



How to ...

Help people discover and use their strengths and gifts

There are many tools that you can use with your congregations to help individuals discover their God given gifts and strengths and to explore how God might be calling them to use this in the service of His church.

Through this process people are helped to reflect on the gifts and skills that God has given them and empowered to consider how they are using these in His service. The process should also serve to build the church as people think about how they can best serve God and the parish in the future.

Some tools to explore:

Spiritual Gift Test

A really great tool for helping people to discover, understand and use their spiritual gifts. An online test, downloads, resources and biblical material is all available from the website.

<http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com/>

SHAPE

This has been used widely to help lay people discern their gifts & vocations for God's service. It emphasises building confidence, faith-development & whole-life discipleship; enabling people to find out the 'shape' that God has made them and using that to serve God in the church, the community and the workplace.

<http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/rural-discipleship-a-nurture/item/9066-your-shape-for-god's-service>

5 fold ministries

This simple online test is designed to give you a snapshot of your Base and Phase ministry gifts as articulated in Ephesians 4 (Apostle, Prophet, Teacher, Evangelist, Pastor) as put together by Mike Breen and 3DM.

<http://fivefoldsurvey.com/>

StrengthsFinder

This tool is to help individuals discover their core strengths from a set of 34 possible strengths. The online test costs per user but is world renowned for helping people to discover their talents.

<http://strengths.gallup.com/110440/About-StrengthsFinder-20.aspx>

CWR – Your Basic Gift

A chart with 35 questions that individuals can fill in in order to discover their basic gifts.

<https://www.cwr.org.uk/doc/pdfs/Basicgift.pdf>

Love Languages

If we are called to love each other it is important that we understand the different ways that people experience and offer love.

<http://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/>

A Bespoke Approach

The most appropriate option for your parish may be to simply create your own teaching series and questionnaire system to enable people to think about their gifts and service.

A teaching series might cover topics such as: Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit; The gifts God gives us and Serving God and His church.

A questionnaire might include questions like:

- What do you feel are your God given gifts?
- What are your strengths?
- What has God given you a heart/passion for?
- What workplace skills do you have?
- What experiences have you had that have given you knowledge or expertise in a particular area?
- In what ways do you currently serve the church?
- Do you feel you are currently serving in roles that make the most of your heart, gifts, skills and experiences?
- What other areas of church life would you like to find out about serving in, recognising that this might mean stepping down from current service commitments you have?
- What gift, skill or strength would you most like the opportunity to use in service?
- Do you currently feel that you give: too little/too much/about the right time in service of God and the parish?
- We are committed to thanking, blessing and recognising the commitment of volunteers in the parish, in what ways could be better recognise and thank people for the generous contributions they make to the life of this parish through serving and volunteering?

A working group could be established to collect the questionnaires and follow up on any of the enquiries made from them, or the responsibility of following up on any actions could be left in the court of the individual.

Linking Gifts and Strengths to Service

Christ Church Downend, having used the SHAPE resources within their small groups and having committed themselves to Whole Life Discipleship (LICC resources) turned the following questions into a form that now resides in their belonging packs and invites people, having explored their gifts and strengths to make a response through service.

I have reproduced the questions from their form below with their permission:

Serving4Life

We are committed at Christ Church to a whole-life vision of serving - that we express Jesus's love for others in everything that we do.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22; 27

The servant heart of Jesus was seen in humble and risk-taking acts of service in all aspects of life. We therefore are following Christ's example when we serve in any and every context - in the whole of life, and we each serve in all kinds of ways. It may be in our paid or voluntary work, in the home or in and through the church.

Serving in the Whole of Life

We want to broaden our understanding of who we are as a church and what our lives 'look like'. This will help us to build relationships, appreciate experiences and develop people's gifts and passions. Therefore, we would like you to give us some detail about:

Your work or main activities during the week:

Your home & family, your hobbies & passions & how you like to relax:

What are the main challenges and opportunities you face at the moment?

Please describe your past experience of church and any involvement you have had elsewhere, if any:

What kind of support would you value that members of this Church could offer? This could be specific prayer, opportunities to meet with others in a similar situation, workshops on particular issues or mentoring etc:

Serving at Church

There are many opportunities to serve God within the life of Christ Church. If you would like to know more about any of these opportunities, please do highlight any of these ministries and one of the team will be in touch:

Children

Families and young children

Young People

Mission and Evangelism (Global & Local) including Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Building 4 Life – Our Church Redevelopment Project

Discipleship

Leadership Development

Worship - Creative Arts, Music or Prayer

Creative Media and Communications

Wholeness & Healing

Social events, hospitality and catering

Resources - Administration, Finances or Maintenance

Anything else?

Please return this form to the Parish Office and one of the team will get back to you shortly. This information will not be shared beyond the church, but it may be used in the Church Family to help us to grow in our relationships and to connect with each other.

Thank you so much for responding to these questions, our hope is that we all know the joy of serving the Lord in the whole of our lives!

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Written by: Chris Priddy; Head of Parish and External Relations