



**Embrace *Jesus* and his vision** by pursuing a deeper relationship with Jesus and learning more about his ways.

**Build *Communion* with God and Others** by fostering bonds of understanding, respect and love with God and people within and beyond the Church.

**Engage in Christ's *Mission* in the world** by living the values of Jesus in everything we do and promoting the reign of God in today's world.

This is a five week adult education resource to enable Anglicans and Roman Catholics to reflect, share and discuss important issues on the topic of 'Church as Communion'.

Each week's session (no more than 90 minutes) consists of an opening prayer, brief quotes from the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) document 'Church as Communion', everyday stories, discussion questions and closing prayer.

For the last forty years or so, Anglicans and Roman Catholics have been increasingly sharing times of prayer, work and meeting together in a spirit of growing trust and familiarity. This discussion resource is another practical step for local communities in that direction. It is being published for use in Aotearoa New Zealand by the local Anglican - Roman Catholic dialogue group known as ARCCANZ.

Through our discussions in our local communities we will come to a greater appreciation of our communion with one another and where the Spirit is leading us.

*Communion implies that the Church is a dynamic reality moving towards its fulfilment.*

*Communion embraces both the visible gathering of God's people and its divine life-giving source. ... There is held before us the vision of God's reign over the whole of creation, and of the Church as the first fruits of humankind which is drawn into that divine life through acceptance of the redemption given in Jesus Christ.*

'Church as Communion' paragraph 3

# Church as Communion



A DISCUSSION RESOURCE FOR  
ANGLICANS AND  
ROMAN CATHOLICS IN  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

## Notes:

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### **New Zealand Edition**

This ARCCANZ edition amended and adjusted for New Zealand by ARCCANZ team with special thanks to all those who contributed time, stories and editing.

For information on ARCCANZ visit the website: <http://www.4churchunity.net.nz/>

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## Closing Prayer

**Leader:** Loving God,  
hear and help us, as we  
say:  
God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 1:** Enrich among us the  
sacramental life, so that,  
sharing holy things, we  
may  
become a holy people.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 2:** Gather up the rich diversity  
of all our cultures, so that,  
by the one Spirit, all the  
peoples of the earth may  
come to you.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 3:** Quicken among us the  
memory of Christ, so that,  
fed by the living Word and  
living Tradition, we may be  
messengers of the Gospel.

(pause) God of grace

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 4:** Give us new ways of  
expressing age-old faith, so  
that, in our own age and  
culture, we may show au-  
thentic faithfulness.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 5:** Re-create us in Christ,  
so that, in a divided world,  
the Church be a sign of  
peace and harmony.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 6:** Inspire us for joint witness  
and practical action, so that,  
we may care for one an-  
other and bear with one  
another in sharing the Good  
News.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

*As part of this final prayer you may  
like to spend some time thanking  
God together and recalling what  
has been valuable for you through-  
out the five weeks of sharing.*

**Leader:** Let us pray.

**All: May the grace  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship  
of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
now & evermore.  
Amen.**

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### *ARCIC II Church as Communion Introduction paragraph 2*

This statement on communion is to give substance to the affirmation that Anglicans and Roman Catholics are already in a real though as yet imperfect communion and to enable us to recognize the degree of communion that exists both within and between us.

*This little booklet is a reflection resource on the ARCIC II document 'Church as Communion' so group members may wish to read the full text which can be found at the address below:*

[http://www.prounione.urbe.it/dia-int/arcic/doc/i\\_arcicII\\_communion.html](http://www.prounione.urbe.it/dia-int/arcic/doc/i_arcicII_communion.html)

## Foreword

It has been a joy and a privilege to be in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church as a member of the Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Aotearoa New Zealand for nearly ten years. The commission works to uphold the special relationship we share as Christian communities, given our common history to the English Reformation, and our common desire to now discover and create greater degrees of communion between us.

In particular we have encouraged the sharing of Ash Wednesday Liturgies throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. The sharing of Advent Wreath Liturgies and as much solidarity and partnership as is possible in our local ministries. This Booklet, "**Church as Communion**" is a new gift for our two Churches to share in the on-going pilgrimage towards deeper unity in Christ. The Booklet invites us to learn, recall, and build deeper co-operation in our daily lives as well as our Christian community.

As this booklet goes to print, Pope Benedict XVI and Archbishop Rowan Williams have given approval and encouragement for phase II of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) to proceed

++ David Moxon

Co-chair of the Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Aotearoa New Zealand

One of the unseen fruits of the ecumenical commitment of the Roman Catholic Church, described by the late Pope John Paul II as "irreversible," has been the on-going Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue in New Zealand, (ARCCANZ). This has seen a group of Anglicans and Catholics meeting together twice a year for prayer and reflection and exchanges on aspects of the life of the two parent bodies.

From the beginning, it has involved bishops, clergy and members of the lay faithful. Importantly, it has sought to involve members with a scholarly background, because as Cardinal Kasper has reminded us, "ecumenism is synonymous neither with kindly humanism, nor with ecclesiological relativism."

It is important Anglicans and Catholics can find ways of sharing together in prayer, work and witness, in complete fidelity to the teachings and disciplines of their respective traditions; being fully themselves. Perhaps this little book will suggest further possibilities.

+ Barry Jones

Co-chair of the Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Aotearoa New Zealand

## **Looking Forward Together**

Christian involvement in state schools. If you know who is responsible for this activity record this also.  
When sharing is finished, collate the information (example shown).

Activity already happening	Contact

### **Step 2.**

You are now invited to make the more challenging step of imagining and thinking creatively about possible new areas of cooperation. They may include activities that already occur but need better promotion and organisation—a good test is to check how many people knew about all the current activities in step 1. Also think about who might be involved and what gifts they have to offer for this activity. Try and think 'outside the square'. For example, meditation groups, prayer groups, liturgy planning, music groups, evangelisation, youth activity etc.

When finished ensure suggestions are specific and can be achieved or passed onto another group (e.g. ecumenical commission or deanery). Decide on at least one suggestion that this group will take forward.

What are the next steps required to make it happen, e.g. contacting other people, holding a planning meeting, discussing with relevant church groups, parish priest, parish council etc. ?

Planned activity	Who?	How?	By When?	Contact

## Topic 5 :

## The Path Ahead -

### Reflection and Discussion

'The ecumenical journey is not only about the removal of obstacles but also about the sharing of gifts'.

*Common Declaration of Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Runcie, 2 Oct. 1989*

What gifts can we offer to, and receive from, our sisters and brothers in the Anglican or Roman Catholic traditions?

'We cannot, ... ignore the effects of our centuries of separation.

...Such differences in communities which have become isolated from one another have sometimes led to distortions in the popular perceptions which members of one church have of the other.'

### Group Discussion

- What 'distorted perceptions' may others have of us or do we have of them? How might these be overcome?
- What are the remaining significant differences and barriers between our two traditions?

Our churches need to ask themselves '...whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately'

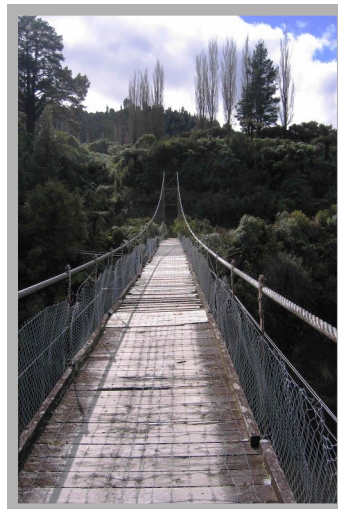
*(The Lund Principle—formulated at the Faith and Order conference held at Lund, Sweden in 1952).*

Throughout the meetings the group has been discussing various issues related to the building up of communion in the Church. At this final session we are going to record and affirm the many areas of cooperation that happen between our two churches and plan ways to further enhance and improve how we work together for the reign of God. At the end of this meeting we encourage you to send a summary of the discussion to your ecumenical commission (*either local diocesan or national*).

A large sheet of paper, or a whiteboard may be helpful to record comments.

### Step 1.

Take a few minutes to quietly reflect on activities where you see Catholics and Anglicans working together. They may include activities at parish or community level—eg, common prayer services at Easter or Christmas, Lenten programmes, outreach into the community—or at a diocesan or regional level—eg, ecumenical theological colleges or ministry training or



*Communion* is one of the most exciting realities of our faith. The God in whom we believe is a communion of persons existing in a relationship of mutual love. 'Communion' names the reciprocal relationship of unity and love that exists, not only among the persons of God but between God, humanity, and all creation. The Church of which we are members is itself a sacrament of Communion. Communion breaks down the limitations of the present moment and in and through God links us to all who have lived in the past or will live in the future. It relativises the limitations of our earthly existence and opens us up to eternity. Stretching our faith and imagination to their limits it fills us with an excitement and happiness that is surely a foretaste of the eternal happiness we hope to experience one day in heaven. I warmly commend this Catholic/Anglican study for your prayerful consideration and discussion, so that together we may understand even more deeply) the loving communion of our God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and its implications for our relationship.

+ John Bathersby Roman Catholic Co-chair of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM)

**Introduction:** The concept of 'communion' is central to who we are as persons — in relationships with others and in our relationship with our God. At one level we recognise our communion with God and one another in our connectedness to all of creation, as creatures of God. At a deeper level we are invited to participate in the Trinitarian communion of God, whose persons live in a unique relationship of giving and receiving love. It is manifest when we see the love of God at work

in our families, workplace and community ... when we offer our sisters and brothers in faith our deep and genuine friendship, see what is positive in others and bear each others burdens' (Galatians 6:2). The Church is called to nourish and support this communion and be a 'sacrament' or 'sign' of our intimate union with God and one another.

For the last forty or so years, Anglicans and Roman Catholics have increasingly met together, prayed together, and worked together in an atmosphere of growing trust and familiarity." The establishment of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) in 1969 and much more recently the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) in 2001 has enabled Roman Catholic and Anglican leaders and theologians to explore together their traditions and practices. The first of these two commissions has worked at the theological issues which have divided us. The second is exploring practical ways for us to cooperate together in mission. This discussion resource is one practical outcome of the work of the second group (IARCCUM). It is being published for use in New Zealand by the Anglican - Roman Catholic Commission of Aotearoa NZ.

In these discussions we see several key concepts emerging: **COMMUNION, UNITY** and **MISSION**. The word COMMUNION (*koinonia*) has become a central idea in all our discussions together. ARCIC described it as: The relation between persons resulting from their participation in the one and the same reality.

That reality is Jesus Christ himself, the Way to the Father, who has filled us with his Holy Spirit. Our communion is with the Holy Trinity no less. We share in this through faith and baptism. It is this reality that already binds us together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

While acknowledging that there are significant obstacles to full communion (UNITY) which Christ wants for his church, that fundamental communion we share through faith and baptism impels us to search for ways the Holy Spirit is drawing us together in prayer, work and witness. Jesus prayed that all his followers might be one 'so that the world may believe' (John 17:21). The UNITY we seek is for MISSION — that together we might further the mission of Jesus in the world. Strengthening our fellowship in mission allows the church to serve more visibly as an instrument of unity for a broken world.

Communion implies that the Church is a dynamic reality moving towards its fulfillment. Communion embraces both the visible gathering of God's people and its divine life-giving source. We are thus directed to the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the life God wills to share with all people. There is held before us the vision of God's reign over the whole of creation, and of the church as the first fruits of humankind which is drawn into that divine life through acceptance of the redemption given in Jesus Christ.

*Church as Communion paragraph 3*

The following study, **Church as Communion**, is based on one of the ARCIC texts (1990).

Such a central notion of the Church deserves to be better understood so that we may cooperate more purposively with the Holy Spirit.

Through our discussions in our local communities we can come to a greater appreciation of our communion with one another and where the Spirit is leading us.

In this we can take a lead from St John, "And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he commanded us" ( 1John 3:23).



## Meeting Five

## Welcome and Gathering Prayer

**Leader:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

**Leader:** We pray together the gathering prayer.

**All:**

**Lord Jesus Christ,  
In you all things hold  
together:  
bless this group that gathers  
in your name.**

**Take our scattered lives and  
form us as a company of  
apostles traveling  
together.**

**Take our searching minds and  
teach us as a  
fellowship of  
disciples learning  
together.**

**Take our divided hearts  
and unite us  
as a communion of Christians,  
praying together.**

**As we read and listen,  
as we speak and pray,  
renew your church  
for the sake of  
the world you love.  
Amen.**

**Leader:.**  
*(Read slowly and prayerfully the following passage).*

Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. Only hold fast to what we have attained.

*Philippians 3:13b-16*

*This last session is a 'working' topic. It is suggested that if possible the group share a meal after the opening prayer. In this session the group is invited to reflect and plan practical steps for the two communities to work together in the local area.*

## Closing Prayer



**Leader:** Loving God,  
hear and help us, as we say:  
God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 1:** Enrich among us the  
sacramental life, so that,  
sharing holy things, we may  
become a holy people.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 2:** Gather up the rich diversity of  
all our cultures, so that, by  
the one Spirit, all the peoples  
of the earth may come to you.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 3:** Quicken among us the  
memory of Christ, so that,  
fed by the living Word and  
living Tradition, we may be  
messengers of the Gospel.

(pause) God of grace

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 4:** Give us new ways of  
expressing age-old faith, so  
that, in our own age and  
culture, we may show  
authentic faithfulness.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 5:** Re-create us in Christ,  
so that, in a divided world,  
the Church be a sign of  
peace and harmony.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 6:** Inspire us for joint witness  
and practical action, so that,  
we may care for one another  
and bear with one another in  
sharing the Good News.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Let us pray.

Group may add conversational or silent  
prayer together. Then conclude with:

**All: May the grace  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship  
of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
now & evermore.  
Amen.**

## Leaders' Guide

Each person in a discussion group can make a significant contribution to the vitality and effectiveness of the weekly meetings. However the person chosen as leader or group facilitator has a specific role — *to provide focus and direction for the group's prayer and learning*. Some groups have a person nominated as leader for all sessions while other groups rotate this role amongst themselves.

The program consists of five meetings — with a suggested shared meal for the fifth session with time to explore a plan for possible further joint action. Each meeting would be about ninety minutes. However there may be a number of reasons for adapting this process to suit the particular needs of your group.

Below are some helpful hints for achieving this and leading the group.

### A welcoming space

- Is everyone clear about venue & time?
- At the first meeting there may be people who don't know each other. It is important to make the setting as inviting as possible.
- Invite people to introduce themselves. This could include their name, a sentence about themselves and the faith community to which they belong.
- Is the room an appropriate size for the group?

- If possible, arrange the seats so that participants can see one another.
- Set the tone for the first meeting by warmly welcoming each person. Introduce everyone. Name tags are helpful at least for the first meeting.
- Ensure each participant has a book before the meetings to improve the flow of the session.
- A meeting would generally last 90 minutes. ***It is important to start and end at the agreed times.*** If people want to continue discussion this could occur informally after the meeting.

### Preparing for the sessions

- By paying attention to the setting and space for your gatherings, you are seeking to create an inviting, prayerful, reflective atmosphere.
- Preview the material for each session.
- Display a Bible in a prominent position as a focus for the group. This also allows members to read scripture references as needed. *The texts in your Bible may differ slightly from the ones in this book due to different translations of Scripture.* Scripture texts in this resource are from the New Revised Standard Version.
- Treat this booklet as a resource. The BEST resource is the life and faith experience of each group member.

- For the last meeting it is suggested that the group share a meal at the beginning and do some planning for future action at the end of the meeting. It could be helpful to have some blank paper and pens. At the end of the fourth meeting organise food arrangements.
- A spirit of goodwill which allows individuals to disagree with respect and dignity should be fostered. People should feel free to disagree without ill feeling. Always remember that the Spirit of God is with the group — with each member of the group — because we are gathered in God's name.

### Prayer focus

The Leader or another member of the group is encouraged to set up a simple prayer focus each session. Elements might include a candle, cross and an open Bible.

### During the meeting

- Is the group keeping to the point? Acknowledge all contributions, and gently keep the topic in focus and to time.
- Is the group open and attentive as different ideas are expressed?
- Are the members respectful of what each person is sharing? As group members become more at ease they will interact more. This is a sign of a healthy group.
- Try to have all members taking part? Avoid one person dominating? .
- Don't be content with just one answer. Ask, "What do others think?" or "Anything else?" until several people have responded.
- Are members being addressed by name — first name if possible?
- Don't be afraid of silence. People may need time to think about the question before responding.
- Don't be afraid of controversy or unanswered questions. They can be very stimulating. The group needs to be aware that every question may not have an answer at this stage. Don't be frustrated. Move on and perhaps include that issue in prayer.
- Being in a small group should be an encouraging and nurturing experience for everyone. Confidentiality is important and a good rule of thumb is; '*what is said in the group stays in the group.*'

## Making Room for Each Other in the Body of Christ

### Reflection and Discussion

- Christians share a common vision of the world as belonging to God - a common way of seeing others as God's sons and daughters. We share a common system of values. How could we, working with each other, express these common values within the world at large?
- We share a spiritual connection through our baptism, but just as the Word was made flesh, we need to flesh out our invisible connectedness in tangible ways. How can you get to know the people of your neighbouring Anglican or Roman Catholic Church at a deeper human level?

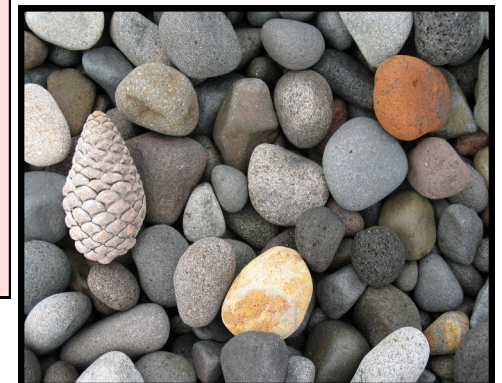
### Group Discussion

- In countries where Anglicans and Roman Catholics live side by side, marriage between members of the two communities is no longer unusual. What has been your experience of the results of these marriages?
- What could we do to support these marriages and encourage couples to affirm their own and the others' faith?
- Discuss the *Church as Communion* excerpts from paras 3, 47 & 45.
- To what extent are we living this life in our own congregation? What would our relationship and mission be like if we related more freely with each other?

### Exploring 'Church as Communion'

The way we live out our communion is our responsibility. The *Church as Communion* describes it as 'a life of shared concern for one another in mutual forbearance, submission, gentleness and love: in the placing of the interests of others above the interests of self; in making room for each other in the body of Christ; in the solidarity with the poor and the powerless; and in sharing of gifts both spiritual and material'.

*Church as Communion para. 45 (summarised)*





**Topic 4:**  
***Communion between Anglicans & Roman Catholics -***

This last topic explores some of the areas of our separation and the ways we are already working together. It acknowledges that there are continuing and not easily reconcilable differences, while we continue to find ways of living out the communion which Anglicans and Roman Catholics already share through Baptism into Christ.

To explore the meaning of communion is not only to speak of the Church but also to address the world at the heart of its deepest need, for human beings long for true community in freedom, justice and peace and for the respect of human dignity.  
*Church as Communion paragraph 3*

**Story:** In a small New Zealand town Catholics and Anglicans worked together as a street community. At the top end of a Paeroa street stands the local Catholic church, school presbytery and home for the Josephite Sisters, who, before their retirement, had been part of the community who ran the school.

When Marjorie, an Anglican, and her husband, who was chronically unwell, moved into the street, the Sisters drew them into a street community. From the first they called, offered hospitality, especially Sunday dinner, cakes for celebrations, and company for when Margery was out. The local priest was very much a part of this community of grace too. Marjorie's son Chris had served the Anglican church as a youth worker for some years before he was called as an ordinand to the Anglican seminary in Auckland.

land. There the Anglican, Catholic, Baptist and Methodist churches formed the Auckland Consortium of Theological Education, so that students from many denominations studied together Biblical studies and languages, pastoralia and liturgy together with tutorials in their own traditions towards Auckland or Melbourne University degrees. Whenever Chris came home there was interest in his progress and lively discussion.

When Chris and his colleagues were ordained deacon in nearby Waihi, the parish priest and Sisters not only attended the service but provided a celebratory cake for all to share, and later, when one of those colleagues became the Anglican Vicar they made her welcome too, especially in ministering to families with both Anglican and Catholic members.

Marjorie's husband had been baptised in the Catholic Church but never confirmed. Over time he was drawn back to his childhood faith and was confirmed and received communion before he died. At his funeral, Chris spoke on the family's behalf, shared in leading the prayers and the committal.

As separated Churches grow towards ecclesial communion it is essential to recognise the profound measure of communion they already share through participation in spiritual communion with God and through those elements of a visible communion of shared faith and sacramental life they can already recognise in one another.  
*Church as Communion p.47*

**Meeting One** ***Welcome and Gathering Prayer***

**Leader:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

**Colossians 1 :15-20**  
*Read slowly and reflectively this passage from St Paul:*

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.

He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**Leader:** We pray together the gathering prayer.

**All:** **Lord Jesus Christ,  
In you all things hold together:  
bless this group that gathers in  
your name.  
Take our scattered lives and  
form us as a company of apostles  
traveling together.  
Take our searching minds and  
teach us as a fellowship of  
disciples learning together.**

**Take our divided hearts  
and unite us  
as a communion of Christians,  
praying together.  
As we read and listen,  
as we speak and pray,  
renew your church for the sake of  
the world you love.  
Amen.**



## Topic 1 : ***Communion unfolded in Scripture -***

This topic will focus on the witness of the Scriptures that reveal God's desire for unity with us in the drama of human existence. God shares life with us and we in turn stand united in that life

The relationship between God and creation is the basic theme of Holy Scripture. The drama of human existence, as given in Scripture, is the formation, breakdown and renewing of this relationship.

*Church as Communion paragraph 6*

**Story:** Rose and Diane are both in their sixties – one a widow the other single, one an Anglican, the other a Catholic, both working for their respective Dioceses in management positions in the social service field. They share a passion for their work and a love of small dogs; Diane now has two and Rose one.

A friendship grew and deepened as the two took holidays together and discovered other things in common. The friendship provided both with support and encouragement, while they both retained their deep faith as Anglican and Catholic respectively. Each supported and encouraged the other on a number of different levels and yet each retained their individuality. Rose's adult children accepted Diane as a family friend – with her own family living elsewhere, this generous support was valuable.

Both Rose and Diane lived in their own homes – beautiful, secure and comfortable. A number of holidays later, the conversation touched the subject of how they could support each other as they grew older. They wondered about how feasible it was to find two suitable houses side by side so that they

could be of more practical help to each other as they grew older.

They found a unit for sale which would be ideal for Rose. In faith, the owner of the next door unit was approached to see if she would also consider selling. What they didn't know, was that she had already made plans to move to a retirement village. God moves in mysterious ways! The respective deals were done, and after some alterations the units were ready to move into.

While one house sold relatively quickly, the sale of the other took much longer, seriously testing their faith. However Rose and Diane held on strongly to the belief that this was where the Lord had lead them. It is now twelve months since Rose and Diane felt called to support each other in their later years and they are now settled in their new environment. The friendship has survived illnesses and the trauma of buying and selling houses.

Rose and Diane share occasional meals, transport, gardening jobs, ideas, hopes, and underlying all of these, a deep faith. They each express this in their own tradition while supporting and encouraging each other in ways that will enrich and deepen their own faith. As they share holidays together, both are comfortable worshipping in either of their respective Churches.

They respect the differences as well as the things they share in common. Both learn from the other, while neither tries to persuade the other to change their spiritual beliefs.

In fact in living out their faith, they realize that the Risen Lord has transformed their

## Meeting Four ***Welcome and Gathering Prayer***

**Leader:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Leader:** We pray together the gathering prayer.

**All:**

**Lord Jesus Christ,  
In you all things hold together:  
bless this group that gathers  
in your name.**

**Take our scattered lives and  
form us as a company of  
apostles traveling  
together.**

**Take our searching minds and  
teach us as a  
fellowship of  
disciples learning  
together.**

**Take our divided hearts  
and unite us  
as a communion of Christians,  
praying together.**

**As we read and listen,  
as we speak and pray,  
renew your church  
for the sake of  
the world you love.  
Amen.**

**Leader:.**  
*(Read slowly and prayerfully the following passages.)*

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

*Ephesians 4:4-6*

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free— and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

*1 Corinthians 12 :12-13*

## Closing Prayer



**Leader:** Loving God,  
hear and help us, as we say:  
God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 1:** Enrich among us the  
sacramental life, so that,  
sharing holy things, we may  
become a holy people.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 2:** Gather up the rich diversity of  
all our cultures, so that, by the  
one Spirit, all the peoples of  
the earth may come to you.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 3:** Quicken among us the  
memory of Christ, so that, fed  
by the living Word and living  
Tradition, we may be mes-  
sengers of the Gospel.

(pause) God of grace

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 4:** Give us new ways of  
expressing age-old faith, so  
that, in our own age and cul-  
ture, we may show authentic  
faithfulness.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 5:** Re-create us in Christ,  
so that, in a divided world,  
the Church be a sign of  
peace and harmony.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 6:** Inspire us for joint witness  
and practical action, so that,  
we may care for one another  
and bear with one another in  
sharing the Good News.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Let us pray.

Group may add conversational or silent  
prayer together. Then conclude with:

**All:** **May the grace  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship  
of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
now & evermore.  
Amen.**

## The drama of human existence

lives and they are committed to deepening  
that relationship with Him.

### Reflection and Discussion

*We reflect on our own situation.*

The news in papers, radio, TV & internet  
are a constant source of worry for many  
people. They bring us stories of a broken  
world, pain and trouble.

- Name a recent event that has happened in  
your community or in the world that brings  
home to you the brokenness of the human  
community.

We love to celebrate our unity and  
harmony. However, communities do not  
always find it easy to live together.  
Continual forgiveness and reconciliation  
are therefore essential to bring healing and  
make the life of each community fruitful.

- Share together something of the  
importance of family or community  
celebrations in your life. Explain to the  
group what events you enjoy the most.
- From your own experience can you tell a  
story of a hurt, forgiveness and peace?  
Why is this story important to you?

### Group Discussion

- Discuss the images in the Scripture passages above and identify your favourite image of the Church as Communion.
- What are the essentials of community that are basic to building up the Church as communion?
- What do you think is the difference between 'community' and 'communion'?

**Exploring 'Church as Communion'**  
Read these paragraphs from Church as  
Communion.

In the New Testament the idea of  
communion is conveyed in many ways.

A variety of words, expressions, and  
images point to its reality: the people of  
God (1 Peter 2:9-10); flock (John 10:14;  
Acts 20:28-29; 1 Peter 5:3-4); vine (John  
15:5); temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17);  
bride (Revelation 21:2); body of Christ (1  
Corinthians 12:27; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17;  
Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 1:22-23).

All these express a relationship with God  
and also imply a relationship among the  
members of the community. The reality to  
which this variety of images refers is  
communion, a shared life in Christ  
(1 Cor. 10:16-21; compare with John 17),  
which no one image exhaustively  
describes. This communion is participation  
in the life of God through Christ in the  
Holy Spirit, making Christians one with  
each other.

*Church as Communion paragraph 13*

**Take a few moments in your group to  
read the Introduction (p 5) to this  
booklet.**

## Closing Prayer



**Leader:** Loving God,  
hear and help us, as we say:  
God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 1:** Enrich among us the  
sacramental life, so that,  
sharing holy things, we may  
become a holy people.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 2:** Gather up the rich diversity of  
all our cultures, so that, by  
the one Spirit, all the peoples  
of the earth may come to  
you.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 3:** Quicken among us the  
memory of Christ, so that,  
fed by the living Word and  
living Tradition, we may be  
messengers of the Gospel.

(pause) God of grace

**All:** Hear our prayer.

*Note: This Closing prayer is repeated for the end of each meeting.*

**Reader 4:** Give us new ways of  
expressing age-old faith, so  
that, in our own age and cul-  
ture, we may show authentic  
faithfulness.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 5:** Re-create us in Christ,  
so that, in a divided world,  
the Church be a sign of  
peace and harmony.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 6:** Inspire us for joint witness  
and practical action, so that  
we may care for one an-  
other and bear with one an-  
other in sharing the Good  
News.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Let us pray.

Invite group to add conversational or  
silent prayer together. Then conclude  
with:

**All: May the grace  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship  
of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
Now and evermore.  
Amen.**

## Linking present, past & future generations of Christians

### Reflection and Discussion

- Reflect on your own area. What were some of the key milestones in the history of your local Church?
- What opportunities do you see available for you to connect the past with future possibilities?

### Group Discussion

- Every Sunday the Creed is proclaimed in Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. The Creed is an essential part of our history and our identity. How can Creeds be vehicles for deeper sharing and understanding between our two churches?

### Exploring 'Church as Communion'

When the Creed speaks of the Church as *holy, catholic and apostolic*, it does not mean that these attributes are distinct and unrelated. On the contrary, they are so interwoven that there cannot be one without the others. The holiness of the Church reflects the mission of the Spirit of God in Christ, the Holy One of God made known to all the world through the apostolic teaching. Catholicity is the realization of the Church's proclamation of the fullness of the Gospel to every nation throughout the ages. Apostolicity unites the Church of all generations and in every place with the once-for-all sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, where God's holy love was supremely demonstrated.

*Church as Communion paragraph 41*

*Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15;16).*

- What does it mean that the Church is holy? What would a holy Church be like and what could we be doing to participate more fully with the Holy Spirit?
- What steps do we need 'to become' Church as described below in paragraph 41 of *Church as Communion*?
- Discuss how we can remain grounded in 'the living truth' with relevance, and faithfulness to the tradition?
- How does one develop new expressions of faith when we are taught about a God who is unchanging?

If the Church is to remain faithfully rooted and grounded in the living truth and is to confess it with relevance, then it will need to develop new expressions of the faith. Diversity of culture may often elicit a diversity in the expression of the one Gospel; within the same community distinct perceptions and practices arise. Nevertheless, these must remain faithful to the tradition received from the apostles (cf. Jude 3). Since the Holy Spirit is given to all the people of God, it is within the Church as a whole, individuals as well as communities that the living memory of the faith is active. All authentic insights and perceptions, therefore, have their place within the life and faith of the whole Church, the temple of the Holy Spirit.

*Church as communion paragraph 29*

### Topic 3 *Communion: Apostolicity, Catholicity and Holiness –*

**‘ We believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.’**

This topic will explore how we value our history and live out our present relationships with each other as churches. What does our God-given identity look like? In what ways is the Church holy?

**Story:** One of the most blessed times in my life, a real gift to the community of brothers in which I was living in New Plymouth, New Zealand, began with an unusual telephone call, from a former brother, Kevin, who had become a priest. Kevin’s close friend, Peter, also a Catholic priest, was Warden of St Margaret’s College, and a close friend of Philip, an Anglican priest, Warden of Selwyn College. He asked:

*A new Anglican bishop, Philip appointed for Taranaki, is now Warden of a university college in Dunedin. Could he live with the brothers for the first six months after his ordination until his children finish the school year? After he establishes a bishop’s house in Taranaki, his family will join him.*

So the new Anglican Bishop Philip came to live in our Catholic Brothers’ community. Later we hosted his wife and children as house guests. Our oldest brother Ollie, in his late eighties, sometimes minded the young bishop’s 6-year-old daughter Clare and 9-year old son Joshua.

Philip lived with us for six months. He was great support to and friend of our resident Catholic Chaplain, Father Dave in the last stages of his life. The bishop

and his family became very good friends of the brothers, and each Christmas for several years we shared the main Christmas meal.

I had many late night discussions with Bishop Philip and discovered how close, in essence, we were in our Christian faith and in the values we cherished. We sometimes dozed off in neighbouring armchairs! When Bishop Philip was ordained in the Anglican church the homily was preached by his good friend Father Peter. I’m sure that wouldn’t have happened if Henry VIII were still king!

Once Anglican Bishop Philip preached at a Francis Douglas school Mass while his friend Father Peter was celebrant. They did not concelebrate, but it may have looked that way to some of the students. I was ready for complaints. There was not one. All I heard were positive comments that it was great to see the unity of Christian faith rather than the divisions.

When Father David died, the attending Catholic Bishop Owen welcomed Philip’s significant participation in the funeral services.

At the entrance to the home of the Anglican Bishop in Taranaki, a plaque commemorating the blessing of the house on 19 Sep 2002 reads in part:  
*This plaque also records the deep appreciation of the Bishops and people of the Diocese of Waikato for the hospitality offered by the brothers of the De La Salle Order...to the first Bishop in Taranaki... during the first six months of his episcopate.* From Brother Bill Firman

### Meeting Two

Welcome



**Leader:**

In the name  
of the Father  
and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

**Scripture**

*Read slowly and prayerfully these passages from St Paul.*

#### **Ephesians 2:14-18**

For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.

#### **Ephesians 5:1-2**

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

## Gathering Prayer

**Leader:** We pray together the gathering prayer.

**All:**  
**Lord Jesus Christ,  
In you all things hold  
together:  
bless this group that gathers  
in your name.**

**Take our scattered lives and  
form us as a company of  
apostles traveling  
together.**

**Take our searching minds and  
teach us as a  
fellowship of  
disciples learning  
together.**

**Take our divided hearts  
and unite us  
as a communion of Christians,  
praying together.**

**As we read and listen,  
as we speak and pray,  
renew your church  
for the sake  
of the world you love.  
Amen.**



## Meeting Three

## Welcome and Gathering Prayer

**Leader:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

**Leader:** We pray together the gathering prayer.

**All:**  
**Lord Jesus Christ,  
In you all things hold together:  
bless this group that gathers in  
your name.**

**Take our scattered lives and  
form us as a company of apos-  
tles traveling  
together.**

**Take our searching minds and  
teach us as a  
fellowship of  
disciples learning  
together.**

**Take our divided hearts  
and unite us  
as a communion of Christians,  
praying together.**

**As we read and listen,  
as we speak and pray,  
renew your church  
for the sake of  
the world you love.  
Amen.**

**Leader:**  
(Read slowly and prayerfully the following passages.)

*The Holy Spirit will teach you everything.* John 14:25-26

I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

*Built on the foundations of the apostles.* Ephesians 2:19-22

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.

In recognizing the canon of Scripture as the normative record of the revelation of God, the Church sealed as authoritative its acceptance of the transmitted memory of the apostolic community. This is summarized and embodied in the creeds. Thus the apostolic tradition ... spans time and space, linking the present to past and future generations. Responsibility for the maintenance of the apostolic faith is shared by the whole people of God. Succession in the episcopal ministry is intended to assure each community that its faith is indeed the apostolic faith, received and transmitted from apostolic times.

*Church as Communion paras 31-33*

## Closing Prayer



**Leader:** Loving God,  
hear and help us, as we say:  
God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 1:** Enrich among us the  
sacramental life so that,  
sharing holy things, we may  
become a holy people.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 2:** Gather up the rich diversity of  
all our cultures so that, by the  
one Spirit, all the peoples of  
the earth may come to you.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 3:** Quicken among us the  
memory of Christ so that, fed  
by the living Word and living  
Tradition, we may be mes-  
sengers of the Gospel.

(pause) God of grace

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 4:** Give us new ways of  
expressing age-old faith, so  
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ture, we may show authentic  
faithfulness.

(pause) God of grace,

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**Reader 5:** Re-create us in Christ,  
so that, in a divided world,  
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peace and harmony.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Reader 6:** Inspire us for joint witness  
and practical action, so that,  
we may care for one another  
and bear with one another in  
sharing the Good News.

(pause) God of grace,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Let us pray.

Group may add conversational or silent  
prayer together. Then conclude with:

**All: May the grace  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
and the love of God  
and the fellowship  
of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all  
now & evermore.  
Amen.**

## Topic 2 : Communion: Sacramentality and the Church -

This second topic will explore how the Church might be a sign and instrument of God's desire to draw us together in unity. How is it possible when Christians are so divided? What sort of sign is the Church? What are some signs of the Spirit's presence and guidance in our brokenness?

The Church is the sign of what God has done in Christ, is continuing to do in those who serve him, and wills to do for humanity. It is the sign of God's abiding presence, and of his eternal faithfulness to his promises, for in it Christ is ever present and active through the Spirit.

*Church as Communion paragraph 18*

**Story:** Nestled in the beautiful Waitemamara Stream Valley that borders the Hokianga Harbour in the Far North of Aotearoa New Zealand is found the St Isaac's Retreat House. This remote, rugged and unique Centre for prayer and hospitality near Opononi was created as an Ecumenical venture initiative from the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox communities in the Hokianga. In recent years the Centre has been operated by the Anglican Order of the Sisters of the Love of God. The chapel is a converted hay barn, the guest house is a shepherd's cottage and there is also a 'hobbit house' perched on the side of a hill for individual retreatants.

Many people have spoken of the remarkable sense of God they have received while on retreat at St Isaac's, due to the prayer life, the dramatic land-

scape and the special hospitality of Hokianga. This is an area where Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Maori and Pakeha all intermingle and share life in a special way. Combined Anglican/Roman Catholic Ash Wednesday services are celebrated every year.

The nearest neighbour to St Isaac's is the Land family, Roman Catholic lay people who have been great friends and supporters of St Isaac's over many years. The Roman Catholic community come to St Isaac's Retreat Centre during Lent to walk the Stations of the Cross together.

A joint Easter Liturgy is celebrated early in the morning on Easter Day. The group gathers at the top of the hill to watch a horse as it gallops in the darkness up the hill from down in the valley. The rider carries a large taper and blows a hunting horn. The Easter fire is lit by the taper and the Easter candle is lit from the fire, including the St. Isaac's Retreat Centre Easter candle. This very dramatic and evocative symbolism of the Easter Light is experienced by those who participate in this combined Easter Liturgy early on Easter morning.

Over a number of years Anglicans and Roman Catholics have been and continue to be trustees of the Hauora Hokianga Health Board. This is a free community hospital facility which is unique in New Zealand. Former members have included a Marist Priest and Anglican lay people and the composition of the current Board includes Sister

## God's

Mary Maitland of the Sisters of the Mission; The Reverend Dr David Williams, Anglican Priest and former member of The Waitangi Tribunal, and The Reverend Katene Eruera an Anglican priest and lawyer. The Maori clergy of the Hokianga area regularly celebrate Eucharist in the chapel at St Isaac's and Sister Anne, the current Sister-in-Charge attends many hui and tangi around the Hokianga Harbour.

### Reflection and Discussion

- All of us have many responsibilities within our family and places of work. Yet in the Church we are called to be, 'individually members one of another' (Romans 12:5).

Where in your parish or community do you see people going out of their way to act as Christ to each other?

- We all experience barriers and divisions between Christians — sometimes these are very painful and confusing.

In what ways do we recognize that God is indeed with 'the others' as well as with us?

- \*Christians believe that the Church is a sign and instrument of God's presence and action in the world. Jesus said: 'Blessed are the peace-makers' (Matthew 5:9).

How do we experience and give expression to this in the everyday life of our Christian community?

### Exploring 'Church as Communion'

For this session you are invited to read these excerpts from paragraphs 18 to 21 of *Church as Communion*.

The Church as communion of believers with God and with each other is a sign of the new humanity God is creating and a pledge of the continuing work of the Holy Spirit. Its vocation is to embody and reveal the redemptive power of the Gospel signifying reconciliation received through faith and participation in the new life in Christ.

...communion involves rejoicing with those who rejoice and being in solidarity with those who suffer and those who search for meaning in life.

*Church as Communion paragraph 18 & 3*

Human sinfulness and Christian division obscure this sign. However, Christ's promise of his abiding presence in the midst of his people (Matthew 18:20; 28:20) gives the assurance that the Church will not cease to be this effective sign.

*Church as Communion paragraph 20*

## abiding presence

The Church is both the sign of salvation in Christ, for to be saved is to be brought into communion with God through Him, and at the same time the instrument of salvation, as the community through which this salvation is offered and received. This is what is meant when the Church is described as an "effective sign", given by God in the face of human sinfulness, division and alienation.

*Church as Communion para. 19*

Paradoxically it is pre-eminently in its weakness, suffering and poverty that the Church becomes the sign of the efficacy of God's grace (cf. 2 Cor 12:9; 4:7-12). It is also paradoxical that the quality of holiness is rightly attributed to the Church, a community of sinners. The power of God to sanctify the Church is revealed in the scandal of the Cross where Christ in his love gave himself for the Church so that it might be presented to him without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish (Eph 5:26-27). "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" ... "making him who knew no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5:19; 8:21).

*Church as Communion para. 21*

### Group Discussion

- How are we challenged to be a sign of the 'new humanity God is creating'

...to embody it, reveal it and participate in 'the new life in Christ'?

- What are some ways we could continue the work of the Holy Spirit together?
- Read again the passages from St. Paul - Ephesians 2:14-18 and 5:1-2.
- How do the words of the text speak to you in your Christian community?
- Where do we find our foundation and impetus for communion?
- Discuss how this Scripture may inspire you to live 'communion' rather than simply 'community'.

