, anxious or afraid.

These young people have such honest open minds, and it seemed like such a good time in their lives to receive this teaching. It would be a perfect next step to go on to Confirmation. The whole experience was very rewarding.



Sarah Clark

Alive in Christ course leader



Capturing memories of charismatic renewal

The work of our Charismatic Renewal History Project reaches a milestone in September, when we hold a Consultation on the past, present and future of renewal at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford. Revd Andy Crook is part of the project steering group, and has been involved in the creation of the project questionnaire...

I'm often surprised by how often, and with what ingenious mechanisms, the Bible encourages us to *remember*. Perhaps I shouldn't be: as a former History teacher, I recognise how vital corporate memory is in establishing national and community identities. But God urged his people to take this to remarkable levels... with his Word attached to door posts, fences, even foreheads (Deut 6:8-9); with festivals and songs devoted to its recitation (Deut 31:10-11; 19-22); and with the establishment of vibrant sacraments – Baptism and Holy Communion – to retell the events of the cross and resurrection (e.g. Rom 6:3-4; Luke 22:19). Remembering 'his wonders' (Ps 105:5) thus remained at the heart of faith. The cost of failing to pass this memory between generations is a key theme of the Old Testament, for example in the cycles of national amnesia, apostasy and disaster in the book of Judges.

What might this mean in our own day? When Bishop John Finney and Canon David MacInnes met for lunch in 2022, they probably felt far removed from such processes. But, as they discussed the remarkable move of the Holy Spirit

that they had witnessed between 1960 and 2000, they came to a similar conclusion: that these wonders should be told to the next generation - to encourage, inspire, instruct and even caution them.

It was at this point that I contacted them, as an MA student in search of a thesis topic. I subsequently interviewed them and other key leaders to discover how charismatic renewal had changed their ministry and theology. This stoked my curiosity, culminating in lining up a PhD looking at people's experiences of God speaking, through both Word and Spirit, through this period.

However, John, David and key allies like Canon Felicity Lawson had also invited ReSource to partner with them, in a broader oral history project. Work started quickly, including running online 'Witness Seminars' on topics like John Wimber's ministry and the so-called 'Toronto Blessing' (available to view on ReSource's YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/@resourcingrenewal).

The project's centrepiece has been an online questionnaire (accessible

at www.resourcingrenewal.org/charismatic-history) designed to gather as many testimonies and memories as possible. Around ninety people have completed this so far - some prompted by a recent letter from John and David in the *Church Times* - making it a rich and varied repository of experiences. It has been a privilege to be part of a team analysing these responses and to see shared stories emerging.

Sometimes, these are stories that would encourage but not surprise those currently active in renewal: lives changed by a new, powerful and personal experience of God; experiences of healing; freedom and joy in worship and the exercise of previously unknown spiritual gifts; a new thirst to hear God speak; and a new joy in fellowship.

“these precious memories, alongside God’s unchanging Word, may prove a priceless inheritance bringing great encouragement.”

Sometimes, they contain narratives in danger of being lost to history: of the Spirit bringing rich and spontaneous fellowship between diverse traditions; of Holy Spirit power seen amidst liturgy; of precious community experiences; and of the sheer unpredictability, excitement and exuberance of waiting on the Spirit in the early days.

And, inevitably, some told of mistakes, disappointments and brokenness: of unbiblical promises of healing; of

untested ‘prophecies’ about a revival that didn’t come; of fellowships fracturing over charismatic renewal even as denominations drew closer; and of a drift from the practice of charismatic gifts into a charismatic culture defined by musical style and not by God’s mysterious power.

The task of properly understanding, exploring and archiving this information is significant, and represents the beginning rather than the end of the process of remembering. It opens up intriguing opportunities for further conversations, including conferences, publications, academic research like my PhD, and consultations like the event at Wycliffe Hall. However, at heart, it will always remain a process by which one generation seeks to bless another with its memories of God’s wonders and with its prayers that God will do new things among them. As and when He does, these precious memories, alongside God’s unchanging Word, may prove a priceless inheritance bringing great encouragement.



Andy Crook

Charismatic History Project
Steering Group

Building kingdom foundations through local prayer groups

ReSource loves to work in friendship and partnership with other Christian organisations sharing similar goals. Local Houses of Prayer is one such example – and founders Anne and David De Leyser are passionate about the power of locally-rooted prayer.

What is a 'Local House of Prayer'?

Typically beginning with only two or three people, LHOPs offer a framework to help us align our lives for greater blessing, and to make an impact in our world for Jesus Christ, right where we are. Participants adopt a small local area for Jesus. Typically this could be their street or community, or a workplace, where they invite His Presence, worship and pray for the manifest breaking in of the Kingdom of God, proclaim blessings, and engage with communities with the aid of what we call our 'Caleb Questions'. LHOPs by definition are missional.

The Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus preached and demonstrated is about the restoration of all things – our relationship with each other and with creation, our fragile bodies, our broken systems. So the vision of a Local House of Prayer is simple and intentional: *to see His kingdom come and God's will be done on this particular area of earth, as in heaven.*

How did LHOP begin?

Local Houses of Prayer was birthed out of a move of God in the small retreat centre of Ffald-y-brenin (Sheepfold of

the King) in Wales. In the early 2000s there was a distinct increase in the intensity and frequency of miraculous experiences around Ffald-y-brenin. Many of the stories are recounted in the books *'The Grace Outpouring'* and *'The Way of Blessing'*. It was during this time that the question was asked, 'How could we share what we are learning with others around the place?'. This was the start of Local Houses of Prayer.

Why is proclaiming blessings so significant?

God tells His people that they will be a Kingdom of Priests (Exodus 19:5,6). Peter reminds us that this calling is also upon us (1 Peter 2:5, 9-10). We are called to be priests of God. But what do we mean by that? In Deuteronomy 10:8 we discover exactly what it means. The call of the priesthood, the call for you and





me, is to carry His Presence, to stand before Him, to minister to Him and to proclaim blessings in His name. As we have shared these principles with so many around the world, many have commented ‘this is so powerful because we spend so much time cursing our nations’. The enemy’s strategy is empowered by cursing. If we start blessing, we tear his kingdom down! Blessing is the antidote of cursing.

How important is unity across denominational backgrounds as a feature of local prayer groups?

The beauty of LHOPs is that they are for all Christian believers and denominations. Coming together in this shared agreement for God’s blessings to flow in our communities is at the heart of a Local Houses of Prayer. We know when we come together in this unity across our denominations, God commands a blessing – as expressed in Psalm 133.

Photo: Ffald-y-brenin retreat house



How have you seen this approach to prayer make a difference for the kingdom?

There are many stories testifying to how much of a difference LHOPs and the practice of speaking blessings has made both to the lives of individuals who have learnt the basic principles of LHOPs and the beneficiaries of those prayers. LHOP has helped ‘ordinary’ Christians rise up with a new authority and realisation of their identity as part of a ‘royal priesthood’. This has resulted in extraordinary manifestations of Holy Spirit power at work – with healings taking place, communities transformed, relationships restored, people coming through to salvation, atmospheres changed and nature restored.

For some of these stories and more information about LHOP, visit www.localhousesofprayer.org.

Anne and David De Leyser

Founders of Local Houses of Prayer

Charismatic Renewal in conversation with...



Join ReSource Director Christopher Landau for a series of live online conversations with authors and theologians as they explore the relationship between charismatic renewal, the wider life of the church, and God's mission in the world. Tuesdays at 1-2pm on Zoom. Book on our website.

Does the church routinely sideline the Holy Spirit?

Can insights from charismatic renewal be expressed in a way that is received fruitfully across church traditions?

What is the Holy Spirit saying to the church in our generation?

What does charismatic renewal need to hear from critical friends?

The Conversations will also be available afterwards on the Resourcing Renewal YouTube channel.



...the call to mission

17 September

Hannah Steele, director of St Mellitus London and author of *'Living His Story: Being a Community of Missionary Disciples'*



...the global church

24 September

Richard Moy, director of SOMA and author of *'The Lion Roars: Letters to the Charismatic Church'*



...the history of Christian spirituality

1 October

Joanna Collicutt, author of *'So Longeth My Soul: A Reader in Christian Spirituality'*



...introverts

8 October

Bishop Mark Tanner, author of *'The Introvert Charismatic'* and Patron of ReSource



...the church of tomorrow

15 October

John McGinley, director of Myriad and author of *'The Church of Tomorrow: Being a Christ-Centred People in a Changing World'*

Upcoming Events



Online Retreat for Harvest

An online retreat to re-focus on Harvest. The programme will include worship, music, teaching and times of silence, and a welcome to the Holy Spirit to meet us as we draw near to him.

Led by ReSource Minister
Revd Keith Powell.

**Wednesday 18th
September,
9am – 1pm
on Zoom.**

Renewing Hope in Smaller Churches - East Anglia

Join ReSource at St Peter's Church, Cringleford on Saturday 28th September for a day focussed on renewing hope in 'little, local, ordinary' contexts. We will encounter God afresh, renewing our confidence in the inextinguishable power of biblical hope. We will also have times to worship, to reflect, and to wrestle together with the practicalities of living hopefully in smaller churches.

Saturday 28th September, 10am-4pm

Tickets £10 (lunch included).



Charismatic History 'Witness Seminars' - Online

Thursdays 17th October & 14th November at 2-3.30pm

A series of 'Witness Seminars' taking place, offering opportunities to discuss and collect memories of significant events in the period 1960-2000. October's theme is 'Then and now' reflecting on continuity and change in charismatic renewal, including responses from September's Project Consultation.



Book at resourcingrenewal.org/events

Help us find 30 new Alongside Companions

The growth of our Alongside Scheme means we are actively seeking wise and prayerful new Companions. Might God be calling you to serve the ministry of ReSource in this way? Or do you know someone you might be able to recommend?

We have set up online Companion training days on any of these dates:

Tuesday 17th September	10am – 12pm
Monday 7th October	2pm – 4pm
Tuesday 15th October	2pm – 4pm

For more information please visit

www.resourcingrenewal.org/becoming-a-companion





RESOURCE

**ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT
ACTIVE IN MISSION**

Retreats & Events

including Sanctuary Days at your church,
led by ReSource Ministers

Courses & Resources

Saints Alive! and more, enabling renewal
in ordinary local churches

Alongside Scheme

Prayerful, one-to-one personal support
for anyone in church leadership

Please contact the office if you would like to explore
how ReSource can support you in ministry

Who's Who in the ReSource family

Bishop Mark Tanner
Patron

Lydia Farnham
Administrator

Katie Nessler
Alongside Project Officer

Christopher Landau
Director

Clare Olliver
Bookings Coordinator

Kathy Smith
Finance Officer

David Heywood
Courses & Resources Editor

Bishop John Holbrook
Chair of Trustees

Jolyon Trickey
Alongside Manager

Mutsa James
Media Manager

Details of our ReSource Ministers, Alongside Companions
and Trustees can be found on the website

Giving to ReSource

We are so thankful for all those whose giving makes ReSource's ministry possible.

Regular monthly giving is particularly helpful for us, even in small amounts;
direct debits can be set up via the Donate button on our website.

Donations can also be made directly to our CAF Bank account number 00032578,
sort code 40-52-40, in the name of ReSource for Anglican Renewal Ministries.

Gift Aid forms are available on the website, where you can also find
information about remembering ReSource in your will.

www.resourcingrenewal.org

Charity no. 1180394