



THE EQUIPPING CHURCH

This is the first core workshop for Bondi & Waverley Anglican.

Equipping Workshops are designed to be done either in groups or 1:1. They are focussed, brief, practical and designed to help the congregations and ministry teams of Bondi Anglican Parish.

At the workshop, participants work through this paper with a leader, sharing responses on the written content and to the specific questions, with a focus on ministry skills, next actions and a prayerful response. Workshops take just under an hour.

The second core workshop is *Every Member Ministry*. Ideally it will be done before doing the other workshops.

Introduction: Discipling, Nurturing, Accountability

Healthy Christians are called to ongoing growth in maturity. Maturity in Christ is more about character than activities, however mature christians display their maturity in the way they act and their commitment to the mission Jesus. There are also some key ways we can plan to grow to further maturity. The Bible makes it clear that we grow best in the context of relationships, rather than just as individuals. So we need to think in terms of congregations and teams. It also helps to have a planned **pathway** to ongoing maturity. This pathway can clarify the stages of maturity and how church teaching and a variety of equipping workshops can be used to help move people towards maturity.

Equipping happens at our large and small group gatherings. I'm suggesting we call small groups at Bondi **DNA groups**¹ (for Discipleship, Nurture and Accountability), which are the important functions of these groups. I want to be very clear and practical about how we equip using these DNA groups and prepared workshops. Attempts to train and equip in churches can seem detached, random, disorganised, and non-practical. Intentional ministry through a DNA group should be the opposite. So the first thing we need are some leaders and members for the DNA groups. These initial leaders will be prepared and equipped by the senior Minister as their pastor-teacher by going through *The equipping church workshop*.

Teams that Equip.

This core ministry workshop introduces the big picture of the equipping model that all the other workshops are based on. It looks at Ephesians 4, with the gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Shepherd-Teachers (or Pastor-Teachers). It introduces all the other equipping workshops together with a twin introductory workshop; *One to one ministry*.

1. Activity. Welcome and introduce each other in pairs to rest of workshop in one minute each, sharing other person's name, favourite part of the Bible or book and any hobby.

2. From God's Word. What is meant to be happening through the local church.

The workshop starts with some key Bible texts. We will ask you to share your answers for discussion, and to listen carefully to others. Please prepare some responses to these questions for workshop.

3. Read Ephesians 4:11-16

1. List the gifts God gives the church; A P E S-T. What does a person with each one do?

2. Focus: What are pastor/teachers meant to be doing? Explain how that may happen.

3. As a result, what are all of God's people meant to be doing?

4. As a result, what should be happening in a church? Can this happen more at Bondi?

5. What are the implications for you and your service or ministry? Think & apply.

4. Read Colossians 1:28

1. What was Paul's aim for the Colossians? How did he go about achieving that?
2. How does that affect the way we should organise our plans to equip people for maturity?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:-13:1

1. What are all members in the church body said to have?
2. Do you know what part you could play in the body? Are you currently doing that? See Romans 12:6 and Hebrews 2:4. Can you be equipped or help others be equipped in this area more?
3. What is the main point of this passage? What is “the more excellent way” in Ch 13? (see also 1 Corinthians 14:12 and discuss which gifts *you* desire).
4. Pray that you would use your gifts well to help the body. Pray the same for everyone in Bondi Anglican congregations.

6. Discuss and Apply.

In our church context, what does “Christian maturity” typically look like? Give some concrete examples.

List other Biblical texts you can find that speak about Maturity. Discuss these.

What is a Disciple? What do you think it means to “make Disciples”?

How can we best be equipped and trained for maturity? What is ‘maturity’?

Why do we want to be mature Christians? Think hard about this carefully before moving on.

The overall goal might be called ‘Christ-likeness’ as we follow and obey Jesus. But try to break that down into a few more tangible points: “Maturity will be evident through ... (list and discuss examples).

How can a DNA group actively Nurture each member? Share ideas.

What is a danger of going to a Bible Study Group where there is lots of good discussion but little practical application and accountability? How can we develop Accountability in group?

Two Key Goals

There are two contexts for growth within church life. Firstly, taking part in regular gatherings and secondly, in being part of a ministry team. This leads to two goals:

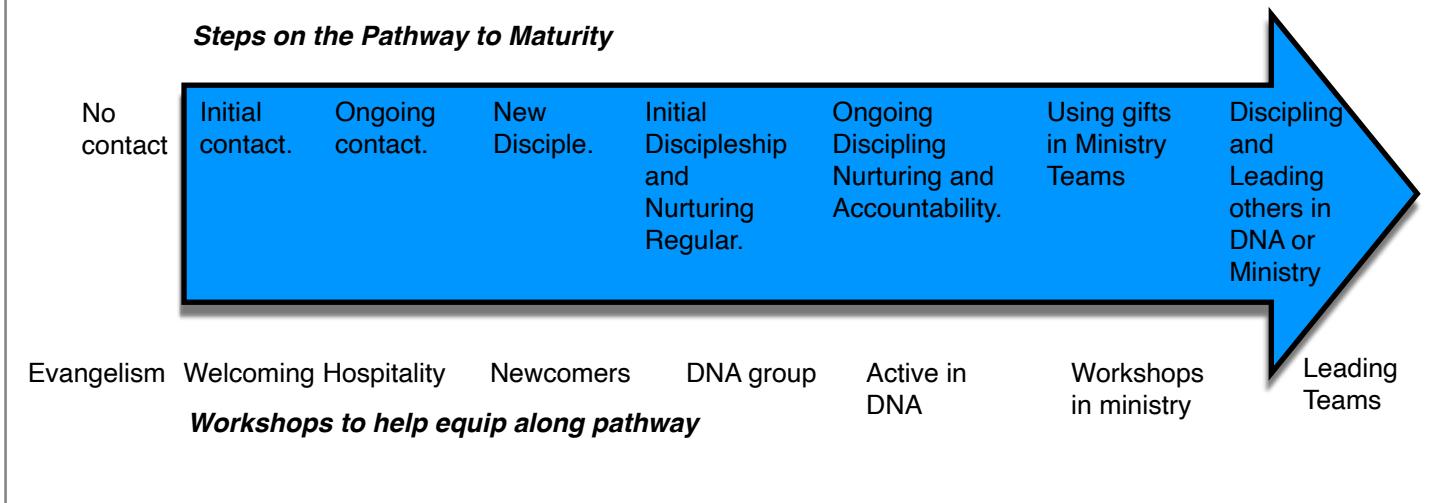
1. **Being actively involved in Christian relationships in a congregation and in a DNA group.**
2. **Being actively involved using gifts serving in a ministry team.**

These two goals are simple. And yet, many other objectives across other contexts are addressed through it. The first major goal is crucial, as involvement in a congregation and a DNA group defines healthy church membership. A DNA group provides Discipleship, Nurture and Accountability for relationships in the believer's life. It is also through the DNA groups that the other major goal—involvement in ministry teams can be addressed.

Pathways

The core task of the pastor-teacher is this: equipping God's people for works of service. The pastor's role is not solely ministering to others, but enabling the ministry of others. Equipping and training is not an optional extra for the pastor/teacher but a central outcome. And being equipped is not an optional extra for followers of Christ, but must be provided for *all* of them. It is part of belonging to a healthy church, as we are all built up to reach maturity.

Pathways to Maturity through Discipleship, Nurturing, Accountability.



Unless equipping and training is intentional, it probably won't happen.

That means identifying goals. For us, these goals are 1. Being actively involved in a congregation and DNA group. 2. Being actively involved in using gifts in a ministry team. It also means identifying the tangible steps needed for people to travel towards these goals. Everyone's pathway to maturity will be different. But without a sequence of equipping opportunities, there is unlikely to be many opportunities that are utilised. It's worth identifying some standard steps of Discipleship. What steps are involved? What strategies might help people move from one step to another?

Identifying steps in the Discipleship pathway enables you to identify roughly where someone is at. It also helps identify what their next step might need to be. It's not always that simple of course, particularly as many Christians have never really been actively discipled for many years, they may find it hard to know where they are on the pathway. But it is a good starting point for intentional ministry. We can then use workshops to equip in a particular way.

Sharing our stories on pathway to maturity.

Look at the Pathways arrow on the previous page. Where are *you* on the Pathway?

How did you get there?

Have you grown in Christian maturity in the last year? Why/why not?

Can you see how you may be able to utilise a workshop to be equipped or to help someone else?

When we think of Discipleship, we have to think about relationships.

That's because we all are fellow workers and need to be part of a team. New Testament ministry was *always* a team thing. When Jesus got his team together, it was a core part of his mission. Wherever Paul did ministry, there were always plenty of these fellow workers alongside him.

Our ministry at Bondi should be no different. Let's all get into a DNA team, and think about using the workshops to help equip and relate as we carry out our ministry.

Equipping Workshops that have been or are being developed.

These may be handed out at the workshop for you to look at. (Can you think of some of the other areas not covered here?)

- 1. Teams that Equip. Core
- 2. Every member ministry. Core
- 3. Joining a DNA group
- 4. Joining & serving in a ministry team:
- 5. Spiritual disciplines: bible reading and prayer
- 6. Setting up Sunday Church
- 7. Preaching
- 8. Public bible reading
- 9. Public prayers
- 10. Leading church
- 11. Welcoming
- 12. Music & Singing at church
- 13. Audio
- 14. Kids talks
- 15. Crèche
- 16. Kids church
- 17. Encouragement
- 18. Hospitality
- 19. Marriage preparation
- 20. Safe Ministry and child protection
- 21. Christian households
- 22. Raising kids to follow Jesus
- 22. Personal evangelism
- 23. Personal apologetics
- 24. Cults
- 25. What it means to be Evangelical
- 26. Anglican Doctrine: the 39 Articles.
- 27. Kids club
- 28. Primary school scripture
- 29. Youth ministry
- 30. High school lunchtime groups
- 31. University ministry
- 32. Pre-school outreach
- 33. Vocations & Ministry

Developing DNA groups and Ministry Teams.

Developing a culture where groups and Ministry Teams are formed and equipped as a central part of church life means investing in people. These people will have to share the vision for our local mission, who share it with others, who'll share it with others. There are already some home groups that exist, and a few ministry areas that need teams to develop around them.

The big aim is a culture of team ministry which will pervade the whole church rather than one off events, relationships, not just programmes. A common approach to training is event-focussed. While training events do have their place, on their own they tend to produce very little lasting impact. An event can act as a useful catalyst. But unless there is an ongoing

training relationship where there is accountability with feedback, discussion and prayer, not much will result. Training may not lead to equipping! Worse, outside of a relational context, ministry skills are abstracted from personal godliness and theological development... so we're often not really equipping for actual ministry but going through an academic exercise.

The Plan

All of us need to be on the pathway to maturity.

Bondi Anglican church wants to identify where all our members are and get them equipped in Discipleship and Nurturing and Accountable Ministry. The workshops are our planned springboard into this. So we need to get some DNA groups and Ministry Teams up and running! Potential DNA leaders and Ministry Team leaders must be trained in our two core workshops: 1. The equipping church (this workshop), and then 2. One-to-one.

There are then a selection of relevant ministry workshop (e.g. leading a DNA group or youth ministry, public reading of the Bible). We want all our members to be equipped so they can, in turn, take other people they lead through relevant workshops. This is modelled on Jesus' passing his mission onto his Disciples, and Paul instructing his fellow workers to entrust the ministry "to reliable men, who will also be qualified to teach others." (2 Timothy 2:2).

The role of the workshops, including this one, is not simply to get through content, but to establish ongoing encouraging relationships. So, the process is very strategic. This workshop establishes the approach to ministry, and is a basis for ongoing reflection, reading and discussion. It's the starting point for an ongoing training relationship. This is why the 'one-to-one' paper is also vital for all leaders to do.

So equipping workshops happen primarily through the DNA groups and the ministry Teams. But they can be done in larger events or 1:1.

DNA group leaders not only orientate people to being part of a group (see workshop on 'joining a DNA group'), but have responsibility for ensuring that they help in equipping them in the ministry areas, either as a whole group or with individuals in their group.

Next Steps: Your next actions in the DNA pathway.

After you have done this introductory workshop, your next action is to help equip others, and plan to do the second core Workshop: One to one ministry.

Who are your fellow workers?

What are you doing to help equip them in the areas they serve in? What can you do to help them to equip others?

Plan which other workshops you and your DNA group can do after One to one ministry: list them, with a rationale for why these workshops are particularly important.

For further thinking and action on the equipping church, *The Trellis and the Vine*. by Col Marshall and Tony Payne, *Movements that change the world*. by Steve Addison, *What Jesus Started*. Steve Addison, *Centre Church*. Tim Keller