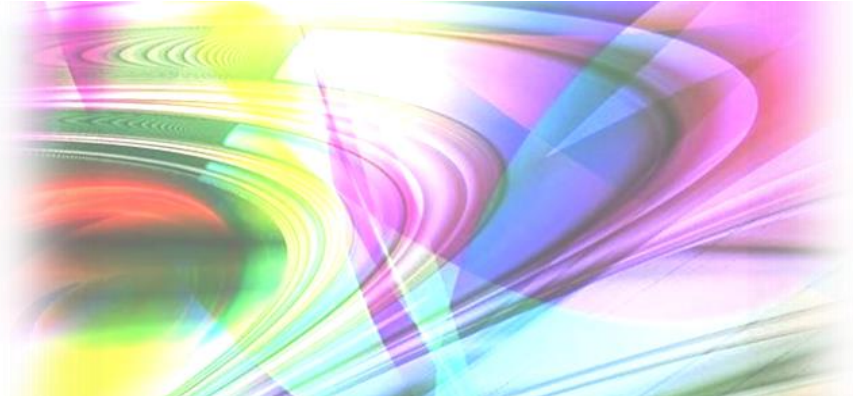


Leadership@Network



***A discussion paper written by
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www.rydalhanbury.com***

Leadership@Network

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

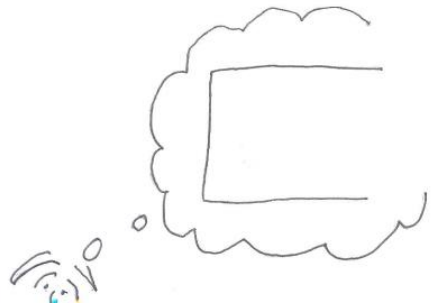
Jesus

Have you ever wondered why Network church is organised in the way it is and in particular why leadership takes the form that it does? Well here are a few thoughts that might help to answer some of those questions. I have attempted to communicate something of the thinking that goes on behind our leadership style and the values that motivate us. This has been a fascinating process for me as I have attempted to unravel the way we think and work together.



I feel it is a great privilege to be part of the leadership of Network and being involved is a great joy for me. I think we are very fortunate to have the friendship and support of such a loving Christian community which seeks to live out the message of Jesus in a relevant way for our day.

I have started with a few headline thoughts that come from my understanding of biblical principles. I have then tried to show how these principles work out in the ideas that I value and the way that I lead. This is not in any way exhaustive but an attempt to give some understanding to our philosophy of leadership. The picture that is emerging is still 'work in progress' which is something of the challenge we face as we try to express a form of leadership that is appropriate in our fast changing culture.



Every one contributing and growing

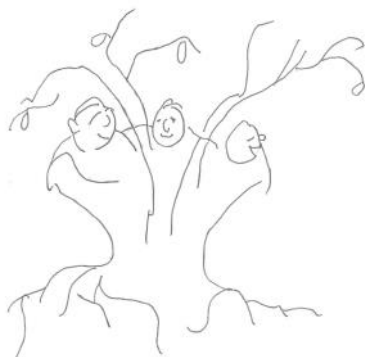
The major challenge: For the most part, the church has been making converts not disciples, and has struggled to train and release God's people for a whole-life, life-long, growing adventure with Jesus on the frontline of engagement with our world.

Mark Green (LICC)

Whether it is an understanding of 'the priesthood of all believers' (1 Peter 2), the teaching on the Body of Christ from Ephesians and 1 Corinthians, or the encouragement in Romans 12 for us to use our gifts effectively, I am committed to all of us contributing and growing. This principle influences many of the choices that are made in the leadership style at Network.

Creating an Atmosphere of Growth

One of our challenges as leaders is to create an atmosphere of growth. We are committed to an environment where people find it easy to 'have a go', to step out and as a result, be better equipped to discover and use their core gifts that have often been buried or underutilised. What creates this environment? I believe there are a number of choices that I make as a leader in order to encourage this atmosphere:



- Openness and Vulnerability



Many of us as leaders have travelled quite a distance in our own development but seldom take the opportunity to share in an open and vulnerable way what that has been like for us. So, as with many things, it starts with us sharing our experience of growth honestly, including the ups and downs.

- A culture of experimentation

We can all be hampered by the belief that we can't 'have a go' at something until we have got everything sorted. "I won't be able to help someone else until I have got my act together completely". Our theology sometimes does not help us here as we can view failure as sin. Perhaps the Christian life has been about 'getting it right'. I am regularly challenged by the words 'go and lo I am with you' from Matthew 28. It is as we step out that we experience God with us. It's fair to say that we seldom get things right the first time we do it, so we need to create opportunities for 'having a go'. Cells are of course great incubators for people in this respect.

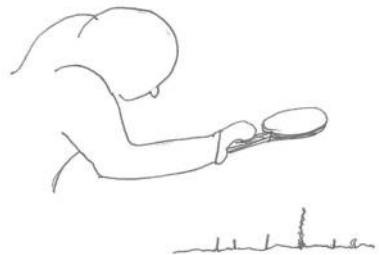


- A need for encouragement

I am constantly amazed what a little positive encouragement can do. It can enable someone to step out of their comfort zone and try something new. Giving words of genuine and specific encouragement needs to be a regular part of our relationships in order to build people up.

- Always looking for potential

Every time I meet with someone I find myself looking for their untapped potential. What is it that God sees in them that is being overlooked? I get a clue when I see what they get passionate or excited about; what brings them alive that is not yet being outworked in their life. I am looking for what is in the embryonic stage of development that just needs fanning into flame.

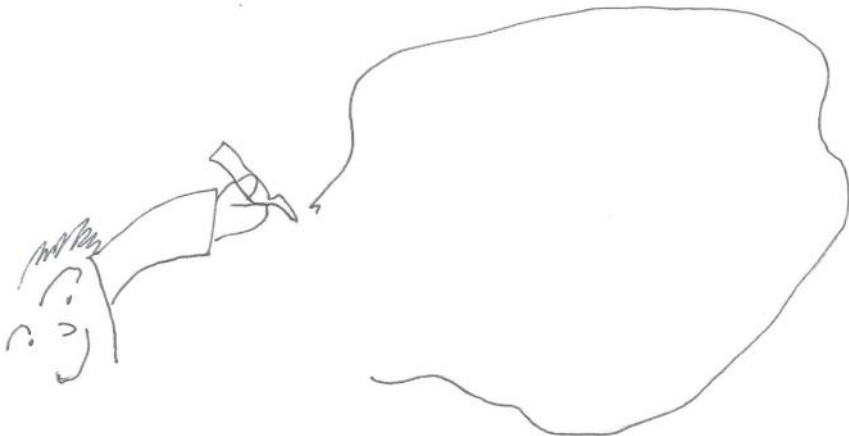


- Sorting the issues

For many there are good reasons why they don't want to step out and grow. I want to encourage people so that they are prepared to put the work in and discover some of the obstacles to growth. Sometimes previous hurts and failures have not been dealt with well and we need to walk people through a healing process so they are willing to have another go.

- Creating space for people

This is where cell groups really come into their own. These small group communities become places where people have space to use their gifts and not only use them but develop them. This works against a common mindset, and even training amongst leaders, which says that we need to create opportunities, usually meetings that we can lead in order to demonstrate our leadership. Leaders then get to practice their gifts and become skilled, rather than enabling others to contribute. To use Paul's language, we need to have environments 'that equip the saints for works of ministry' (Eph 4). I think of this a bit like learning to swim, mostly in the water having a go with coaching and some occasional theory. Our preference in church life is often the reverse, loads of theory but little opportunity to have a go and little if any coaching.



What enables us to grow?

I have carried out some research over a number of years now, where I have asked the question in all sorts of different groups, 'what has enabled you to grow as a Christian?' The most common answers that I have received have been these:

- 1) One to one relationships....
(Often expressed as someone who took an interest in me or believed in me)
- 2) Being part of a small group....
(These can be cells, prayer triplets or social action groups)
- 3) Facing life's challenges.....
(Often expressed as being thrown in the deep end or coping with a life crisis)

These answers give us very strong clues as to where our focus as a church should be if we are really interested in seeing people grow and develop and perhaps the role that leadership takes in enabling that growth.



Church that is responsive to change

I believe that we should be a flexible and responsive expression of the Body of Christ and that our leadership should be flexible and responsive too. I want to lead in a way that encourages experimentation and gives permission to have a go and possibly fail, because I do not believe that failure is sin.

How then do we learn to live out the riches of a 'whole-life' Gospel within the force fields of contemporary culture?

Bishop Graham Cray



Engaging with our world

In this time of great change and particularly where the pace of change is unprecedented, there is a very real danger that the way we engage with the world as Christians becomes increasingly irrelevant. This means that we need to find new ways of acting and responding to our world. In my view this will involve a series of experiments to see what sort of things might help. Examples of this would include such things as the Journeys course, Dream Interpretation and Essence. In this season, experimentation is essential not just with these sorts of outreach tools but in the very way we experience church life. How we view this experimentation will depend on a number of factors:

1. Where our security lies

As Christians we know that our security should rest ultimately in God himself. But even here we have set up our defence structures just in case he proves to be unreliable. We can be influenced by our scientific world view and start by describing God himself as a force or an object that is disconnected from the reality of the chaotic world that we experience. He becomes the ultimate controller of all that is happening and as such takes the blame for anything and everything. He is often attributed this role by people who profess not to believe in Him!



God has been described like this from very early on in philosophical thought. Aristotle made the proposition that God is the 'unmoved mover', by which he meant that God set things going and then retired into the wings to watch what happened and was unmoved by what He observed. There are many statements about God that find their roots in this Greek style philosophy which is the basis for much of our western thought. This contrasts strongly with the more Hebraic view taken in the Bible, where things are interconnected and God is integrated and part of life rather than somehow separate. So the God we believe in is integrally connected to the world we inhabit and walks with us in every situation. He is the God who will never leave us or forsake us and so can be trusted not just because he is all powerful but because he chooses to use that power in ways that encourage rather than damage his relationship with us.

2. How we view God himself

If God is the 'immovable unmoved' God of Greek thought, how can we talk in terms of experimentation? Surely everything is fixed and preordained. Add to this the strong sense of determinism that is around in many areas which says that there must be only one right way and this leads to a double road block. So we convince ourselves that we just must keep doing what we have always done. Perhaps if we do it more or work harder at it then it will work.



3. How we view failure

Linked to this is the idea that failure is sin. What do I mean by this? Again this is linked to our Greek rather than Hebrew view of God. As an unmoved mover, God had to be unmoved because the Greeks believed that God by definition was perfect. If He was perfect He could never change, because if he were to change, he would either no longer be perfect, or He would not have been perfect to begin with (Forster – Trinity). From this we define perfection as the ability not to change. This line of thought influences our theology. We strive for perfection to be like God and in doing so resist the idea of change as God does not change. We can also be influenced by our initial statement, seeing failure as sin; we extrapolate that as God is perfection we must strive for perfection and anything less feels like sin. Getting it right becomes essential. Getting it wrong becomes not just failure but sin. This works against the idea of experimentation and pushes us towards God needing to reveal everything to us directly in all its minutest detail lest we should get it wrong.



4. How we view risk

Our view of failure and change can be so strong that we avoid making any sort of risky decisions even though faith always involves risk. So decisions are pushed to those who are perceived to have a hotline to God and are able to get things right. In most situations these people are leaders. This would be a perfectly acceptable idea if we were Old Testament Jews where God spoke to the people through the priests, prophet or kings but we are New Testament Christians and believe in the priesthood of all believers!



5. How we view change within a changing world

The truth of the world in which we live is that everything is in a state of flux and to some degree this has always been the case. It is increasingly true in this age. The natural world around us is constantly changing and always has been. Shorelines and indeed whole continents shift and change over time. We as people are constantly changing; the things we know and understand, our relationships develop and change. I am not the same person I was yesterday and neither are you.

I find it fascinating to see how keen we are to try and keep everything the same. So why is it that some sorts of change we find really difficult to cope with or even contemplate, when in reality we live with and accept life changing on a day by day, moment by moment basis?

Our more settled rather than nomadic rhythm of life in the western world along with a scientific world view which wants to generally measure and pin things down so we can study and understand them, are two possible reasons why at least some change feels uncomfortable and often unwelcome. Much of the fear associated with change comes from our desire to understand and so control life. This is our attempt to take the chaos that exists around us and create some safety. The way we do this reveals our underlying insecurities and as such will be different for each of us.

But why is all this important as we look at the way we lead? Simply because these underlying ideas and beliefs shape the way we view the world and therefore the way in which we understand it working. This in turn shapes the things we believe about leadership and how it should work.



Collective responsibility

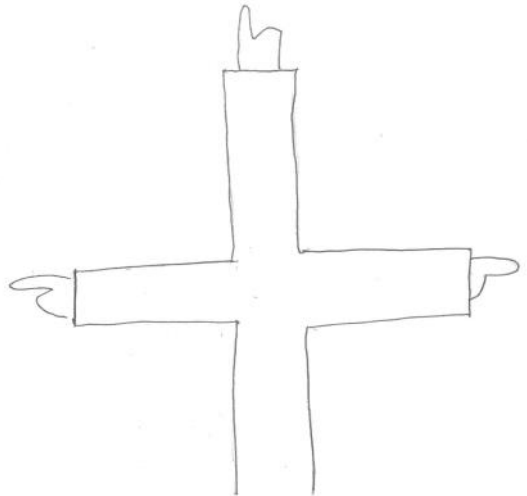
I believe that we have a collective responsibility to create our Christian community at Network. This belief influences the way I lead. It might seem that in some areas I am refusing to take the lead or responsibility. This is because I want to make space for others to participate in leading and to share the responsibility. Our leadership team is there to support and enable others to lead, take responsibility and make their contribution.

In essence leadership is influence

John Maxwell

God as Trinity

Again our root here is God himself. The God we believe in as Christians is unique amongst world religions. This is because He has chosen to exist in community. He is not a single entity or even a single person. He is three persons, in one person, Father, Son and Spirit. You might think that this is just theology, but as such it should inform and shape our methodology. Sadly this is often not the case. What most often informs and shapes our methodology is the current thinking of the age. So in an age where strong leaders in all areas of life have been dominant, it's not surprising that the church has followed this idea. In an age where hierarchical structures in business have been the norm and the work force has been seen as cogs in a machine, it's not surprising that our churches have adopted the same idea. We even use language that re-



flects this...the Senior Pastor..running the Fathers business....our churches have departments and department heads. These structures tend to put the responsibility firmly on the shoulders of the few; we look to others to tell us what to do and how to do it. The larger the organisation the more this seems to be the case.

I heard someone say recently that 'it feels as if we are working to feed the machine'. Could there be another way? Going back to our statement that 'theology breads methodology', is this organisational structure the way we see the 'God as Trinity' working and how we perceive the natural world that God has created to work?

CS Lewis describes the Trinity as 'a divine dance'; this brings a great energetic interconnected picture to mind. Often when we refer to God and especially when we read about him in our Bibles we are thinking singular and probably God the Father is the dominant view. The reality of course is that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Even at the outset the language states this with the words 'let us make man in our own image' Genesis 1 v26. So the creation of the world was a team effort. I also believe that part of us being created in God's image is that we were designed to function like Him. Unlike God we are singular and so to represent God and the way he operates we need to work with others. This allows us to demonstrate the very heart and nature of God which is love. This is something we cannot do in isolation. It is not a solitary occupation.

It is interesting to note that God's creation turns out to be more than just a partnership within the Godhead. It is one that is extended to us. We are invited to continue this work as we steward the earth and in particular multiply our own kind. The model here is the same as the Trinity, with the basic family unit being father, mother and child.

Jesus and the Holy Spirit as team players

Jesus' model of leadership was one of servant hood, where the first shall be last and where argument of who will be the greatest was irrelevant. He also chose to be in team just as He experienced with the Father and the Spirit.

But there is more!

Because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost we are all able to participate. The shift has moved from prophets, priests and Kings (and the occasional donkey) connecting with and being used by God, to all of us being empowered whether we are leaders or not. This is why Paul can write about us all being members of Christ's body and playing our part. I think we know this on one level as knowledge that we have acquired but we don't experience the reality of it as personalised knowledge that changes the way we think and respond.

The protestant reformation heralded the priesthood of all believers but sadly this has stayed for the most part a belief only and not something that has been outworked in practice. The second reformation as Bill Beckham describes it, has to happen to see this belief become a reality, which is every one having the opportunity to minister.

All of this leads me to believe that God's desire for us as the church is to work from these principles, to value joint responsibility and working together. Leadership is a team responsibility, the days of the singular omniscient leader are over (if indeed they ever really existed). We have moved and need to continue to evolve methods of working where everyone is involved. This will demand new ways of thinking and won't always come naturally as we have been conditioned to think in particular ways but I want to encourage us to be up for the challenge.

Believing in people

We benefit in so many ways from everyone making their contribution. We are enriched by everyone else's contribution if we are able to allow the space for them which leads to an underlying issue. We have to believe that everyone has a contribution to make if we are really going to see this value of everyone contributing being real! I think this is an area we really struggle with. We are often making judgements about others and writing them off before we have even given them a chance to have a go, let alone participate in a way that enables them to take any collective responsibility. Isn't it fascinating that Jesus even had Judas on his team?

I love the story in the Gospels where Jesus asks Peter to step out of the boat and join him, walking on the water. We tend to think that it is Peter's faith in Jesus that enables this. I wonder if actually it is the other way round. In other words, it's the fact that Jesus believes Peter can do it that makes it possible for him to step over the side. We tend to emphasise that we need to believe in Jesus, but do we believe that Jesus believes in us? I think that's a much harder question, particularly for us Brits.

How does this effect leadership? We like being led by people who believe in us, not just for what we can contribute to the leader's organisation or team but those who genuinely believe in us regardless of our input to anything. I guess we could call this unconditional belief; the sort of belief that Jesus had in his disciples.

This unconditional belief in others is often hard for leaders. Our need as leader's is for people to populate our organisations and structures to keep the whole thing going. This means there is a constant agenda in the leaders mind about the contribution that individuals need to make so they can enable the organisation to continue.

The thing about God's kingdom is that it is not about our organisations, it is much bigger than that. Our leadership needs to be big hearted where we seek the growth and development of people for the sake of The Kingdom and not just our kingdom. This means that our belief has to be in the individual for the sake of their influence into their spheres of influence where ever they are, for the sake of the Kingdom. This can appear to be suicidal when looked at from the perspective of the institution or organisation, but that must not be our sole perspective. This creates a different sense of why the organisation exists, namely to be a staging post to enable individuals and small group communities to be carriers of kingdom values.

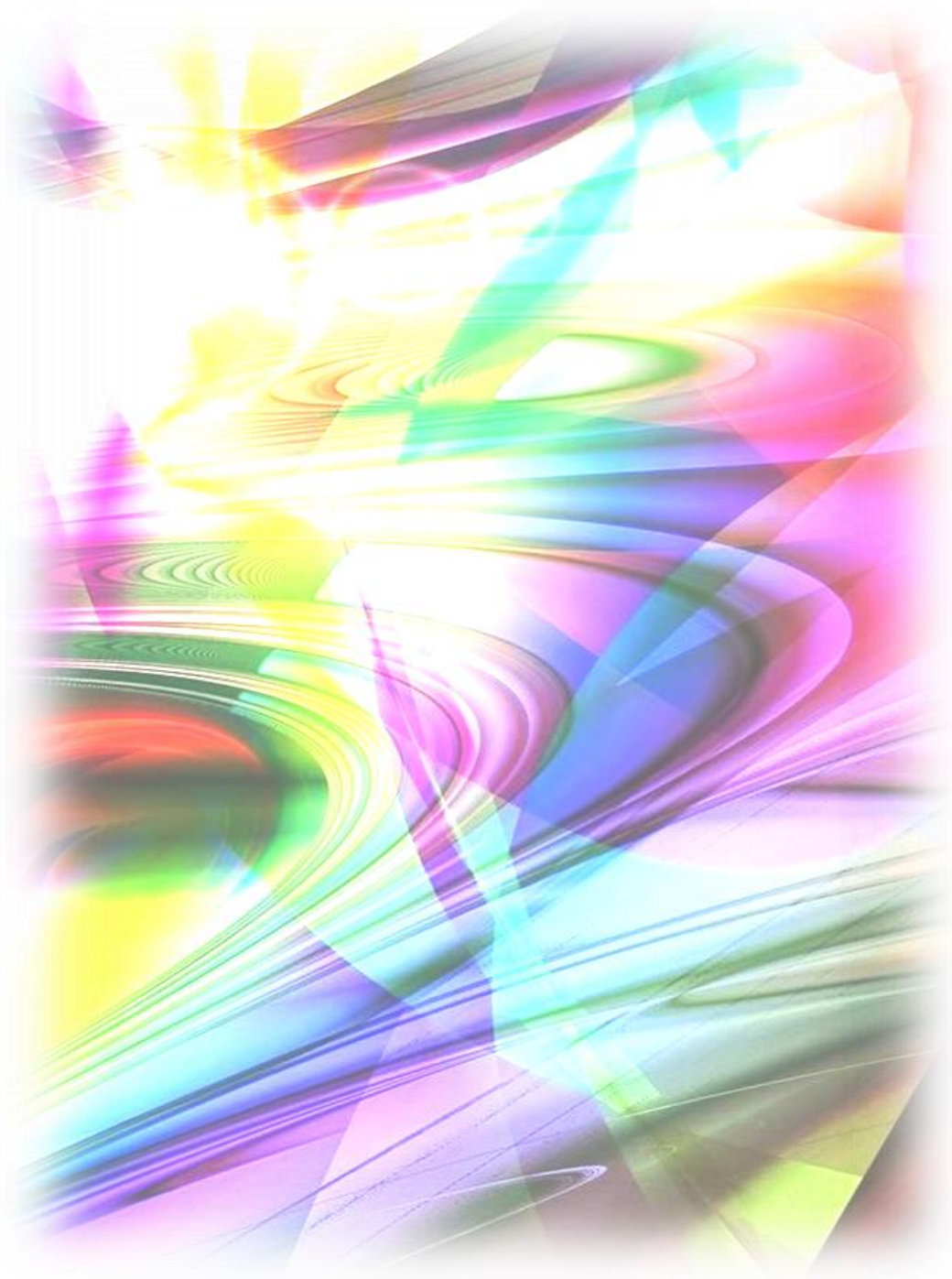
Shared dreams or your dreams?

When I think of dreams in this context I am thinking of those dreams that are our aspirations or godly desires. I think the ideal for our Christian communities is that they are a place where these individual dreams contribute to and shape the whole. The vision of the community is then shaped by the individuals that form it rather than being dictated by one individual who is 'the leader' bringing the vision that we all fall in and follow. Why do I think this is important? We then have what I want to call 'say so', which means that we have a contribution to make to the shape and purpose of the community. Our dream can become part of the collective dream; our aspirations can shape and form the corporate aspirations of the whole. This means that each of us will have increased ownership and participation because our thoughts and ideas are important and make a difference. This also means that the community as a whole will be richer as different and diverse ideas are folded in and shape the whole.



Church - as family or business?

This idea of shared dreams leads to more of a sense of family being the outcome rather than running a business together. This does not mean that I have anything against business because I don't; business is great and I fully support it. However I am not sure that it should be the reason or the basis around which we form our Christian community. The metaphor of body or family I think is both more Biblical and also more helpful. It is interesting to see how in different eras of church history the structures and metaphors have mimicked the structures in culture. For most of us in the western world, the dominant culture is economic and therefore it is not surprising that the church has been influenced by this and uses business as one of its shaping ideologies.



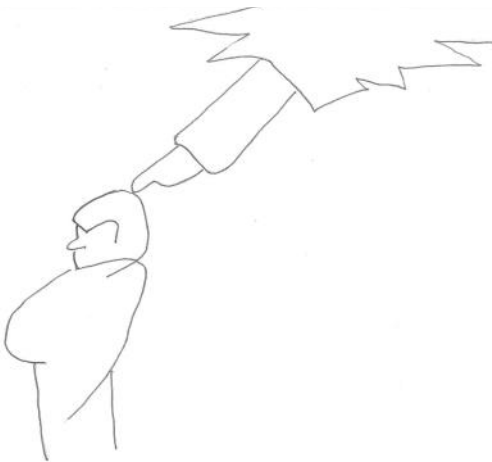
Rediscovering how big God is

One of the unfortunate consequences of our scientific world view is that we have tried to reduce God to fit in our rather limited scientific definitions. This is particularly focused through our 'either/or' understanding of the world rather than a 'both/and' philosophy. By which I mean that we often play one thing off against another rather than try and see how two things could be mutually compatible rather than mutually exclusive.



As a result we can find ourselves giving very narrow and one sided definitions to things that in fact are far more complicated and deserve a much bigger perspective. You may well be asking yourself what this has got to do with leadership at Network. I think it has a number of out workings in the way we think about Network's life and its leadership.

Whose Church is this?



I decided many years ago as we planted a Church in Sussex that this was primarily God's job and not mine. Jesus says 'I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it'. We all know this deep down but in reality can find it difficult to fully live in this truth in our everyday experience. Our language can show this. The church leaders can be given such lofty positions that it seems as if the church becomes 'theirs'. We hear

people saying 'oh this is Trevor's church'. This does two things. Firstly, it

reduces church in our thinking to something that one person can own. It might seem that 'church' can only be happening when this person says so or has made it happen. Secondly, it means that the responsibility for this church rests solely with this individual. In turn this means that collective responsibility for the health and life of the church community is minimised.

Are we gathered or scattered?

The short answer is of course we are both. The secret is keeping these two areas in balance. This is a task of the leadership at Network and one of our distinctives - we believe equally in both of these. We believe that cell groups are fundamental and are the basic building block of the church, however we also believe in the need for the connectivity and support that the larger church dimension brings. Some, I feel would like the leadership to make up its mind and put its energy into one or other of these areas. Like Jesus we want to give equal value to each. He spent his time with both the crowd and the disciples. We could boil everything down and work only with the essentials, but we have a vast and creative God who challenges us to be like him and hold all these things in tension. He wants us to create as many possible connection points as we can, so we can be connected to him, each other and the world that we long to see discover him.



Leadership, a conduit for ideas, stories and thoughts

In this sort of model, leadership is often the connecting conduit for ideas and information - highlighting stories that are shared in one part of the network and bringing them to other parts. This is one of the reasons I place so much value on having space to hear from each other in our Sunday gatherings. The question and answer sessions are another expression of this, where the diversity of views and ideas can be heard and appreciated. My hope is that this will develop through the cell cluster evenings. We will look at different topics each time and bring a real prayer focus so we can both bring our ideas to him but also anticipate hearing his voice speaking to us.

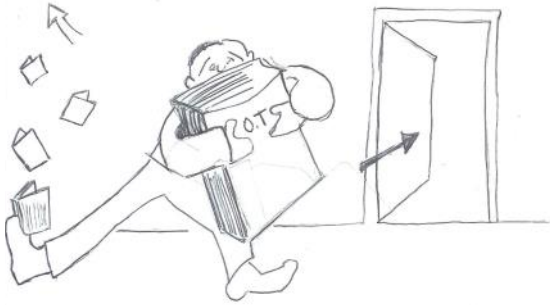
Leadership connects people together

Diversity is celebrated in the Godhead as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At Network we want to celebrate the diversity of God's ongoing creation as we learn to love and accept one another with all our differences. Just as there is honour and respect through the persons of the Trinity, so we aspire to experience this same dynamic through the varied expressions of Network. Our leadership role becomes one of drawing out these differences and making helpful connections across the spectrum of relationships. We are not seeking to create conformity of views and ideas but rather a tapestry of viewpoints that are knitted together. Our leadership role becomes one of stitching and shaping. In many organisations the ideal is to have everyone on the same page as it were, all lined up and neatly ordered, conformed to the pattern of the organisation. For Network this is not the goal.

Old or New Testament models of leadership?

Over the past few years I have found myself becoming more and more exasperated in a number of discussions in different settings. I was puzzled and perplexed for some time until I had something of a revelation. Many of the examples and the language we use to describe our structures and leadership models are from the Old Testament. Let me make something very clear before I continue, I am a Bible believing

chap and the Bible includes the Old and New Testaments, so I am not about to throw most of it away. I do however want to highlight that we need to think carefully how we handle God's word to us and how we apply any of it, but particularly the Old Testament. To listen to some conversations it sounds as if we are advocating Judaism not Christianity as we use so much of the Old Testament to inform our leadership and organisational structures. Why should this be I wonder? Even when we do use New Testament passages I still find we default to unhelpful ways of thinking and interpretation.



Let's take an example of a passage that came up in conversation with a friend just the other day. The conversation went something like this: 'Well, Trevor what do you think about the fivefold ministry in Ephesians?' This is in Ephesians 4 where Paul says 'It was he (Jesus) who gave some to be apostles some to be prophets some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers' (Ephesians 4 v 11). It is generally assumed that this is a passage about leaders because we see these 'ministries' as leadership ministries; it has been leaders who would normally have held these positions in church life. This is not the case however as far as the context of the passage is concerned. This is a passage about the body of Christ talking about one another, everyone in the body, not only leaders! Our conversation then moved in an even more interesting direction. If this passage is not about leaders, but is inclusive of everyone in the body, could we be saying that each and every one of us has at least one of these ministries? I could feel the need to check that my fire proof suite was up to speck as this sounded a bit like heresy to me. The flames grew even more vivid as I found myself suggesting that if the outworking of these gifts was to build up all of those in the body, then if we were all ministering to one another we would all be working in each of these areas to some degree or another as we were enabled by each other! This seems like a far cry from one leader or even a handful of leaders carrying these gifts.

Shifts in perspective

'I no longer call you servants but friends' (John 15 v 15)

The early church under persecution headed in two distinct directions, west and east from Jerusalem. The church that was established in the west became rational and sought logic to try and answer its questions. The church that went east however embraced more of the mystery of God. This has been evident in our differing models. The western church has developed leadership around rational understanding and in so doing lost the mystery. Brian McLaren picks up on this thought as he looks at some components of western leadership. He uses the Wizard of Oz film as his text and compares the Wizard's leadership with that of Dorothy's. I have found this a very helpful analysis of leadership and include it here:

1. Bible Analyst → Spiritual sage: *As we move beyond modernity, we lose our infatuation with analysis, knowledge, information, "facts," and belief systems – and those who traffic in them. Instead, we are attracted to leaders who possess that elusive quality of wisdom (think of James 3), who practice spiritual disciplines and whose lives are characterized by depth of spiritual practice (not just by the tightness of belief system). These leaders possess a moral authority more closely linked to character than intellectual credentials; they are more sages than technicians; it's their slow, thoughtful, considered answer that convinces, not the snap-your-fingers-I-know-that kind of answer-man know-it-all-ness. Dorothy has this "softer" authority, a reflection of her earnestness and kindness as much as her intellectual acumen.*

2. Broadcaster → Listener: *In the postmodern world, it's not how loud you shout; it's how deeply you listen that counts. Just as Dorothy engages her travelling companions by listening to their stories and evoking their needs, the postmodern leader creates a safe place that attracts a team, and then she or he empowers them by the amazing power of a listening heart.*

3. Objective Technician → Spiritual friend: *Think of the difference between a scientist objectively studying chimpanzees and a crusader dedicated to saving them from extinction. In modernity, a leader loves his*

organization and loves his ambition, his strategic plan, his goals; but on this side of the transition, leaders love their teams, and those to whom their teams are sent. (Or, more perversely put – in modernity, I Corinthians 13 would read, “If I have all love and would lay down my life for my friends, but have not knowledge, I am a wispy wimp and a poor excuse for a leader.” Beyond modernity, we return toward Paul’s original meaning.)

4. Warrior/Salesman → Dancer: In a world plagued by ethnic hatred and telemarketers, every voice adding stridency and sales pressure to the world is one voice too many. Nobody wants to be “won to Christ” or “taken for Jesus” in one of our “crusades,” and neither do they want to be subjected to a sales pitch for heaven, that sounds for all the world like an invitation to check out a time share vacation resort. A presentation of the gospel that sounds like a military ultimatum or like a slick sales pitch will dishonour the gospel for postmodern people. Instead, think of leadership (and especially evangelism) as a dance. You hear the music that I don’t hear, and you know how to move to its rhythm. Gently, you help me begin to hear its music, feel its rhythm, and learn to move to it with grace and joy. A very different kind of leadership, don’t you agree?

5. Careerist → Amateur: The root of the word “amateur” is “amar” – to love. Most of us in Christian leadership know that seeing ministry as a career can quickly quench the motivation of love. How can we keep that higher motivation alive? How can Christian leadership be for us less like the drudgery of a “job” and more like the joy of a day golfing or fishing or playing soccer or whatever ... not something we have to do, but something we get to do? The professionalization of ministry will be one of the harmful legacies of modernity; I believe ... a classic case of jumping from the frying pan of clericalism into the fire of professionalism.

6. Problem-Solver → Quest Creator: The man-at-the-top of modern leadership is the guy you go to for answers and solutions. No doubt, there are times when that’s what we need now too. But postmodern leaders will be as interested in creating new problems, in setting new challenges, in launching new adventures ... as in solving, finishing, or facilitating old ones. Dorothy does this: she helps her companions trade their old prob-

lems (birds landing on the scarecrow, the tin man being paralyzed by rust, the lion faking bravado) for a new quest. Of course, this is what Jesus does too. He doesn't solve the problems of the Pharisees (How can we get these stupid crowds to know and obey the law as we do?). He creates new ones (Seek first the kingdom of God....).

7. Apologist → Apologizer: Instead of defending old answers, the new kind of leader will often apologize for how inadequate they are. In modernity, you gained credibility by always being right; in post modernity, you gain authority by admitting when you're wrong (think of the Pope's visit to the Middle East in early 2000) and apologizing humbly. That kind of humility, that vulnerability, was one of Dorothy's most winsome – and “leader-ly” -- characteristics.

8. Threat → Includer: The only threat Dorothy poses is the threat of inclusion, not exclusion. She basically threatens you with acceptance; you're part of her journey, a member of her team, unless you refuse and walk away. That kind of leadership strikes me as gospel leadership, and it reminds me of Someone Else.

9. Knower → Seeker: Oddly, Dorothy's appeal as a leader arises from her being lost and being passionate about seeking a way home. Does it ever strike you as odd in contemporary Christian jargon that it's the pre-Christians who are called seekers? Where does that leave the Christians? Shouldn't the Christian leader be the lead seeker?

10. Solo Act → Team Builder: All along her journey, Dorothy welcomed company. She was glad for a team. By the end of their journey, the lion, the scarecrow, and the tin man have joined Dorothy as peers, partners, friends. Her style of leadership was empowering, ennobling, not patronizing, paternalistic, creating dependency. So effective was her empowering of them that they were able to say a tearful goodbye and move on to their own adventures.

I know, you're thinking, why take a silly kid's movie so seriously? You're right – it's just a movie. But I find the film's repudiation of more traditional modern leadership to be fascinating, maybe an early expres-

sion of a cultural shift that we are more fully experiencing today. And ultimately, of course, I find in Dorothy's way of leadership many echoes of our Lord's. After all, you can never imagine the great and terrible Oz washing his subjects' feet, or his voice booming out, "I no longer call you servants, but friends."

Maybe some of us are trying hard to be something we're not. Maybe we're imitating styles of leadership that are becoming outdated, inappropriate. That's not to say we don't have a lot to learn, but maybe the best thing that could happen to us would be to have the curtain pulled back to reveal us not as XXL superheroes, but regular size-M men and women. Maybe then, with the amplifiers turned off and the imaged dropped, we'll hear Jesus inviting us to learn new ways of leading in his cause.

In conclusion

My hope is that you will have been informed, stirred to think and challenged by this paper. I want to remind you that it is a start and not in any way meant to be exhaustive. It is like a snap shot of my current thinking and reflection on where we find ourselves. Let's keep the conversation going and discover more of who God is shaping us to be together so that we can make our unique contribution to the transformation of our world as we seek to see God's Kingdom come in us, through us and beyond us.

Would you take a few minutes to look through the following section which acts as a summary and reflection tool. I have given some space so you can jot your thoughts down and who knows maybe we could have coffee together and chat sometime .



Summary and reflection

So let's review some of the areas we have looked at together and ask some questions that will stimulate further thought and development around these.

Every member contributing and growing

The major challenge is this: for the most part, the church has been making converts not disciples, and has struggled to train and release God's people for a whole-life, life-long, growing adventure with Jesus on the frontline of engagement with our world.

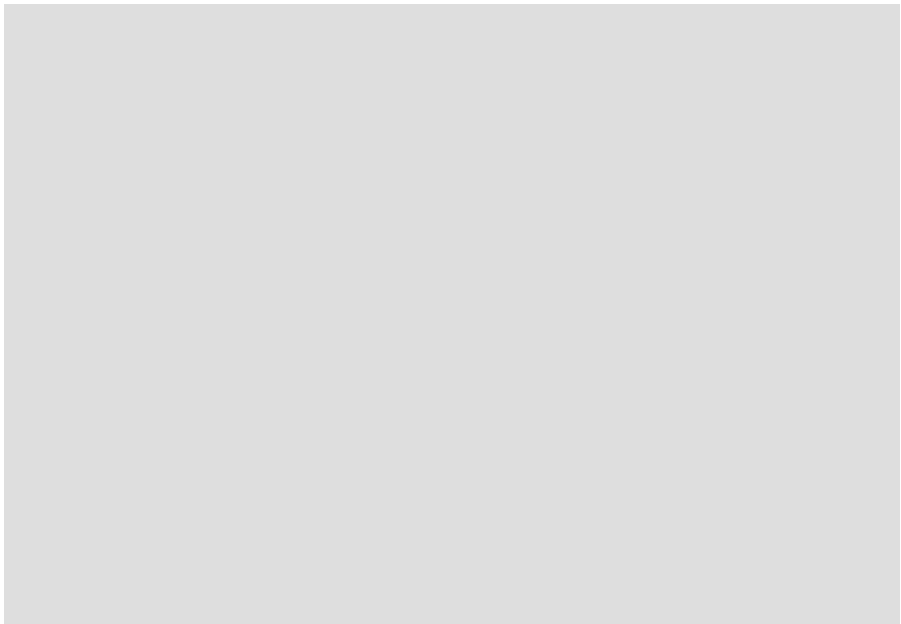
Mark Green (LICC)

- In what ways has Network encouraged or enabled your growth and development?
- Can you identify 3 areas where you would like to develop more and think about how Network could support you in these?

Church that is responsive to change

‘I believe that we should be a flexible and responsive expression of the Body of Christ and that our leadership should be flexible and responsive too. I want to lead in a way that encourages experimentation and gives permission to fail, because I do not believe that failure is sin. ‘

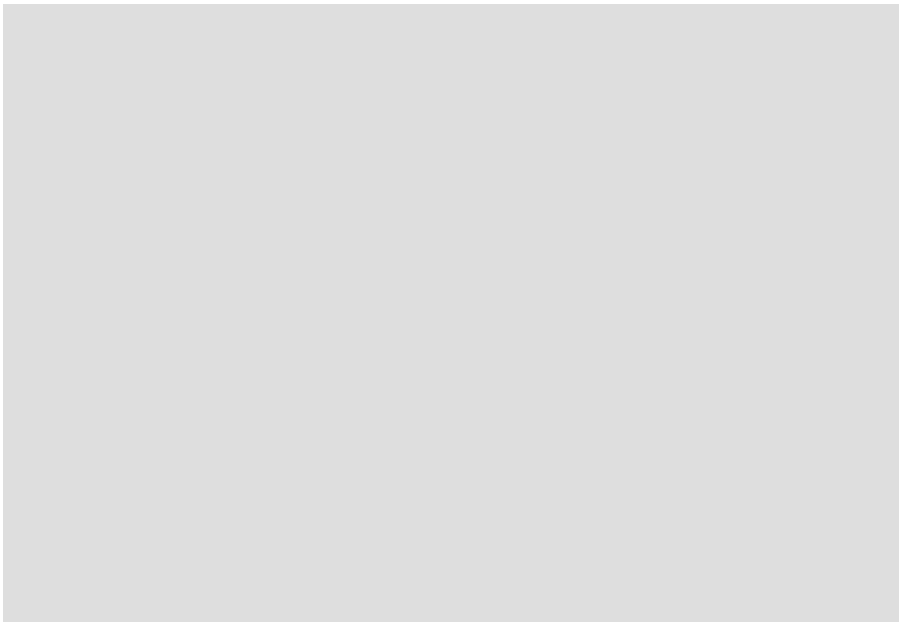
- To what degree do you think the above statement is true of Network?
- On a scale of 1 – 10 how do you feel about stepping out and taking risks?
- Can you suggest ways in which Network leadership could change its approach to help experimentation?



Collective responsibility

'I believe that we have a collective responsibility to create our Christian community at Network. This belief influences the way I lead. It might seem that in some areas I am refusing to take the lead or responsibility. This is because I want to make space for others to take the lead and to share the responsibility. Our leadership team is there to support and enable others to lead, take responsibility and make their contribution.'

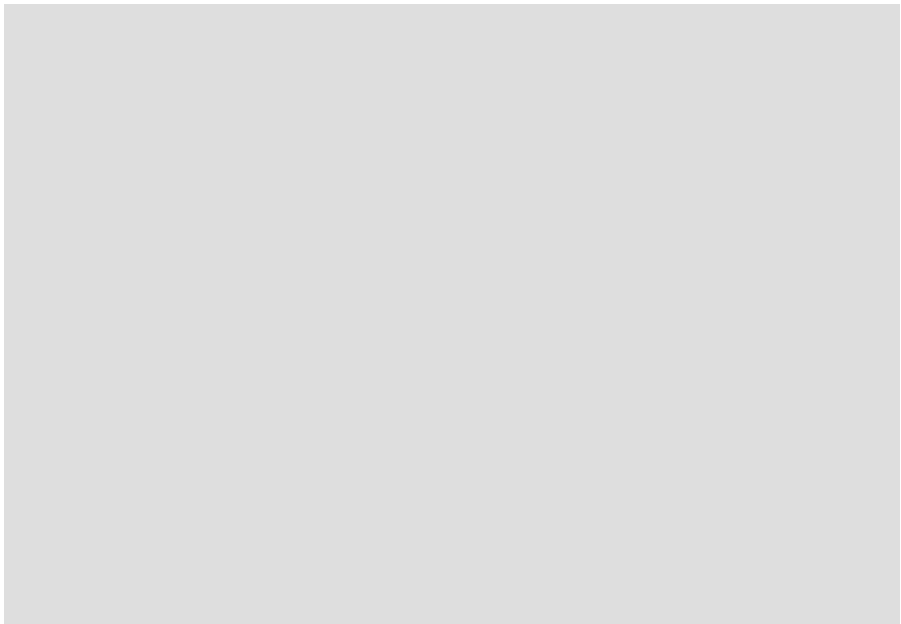
- To what degree does Network feel like a place where leadership is shared? Think of specific examples of this if you can.
- In which areas do you think leadership needs a greater profile?
- If leadership is primarily influence, where is your sphere of influence and therefore leadership and how can Network support and encourage this?



Rediscovering how big God is

‘One of the unfortunate consequences of our scientific world view is that we have tried to reduce God to fit in our rather limited scientific definitions. This is particularly focused through our ‘either/or’ understanding of the world rather than a ‘both/and’ philosophy. ‘

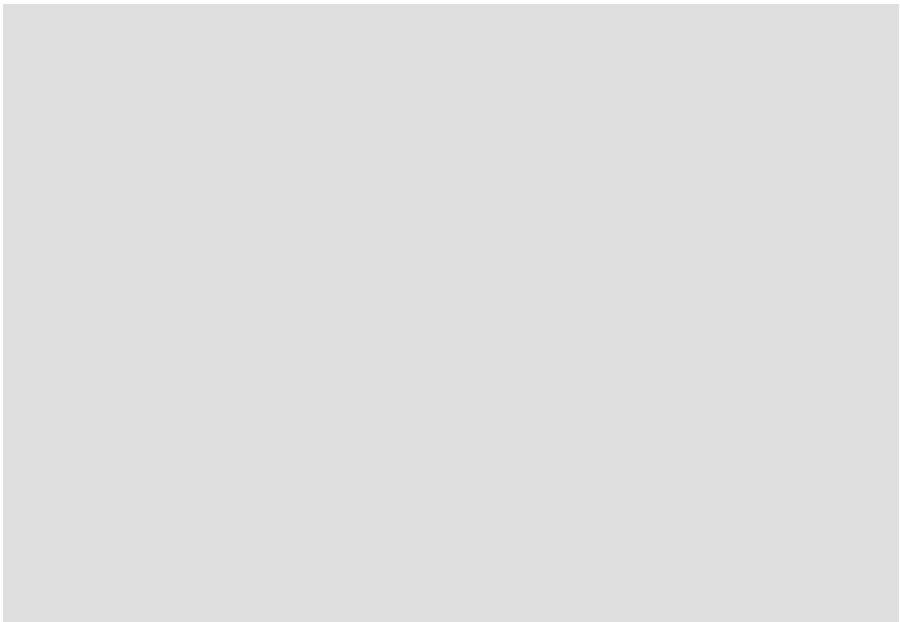
- How have we limited who God is at Network?
- In which areas of Network’s life have we set one thing against another unhelpfully?
- In which areas does your view of God need expanding?



Leadership, a conduit for ideas, stories and thoughts

‘In this sort of model, leadership is often the connecting conduit for ideas and information - highlighting stories that are shared in one part of the network and bringing them to other parts. ‘

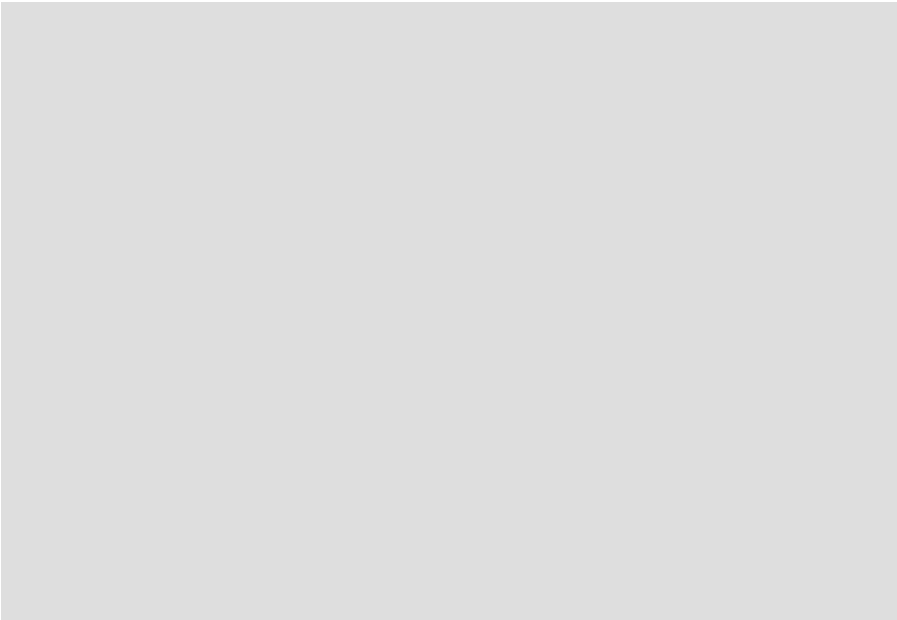
- How inter-connected does Network feel?
- Do you feel that you could bring your thoughts and ideas to the leadership team?
- How can we improve the connectedness across Network?



Shifts in perspective

'And ultimately, of course, I find in Dorothy's way of leadership many echoes of our Lord's. After all, you can never imagine the great and terrible Oz washing his subjects' feet, or his voice booming out, "I no longer call you servants, but friends."

- Which of the ten points Brian McLaren highlights did you most connect with and why?
- Which were most disturbing for you?
- Which do you think we should be trying to apply in Network?



Further resources for your interest

Leadership and the New Science

Margaret Wheatley

The future of Management

Gary Hammel

Post Christendom

Stuart Muray Williams

Finding our way

Margaret Wheatley

Trinity

Roger Forster

Future Leader

Dr Viv Thomas

Who's Shaping You

Graham Cray

Hope for Europe

Geoff Fountain

A New Kind of Christian

Brian McLaren

God of the Possible

Greg Boyd

