

Starting Conversations

Bible Study

“Simon and his brother Andrew were casting nets into the lake, for they were fishermen.” Mark 1:16

What expectations for the future did Simon (Peter) and Andrew have at this point?

What happened to Simon over the next five years?

Read the rest of verse 16 and the next three verses.

How much did they understand of what they were letting themselves in for, *before* they followed Christ’s call? How much do we *need* to know before we follow the call?

Who are we?

What sort of people are we?

Where are our churches, and what are they like?

How many of us are there?

What is special about us?

What is our *style*?

How do we work?

Who are our staff members?

Is that expected to change and if so when?

Do we have Circuit Services?

What is our structure of committees?

What are our meeting patterns, style and mood?

Where does the best discussion take place?

What are our ecumenical relations like?

What are our finances like?

Do we want to discuss this yet?

Do we want to share figures or just general shapes?

Should money be a factor in deciding how we work?

In general terms how strong are our circuit finances

What are our key policies?

What are our financial expectations for the next few years?

Here are five groups of questions that might be useful to structure initial talks between circuits, which just might have a shared future.

You can use them in many ways, but it could be helpful if some are discussed in small groups, while others are presented to everyone at the same time.

It might also be helpful for circuit teams to consider among themselves what they want to say in advance, or at the start of the meeting.

There is no need for definitive information: this is about getting to know people.

Ask questions and make comments: if the talk goes “off agenda” then fine, let it flow!

Constantly ask yourself, “What of this would I like to carry into the future, and what would I rather avoid? Why?”

Hopes and fears

What would we like to do if you had the energy, time and resources?

What things are causing us concern?

What are our greatest aspirations for the future?

What do we need to achieve them?