

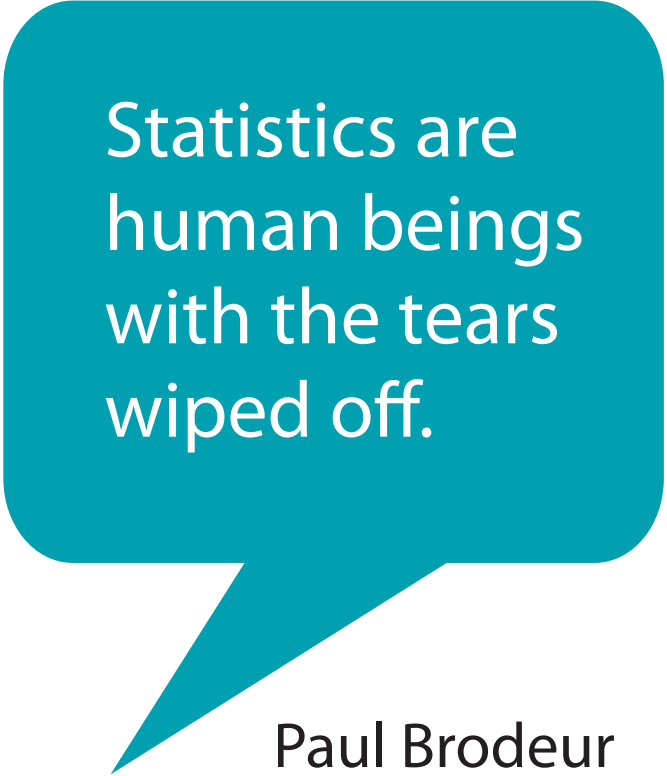


Stats  
have  
Faces

Congregation  
local area exploration  
process



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD



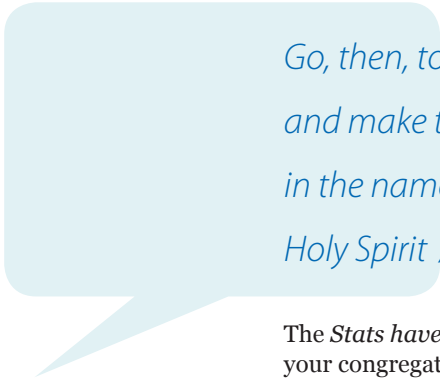
Statistics are  
human beings  
with the tears  
wiped off.

Paul Brodeur

# Contents

Introduction	4
The process	5
<b>Step 1</b>	6
Introductory reading	
<b>Step 2</b>	7
Bible study	
<b>Step 3</b>	9
Accessing a local area demographic, social and economic data report	
<b>Step 4</b>	11
Find the figures: team members reflect on the local area data	
<b>Step 5</b>	13
Mapping your community	
<b>Step 6</b>	15
Identifying community assets	
<b>Step 7</b>	17
An exegetical neighbourhood walk	
<b>Step 8</b>	19
Accessing your congregation's demographic and social data	
<b>Step 9</b>	21
Reflecting on the research	
<b>Step 10</b>	23
Bible study	
Appendices and optional resources	25
Worship together	27

# Introduction



*Go, then, to all peoples everywhere  
and make them my disciples: baptise them  
in the name of the Father, the Son, and the  
Holy Spirit // Matthew 28:19*

The *Stats have Faces* resource has been produced to help your congregation build a better understanding of your local community. Along the way you may discover that familiar people and places have changed, and that there are new challenges and possibilities where you live and worship.

The Queensland Synod's Vision 2020 calls for the church to be a "sustainable mission oriented organisation". The *Stats have Faces* process provides tools and activities to help your congregation to engage more effectively in mission in your neighbourhood.

All agencies and service providers are encouraged to carry out research into their local community and churches should be no different. While communities might share similarities such as schools, shops and sporting facilities, each one is unique with its own character and potential.

A key missional concept behind this resource is that discerning God's mission is not so much about skills or knowledge as about learning to listen, and discovering how we might join with what the Spirit is already doing in our community.

Statistics are valuable tools in this process but it is important to remember that behind every number there are stories about real people living with frustrations, hopes and dreams. Statistical information is never a substitute for going out and meeting the people who actually live and work in your community. Nor can statistics substitute for prayer and reflection on God's calling for your congregation.

The *Basis of Union* says that the Uniting Church "stands in relation to contemporary societies in ways which will help it to understand its own nature and mission". The more we understand our communities and the needs of those who live in them, the better we can serve God and be effective in mission.

# The process

The *Stats have Faces* process can be undertaken by your church council, mission committee or a task group recruited for the purpose. The process is managed by a team leader and will take about six weeks to complete.

Make sure that you have a range of ages and balance of genders in the team. If possible, try to include some people with experience in statistics and research.

Note: the *Stats have Faces* process will often refer to the “local community”. This is the local geographical area where your congregation is based and which it serves. Sometimes the term “neighbourhood” is used and this is a similar notion.

Below is a brief outline of the ten-step process.

## Pray

1. Introductory reading: an explanation of the process to help each team member prepare. This an individual activity. *Use Handout 1.*
2. Bible study: exploring what the scriptures have to say about the place of research and statistics in God’s plan. This is a team activity. *Use Handout 2.*

## Research

3. Accessing a local area demographic, social and economic data report. The team leader or any member can complete this step.
4. Find the figures: reading and reflecting on the local area demographic, social and economic data report. This is an individual activity. *Use Handout 3 and the Local Area Statistical Report.*
5. Mapping the community: thinking about what life is like for the people in your community. This is a team activity.
6. Identification of community assets: visiting one or more groups or networks already involved in your community. This is a team activity. *Use Handout 4.*
7. An exegetical neighbourhood walk. This is an individual activity. *Use Handout 5.*
8. Accessing your congregation’s demographic and social data. The team leader or any member can complete this step.  
**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *You should start this step now.*

## Reflect

9. Reflecting on the research: putting all the information together to gain fresh insights about your community. This is a team activity. *Use Handout 6.*

## Act

10. Bible study: exploring the possibilities for action arising from the research. This is a team activity. *Use Handout 7.*
11. Sharing the results: presenting the outcomes from your research to the church community.

Additional optional reading and watching activities are included in the appendixes at the end of this Leader’s Guide.

## Your role

As the facilitator/leader of the *Stats have Faces* process you are responsible for the oversight of the project. Read through the Leader’s Guide and handouts to understand the process and complete any preparation well ahead of time. When the group meets your role is to facilitate the process and manage the various steps of the program.

**Don’t forget to start Step 8 (Accessing your congregation’s demographic and social data) NOW by contacting the Research Officer at the Synod office email [research.officer@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:research.officer@ucaqld.com.au) or phone 07 3377 9910.**

If you need assistance contact your presbytery minister or one of the presbytery mission staff.



# Introductory reading

- Who:** This is an individual activity.
- Time:** Flexible.
- Needed:** Handout 1: Introductory reading.
- Objective:** To get people thinking about the process before your first meeting.
- Preparation:** Email or give each participant Handout 1 and ask them to read it before you meet for the first Bible study.

## Leader's notes:

*Handout 1* is a short introduction to prepare team members for the process. It sets out an agenda for mission linked to the *Basis of Union* of the Uniting Church in Australia and the Queensland Synod Vision 2020.

The handout talks about our individual and corporate responsibility to be engaged in mission which is grounded in our local community.

It reminds us that this is God's mission. We are not called to venture forth on our own, but to recognise and participate in what God is already doing.

The reading reminds us that although statistics and research are valuable tools to help congregations discern their local mission, statistics are about people. The numbers, maps and graphs aren't the whole story. Statistical information is never a substitute for going out and meeting the people who actually live and work in the community. Nor can statistics substitute for prayer and reflection on God's calling for your congregation in its mission and ministry.

The *Stats have Faces* process will engage people at all of those levels.

- Next:** Organise the time and location of the first Bible study.



# Bible study

- Who:** This is a team activity.
- Time:** One hour.
- Where:** Organise a venue at church or in someone's home. If there is a big group, break into smaller sets of five to eight people. You may decide to take turns to provide snacks or a light supper.
- Needed:** Handout 2: Bible study.
- Objective:** To explore some of what the scriptures have to say about the place of research and statistics in God's plan.

## Leader's notes:

### Before you start

Give a brief overview of the program. Explain that the process will involve group and individual activities and will start and finish with Bible study.

### Trivia quiz icebreaker (ten minutes)

This is an enjoyable activity to warm up the group. Have people write down their answers and allow discussion before providing the correct answer.

### Answers:

1. True. They can also use their long tongue to clean their eyes.
2. False. But low-flying aircraft can cause penguins to panic and leave their nests.
3. True. The distance was over 90 metres.
4. True. Termites live in colonies which number from several hundred to several million individuals at maturity.
5. True. The decapitated head can also survive waving its antennae back and forth for several hours until it runs out of steam.
6. False. The air from a human sneeze can actually travel at speeds of 160 kilometres per hour or more (another good reason to cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or duck when you hear one coming your way).
7. True. The microwave was invented in 1945 by Percy Spencer. The first food deliberately cooked with his microwave was popcorn.
8. True. This was a headcount of males, able to go to war, over the age of 20 years (Numbers 26:51).

### Thinking about collecting statistics (ten minutes)

This activity will get people thinking about statistics, what they are and why they are collected. It also asks people about their feelings when they are part of a statistical exercise and will set the context for the next step of working with the scriptures.



## Bible study

### **Reflecting on the scriptures (25 minutes)**

This consideration of two Bible passages shows that statistics played an important historical role in the Old Testament and that Jesus himself encouraged people to take account of the consequences of their choices and plans.

### **Looking forward (ten minutes)**

In this section the group is encouraged to consider how research and statistics might be helpful to the mission planning of the congregation.

### **Prayer (five minutes)**

The prayer time not only provides a definite conclusion to the gathering but highlights the implications of the discussion. It is an opportunity to commend the vision of the group and the *Stats have Faces* process to the care and guidance of God.

**Next:** Remind the group that you will be accessing the local area demographic, social and economic data report and sending this to them along with some questions for reflection.



# Accessing a local area demographic, social and economic data report

- Who:** This is a one-person activity for the facilitator/leader or a delegated team member.
- Time:** Less than one hour.
- Where:** This can be done from home.
- Needed:** A computer connected to the Internet and a printer.
- Objective:** To generate a clear and accessible statistical report about your local community with tables and graphs.

## Leader's notes:

Much of the information you need to build a community profile is already available through a range of sources.

Here is a first step in finding the figures. Set aside half an hour to create your report which will automatically generate the latest demographic, social and economic data available for your area.

Go to the website [statistics.oesr.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles](http://statistics.oesr.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles) (Queensland Government Statistician's Office Queensland Regional Profiles).

1. Click on the radio button that says "Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2)". SA2s are the smallest geographical region suitable for generating your report and are broadly equivalent to suburb size in urban areas. There are 526 SA2 regions in Queensland each with approximately 3000 people.
2. You can select your region by name or by clicking on a map. If your church serves multiple regions you can select more than one (note: when you highlight a region in the left-hand box you then need to click the arrow to move it to the right-hand box). You will need to name your report, for example "XXXXXXX Uniting Church".
3. Your data will be compared to the Queensland data but you can select a larger region or city-wide data around your congregation with which to compare your local area.
4. Under step 4 choose "Resident", include "All topics" and then click on "Show topics". You might like to uncheck the boxes under "Industry and Development" unless you have particular interest in these statistics.
5. Choose output type PDF as this will make it easier for you to print, email and share your report with others.



## Accessing a local area demographic, social and economic data report

6. Click “Create Report” and your report will be ready to share in less than one minute.

The generated report will be attractive and easily readable with tables, graphs and summaries.

**Next:** Email or give each team member a copy of the report plus *Handout 3: Find the figures*.

Start planning now for *Step 6: Identifying community assets*, by making arrangements with the group/program/project(s) you plan to visit.

# 4

## Find the figures: team members reflect on the local area data

- Who:** This is an individual activity.
- Time:** About an hour.
- Where:** This can be done by each team member at home.
- Needed:** A computer connected to the Internet and a printer or a copy of the report and Handout 3: Find the figures.
- Objective:** Team members will read and reflect on the local area data.

### Leader's notes:

Your task is to share this report with your group together with Handout 3: Find the figures.

You can do this by emailing both documents or preferably printing them off and handing them to each group member. Their task is to reflect on the report using the questions in the handout before the next meeting.

- Next:** Remind people of the time and venue of the next meeting for *Step 5: Mapping your community*.



# Mapping your community

- Who:** This is a team activity. Community mapping is most effective with small numbers of people so if you have a big group break into smaller sets of three or four.
- Time:** About one and a half hours.
- Where:** Organise a venue ahead of time. You will need tables and chairs for each group.
- Needed:** Large sheets of flip-chart paper or poster-size newsprint, markers in a variety of colours, tape or Blu Tack and Post-it notes.
- Objective:** To draw up maps of your community and to gather and compare people's different perceptions. Participants will identify community resources, assets and needs, and note points of connection between the church and community.

## Leader's notes:

This community mapping exercise is used to reveal people's different perceptions about their community. It is not a statistical analysis and recognises that some people think in numbers, others in words and some in pictures.

In this activity, groups of participants draw a map of your community, marking certain points of importance and noting how often they visit these places. You as facilitator will lead the exercise while another person should be delegated to record the discussion.

This exercise can be done by your group or you could make it an informal gathering of your congregation. You could even invite other community members to join you. The session plan can be adapted to fit your specific needs and those of the people who are attending.

1. Explain the purpose of the session and if appropriate open with prayer. (Three minutes)
2. Divide participants into groups of three or four, either randomly or by age or gender. (Three minutes)
3. Distribute markers and flip-chart paper to each group, telling participants they will be drawing a map of their community. Give guidance as they proceed and visit each group briefly to monitor progress and answer questions. (20 minutes).
  - It may be helpful for the group to identify a central place in the community to help orient their map.
  - Ask each group member to mark his or her place of residence.
  - Ask participants to add places of importance where people regularly gather, such as markets, religious centres, schools, community centres, parks and sporting grounds, businesses, coffee shops, pubs, government offices, health clinics and police stations.
  - Ask each group to add two or three places from the following categories:
    - places where they spend the most time, using different colours to indicate daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly visits
    - places where they enjoy/don't enjoy spending time, indicated by different colours of markers
    - places they would like to add to the community, indicated by sticky notes.



## Mapping your community

4. Bring the groups together and ask a representative to share each group's map. Have someone record comments. (20 minutes)
5. Discuss the following points: (30 minutes)
  - What are the differences between the maps?
  - Why are there differences?
  - Are there any similarities between the maps? If so, what?
  - Are there any unspoken boundaries; places where people don't go or lines they don't cross?
  - Where do people see strengths and weaknesses in their community?
  - Note any points of connection between the church and the community.
  - Where can people see God at work in the community?
  - What have you learned about your community through this exercise?
6. Close in prayer and collect the maps at the end of the activity. (Five minutes) Note: Keep your maps as you may wish to refer back to them in a later part of the process.

**Next:** Let the team know the details of *Step 6: Identifying community assets*.

Make arrangements with the organisation/group to be visited and organise team transport. Each team member will need *Handout 4: Community visit questions*.



# Identifying community assets

- Who:** This part of the *Stats have Faces* process engages us in conversation with “community assets”; those individuals, associations and organisations in the local area which build social capital. This moves us beyond mere statistics and identifies groups and networks already active in our communities, seeing the community through their eyes.
- Time:** About one and a half hours.
- Where:** Organise ahead of time by making arrangements with the program/project(s) you will be visiting.
- Needed:** Handout 4: Community visit questions, transport, camera, flipchart and pens (for the discussion afterwards).
- Objective:** To meet some of the faces and hear some of the stories behind the statistics by visiting a local community group/project/program.

## Leader’s notes:

This session focuses primarily around the team visit(s). As this may require significant logistical planning it is important to be organised some weeks in advance.

If your team is a larger one, you may wish to arrange more than one visit as a maximum of four people per group is recommended.

Each community will offer a variety of possibilities for engaging with local organisations such as schools, service and sporting clubs, counselling services, the community centre, and advocacy groups.

Here are some useful principles to guide your choice and shape your visit:

- Try to visit a group/project/program where local people are in charge.
- Choose a group/project/program that is not familiar to most group members, preferably somewhere challenging.
- Remember that you are guests, and that your role is to listen and learn rather than to talk about what the church is doing.
- If possible, the team should meet immediately following the visit(s) to share insights.



# Identifying community assets

## Before the visit

You can use this draft for a letter or email confirming your visit.

Dear...

Thanks for confirming that a small group from [NAME] Uniting Church is invited to visit you/your program on [date and time]. We expect there will be about [NUMBER] people in our group.

The aim of the visit is to better understand the community in which we are situated. We are not seeking to recruit people to join our congregation nor are we offering to assist you or your program at this point in time.

We would like to learn about what you do and to understand your perspective on the opportunities and challenges facing our local community. We are particularly interested in hearing about the purpose, goals and funding of your group/project/program and about partner organisations and volunteer networks.

We are not seeking any confidential information. Our aim is to hear stories about your work and to receive your wisdom about our local community.

Thank you...

## Next:

Distribute *Handout 5: Exploring your neighbourhood*.

Answer any questions about the planned exegetical walk.

## After the visit

Gather together at a central point and ask people to reflect in pairs upon the visit.

- What did you learn?
- What most inspired you?
- What was most challenging?
- Are there ways in which the church community or individual members could get involved?
- What practical steps should follow the visit?

Share your thoughts as a team, recording people's comments on a flipchart. Try to ensure that the observations of each pair are included.

Nominate someone to write a thank-you note to the place(s) you have visited, outlining some of the things which the group has learned and informing them of any practical steps you hope to take.



# An exegetical neighbourhood walk

- Who:** This part of the *Stats have Faces* process is done individually. Each person will be invited to take a walk through their neighbourhood observing the people and the natural and the built environment, reflecting on God's presence.
- Time:** Up to two hours.
- Where:** Usually around the immediate neighbourhood of each participant; if that is not appropriate perhaps use the area around the church property instead.
- Needed:** Handout 5: Exploring your neighbourhood.
- Objective:** In this exercise each person is invited to undertake an exegesis—a critical interpretation—of their neighbourhood. Through careful, sensitive and critical observation, their task is to discern the truth of God's presence where they live. This is about reading the neighbourhood as one of the primary texts of daily life—one through which God speaks.

## Leader's notes:

Explain the process to the group and ensure that each person has the handout.

**Next:** If the four-week period for the collection of Step 8: *Assessing your congregation's demographic and social data* from the Research Officer has passed, check that you have received your report or call the Research Officer at Uniting Communications on 07 3377 9910 or email [research.officer@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:research.officer@ucaqld.com.au).



# Accessing your congregation's demographic and social data

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The survey process takes four weeks to complete and should be commenced well before the data is required.

- Who:** This part of the *Stats have Faces* process is coordinated by the team leader but aims to involve EVERY member of the congregation. The task could be delegated to a team member.
- Time:** About two minutes for each participant.
- Where:** Each congregation member can complete this at home online or you may wish to set up laptops after worship on Sunday for those who do not have computer access. This can be done by some people on paper but the answers will need to be entered online. Be aware that some people, including children, may need assistance.
- Needed:** Copies of the final report of this research should be made available to each group member.
- Objective:** To collect information from your own congregation/faith community.

## Leader's notes:

The task is to encourage as many congregation members as possible to complete a quick online survey in order to collect information from your church community which will parallel the data available from the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) demographic material collected in Step 3.

This data will enable comparisons between the demographic of your local area and your particular congregation. This is an important part of the *Stats have Faces* process as it holds up a mirror to the church community.

Note: some additional questions have been added for children under 15 years in order to make the survey more relevant and interesting.

### Pre-survey period

Contact the Research Officer at Uniting Communications on 07 3377 9910 or email [research.officer@ucaqld.com.au](mailto:research.officer@ucaqld.com.au) and they will prepare a personalised *Stats have Faces* profile survey for your congregation and send you a hyperlink URL to share with your congregation. They will also send a print copy.

The survey takes about two minutes per person and can be completed from home or the church office. It is important that every congregation member in the household takes part.

Once your congregation's profile survey is live, you will have four weeks in which to collect the data.

# 8

## Accessing your congregation's demographic and social data

### Survey period

Once your survey is live, email this letter to congregation members and include in your newsletter:

Please assist with our *Stats have Faces* project by ensuring that each worshipping member from your household takes just two minutes to complete a quick online demographic survey. This will be invaluable in helping with our planning and evaluation.

It is important for every congregation member in the household to complete this survey. Some people (e.g. small children) may need assistance to complete the task.

To complete the *Stats have Faces* survey go to the survey website [www.surveymonkey.com/s/qlducaprofile](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/qlducaprofile) [Your congregation's individual URL goes here] and click away.

Print copies are available from [NAME OR CHURCH OFFICE].

If you have any questions please contact [NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS].

The survey will close on [DATE]. Thanks so much for your time.

Throughout the four-week period use email, pulpit announcements and the Sunday newsletter to remind people to complete the survey.

Information entered onto print copies of the survey will need to be entered online before the closing date.

### Post-survey period

At the end of the four-week period the Research Officer will close the survey and email a full report with statistics and graphs. Share the report with your team.

### Next:

Let people know the time and place for the next meeting. Remind them to bring their Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) profile report from Step 4. Provide copies of the congregation's demographic profile from Step 8.



# Reflecting on the research

- Who:** This is a team activity.
- Time:** One and a half hours.
- Where:** Organise a venue at church or in someone's home. You may decide to take turns to provide snacks or a light supper.
- Needed:** Individual copies of the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) profile report from Step 4 and the report from the congregation's demographic profile in Step 8, plus Handout 6: Reflecting on the research. If possible display the maps from Step 5. Record comments using a flipchart and pens.
- Objective:** To develop new understandings through bringing together the information and insights gleaned from the community statistics, the congregational profile, the visit, the exegetical walk and personal reflections.

## Leader's notes:

This step in the *Stats have Faces* process is a time of reflection about what we have discovered about our community and ourselves, and what this means for the church as an agent of God's mission.

Reflection assists us to work through the information we have gathered in order to gain fresh insights about how we might live as Christians and engage with our neighbourhood as authentic communities of faith.

1. Begin with a reminder that the *Stats have Faces* process is about people not numbers. Remember that God is already at work in your community and that the challenge is to recognise where that is happening. (Two minutes)
2. Open with prayer. (Three minutes)
3. Work through the questions in Handout 6. Ensure that everyone contributes, if necessary breaking into sub-groups. Record the key points on flip charts. Putting it all together is the key step so make sure you leave sufficient time for this part of the conversation.
  - Looking at the statistical report (20 minutes)
  - Looking at the congregational survey (20 minutes)
  - Reflecting on existing community connections (15 minutes)
  - Putting it all together (25 minutes)
4. Close with prayer. (Five minutes)

**Next:** Let the team know the time and venue for Step 10.

# 10

## Bible study

- Who:** This is a team activity.
- Time:** One and a half hours.
- Where:** Organise a venue at church or in someone's home. You may decide to take turns to provide snacks or a light supper.
- Needed:** Handout 7: Bible study. It may be helpful to include the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) profile report, the congregation's demographic report and the maps as well as flip-chart notes from your meetings. Be sure to record the comments in the "Looking forward" part of the Bible study.
- Objective:** To reflect on the scripture and explore the possibilities for action arising from the research.

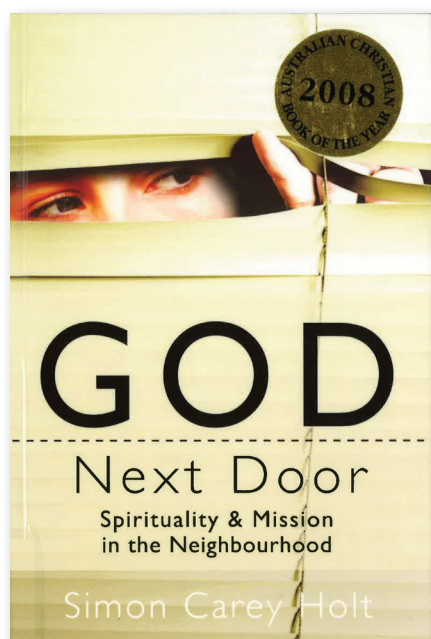
## Leader's notes:

1. Open with prayer. (Five minutes)
2. The warm-up activity is a fun introduction. Answers:
  1. Alektorophobia: Fear of chickens. (No KFC for you then!)
  2. Ephebiphobia: Fear of teenagers. (Tough phobia for a youth worker!)
  3. Chiclephobia: Fear of chewing gum. (Oprah Winfrey is a famous Chilephobe)
  4. Arachibutyrophobia: Fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of the mouth. (First mentioned in the Peanuts comic strip and pop culture has run with it ever since)
  5. Ablutophobia: Fear of taking a bath or cleaning yourself. (Better go grab some deodorant)
  6. Omphalophobia: Fear of belly buttons, (Both innies and outies)
  7. Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia: Fear of long words. (This is also a joke phobia that often gets thrown around on the internet)
  8. Chronophobia: Fear of time passing. (Not surprisingly it is often found mostly in prison inmates or the elderly)
  9. Arithmophobia: the fear of numbers. (If you have this one we hope the *Stats have Faces* process hasn't upset you too much.)
  10. Phobophobia: Literally a fear of phobias. (If you managed to get through this quiz you're probably in the clear on this one.)
3. Reflecting on the scriptures. (20 minutes)
4. Looking forward. (50 minutes)

This is the key step. You may not get it all sorted at this gathering but the goal is to end up with some action possibilities on the flipchart. These can be sorted into "quick wins" which can be done quickly and longer term goals.
5. Planning to share with the congregation.

Discuss how to share your experience, reflections and priority suggestions with your congregation. Ask your team about how to move from the flipchart to action.
6. Close with prayer.

# Appendices and optional resources



## ***God Next Door: Spirituality & Mission in the Neighbourhood* by Simon Carey Holt**

Simon Carey Holt has listened to the experiences of numerous men and women of faith living in a variety of urban and suburban neighbourhoods and uncovered the spiritual possibilities of our neighbourhoods.

- Part one of the book describes modern neighbourhoods including rural communities, urban communities and suburban communities.
- Part two describes the call of God with respect to neighbourhoods including the biblical mandate, the example of Jesus and the relationship between neighbourhood and church.
- Part three describes mission in neighbourhoods including disciplines of engagement which the author calls “naming”, “celebrating”, “nurturing” and “inviting”.

Reviewer Brian Edgar says: “Choosing to engage with our neighbourhoods as places of community requires a level of creativity and purpose but Simon Holt shows that the rewards are great—for both families and churches. Nurturing community in the local area is a challenging task but it ought to be seen as an intentional one for Christians—a vital part of the mission of the church.”

*God Next Door: Spirituality & Mission in the Neighbourhood* was the winner of the Australian Christian Book of the Year Award 2008.

Purchase the book at Christian bookshops, from the Publisher Acorn Press [acornpress.net.au](http://acornpress.net.au) or in eBook format online (eISBN: 9781617504877).

The book is available from the Trinity Theological Library in print and eBook format. [library.trinity.qld.edu.au](http://library.trinity.qld.edu.au)

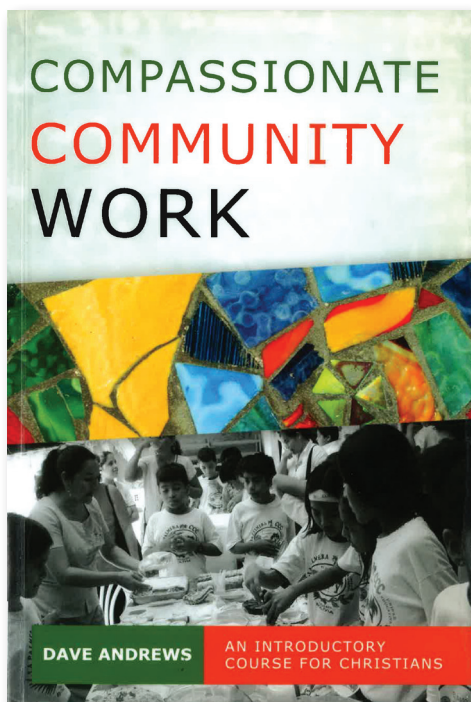
### **God Next Door. The Simon Carey Holt video series.**

In the conversation with Alan Roxburgh, Simon Carey Holt shares from his book *God Next Door: Spirituality and Mission in the Neighbourhood*. His emphasis is that the neighbourhood is a place where God is, and it is a place where God calls us to participate with him.

There are two videos in the series and they can be found at [missionalchurchnetwork.com/simon-carey-holt-god-next-door/](http://missionalchurchnetwork.com/simon-carey-holt-god-next-door/)

The subject and length of each is noted below.

- Video one: This is a quiet and passionate conversation about what it looks like to “move back into the neighbourhood” and listen to what God is up to in the ordinary places we live and work. (8:26)
- Video two: Simon and Alan Roxburgh continue their conversation about what it means to “move back into the neighbourhood” and the challenges of understanding what it means to be embedded in a neighbourhood. (5:41)



### **Compassionate Community Work by Dave Andrews**

This introductory textbook to community work can be used for self-study and as a resource for church-based mission training. It complements existing courses that do not consider the implications of a Christian world view.

Queensland-based Dave Andrews has a wealth of experience as a community worker. His book integrates the spiritual dimension into community development work. Prayer, meditation, engagement with Biblical material, and private and communal reflection are all core activities in the program.

The content is divided into 28 sessions. Part I (Sessions 1 to 17) helps people understand the foundation principles of practical community work. Building on those foundations, Part II (Sessions 18 to 28) sets out the practices of community work to enable people to use these skills in their own particular contexts.

In his foreword to the book Steve Bradbury says, “*In Compassionate Community Work*, Dave Andrews has provided a truly remarkable and comprehensive resource for teaching and learning about community development. This ‘introductory course on community work for churches’, is much more than a text book. It is an invitation to participate in an experiential, highly practical, spiritually rich, and potentially life-changing learning process.”

Purchase the book at Christian bookshops. Published by Piquant Editions Paperback/softback 362 pages, ISBN 1903689368. The book is available from Trinity Theological Library [library.trinity.qld.edu.au](http://library.trinity.qld.edu.au)

# Worship together

*You may choose to share the results of your work together with your congregation during Sunday worship. The following resources may be helpful.*

## Prayers

Dear God,  
we thank you that you call us into a relationship with yourself  
and with everyone in our community.  
Your generosity and mercy are always taking us by surprise.

We praise you for your vision of inclusion, solidarity and compassion

which opens our minds, widens our sympathies, and enlarges our hearts to the people in our community.

We commend to your gracious care all those whom it would be easy for us to forget: the needy and the hungry, the addicted and the lost, the lonely and the abandoned, and hurting children.

We thank you for the imagination and generosity of those who minister

to those who are most in need in our community.

**Amen.**

The Methodist Church in Britain

Gracious God, you have called us to be the Church of Jesus Christ. Keep us one in faith and service, breaking bread together and telling the good news to the world; that all may believe you are love, turn to your ways, and live to your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From *Uniting in Worship 2*, Uniting Church Press 2005

**Leader:** God, who has created and continues to create and recreate, we come here today from our different homes to learn more about your vision for the world, our community, and especially your vision for us.

**All:** **May our ears be open to your voice and our eyes be open to the wonder of creation in ourselves and each other.**

**Leader:** God, who dares to love humankind with a heart that encourages us to share that love,

**All:** **Help us to deepen our love of you, our love of family and friends, and help us to love those whom we find unlovely.**

**Leader:** God, who saves through the death of Jesus Christ, we come to discover and rediscover the nature of this eternal gift to us.

**All:** **May our hearts, our souls, be so moved by the spirit of grace and love that our words of thanks blossom into actions.**

**Leader:** So surprise us Lord, with new thoughts, new pictures, new ways of living and loving as we study and bring ordinary things that we do into the circle of grace.

**All:** **Amen.**

From Church of Scotland and Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS).

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace.

So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you, for the honour of your Name.

**Amen.**

From the *Book of Common Prayer*

# Responsive Psalm

## Psalm 85

Lord, you were favourable to your land;

**you restored the fortunes of Jacob.**

You forgave the iniquity of your people;

**You pardoned all their sin.**

You withdrew all your wrath;

**you turned from your hot anger.**

Restore us again, O God of our salvation,

**and put away your indignation towards us.**

Will you be angry with us for ever?

**Will you prolong your anger to all generations?**

Will you not revive us again,

**so that your people may rejoice in you?**

Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,

**and grant us your salvation.**

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,

**for he will speak peace to his people,**

**to his faithful, to those who turn to him**

**in their hearts.**

Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,

**that his glory may dwell in our land.**

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

**righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

**and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

The Lord will give what is good,

**and our land will yield its increase.**

Righteousness will go before him,

**and will make a path for his steps.**

# Statements of faith

## We are a Pilgrim People

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We proclaim Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen One, confessing him as Lord

to the glory of God the Father.

In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

we acclaim Jesus as the Lord of the Church,

the head over all things,

the beginning of a new creation.

We acknowledge that we live and work

between the time of Christ's death and resurrection

and the final consummation of all things

which he will bring.

We are a pilgrim people,

always on the way towards a promised goal;

on the way Christ feeds us with word and sacraments,

and we have the gift of the Spirit

in order that we may not lose the way.

We will live and work within the faith and unity

of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church,

bearing witness to that unity

which is both Christ's gift and his will.

We affirm that every member of the Church

is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

Together with all the people of God,

we will serve the world for which Christ died.

And we await with hope the day of the Lord Jesus

From Uniting in Worship 2, Uniting Church Press 2005 – Adapted from the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia

## **We are not alone**

We are not alone,  
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit. We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

From *Uniting in Worship 2*, Uniting Church Press 2005 – The United Church of Canada, General Council 1968, alt. 1998



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

The Uniting Church Centre  
60 Bayliss St  
Auchenflower QLD 4066

GPO Box 674  
Brisbane QLD 4001

[ucaqld.com.au](http://ucaqld.com.au)

T: 1300 UCA QLD