

One Church in London
New Frequently Asked Questions about the London Proposal
January 21st 2010

Most of the London ministries have held congregational meetings this last few days. A few new questions came up about the proposal. Here are some more answers to those questions.

- 1. How will this effect our relationships with our sister-churches around the UK?** It should benefit us all. Since we are proposing to stay within ICCM this does not effect our relationships with other ICCM churches in any negative way, nor, for that matter, any non-ICCM churches. Indeed it should help because as we work together more effectively in London we can support the smaller churches around the UK & Ireland with a more coordinated approach that takes into account short and longer-term needs.
- 2. Will we be asked to re-pledge our church contributions?** This has not been discussed in detail yet, but it might be something we do across London to make sure we are holding to the same standards. Any teaching and practical application on this subject would be discussed and consulted on extensively before being put into practice.
- 3. What about the role of “teachers”?** It is the expectation that the all staff and future elders will be competent teachers. In addition some staff and some members of the London church not on staff will have a stand-out gift of teaching that they will be expected to cultivate and use. All staff are expected to develop (with input) their own on-going professional development, which for some will mean studying disciplines within the realm of theology.
- 4. What process should be followed if we have more questions?** More questions and feedback are always welcome. Please speak to your local leadership team. Hopefully they can answer your question. If not they can forward the question to the senior staff group. Regular updates will continue to be given until this process is completed. Becoming one church will not be completed by simply agreeing to be one church. This would be the start of the next phase of practical adjustment in terms of schedule, leadership, staff and resource sharing. The details of the process will be completed at some point in 2010, but we are in no rush. The main thing at this stage is make the decision to agree to be one church and share all resources.
- 5. What kind of people will be on the Advisory Group?** We’re working on the detail, but, in general, they are likely to be on leadership teams already, people with shepherd’s hearts, mature Christians and well-regarded not only in their local ministry, but also beyond. Specific proposals will be circulated soon.
- 6. How will the Advisory Group interact with the Leadership Group?** The Advisory Group (AG) and the Leadership Group (LG) are expected to respect and trust one another. They are to actively listen to and seek the views of each other. The AG will be sent meeting agendas beforehand and have the ability to add items to the agenda. The LG and AG are to work as a team, not as groups keeping an eye on each other. The members of the AG will have access to the members of the LG outside meetings. The LG are not to tell the AG what to do, and the AG are not to focus on bringing “concerns” to the LG (although this will be appropriate at times), but instead they are expected to work together towards common goals consonant with the overall priorities for London.

They are to decide a meeting schedule that works for both the AG and the LG. Minutes will be taken of meetings which will be available for any who wish to see them.¹

- 7. Shouldn't we work out the details of the way the finances will work centrally and locally before making the decision to share everything?** The decision to join up and share resources is one being made in principle in the belief that this is the right way for London to move forward. If that decision is made, a commitment is being given to lay out the principles of how the finances will work, and to involve Paul Rowden (administrator for ICCM), local treasurers and local leadership teams in the forging of the detailed practicals.
- 8. How will staffing decisions be made, like which staff serve which ministries, and the hiring of new staff?** First we will assess if we have enough money to hire staff where gaps exist. This will be done as speedily as possible. Where staffing a ministry is not possible at this time a discussion will take place between the local ministry and the staff member who already has a relationship with them to work out the best way to meet the needs at the present moment. The hiring of new staff will be a joint endeavour between the senior staff and the local leadership team. Both will be involved in the selection and interview process (as well as the Trustees). Over the last few years the trustees, local leadership teams and staff have developed the process of staff hirings by working on job descriptions, multiple interviews and consultation exercises.
- 9. How will the LG & AG be commended?** The members of the LG & AG need to be commended by their local ministries first. Then, if local leadership teams have any objection to any of the proposed members of either the LG or AG this can be registered and worked through. When this is completed we will arrange a commissioning for both groups at some major London event perhaps at the next London service in March.
- 10. Is the AG temporary?** Yes. It is likely that the next phase of London leadership will be the replacement of the LG & AG by a leadership group that contains evangelists and elders. We do not know when this will be, but we all accept that the current proposal is temporary. We must, of course, remain open to the Holy Spirit directing our course on this as in all matters. In God's good time Elders will emerge from the new shepherding training group (starting in February). At the point when we are ready to recognise elders for the London church it will be natural to reassess the composition of the LG and AG.
- 11. How could congregations opt in later? Would there be any prerequisites?** Certainly congregations could opt in at a future point. The existence of prerequisites or otherwise depends on what practical details are in place at the time. Such a congregation would need to look at what we were doing and how we were working and decide if they wanted to join in with those. It is likely that discussions would take place over an extended period of time to make sure that the practicalities of joining up were clear, understood and accepted. Both the London group and the joining congregation would need to have a clear agreement on what they were expecting of one another.
- 12. What roles are the senior staff expected to fulfill, and are they able to lead the London church?**
- a. The current senior staff (Malcolm, Toks, Mohan, Mike, Adrian) are from very different backgrounds, culturally, socially, educationally and in character and personality.

¹ Confidential matters may be edited out.

- b. Most have a wide experience of other working environments through having had periods of secular employment. Mohan and Adrian have extensive experience of working with HOPE.
- c. Most of the brothers have led at many different level of church life from family groups to campus ministry, teens, sectors, regions, churches and mission teams etc.
- d. Mohan and Toks have served abroad on the mission field.
- e. Eleven of the fifteen children represented in these families are disciples so far.
- f. The brothers are expected to devote their time and energy to helping formulate a long-term strategy for the London church and to execute the London priorities recently revealed as a result of the consultation exercise towards the end of 2009.
- g. They are to be actively involved in local ministry, teaching the Bible, preaching the Word, raising up leaders, counseling people spiritually, training more junior staff, leading by loving example, growing the faith of the church and so on.
- h. They will oversee the London-wide ministries such as campus, LINK & Children's Ministry,² Youth & Family ministry (including teens, the "Good-enough" parenting series & the shepherding training group), London events (Sundays together, teaching days, conferences, singles events, marrieds retreats, family group leaders meetings, etc.).
- i. Their collective experience and gifts should make them a team capable of leading the London church forward. As the team works together with the AG, it may be that significant gift-gaps emerge. If this is the case then the group can always be added to if someone is available with the missing gift or experience. Doubtless God will change the membership of the group over time.
- j. They are not tasked with doing everything, but they are being asked to be responsible for the overall direction of the London church and ensuring that biblical commands and principles are taught and biblical standards upheld. As the need arises, they may be involved in church discipline issues. Their job is to work together with other leaders to "prepare God's people for works of service".
- k. The group is also expected to be one where the brothers have genuine, deep spiritual relationships, and that they are united in mind and heart, practicing the one another commands and principles with each other.
- l. At this point it is anticipated that the brothers will continue with their London and local responsibilities as they currently stand. In terms of the London-wide areas, Malcolm's primary role is as leader of the team and overall coordinator of London leadership and major events as well as overseeing the Central London Ministry and Campus Ministry. Adrian is overseeing Youth and Family (including teens) and will be responsible for the shepherding training group as well as the "good enough" parenting series. He also has "discipling" relationships with the South and Surrey. Mohan has a "discipling" relationship with the Riverside and the South East. Mike and Toks will need to take on specific London responsibilities. The exact nature of these will be discussed after the decision to be one church is made, since that will affect what responsibilities are needed to be covered.

13. What areas of ministry continue to be local and what stops being local? Not much changes. There will be a few more London-wide events this year. For example, a marrieds retreat, teaching days, 3 months of coordinated teaching at midweeks, 5 family group leaders meetings and so on. But most Sundays, midweeks and ministry will remain local in terms of decision-making and practical arrangements.

Your brother, Malcolm

² (Barry and Nancy Lamb will retain their responsibilities of leading LINK and Children's Ministry)