**Third International Training Consultation**

**Theme: “Hermeneutics for the heart…and mind”**

**Dubuque 27 – 31 May 2014 (DV)**

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| **Worship & Devotions**  8.45 – 9.30 am | **Morning Session 1**  **A Contextualised Gospel that is True to the Faith –Theological Challenges**  9.30 – 10.45 am | **Morning Session 2**  **Training Challenges**  11.15 am – 12.30 pm | **Afternoon Workshops on the Practice of Training**  (Workshops 2.00 – 3.30 pm Weds to Friday) | **Evenings**  7.45 – 9.00 pm |
| **Day 1**  **(Tues 27)** |  |  | **Afternoon Registration** 2.00-4.30 pm  Welcome & Introductions 5.15pm | **E.1 Dare to be encouraged** |
| **Day 2**  **(Wed 28)** | **Plenary Session 2.1**  **What do you mean – Contextualise the Gospel?** John Hitchen  **A Hermeneutic for all: Penetrating hearts and minds globally**  The unique Gospel of Jesus Christ is for all people groups. If it is to be fully appropriated, to what extent must it be contextualized to every culture. | **Plenary Session 2.2**  **Training for depth: Encouraging Biblical understanding and critical thinking**  David Smith & Frank Jabini | **Elective workshops**  **2.1 Hermeneutical Issues – The Bible, culture and the definition of marriage.**  **2.2 Counselling and the Gospel**  **2.3 Training for effective church planting.**  **2.4 Training for change**  **2.5 Training and financial sustainability** | **E.2 Some instructional stories** This is an evening for delegates to hear of developments around the world. Local church members have been invited to attend. |
| **Day 3 (Thurs 29)** | **Plenary Session 3.1**  **The Good News of Christ’s Uniqueness**  John Hitchen  **A Hermeneutic shield: Protecting hearts and minds globally** – Paul’s approach to the Colossian heresy provides insights for dealing with error in its global manifestations. | **Plenary Session 3.2**  **Training for maturity: Encouraging personal growth in a local church context**  Russell Thorp | **Elective Workshops**  **3.1 Hermeneutical issues - Training and the gender challenge**  **3.2 Hermeneutical issues - Leadership in Brethren churches**  **3.3 Effective apprenticeship training**  **3.4 Training and governance**  **3.5 Training & self-support courses** | **E.3 Harnessing technology for future growth**  Online learning Environments  Len Smith, Jim Crooks, Lisa Beatty |
| **Day 4**  **(Fri 30)** | **Plenary Session 4.1**  **When the Gospel crosses Cultural Frontiers**  John Hitchen  **A Hermeneutic key: Reaching hearts and minds across cultures** – Paul’s approach in Galatians is a model of contextualization to people across cultural divides. | **Plenary Session 4.2**  **Training for Transition: Contextualization and transitioning to a new generation of local leadership.**  Learning from our mission heritage for transitioning to fresh leadership in our training institutions and churches today  John Hitchen | **Elective Workshops**  **4.1 To be confirmed**  **4.2 Hermeneutical issues - The Gospel and the Insider Movement in Islam**  **4.3 Training for cross-cultural mission in the 21st Century**  **4.4 Decentralising Training – extension ministries & other church-based initiatives**  **4.5 Training and accreditation** | **E4 Impacting and being impacted by the next generation –** What can we learn from youth initiatives and how can we shape training with and for them  Jeff Riley |
| **Day 5**  **(Sat 31)** | **8.45 to 10.45 am (chair: Mark Davies)**  **5.1 Planning for the future. Where do we go from here? –**  8.45 Worship & Devotions -  9.15 Work in smaller think-tank groups on the following Issues:-   * Consultancy & a “training of trainers” concept within our movement & Developing specific training partnerships * Growing a Brethren theological group * International Training Consultations, BTN, IBCMs, etc   10.50 Concluding summary and agreement on action plans  10.15 inspiration to go and train better  **Mid-morning departure** | |  |  |

**Detailed programme**

**Welcome & Introductions (Day 1)**

* From Steering group (David Clarkson)
* Clarification of programme details and “rules of engagement”
* Practicalities of living at college, etc. (Mark Presson)
* Brief self-introductions
* Small group prayer

**Plenary Sessions – mornings Speaker: John Hitchen**

**Soundings in biblical contextualization to inform our theological curriculum.** Each message will attempt to exemplify different hermeneutical models. The emphasis will be on the contextualization approaches in each case, with pointers for exploring, but not in-depth discussion of, the areas of application listed under each heading

**2.1 What do you mean – Contextualise the Gospel?  
Confirming the Nature and Extent of the Gospel in a Global Context:·** Summarizing the holistic nature and extent of the Gospel thematically, and exploring how contextualization can embrace the diversity of biblical atonement metaphors for a mature appropriation of the fullness of the Gospel [with pointers to variations in application in different contexts – Western rationalistic modernity; post-Christian secularist Postmodernity and globalizing Majority World settings]

**3.1 The Good News of Christ’s Uniqueness – challenging those who doubt & Deny It:   
Exploring the Message of Colossians for Pluralistic Post-Modern Contexts.** Confronting challenges from a Dominant Worldview threatening to discredit the Uniqueness and Sufficiency of Jesus Christ. Insights from the way Paul contextualized the Gospel of Christ for the Colossians and its relevance for the postmodern context , noting its warnings about syncretism, the dangers of supplementing the all-sufficient work of Christ and its call to fullness of new life in Him.

**4.1 Addressing Cultural Factors in Biblical Interpretation**:· Exploring how Paul’s contextualization of the Gospel for non–Jews provides a model for our contextualization across cultural divides. The overall Message of Galatians as a model for addressing contextualization issues when establishing a church in a new cultural setting. The major themes; why each is necessary; and what they mean both for the previously dominant cultural centre of Christianity and for churches at new cultural frontiers in our multi-cultural contexts today

**Plenary Sessions – mid-morning**

**2.2 Training for depth in Biblical understanding and critical thinking**:

Teaching students to think ... and to think biblically and spiritually.

1. 21st century hermeneutics – how do we train for leadership with significant hermeneutical ability.
2. The place of higher learning and training; encouraging the development of a sufficient quantum of in-depth bible scholars, historians, philosophers and other academics from and for the Brethren movement and its successors.
3. Modelling excellence in the school/college; developing curricula to meet the needs of students, churches and society. On-going staff development and appraisal.

**3.2 Training for personal growth in a local church context**

Inspiring people to continuous education and improvement and developing models that fit your context.

1. Contemporary global challenges as seen in PNG and parts of South East Asia
2. Asking the right questions
3. The importance of context, developing curriculum for that context involving Biblical and local models.

Plenary discussions also intended to cover:-

* Auto-didactism: inspiring people to continuous self-education and improvement, and developing the personal tools for, and practice of, it
* Contemporary global challenges, insights and ways forward for local-church-based training,
* Holistic church-based training that deals with life-stage changes (rites of passage such as birth, puberty, marriage, death) and tackles the social/community problems faced.

**4.2 Contextualization and transitioning to a new generation of local leadership today.**

Learning from our mission heritage for transitioning to fresh leadership in our training institutions and churches today- Anthony Norris Groves, the “Three-self Principles,” Contextualization, and transitioning to a new generation of local leadership today.

**Other sessions**

E.1 **Dare to be encouraged.** An inspirational summary of the progress and challenges worldwide in Brethren church growth and training, and specific progress made since Dubuque 1 and Dubuque 2.

* From Phil Boom Emmaus College: Welcome as Host, & a brief intro to Emmaus Developments.
* Thanksgiving to God for worldwide growth of His church & the ministries of training
* Where have we come from? – Neil Sumerton/David Clarkson
* What have we done with it all? Some brief testimonies from past consultation participants as to things they have tackled/developed from our previous meetings
* Introducing John Hitchen – 10 mins testimony form John H and a brief intro on how he hopes to lead our studies with us this week

E.2 **Some instructional stories** Allow for specific feedback on local developments over the last 5 years such as the following examples:-

* Headspace (NZ) youth mentoring/training scheme
* Peru – Mission training for national engagement in mission
* Australia ref CCAus
* India – understanding growth and developments against a Hindu/Islam context
* Myan Mar - understanding growth and developments against a Hindu/Islam context
* Training for growth in central Africa

E.3 **Harnessing technology for future growth** Discussion on the use of technology to deliver training.

A paper will be presented outlining the issues, challenges, costs and opportunities of using the Internet.

E.4 **Impacting and being impacted by the next generation.** What can we learn from youth initiatives and how can we shape training with and for them. This will include some input and discussion of internet and social media, the concept of virtual “communities” and how training may be integrated with technology for the next generation.

M.5 **Planning for the future. Where do we go from here? –**

8.45 Short devotion

9.15 Work in smaller think-tank groups on the following Issues (examples only which may change):-

* A “training of trainers” concept within our movement (aka Langham model of training)
* Developing specific training partnerships
* Growing a Brethren theological group
* International Training Consultations, BTN, IBCMs, etc

10.15 Concluding summary and inspiration to go and train better

**Elective workshops**

2.1 **-The definition of marriage -**:**A Hermeneutical-Cultural challenge** Working through syncretistic factors, e.g., polygamy, same-sex marriage compared and contrasted. Based on the morning’s plenary sessions, the workshop is aimed at exploring how we interpret the Scriptures regarding the definition of marriage and apply this teaching to cultures that permit or encourage alternative understandings of marriage such as the ancient practice of polygamy, or the more recent development of so-called same-sex marriage. This workshop is an application of the morning plenary sessions on how we interpret the Bible regarding the Gospel and its demands on us as applied to different cultural contexts

2.2 **Counselling and the Gospel** Where does Counselling fit into the Great Commission to make disciples of all Nations? Discussions will include looking at the range of principles/ethos adopted in different counselling methods, investigating concepts of Bible -centred counselling and the use of contemporary psychology.

**2.3 Training for effective church planting.**  Much of traditional western-rooted theological education has been focussed on maintaining existing churches (pastors, Bible teachers, leaders) and more recently in a survival-mode context. What are the challenges of training in or into a church growth context? How do we train church planters with sufficient flexibility for the cross-cultural or cross-generational context?

2.4 **Training for change**. How can we best prepare people to be able to analyse our traditions and facilitate change in churches. What is the role of trainers and training systems in promoting positive change in our churches – the concept of training change-makers.

2.5**. Training for financial sustainability:** Facing the challenges including sources of income for training, recruiting the right students in sufficient numbers in difficult times, the challenge of staffing, recruiting a pool of staff members so that teachers will also be practitioners, the training will meet the needs of the believing community and will connect with/ be relevant to the learners.

3.1 **Training and gender challenges. A Hermeneutical-Cultural challenge** - Understanding the role of women in Christian ministry and their development in leadership. In most countries, education opportunities for girls are identical to those for boys. How do we apply Biblical concepts of gender identities and roles in our training of men and women for Christin ministry This workshop is an application of the morning plenary sessions on how we interpret the Bible regarding the Gospel and its demands on us as applied to different cultural contexts

3.2. **Leadership in Brethren churches - a Hermeneutical-Cultural challenge**: Plurality of Leadership Structure – understanding the nuances of eldership and part/full-time workers What are and how absolute are the Biblical bases for “elder-led” and “Pastor-led” –churches Making team leadership work. Blending part/full-time workers and eldership. “Pastor-led” churches – how do we train for the use of full time workers in local churches without following a CEO model. This workshop is an application of the morning plenary sessions on how we interpret the Bible regarding the Gospel and its demands on us as applied to different cultural contexts

3.3 **Effective Apprenticeship training:** If the discipleship principles Jesus used with his disciples mean anything, it means that “learning-on-the job” is possibly the key Biblical way to develop a new generation of capable leaders in all facets of church life. How effective is our training in terms of providing true apprenticeships into ministry? How can we blend the formal systems of academia into ministry training? How can we revive and improve on the historic principle of training in the local church?

3.4 **Training and governance**. Accountability. Linking colleges with local and/or national churches. Balancing autonomy/flexibility in ides and development with accountability to local church leadership.

**3.5 Training and self-support courses.** Introducing life-skills/income support courses into Bible college curriculum – the pros and cons. In many parts of the world full or part-time Christian ministry is dependent on the workers own ability to self-support. How can we better enable students to develop self-support skills alongside Biblical studies and spiritual development.

4.1 **Hermeneuting the Church** - Are we living according to design? How should we integrate Ecclesiology and Ministry today? Hermeneutics is the bridge from the world of the text to the world today. Just as preachers are called to bring the text into our lives today, church leaders are called to guide the faith community to be a faithful embodiment of the church in today’s world. How do we do this?

4.2 **Hermeneutical issues - The “cultural” Gospel (Insider Movement in Islam)** How to train people for effective witness to Muslims, and what role does the “Insider” movement principles have for effective Biblical outreach and church planting. This workshop is an application of the morning plenary sessions on how we interpret the Bible regarding the Gospel and its demands on us as applied to different cultural contexts.

4.3 **Training for Cross-Cultural Missions in the 21st Century:** The traditional paradigm of missionaries coming from Western Nations to the rest of the world is being replaced by an ever increasing missionary task-force from the “Global South” – or a “from anywhere to anywhere” reality. What are the implications for cross-cultural missions training? Learning from cross-cultural missions training in nations that traditionally were missionary receiver nations. Training “Global South” missionaries in the West and Western missionaries training in the Global South.

4.4 **Decentralising Training –** explore the different experiences, strengths and weaknesses of either taking college-based studies into extension ministries, or developing church-based training methods**.**

**4.5 Training and Accreditation**. Moving from an informal to a formal recognised curriculum. Requirements of accrediting bodies. Passing on advice and help from colleges with recognised accreditations on their courses.