

Information Sheet – Gospel-based Discipleship

The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer in Canada describe Gospel Based Discipleship (GBD) in the following way:

“Gospel Based Discipleship includes an encounter with the Gospel, either individually or within a group. It begins with the Gathering Prayer using the language and style of Native American prayer. When a group engages the Gospel by participating and sharing in the experience the encounter with the Gospel may provide for individual and group growth and understanding.”

It has the following Guiding Principles:

As Gospel Based Disciples we commit:

1. To regularly engage the Gospel
2. To take seriously our own spiritual formation
3. To nurture and foster the spiritual formation of others
4. To live the Baptismal Covenant
5. To live as a community of disciples
6. To foster reconciliation, healing, and vision
7. To pray and worship regularly
8. To respect the spiritual traditions, values and customs of our many peoples
9. To take full responsibility for our local ministries

It also offers a Rule of Life:

Creator God we acknowledge and give thanks that:

In Jesus we know we belong to a Sacred Circle with the Gospel and Baptismal Covenant in the Center

In this Sacred Circle:

We are all related;
 We live a compassionate and generous life;
 We respect all life, traditions, and resources;
 We commit ourselves to spiritual growth, discipleship, and consensus.

Gospel Based Discipleship is not a program. It is not Bible Study. It is an encounter with the Gospel, designed to engage people with the Gospel appointed for the day, or the Sunday proper. It depends on participants being willing to share responses to the three questions:

What words or phrases did you hear?
 What is Jesus (the Gospel) saying to you?
 What is Jesus (the Gospel) calling you to do?

These are designed to elicit personal reflection, sharing and discussion. It is important for people to know there is no right or wrong answer. The group is seeking the truth by hearing what the Gospel says to them individually and corporately. Statements like: “that’s not what we believe” or, “you’re wrong about that”, are not helpful. Statements



that elicit response such as, “Could you say more about that” or, “I’ve never thought of that before” keep the discussion going. Persons who do GBD regularly find new insight and revelation are the rewards. Use at least two or three translations of the Gospel – a different one read before each question is posed – is recommended.

GBD in a meeting

Starting a meeting with GBD grounds participants in the Scripture and focuses the energy of the group. The relevance of the Gospel message to the meeting adds perspective. It also is a good way to encourage people to share with one another at a spiritual level. Normally a copy of the Scriptures remains on the table, or in the room, with the understanding that at any time during the meeting anyone may call for the reading of the Gospel again. This often helps refocus the group especially when the group becomes distracted or conflicted

Expectations and outcomes from GBD

- Groups that use GBD regularly should expect to begin to see their call to mission differently. Some congregations use GBD as a way to focus on what God is calling them to do in their community.
- Spiritual friendships develop through GBD. As people become familiar with the process and each other, spiritual journeys are shared and people know one another in a new way, not based merely on similar likes or dislikes, but as disciples on a journey together.
- The entire faith community encounters the Gospel as peers, whether lay or ordained. This leads to a vision of the community gathered around Scripture.

Other resources for GBD in the BILC Tool-kit

A Disciple’s Prayer Book – the introduction to this edition of A Disciple’s Prayer Book describes it as a pastoral adaptation of the Book of Common Prayer to help disciples hear the Gospel and see Jesus. The Prayer Book also offers insights in what GBD is and how to develop its use within both the formal and informal structures of the life of the Church.

Power-point presentation on GBD – what it is, how it can be used, what resources are available - Developed and Distributed by Native Ministries and Gospel Based Discipleship of The Episcopal Church

Gospel Based Discipleship: A Way of Life Leading Us In Our Daily Walk with Jesus an article written by The Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor who ministers in the homeland of her Mohawk mother on the Six Nation Reserve in Ontario, Canada. She is the new Coordinator of Indigenous Ministries, Anglican Church of Canada. She went to Alaska as a missionary 18 years ago and lived in the village of Tanana on the Yukon River. Eventually she was called to become Canon to the Ordinary for the Diocese of Alaska during the tenure of the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald who is now the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop of Canada. Reared on the Onondaga Reservation of New York State, she holds dual citizenship of the U.S. and Canada.

