



EXPLORING MISSION, AROUND A TABLE

Interested in having a learning conversation about mission where you live? A new resource called *Table* may help you and your small group explore just that.

John Good, Baptist pioneer in Poole, has teamed up with Paul Bradbury, an Anglican Pioneer minister, to create the innovative five-week course, which is based on five-tablecloths.

A host simply needs to prepare a meal each week and place it on top of the tablecloth where all the content and questions are laid out imaginatively.

Participants can chat, draw and scribble their way through a teambuilding process which helps them explore the theology, missiology and ecclesiology of missional community. The process also helps them make some decisions together about how they want to do life together as a missional community.

It was born from wanting an accessible course to help new communities be birthed in mission.

Prior to moving to Poole, John was assistant minister of Stopsley Baptist Church in Luton, where he had the responsibility of developing missional communities.

“We were looking for something to help move us forward - a group of enthusiastic people around an initial vision.

“But there was no easy pathway; going from an idea to an actual formed community with an understanding of a sort of semi-autonomous leadership, an understanding of community life and how to organise itself. We were really hankering after something like this.”

With Paul looking for something similar, the pair set about creating the resource.

John and Paul were excited to see that this approach doesn't need a 'qualified' leader

present to impart information. It recognises there's a lot of experience already around the table, as well as encouraging everyone to see the role they each have to play.

A pilot was developed just before the pandemic hit. "The initial feedback was really positive," says John. "People found the visual aspect helpful and said it put them in a different headspace around mission."

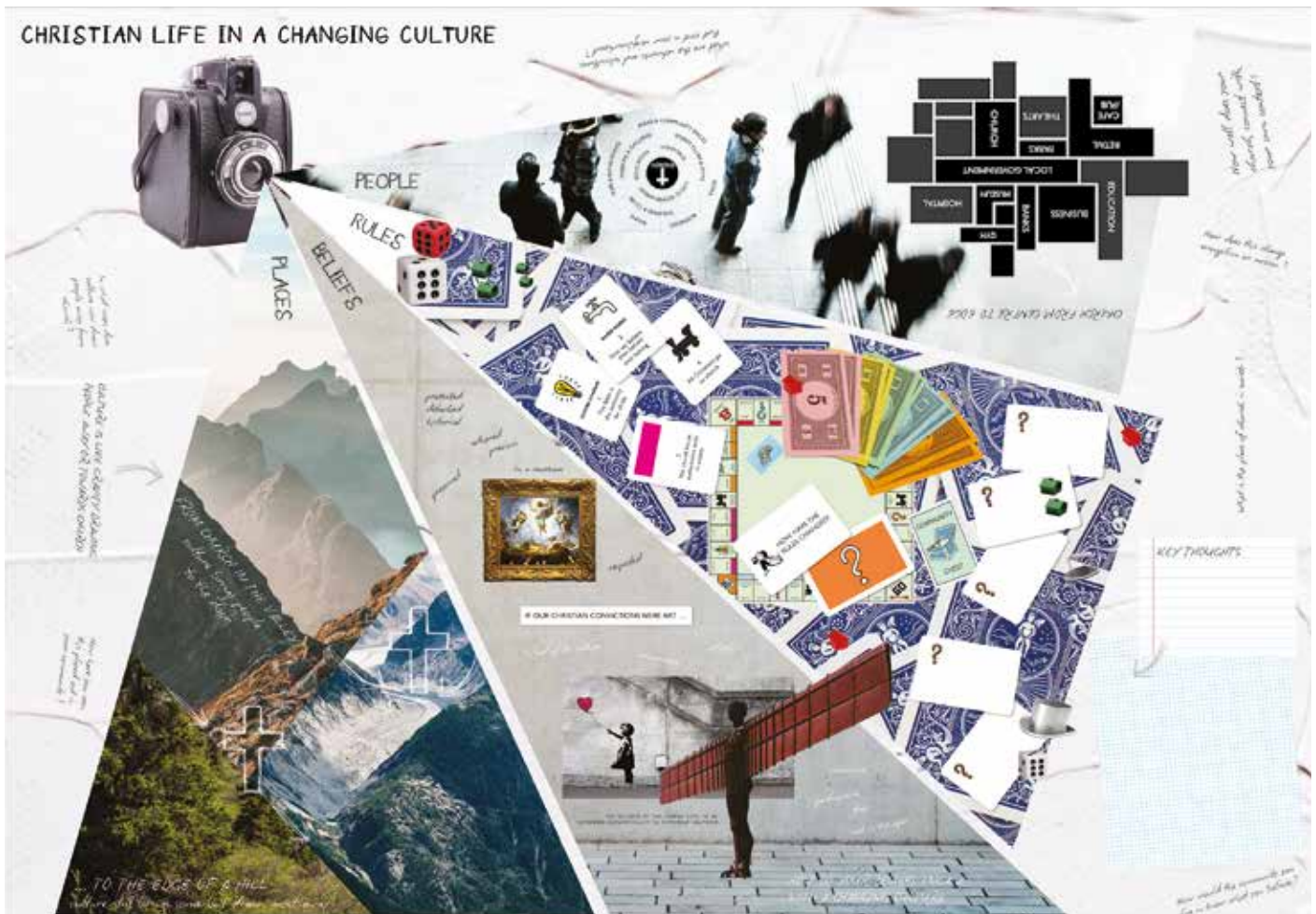
John led a webinar last November to introduce the resource on a wider scale. Most participants so far have either wanted to start a new community, or have come from a church where they wanted to start a new project; or those who have left institutional church all together, but still believe in Christian community and in following Jesus.

He says, "There has been a lot of feedback around the resource taking participants to quite surprising places. The Spirit was at work, highlighting either aspects of their shared life together, or highlighting areas of things they potentially could do or ways they could be together."

To find out more, visit www.poolemc.org.uk/resources



John Good is a Baptist pioneer minister in Poole, Dorset



Photos courtesy of John Good