

Lay Evangelist Formation: Outline of Modules

Module 1: The Story of God's Love

Module Outline:

- The story of God's love in six chapters
- The Prodigal Son: Coming home to God's unconditional love
- Conversion in the Bible:
 - Darkness to light
 - Passing it on to children
 - Response grid

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, you will be better able to:

- Describe how the whole Bible hangs together as a story of God's love.
- Understand the process of conversion and the different ways it can work in the life of a Christian.
- Understand your own faith storey and how it 'maps onto' the different varieties of faith story found in the Bible.

Homework:

- Pick a partner in the group. Your role will be to bring your partner up to speed (using the video and also your own notes) if you miss a session.
- Write down a short summary (5 minutes) of your 'conversion story'. Be ready to share it at the next session.

Module 2: Surprise the World

Report:

- Share your conversion story with the group.

Module Outline:

- This module is heavily based around the book *Surprise the World* by Michael J. Frost. It outlines a rule of life for missional Christians using the acronym BELLS (Bless someone, Eat with someone, Listen to God, Learn Christ, Sent).

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session you will have a better understanding of how a missional Rule of Life can help equip an evangelist for their work of witness, and you will begin to work on developing such a Rule for yourself.

Homework:

- Begin to implement BELLS in your daily life. Be ready to report back on your progress next month.
- For your reading: Michael J. Frost: *Surprise the World* (The Navigators, 2015).

Module 3: How to Relax and Enjoy Evangelism: Part 1Report:

- How is BELLS going?

Module Outline:

- Introduction to Relational Evangelism.
 - Start by being honest about our hesitations, sense of inadequacy, fear etc.
 - Identify and Rejoice in the Ways the Gospel is Good News for You
 - Start by Being a Witness
 - Remember that a Conversion is Usually a Process
 - Begin with Those Closest to You
 - Pray Continually

Learning Outcomes:

This module is the first of a two-part series. By the time the Module 4 is completed, you will have an increased sense of confidence and expectancy about sharing your faith in the context of trusting relationships, and you will begin to be more intentional about looking for opportunities for conversations about faith with people who are not yet followers of Jesus.

Homework:

- Continue with BELLS.
- What's your favourite way of describing the Gospel? Prepare a short, one page explanation of it and be ready to share it with the group next month.
- Create an 'Operation Andrew' list

Module 4: How to Relax and Enjoy Evangelism: Part 2Report:

- How is BELLS going?
- Share about the process of creating an Operation Andrew List (but don't share confidential information)
- Share your Gospel presentations.

Module Outline:

- Introduction to Relational Evangelism.
 - Quick recap of last time
 - Be Yourself
 - Learn to ask Leading Questions
 - Listen for Openings and Possible Contact Points for the Gospel
 - Enjoy your Evangelising Conversations
 - Don't Be Afraid of Awkward Questions
 - Don't Be Afraid to Help People Step Through the Door
 - Do Good Follow-Up

Learning Outcomes:

This module is the second of a two-part series. By the time it is completed, you will have an increased sense of confidence and expectancy about sharing your faith in the context of trusting relationships, and you will begin to be more intentional about looking for opportunities for conversations about faith with people who are not yet followers of Jesus.

Homework:

- Continue with BELLS.
- Work with your 'Operation Andrew' list – begin praying and looking for opportunities for witness. Report back next month.
- For your reading: William J. McKay: *Me, An Evangelist?* (Stephen Ministries, 1992). Read it and be ready to share *one reflection* next month.

Module 5: Helping New Disciples GrowReport:

- BELLS, Operation Andrew
- How was the book *Me, an Evangelist?*

Module Outline:

Four things Jesus is leading us into:

- Into a new relationship with God (habits: prayer and Bible reading)
- Into the people of God (habits: corporate worship and small group fellowship)
- Into a new way of living, which will affect many areas of our lives)
- Into mission and evangelism

How are we currently helping new disciples grow?

- Preaching
- Confirmation classes

- Midweek study groups
- Spiritual direction
- Self-directed reading

What can we do?

- Start a discipleship group
- Initiate one-on-one or one-on-two mentoring conversations

Learning Outcomes:

By the time this module is completed you will be able to identify the key habits and disciplines that help Christians grow, and you will be better equipped to help people take their first steps into this new way of life.

Homework:

- Continue to implement BELLS, Operation Andrew
- For your reading: Francis Collins: *The Language of God*. This will be our discussion book for next month. Read it carefully, take notes. For *each* chapter, identify:
 - New learning for you.
 - What was the most important point?
 - What did you agree with most strongly? Was there anything you disagreed with, and why?
 - What unanswered question do you still have?

Module 6: The Big Questions

Report:

- BELLS, Operation Andrew

Module Outline:

In the modern world, many people struggle with difficult questions about faith issues. These might include things like 'Is there a God?' 'Are science and faith contradictory?' 'Why is there evil in the world?' It is impossible for us to address all these issues in one session. However, Collins' book *The Language of God* is a good defence of (a) theism against atheism, and (b) science against fundamentalism. Our learning for this module will be based on this book and the things that stood out for us as we read it.

Learning Outcomes:

By the time this module is completed you will have a greater sense of confidence in your ability to respond when people raise difficult questions about faith.

Homework:

- Continue to implement BELLS, Operation Andrew
- Talk to a non-Christian friend and ask them about their biggest questions, objections, and hang-ups about Christianity. Research some answers for them!

Module 7: Courses for InquirersReport:

- BELLS, Operation Andrew
- How did your talk with your non-Christian friend go? What questions and issues did they raise?

Module Outline:

In recent years many 'inquirers' courses' have been created to help people who want to explore Christian faith but are not yet persuaded of its truth. In this module we will:

- Identify what makes a good inquirers' course
- Identify and explore some of the better-known options (Alpha, Transforming Questions, Pilgrim).
- Go through a detailed outline of one particular course, Christian Basics, based on the first four chapters of Tim Chesterton, *Starting at the Beginning*.
- Begin to plan a Christian Basics weekend that we will present as a group at a church in the Diocese.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module you will have a better understanding of what makes for a good inquirers' course and will be more familiar with the options available if and when your church wants to use such a course.

Homework:

- Continue to implement BELLS, Operation Andrew
- Further reading: Tim Chesterton: *Starting at the Beginning* (Amazon, 2023)

Module 8: Evangelistic Preaching and Testimony, Part 1Report:

- BELLS, Operation Andrew
- How was the book *Starting at the Beginning*?
- Continue planning for our diocesan Christian Basics course.

Module Outline:

In this module we will explore two types of public presentation of the Christian faith:

- The evangelistic sermon, in which a preacher gives a presentation of the basic gospel message and invites people to respond to it in some way.
- The faith story/testimony, in which the speaker shares their own personal journey of coming to faith in Christ and growing in that faith.
- We will learn how to prepare and present both these options. Note: these are big subjects and each one could be the subject of a whole course in itself! It will only be possible for us to scratch the surface in this module.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module you will be able to begin preparing either an evangelistic sermon or a faith story/testimony.

Homework:

- Continue to implement BELLS, Operation Andrew
- Choose one of the following options to do as a presentation next month:
 - Prepare a faith story/testimony
 - Prepare a ten-minute talk on the question, 'Why would I recommend Jesus?'

Be ready to do your presentation before the group next month.

Module 9: Evangelistic Preaching and Testimony, Part 2Report:

- BELLS, Operation Andrew

Module Content:

- In this module you will preach your sermon or share your faith story for the group, and the group will offer feedback.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module you will be ready to refine your faith story/sermon and present it in your own church (with your rector's permission) or another appropriate situation.

Homework:

- Refine your story/sermon and present it in your own church (perhaps as a sermon, or to a small group gathered for the purpose of hearing and giving feedback), with your rector's permission.
- Continue to implement BELLS, Operation Andrew

Module 10: Where Do We Go from Here?

Report:

- BELLS, Operation Andrew
- How did your presentation in your own church go?

Module Content:

- In this module we will look back and review the whole course, and our participation in it. We will identify the modules we feel confident about and those that need more work, and each participant will try to identify the sort of evangelistic work they are most excited about.
- In the second half of the module, the candidates will work with their rectors to come up with a plan for the first year of their ministry as evangelists.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this module each candidate and their rector will be well on the way to preparing a working agreement for the first year of their ministry as a lay evangelist.

Homework:

- Complete working agreements with rectors (with the help of the Warden of Evangelists). Implement them.