

BCM Beyond Church Walls Journey Outline

BCM Beyond Church Walls is for anyone who's noticed the gap arising between the church they're attending and the people outside who would either never come to worship in it or if they came once would be unlikely to stay. Beyond Church Walls aims to help you start to close this gap by going to where people are and starting there, rather than inviting people to come to where you are. This means unlearning things and challenging some of our tightly held beliefs and attitudes. But it can start us on an unforeseeably exciting journey.

1. The Jesus who starts things

We've got used to looking at Jesus through a particular set of spectacles (maybe a range of them) but perhaps we haven't looked at him as an innovator, a pioneer of new ways of doing things, someone who has a string of 'firsts' under his belt like a James Dyson or Edmund Hilary or Greta Thunberg. What innovations did Jesus bring? What characteristics and attitudes did he have that enabled him to be the 'pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2)? And how can we as his disciples learn to be initiators of new things for the sake of God's mission in the world?

2. What is all around you?

You may have noticed that people without a church background find it hard to come into a worship service or church building. Or they just don't see the point. This means we have to go to where they are if we want to share the good news. God is already outside in our communities, working. How can we learn to notice what is going on all around us, who lives in our communities, what matters to them, and how we can we join in with what God is doing?

3. God and you creating together

God is like a heavenly mother or father who wants to be with their children, delighting as they discover things through play and exploration, or teaching them new skills. As we respond to the call of Jesus to follow him into the world in mission, God invites us into the work of co-creation. What's important here is that God needs YOU to be YOU. There's no programme or technique – just a question: how can you be yourself and you and God be at play together...?

4. Rhythm, action and contemplation

There's a lot of talk about churches and leaders being exhausted after the pandemic. We can feel tired just thinking about another mission initiative. But there's a rhythm to mission: it's not lots of endless activity. How do we find a spiritual rhythm that allows a balance between waiting on God and responding to what we hear?

5. Different churches for different people

Over the past 400-500 years church was pretty much the same everywhere in Europe. There were a few differences. But people were expected to take it as they found it, shaped by the influences of the past. As the world changes, we're finding that perhaps there's more to learn about what it means to 'be' church. How do we

enable church to arise that is meets people where they are at and feels familiar and suited to their culture and context?

6. **Pioneering as a spectrum**

You may not think of yourself or your church group as pioneers. But a pioneer is anyone who does something for the first time or creates something new. In the church today lots of people are pioneering something. And there is a range of ways to go about birthing something new into the world for the sake of the gospel and the kingdom of God. Where might you fit on the spectrum?