

*Developed by Richard Passmore and the Northern Mission Centre.*

*An ecumenical initiative of God for All Cumbria supporting innovative mission across the north of England and Southern Scotland.*

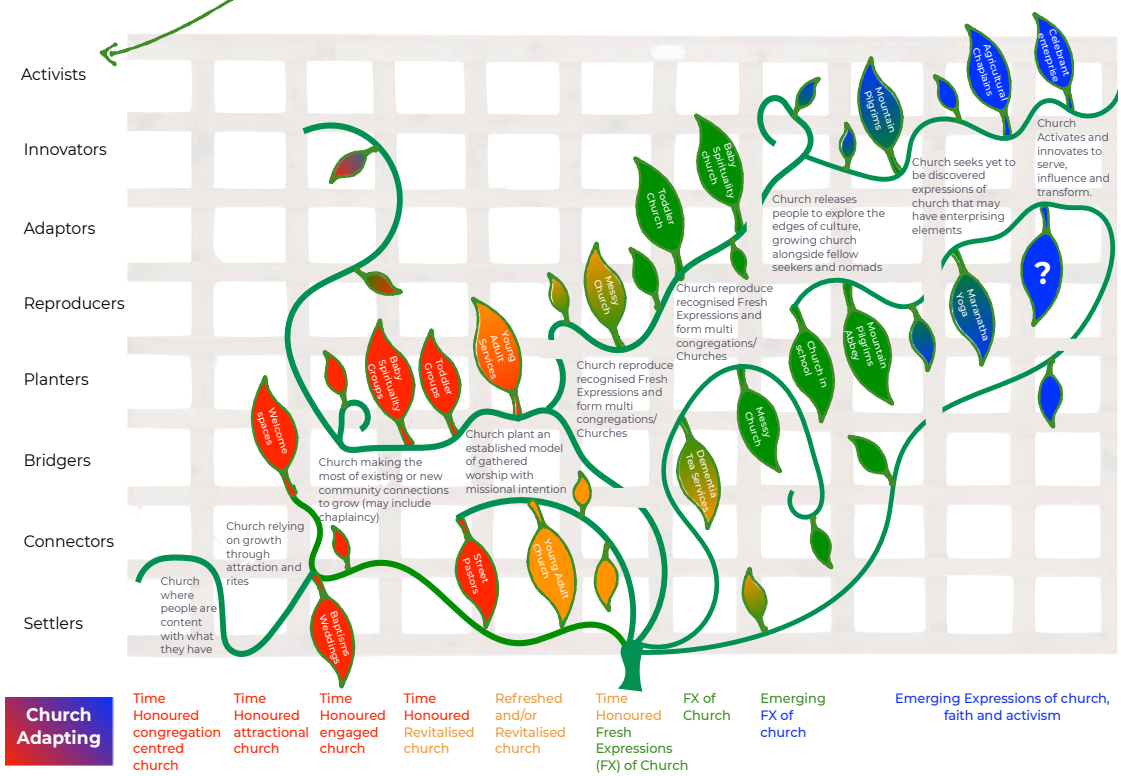
The Trellis is a way of visually capturing all of what Church can be. Fresh Expressions and pioneering expressions of church have matured and are now an established part of the wider Church in the UK. Time Honoured church and Fresh Expressions have distinct needs, but also need one another. In the mixed ecology, all are valid, but more than that, by being in relationship with one another in a mixed ecology, Church can flourish and bring about positive change. The Trellis seeks to shed light on what a mixed ecology of Church might look like, and how the different aspects interconnect and relate to one another.

The Trellis image is deliberately organic, and the vine interweaves across the different elements, traditions and approaches to show our interconnectedness.

The Trellis uses open language recognising that everyone has a part to play, one Church with many expressions and different gifts that need one another. Although the language of 'pioneering' is not used on the Trellis it is recognised that pioneering remains critical to creating space, and the continued imagination to reach the breadth and diversity of the communities we serve.

A more adaptable approach to church and a greater sense of church as a journey rather than a destination.

### The mixed ecology of church



## How to use the Trellis

**Set up:** Lay out the trellis canvas onto a large table. Spread the clear Perspex leaves out around the edge of the trellis and have the whiteboard pens available.

**Video:** you may want to start the session by watching [this short explanation video](#).

George Box said 'All models are wrong but some are useful.' Bear this in mind when using the Trellis. Different people will think things go in different places according to their context, meaning, language etc. Don't get too hung up on trying to be overly accurate about where to put things, remember this is just a tool.

**Explain the axis** (see pages 3-5)

### Examples:

You run a messy church that engages families inside and outside of the church. You follow the pattern of a messy church with craft, story and a meal. This type of messy church would sit on the 'Refreshed and/or revitalised church' along the bottom and 'reproducers' along the side.

You run a meditation group which is predominantly attended by those outside of church, for those that attend they see the group as their church. This would sit on the 'Emerging FX of church' along the bottom and either: 'Reproducers' if this was copying an existing model, 'Adaptors' if you were making some adaptations to an existing model or 'Innovators' if you were trying something completely new.

You run a Christening class for those wanting to have their children christened, this predominantly is for those in church, but a few from the local community attend to. This would sit on the 'Time Honoured attractional church' at the bottom and 'connectors' along the side.

**Note:** It is entirely possible to inhabit more than one space, e.g. a Time honoured church community may run a service dedicated to people who simply want to attend a weekly communion, and others in the church community could run a Messy Church and an Enterprise engaging new people beyond their usual reach.

**Start by** picking some of things your church(es) are involved with (avoid duplication) write these on the leaves provided with the white board pens and place where you think they go on the Trellis. Once people have finished the exercise see if there's a general consensus that the leaves are in the right places.

### Then consider the following questions:

What do you observe generally? Are there any areas that are very populated?

Is there any commonality? E.g. the majority happen out of a church building, there are lots of groups with children, everything happens on a Sunday etc.

Where are the gaps? Both in terms of where the trellis is not very well populated, and in terms of themes/commonality?

Take a photo of the results and record your observations.

## **What makes up the Trellis? (the axis)**

### **The vine and leaves**

Shows different expressions of Church in the mixed ecology, an organic structure has been created to show that all expressions of church are valid.

### **To the left of the Trellis**

These terms seek to describe the type of attitudes and aptitudes that a church and leaders may need as it seeks to engage a society, becoming increasingly distanced from church as it has been known. This is based on the Pioneer Spectrum created by Tina Hodgett and Paul Bradbury, you can read more about that here: <https://pioneer.churchmissionsociety.org> search for 'Pioneer Spectrum'.

### ***Settlers***

A church that is not looking to reach out to their community proactively, perhaps an older congregation being faithfully served weekly eucharist.

### ***Connectors***

A church setting that would primarily use existing services and traditional connections e.g. christenings and weddings as a way to attract and connect with new people.

### ***Bridgers***

A church deliberately trying to capitalise on its role in the community to bridge into new groups e.g. running a toddler group and inviting these participations to Sunday services.

### ***Planters***

A space where a new or revitalised congregation is established with the intention to reach new people centred around gathered worship services.

### ***Reproducers***

A space where tried and tested methods of church or Fresh Expressions e.g. Messy Church are reproduced in a local area to grow a new Christian community.

### ***Adaptors***

Spaces where established ideas are tweaked and contextualised to a context or situation e.g. Fire church where a community gather around a fire but use many of the Forest Church principles.

### ***Innovators***

Spaces where new things are tried and tested and developed with new people in new ways to form Christian community.

### ***Activists***

Individuals or groups working in innovative ways to connect with a range of new people in new ways, either with or without the specific intention of forming Christian community. These may include social enterprises or activities seeking to address particular needs.

### ***Accommodators (not on the Trellis but important to note)***

Accommodators are generous space makers, leaders who see that Time Honoured and Fresh Expressions need each other. Even if they are working primarily with a Settled Church Congregation, they look to help others flourish and let them go to new places that they themselves or their established congregation may never go.

### ***Along the bottom of the Trellis***

Shows the different types of churches in the mixed ecology. Time Honoured churches are those that are often easily recognisable as 'church' by those in the community e.g. your local parish church or chapel. Fresh Expressions of church are new Christian communities that emerge as you listen to the local context and seek to gather people. Many Fresh Expressions have now been around for a long time, and this is reflected below. However, any description is limited, but the intention is that all spaces are valued for what they offer.

### ***Time Honoured Congregation centred church***

A church community that are simply seeking to gather for worship without any specific intention of meeting new people.

### ***Time Honoured Attractional church***

A church centred around gathered worship open to others.

### ***Time Honoured Engaged church***

A Time Honoured church active in their community.

### ***Time Honoured Revitalised church***

A church where a new congregation has been planted into a traditional church setting e.g. a parish church.

### ***Refreshed and/or revitalised church***

As above but may or may not meet in a recognised church building.

### ***Time Honoured Fresh Expressions of Church***

A Fresh Expression of church that is well established over a number of years and may or may not meet in a recognised church building.

### ***Fresh Expressions of Church***

New expressions of church that emerge in response to local needs and interests.

### ***Emerging Fresh Expressions of church***

New expressions of church that are being experimented with or may not yet be mature enough to meet all the criteria of a Fresh Expression (to be contextual, formational, ecclesial, and missional).

# Emerging Expressions of church, faith, and activism

Spaces where journeying beyond the boundaries is encouraged. Where innovation, challenge

