



Diocese of Bath & Wells

*Changing Lives, Changing Churches for Changing Communities*



# Local Ministry Groups and your PCC

## Making a start

# A Learning Unit

Description This brief learning module (1¼hrs) is designed to help PCC's engage with the issues in the Green Changing Lives documents

Aim to discover what the PCC needs to do as Local Ministry Groups (LMG) are being formed

Method It is envisaged that this exercise will be completed by a PCC with a facilitator (who may or may not be the incumbent). In four steps the PCC will understand a little more of what the church is about, know a little more about their own locality, consider the issues in the Green Papers and decide what action needs to be taken next. This exercise should last about 1 ¼ hours.

Requirements Everyone should have read the [Green Bulletin](#)  
Facilitator  
Map of area

## Session Design

You may like to start with a short prayer.

### Step 1 Describing how things are – 15 minutes

Give the group sheet 1. This shows three circles with space to write. The circles are entitled

- in relation to God
- in relation to each other and
- in relation to others

Ask the group to individually write down known activities that the church is already doing, that might fit into each of these circles. Give the example 'home groups' or 'Lent groups' or make up another if you don't do either of these. 'Lent groups' probably best fits into the 'in relation to each other circle'.

NB It is only a best fit. For example, worship is primarily for God but it does have its benefits for humans too, and it has been described as the shopfront of the church. A person will need to decide where it best fits. There is no *one* answer.

At the end of this people should have clusters of activities around and in the circles. People can write in the centre or where two circles join if they wish.

10 minutes in total (5 minutes handing out, explanation of the task, answering questions, up to 5 minutes for writing)

## **Step 2 Mapping our church – 20 minutes**

Find a map of your parish (Ordnance Survey, [www.mapquest.co.uk](http://www.mapquest.co.uk) accessible through the web. street atlas), or you may get a piece of wallpaper and draw it on the back.

Provide enough copies for small groups or if you wish or one large one that can go in the middle of the table.

Ask people to mark their answers to the following questions on their maps:

- Name important buildings - pubs, shops, schools, workplaces, centres of worship
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- Where do you live? – where do others live?
- Where do you work? – where do others work?
- Where do people shop?
- Leisure facilities
- Blackspots, kids hang out
- Things that have gone
- Recreational areas
- Best place - worst place

What does this tell us about the community and the church?  
List some of the reasons why our community looks like this

## **Step 3 – What difference will the LMG make – 20 minutes**

The Changing Lives bulletin makes the following points: see sheet 2

Divide into small groups (3's or 4's). Ask each group to choose for themselves one of the statements on sheet 2 that interests them and discuss the issues that arise from it for 10 minutes.

Ask each group to feed back their thoughts. Write them up on a large piece of wall paper, flipchart etc.

## **Step 4 Next steps – 15 minutes**

Take a large piece of paper (wallpaper, flipchart)

Put the following benefits of being part of an LMG in order

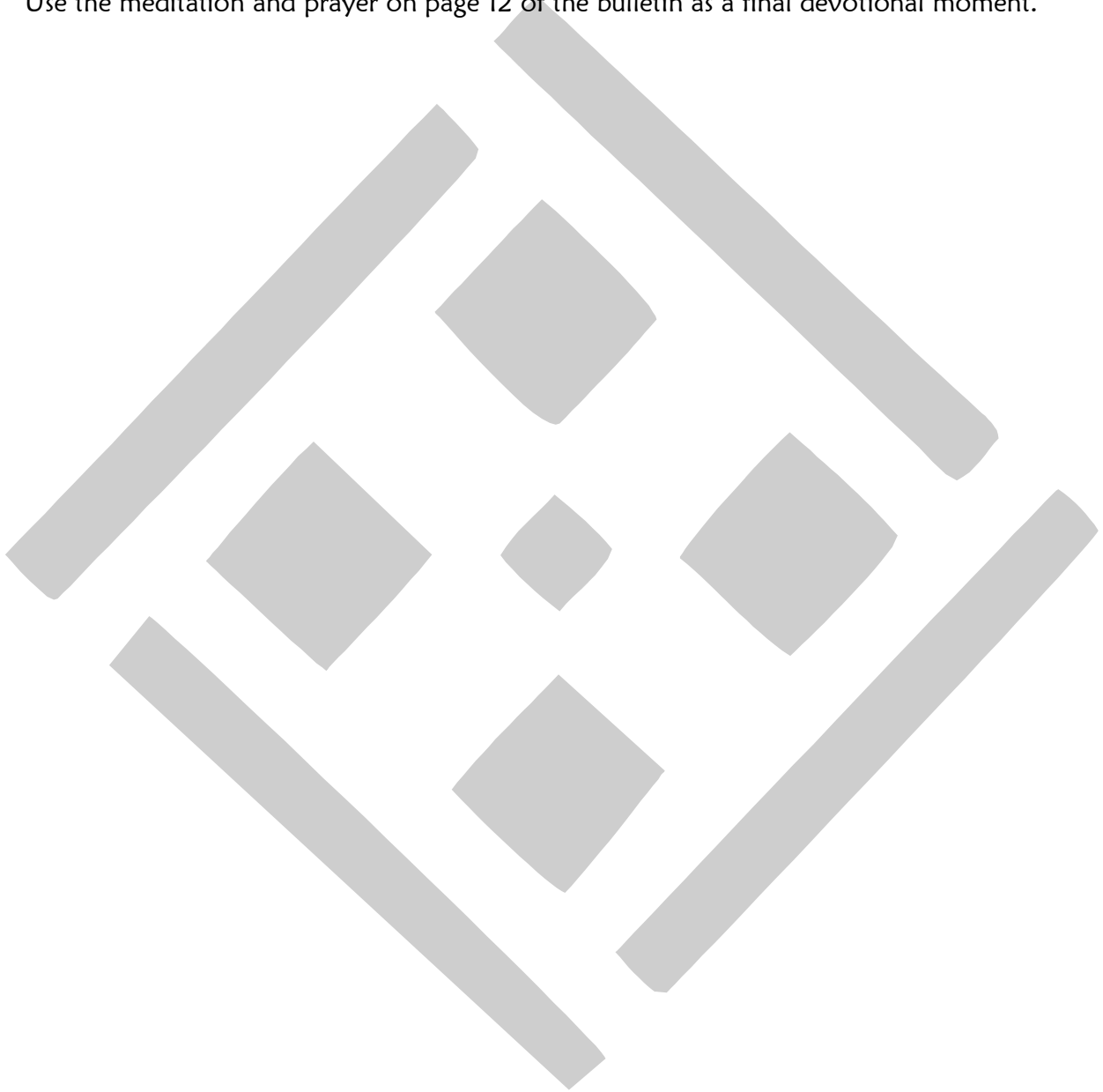
- Working with others for the common good
- Sharing fellowship
- Joint witness to people in the LMG area
- More cost effective
- Less administration in a single benefice
- Learning from different expressions of the Christian faith
- Providing a more secure future

As a result of your discussion what one point do you want to make to your Deanery Pastoral Committee?

As a facilitator you should make a note of this and send a letter on behalf of the PCC to the Secretary of the Deanery Pastoral Committee.

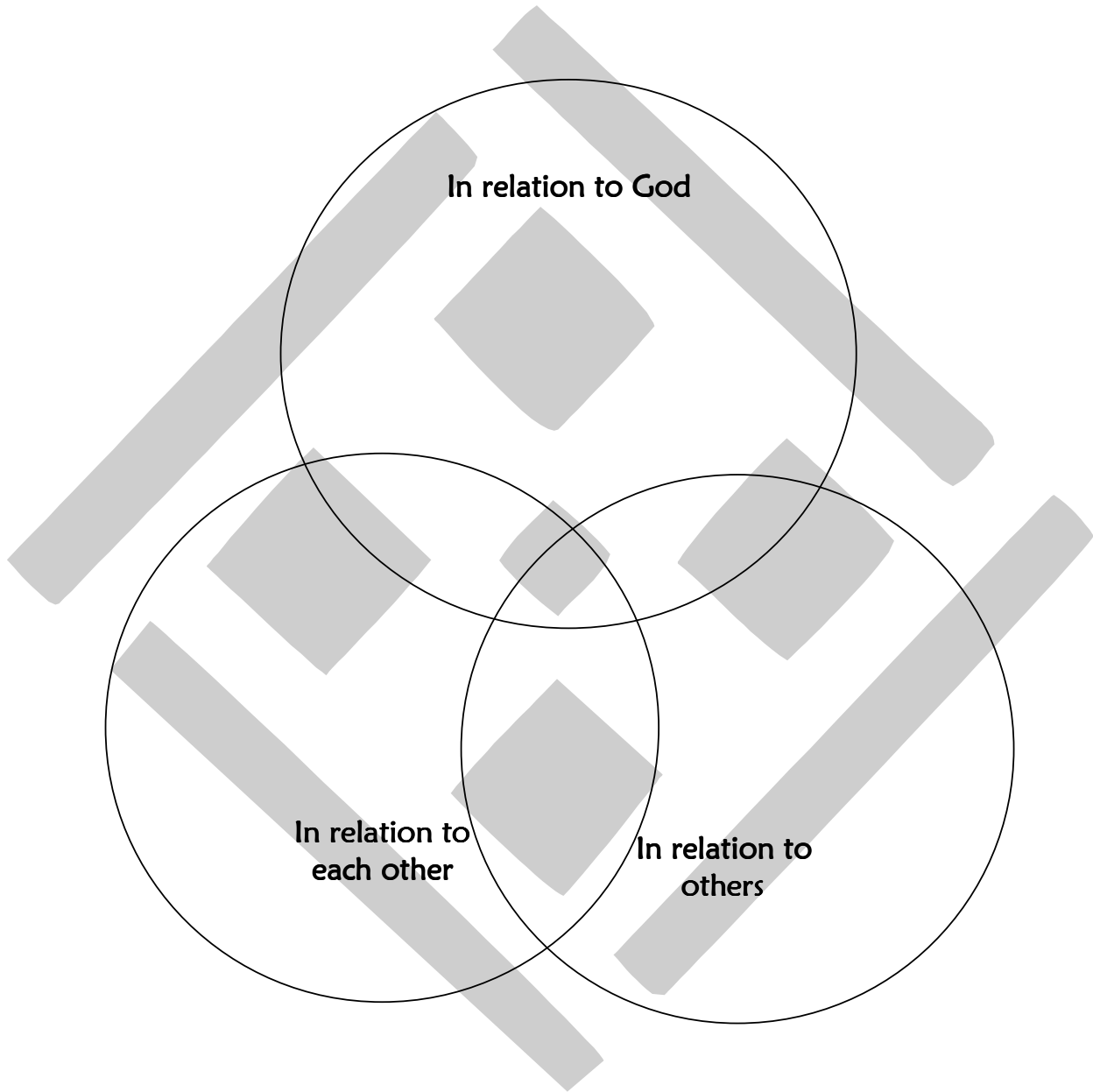
### **Conclusion**

Use the meditation and prayer on page 12 of the bulletin as a final devotional moment.



# Local Ministry Groups and your PCC – Making a Start

## Sheet 1 The Church's Task



Source:

How to be a Local Church, John Cole, 1990, Kevin Mayhew

# Local Ministry Groups and your PCC – Making a Start

## Sheet 2

These are some of the areas covered in the Changing Lives bulletin. Choose one of them for your small group to discuss.

What do you see as the issues that arise for you as we move towards being part of a Local Ministry Group?

- A. There is an urgent need for the church to adapt its own structures. It is tempting to ignore the signs and carry on as if nothing has really changed. We cannot and should not attempt to continue as we are
- B. Even if we had the money we do not have enough people offering themselves for ordination (see page 3 of the bulletin). We know that our clergy allocation will continue to fall. We have to change in our inherited models of ministry and it is best to plan for this now in an open and prayerful way.
- C. Here are two statements about our communities and our church buildings.
  - The church is a building that stands in a community
  - The church is a community that meets in a buildingCan both of these be correct? What do you do when one hinders the other?
- D. Most stipendiary clergy trained in a theological system that prepared them to be a Rector, Vicar or Priest in Charge of a single parish. We need a change of culture here. The principle of no one alone means we have to see working and praying with, and recognising the giftedness of others as the way of ministry in the future.
- E. By working together you can achieve far more than working separately. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Be ready to feed your thoughts back to the main group after ten minutes of discussion.