**Retreat Day - St. Stephens.**

**End of Pupil Free Week – Friday, 2015.**

**Co-facilitators: Ian Marks & Luke Spilsbury (and Meg Noack)**

Venue set up – no tables, participants to wear comfy clothes and bring cushion to sit on.

**Participants need to bring their ‘LIFE IN A SHOEBOX’ , Bible verse that connects with their story three different highlighters and a pen. BIBLE**

**Participants provided with a pack containing Retreat booklet, postits, highlighters, lolly pack.**

To be brought:

Bible – Meg/Ian/Luke

Ulos – Meg

Cross – Ian/Luke (to be constructed)

Bethania symbol – Catherine

Outline of day – Meg

Retreat Booklet – containing stimulus, reflection and sharing questions for each session – Meg

Groupings – Ian

Retreat Space preparation – What time can we meet at the Uni on Friday morning? I am flying in on Thursday evening [after being at St. Peters Springfield]

Facilitators:

Luke’s Sessions

Meg’s Sessions IANS CLOSE.

Movement/Physical Activity Session – GEORGIA OR CHELSEA.

Other sharers: Janice/NEVILLE /Ian – HISTORY OF ST. STEPHENS.

**8.30 Welcome – Ian**

**Devotion – Luke.**

OPTIONAL SUGGESTION:

Participants to write down worries on coloured paper, tear into pieces and then glue onto large wooden, free-standing cross. [Take the cross from the chapel area/or replicate a rugged kind of cross the cross from the front garden]

WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO CREATE A REFLECTIVE ATMOSPHERE – OR I AM HAPPY TO SHARE THE ULOS STORY. I HAVE A FEW PACKED.

**RETREATS: SETTING EXPLANATION: (FOR RETREAT BOOKLET)**

**Ceremonial Textile (*Ulos Ragidup*)**, Toba Batak people, Sumatra, Indonesia. Cotton; L.

The most sacred textiles of the Batak people of northern Sumatra are the *Ulos ragidup,* whose name literally means "pattern of life." Both during and beyond an individual's life, *Ulos ragidup* play central roles It is referred to as a ‘soul cloth’ – important at the birth of the first child, in marriage and death.

In pre-Christian times, the item was a supernaturally powerful object of protection – where complex woven patterns foretold futures.

Today, the Batak people claim Christianity as their religion. Church life is very important. As guests of Batak Christians, we have ceremonially received Ulos [where it is wrapped around us by key people at that location]. We have also received a variety of explanations that include reference to the Batak’s strong Christian heritage.

“An Ulos will keep you warm. But also spiritually warm.”

“Ulos’ are important in our families still. You are part of our family ‘in Christ’.”

“We wrap you in our hearts and Jesus’ heart too”

“May God protect you and go with you until we meet again”

These Ulos are placed here [holding the Christian symbols of the Bible and the Cross] as an invitation to us – too feel embraced together in the love of God [which is expressed by Jesus sacrifice on the Cross and is revealed through the Word]; wrapped and warmed by God’s gift of grace. in Grace

My prayer today is that you as an individual – and that together as a community you will feel ‘wrapped up’ and warmed by God’s love and the gift of grace – as represented by these Ulos.

DEUT 33: 27 “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms”.

**SESSION 1: 45 MINUTES MEG: (I have all the items required)**

**SESSION PEDAGOGY:** SYMBOL-SELECT/RESOURCE HANDOUT REFLECT/INDIVIDUAL WALK AND REFLECT [*OPTIONAL:* *RETURN FOR WHOLE GROUP RE-GATHERING/ PLACE IMAGES/BIBLE WORDS ON THE ULOS]*

Use outdoors if weather and setting applicable.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION TIME: Provide the participants with the Resource Handout, What is Spirituality?, and ask them to read and highlight the different descriptions of spirituality using the following key:

* •anything you think is really important
* •anything that raises questions for you
* •anything that challenges your ideas about spirituality

Ask them to choose one that they find particularly helpful in describing spirituality.

COPY QUESTIONS ON CARD

* What is central to Christian spirituality?
* What is the role of Jesus in Christian spirituality?

1. Participants individually think about /select images provided (e.g. from Meg’s images of trees) or invent metaphors that may help depict an understanding of Christian spirituality Or draw an image of your own or write a short series of statements.

DISPLAY IMAGES AND BIBLE WORDS ON PATHWAYS ULOS

Provide time for the participants to reflect individually AS THEY PLACE THEIR PICTURES/BIBLE WORDS/SAYINGS

* •What three things will you take away from the session?
* •What did you learn that you did not know before?
* •What have you learned about spirituality that will be helpful as you work in the school?

EXEMPLAR STATEMENTS:

***Christian Spirituality provides:***

A story to enter; a language to speak, a group to which we belong; a way to pray; a work to undertake; a face of God to see [Fr. Claude Marechael, Assumptionist]

Jesus Christ as my Saviour: he forgives my sins and sets me free. Jesus Christ as my teacher: he teaches me wisdom and guides me into truth. Jesus Christ as my Lord: he lives at the centre of my life. Jesus Christ as my Friend: he understands and comforts me. [Smith, J & Graybeal, L: A spiritual formation workbook. p. 25]

**SESSION 2 STORIES – 45 MINUTES IAN & LUKE TO GROUP/ MEG TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS AND TIMING**

Resources – participant’s shoe box

* Bible verse (FAVOURITE OPTIONAL) BIBLE
* 3 participants to share the school’s story and 1 to share the congregation’s story (in relation to the school).

Focus Questions

COPY QUESTIONS ON CARD

* Who have been important people and what have been important events in my story?
* How has my story shaped my spirituality?
* What is the school’s story?
* How has this shaped the way the school gives expression to its spirituality?

Session

**SESSION PEDAGOGY:** PERSONAL NARRATIVES [SMALL GROUP/WHOLE GROUP - WG]

1. Participants reflect on their story and select a Bible verse from those provided (or could be their own verse) that speaks to them.
2. In small groups participants find a space to share their story through their shoebox and Bible verse.
3. The School’s Story IAN /LUKE TO GROUP STAFF. MEG WILL PROVIDE OTHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIS ACTIVITY. ALL STAFF MUST BE ASKED TO BRING A SHOEBOX. THIS IS A POWERFUL SESSION.

TWO staff members are invited to share information about the school’s story. An incident that happened to them which speaks about the school and it’s makeup. Stories that are woven into the fabric of the school – the stories people remember.

The School’s Story JANICE – LONG SERVING TEACHER

1. The Congregation’s Story - NEVILLE – CONGREGATION MEMBER

**SESSION 3 LUKE/IAN**

**Session 3 God’s Story with His People – 40 Minutes**

Resources – Tom Christenson quote

* Theological focus
* (OPTIONAL) Bible readings 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21;John 5:39; Luke 24:25-27

Focus Questions

* What do I know or believe about the Bible?
* Why is the Bible important for Christians?
* How does the school witness to the importance of the Bible?

Session

1. Participants read the Christensen quote and the theological notes with the related Bible readings.

B) PUZZLE THE PASTOR PUZZLE THE PRINCIPAL…. Questions you always wanted to know but are afraid to ask… WRITE AND PLACE IN THE QUESTION BOX: starter questions could include:

COPY QUESTIONS ON CARD

* What is your understanding of God’s story?
* How could God’s story inform knowing, learning, teaching and human becoming in the contemporary world?
* What kind of school should be built and maintained by those who tell such a story?

Entering THE STORY:

MEG TO CONCLUDE WITH

“The Story” – with forward by Max Lucardo … THE MESSAGE BIBLE … EXAMPLES OF BIBLES <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1JY_vEdOK8>

**Morning Tea – 10.45 to 11.05**

**SESSION 4 LUKE – THIS IS YOUR SESSION. A GROUP ACTIVITY FOR PARTICIPANTS. SEE P 15 OF THE RETREAT HANDBOOK**

GROUPWORK KEY THEMES OF THE BIBLE PARTICIPANTS BOOKLET…

Invite participants to answer the question – to share back to the main group:

*What we learnt about… e.g. God’s people, God’s forgiveness, prayers. (see folder for verses)*

(share key words and phrases Place a bible in the centre of the group space and participants read their favourite bible words and come and place that text on the poster beneath the open bible…

Create a collage with an open bible and cross as a focus where people reflect upon what they have learnt about the Bible and its importance for people.

1. In groups, participants then ‘pick a question’ for others to consider:

(MEG HAS written these on a card for each group)

* *What do you think are common misconceptions about the Bible?*
* *Is the concept of the Bible as God’s story helpful?*
* *How could God’s story inform knowing, learning, teaching and human becoming in the contemporary world?*
* *What kind of school should be built and maintained by those who tell such a story?*

**SESSION 6 MEG TO LEAD [IAN TO SUM UP]**

**Session 6 – Community of Faith – 40 Minutes**

Resources – Reflection stimulus ‘Living from Belovedness’

* Bible readings ‘God’s Special Creations’.
* BLANK A4 Paper and several roles of tape (this activity is ‘write on your back some kind of affirmation about gifts and talents of others’)

Focus Questions

* Who am I?
* What does God think of me?
* What has God created me to do?

Session

* In the large group read ‘Living from Belovedness’
* REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS:
* What does God say about our value or worth?
* How does Nouwen suggest our value impacts on the way we live?

Introduce the concept of God’s view of us as humans. Reflect on the question

* What are your gifts?

If you find identifying the ways God has gifted you difficult consider:

* What do you love to do?
* How do you like to spend your time?
* What do other people say you’re good at?
* Participants have a piece of paper on their back and other participants record what that person’s gifts are.
* Participants remove paper, read, glue in journals.
* Reflection question in retreat resource – What does God want me to do with these gifts?

12.30 – 1.15pm

INCLUDE A BREAK TIME… AFTER LUNCH… GEORGIA OR CHELSEA.

**SESSION 7:**

**Fulfilled in Relationship – 30 to 40 Minutes MEG TO LEAD**

Resources – The Calling of Humans

* Prayer

Focus Questions

* What relationships are important to me?
* What is God’s plan for relationships?
* Participants are asked to draw a series of concentric circles to show the many different relationships in which they are involved. Start with their closest relationships in the inner circles and extend this through to the less close relationships.

Reflecting on: How do relationships enrich my experience of life?

What challenges do I experience through relationships?

* **In pairs** participants read ‘The Calling of Humans’ discuss the questions:
* How does this describe the interconnectedness of relationships?
* Why do you think it important to think about relationships in these ways?

This activity occurred as a culminating of our ‘outdoor session’

* Participants read prayer 1 JOHN 4: 7 – 21 and highlight sentence that speaks to them.
* In large group circle reading of favourite verse.

SESSION 8: MEG TO LEAD

**Vocation through Service**

Resources - Vocation

Focus Questions

* What is Luther’s concept of vocation?
* What is Christian Service?
* In what areas of life do you have a sense of service?
* How is the concept of service developed in the school community?

Session

* Ask participants to draw a picture a picture of themselves surrounded by the various roles or responsibilities they have at home, school, local worshipping community, local community etc. In the picture they show the strength of the relationships and levels of commitment to these various roles.
* Participants reflect on their time in the last week
* **and create a pie graph to show how they have spent their waking hours.**
* **Participants spend some time reflecting on how the priority given to roles and responsibilities in the first activity is reflected in the second. Is there congruence or inconsistency? What challenges lie in trying to maintain congruence between keeping balance in life with the different roles and responsibilities?**
* Participants read Vocation and reflect on the stated questions

Prayer of St. Francis with cards: in groups with cards.

SESSION 5: CLOSING [IAN/LUKE]

(RECOMMEND – as closing…. Focus on 2 particular disciplines… primarily to lead into action or doing… or practicing…

e,g discipline of service – and include an act of service. …

e,g, discipline of worship – closing worship

e.g. meditation… conduct a meditation – include in closing worship… (stillness exercise)

e.g. prayer – Prayer of St. Francis. I HAVE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS ACTIVITY AND AM HAPPY TO LEAD THE ‘PRAYER’ COMPONENT.

**Finish 3.30**