

The Congregational Federation GIFT Programme



Growing In Faith Together

2018/19



The Congregational
Institute for
Practical Theology

The Congregational Federation **GIFT Programme**

Growing in Faith Together

The Congregational Federation offers a range of opportunities for individuals and for churches to explore their faith, discern gifts and develop skills for service. You can find information about these at www.congregational.org.uk.

They include:

- ***Christ in All Things*** and ***Christ in All People*** work books to help local churches explore faith, and grow their life and service: 'We have a treasure-trove of gifts within our churches just waiting to be recognised, nurtured and celebrated'. *Christ in All Things* looks at what it means to be a member of a Congregational church and *Christ in All People* takes this one stage further by discerning and developing the gifting of those who are part of the church.
- **GIFT** – see below
- **Foundation Degree in Practical Theology**: a vocational qualification, accredited by York St John University, for people wishing to explore and develop their Christian discipleship, or train for one of the Congregational Federation's recognised ministries
- **BA (Hons) in Practical Theology**, which follows on from the Foundation Degree, and leads to a Bachelor's Degree.

GIFT sits right at the heart of these resources. You or your church can use it flexibly and in a variety of ways, to enhance the life of the local church, or to help church members gain access to the Foundation Degree and BA (Hons), or a mixture of the two! To find out more, read on!

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The programme is designed in a set of modules, which you can use independently, or as a whole programme. Four general modules help you to reflect on aspects of our Christian faith. If you are doing the whole programme, these are core modules. They are designed to stand alone, but also form a continuous programme, with each module leading into the next.

- **Module 1** **The Word of Life:** an exploration of the Bible
- **Module 2** **The Life of Faith:** developing discipleship
- **Module 3** **Faith in the World:** the church's story and mission
- **Module 4** **Being Congregational:** the vision of a church that is Christ-centred and Spirit-filled in practice

The last module ends with a series of units about different aspects of the life of the church. This makes it a useful module if taken on its own, but also links the general modules to a set of five specific modules designed to help you develop your gifts and skills. If you are doing the whole programme, you will choose one of these options.

- **Module 5a** **Growing disciples** (working with adults in the church)
- **Module 5b** **Working with young people and children**
- **Module 5c** **Church management and administration**
- **Module 5d** **Living worship**
- **Module 5e** **Mission**

Each module comes with:

- A handbook which can be downloaded from CONGLE (The CIPT online learning platform) by request from the GIFT Co-ordinator
- Resources, such as powerpoint presentations, also through CONGLE to support a minimum of three hours group meetings/sessions.
- Assignments and cover sheets for those wishing to do the assessed version of the programme

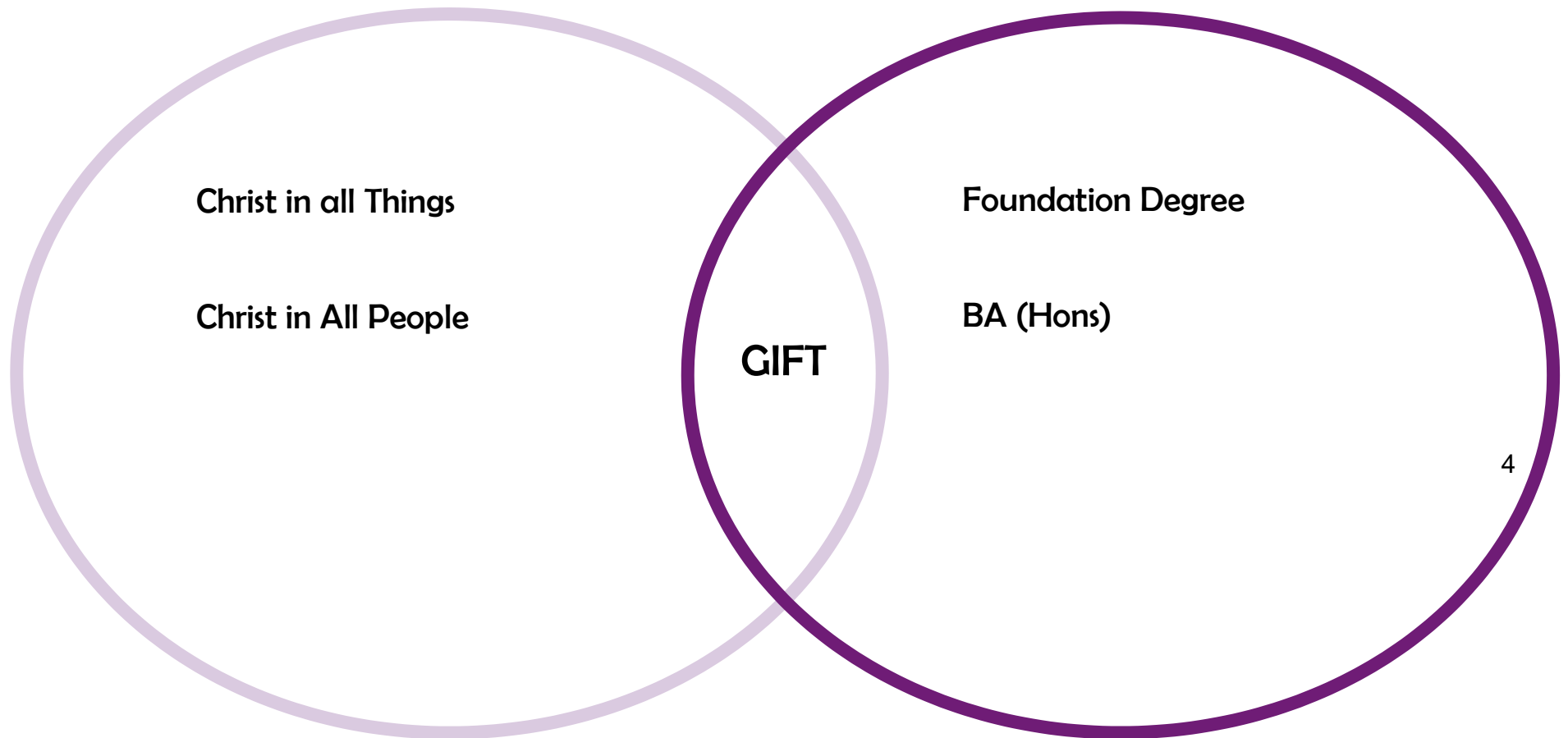
Group Meetings/Sessions can be:

- 6 hours over a weekend (say), covering two modules
- 3 hours in a single day (for example a Sunday afternoon following the morning service) covering a single module
- An hour or hour and a half in an evening so that a module is spread over two or three evenings
- Another pattern of your own choosing – talk it over with the GIFT Co-ordinator!

Congregational Federation Training Resources and Programmes

Rooted in the Local Church

Accredited by York St John University



Pick a topic or skill – or more

Who is this for?

Any church or individual who would like to explore a topic, or develop a skill by using one or more modules from the GIFT programme 'off the shelf'.

Why not use one or more of the modules as a background to a series of sermons or Bible Studies, or to develop specific skills in one area of church life?

Examples:

One church is using the module on church management and administration to train its deacons.

The 'Faith in the World' module could be used with the Mission module to help the church think about its outreach in the community.

A new member of a worship team could use the Living Worship module to help develop appropriate skills.

Who is involved?

An individual can simply download a copy of a module he or she is interested in, and study it on their own.

The minister, or someone involved in leading worship or Bible Studies, or working with a team such as a mission or outreach team, could ask for copies of relevant modules.

We will always seek to put you in touch with other people in the Congregational Federation working in the relevant areas, such as Youth and Children, Mission, and Church Management.

What do I need to do?

Contact the GIFT co-ordinator to find out more. You can use the contact form on the website at

www.congregational.org.uk/cf/contact-us, or email training@congregational.org.uk or ring 0115 9111 460. You can also look at descriptions of the modules on the website: www.congregational.org.uk/GIFTmodules

How do I access the materials?

When you have identified the module(s) you would like to use, you will be given an access code to CONGLE. You will be able to download the handbook(s) and other material free of charge. If you need a printed copy, a small charge will be made to cover printing and postage.

What next?

If you enjoy your first taste of the GIFT programme, you might wish to look at other modules on the same basis.

Or you may wish to move on to do the whole programme, starting from the work you have already done.

If so, read on.....



Run the whole programme in your church/Area

Who is this for?

A local church, or group of churches, or Area, which would like to use the GIFT programme as a whole, integrated programme.

All participants will normally study the first four modules, then choose between the five optional modules.

The whole programme normally covers about nine months. We can provide a time-line, tailored to your programme (see example time-line on p. 10), if you would find this helpful.

Examples:

One church studied the four core modules together, and then divided the optional modules between the participants, based on their gifting and their position in the church, so that the whole range of skills was covered

A group of churches ran the four core modules together, then focused on two options, as selected by the participants together, in the light of the churches' needs.

Who is involved?

There are several roles, which help to ensure that the programme works well

Local organiser

- Liaises with the GIFT co-ordinator
- Downloads material from CONGLE
- Communicates with participants and tutors
- Organises sessions

Local Tutor/s

- Deliver teaching sessions
- May be involved in support and evaluation
- At least one local tutor should be registered with, and recognised by CIPT

National Team

- GIFT co-ordinator liaises with the local organiser
- Your national team member will offer advice and support as required
- May visit if requested, to help set up the programme
- May advise on teaching in specific areas (e.g. optional modules)
- Training is available for local tutors, if requested

What do I need to do?

Contact the GIFT co-ordinator, who will work with you to help set up the programme.

Your local organiser will register the programme with CIPT. You can find the registration form at

www.congregational.org.uk/applications

There is a registration charge of £25 per course. This provides access to CONGLE, for the local organiser to download course materials and resources for sessions, plus support by the national GIFT Team.



How do I access the materials?

The local organiser and registered tutor(s) will be given an access code to CONGLE. You will be able to download the handbook(s) and other material free of charge. There are two core books which support the core modules. These can be readily purchased online or at reputable book stores. It may be possible to acquire copies from other local courses.



What next?

Participants may wish to work towards the GIFT Certificate, or use the programme as an entry course for the Foundation Degree/BA (Hons) in Practical Theology.

If so, read on.....



Work towards a Certificate

Who is this for?

Any individual on a GIFT programme, who would like to gain a Congregational Federation GIFT Certificate at the end of the programme.

This can be completely flexible. Not all participants in the same programme may wish to work towards a certificate. Participants may opt in or out of this at any time, while continuing on the programme.

Examples:

Half way through a local programme, in which no participants intended to work towards the certificate, one person found that she had changed her mind. She then completed assignments for the modules already studied, and went on to send in assignments for the whole programme.

On another programme, which set out with all participants intending to do the assignments, about half completed them all, while others did the assignments that they felt would most enhance their experience.

Who is involved?

Local organiser and tutors as above.

In addition to other support, the national administrator and team will receive and mark assignments.

What do I need to do?

The local organiser will need to inform the GIFT co-ordinator of the intention of one or more participants to work toward the certificate. Once this has happened, a number of requirements come into force.

This option is available only to registered programmes (see above) with a minimum of three participants. Not all need to be working towards the Certificate, but all three should be in attendance at sessions.

There must be a minimum of three hours teaching time per module.

The whole programme must be delivered in a minimum of two years.

The participants who wish to do this will need to apply for the GIFT Certificate Programme, on the form available on the website. This can be done at any time, but should be done before any assignments are submitted. A registration fee of £10 is also required. This can be made by cheque payable to 'Congregational Federation'. Participants on the Certificate Programme will need to submit the assignments attached to the modules. These can be found in each handbook. All assignments will need to be passed, to gain the certificate.

Once someone is working towards the certificate, they will receive direct support from the training office. Assignments are marked by members of the national team. This in no way supplants or compromises the work of the local course.

How do I access the materials?

As above.

More information about assignments, including cover sheets, can be downloaded from CONGLE.

What next?

The GIFT Programme can be used as an access course to the Foundation Degree and BA (Hons).

If you are interested, read on

Move on to the Foundation Degree and BA

Who is this for?

Anyone who has embarked on the GIFT Programme with a view to moving on to the accredited course.

Anyone who would like to explore their discipleship or vocation further, or seek accreditation in one of the ministries recognised by the Congregational Federation: Minister, Preacher, Chaplain, Mission Enabler, Tutor, Spiritual Enabler, Pioneer Minister (see website or year book for definitions).

The GIFT programme is recognised by our accrediting university as an access course for the accredited courses, for those who do not have existing qualifications (e.g. GCSE A' levels). If you are in this position, you must complete all assignments. If you already have qualifications that equip you for the accredited course, it is not a requirement that you complete all assignments (though you may still wish to do so, to gain the GIFT Certificate).

Who is involved?

The local organiser, tutors and national team as above.

National staff will offer you every support in your application.

What do I need to do?

The local organiser will need to register your intention as soon as possible, as above.

You must apply for the accredited course by the advertised deadline, including all relevant documentation. You can find out about this from the website, or by contacting the training administrator and Director of Learning and Development.

We will offer you every support in your application.

How do I access the materials?

The prospectus and application forms for the accredited programmes are available on the website.

All other documentation can also be downloaded from the website.

What next?

During the Foundation Degree training weekends, a member of the Pastoral Care Board will work with you to help you discern and develop your vocation. Completion of the Foundation Degree is required for recognition on the Roll of Ministries.

Completion of the Foundation Degree and BA (Hons) opens the way for many other opportunities for further study and professional development.



Sample Timeline

The below timetable is an example of how one church worked their way through the GIFT Programme. This is only indicative; the GIFT Co-ordinator will work with you to plan a timetable that suits your needs.

September

Launch meeting, handbooks and resources. Plan sessions.

October

Module 1 sessions, using resources from CONGLE

November

Module 1 sessions, *
plan for module 2

December

Module 2 sessions – opportunity to feed into Christmas worship

January

Module 2 sessions, *
Module 3 Sessions.

February

Module 3 sessions, *
mission speaker.
Choose options.

March

Start optional Module sessions.

April

Optional module sessions. *

May

Closing session, evaluation, Option to apply for Foundation Degree

* Example deadline dates for those wishing to complete the assignments.

Contact Us



For initial enquires please contact
The GIFT Co-ordinator, Richard Pickering
01858 468213 or rhpickering45@gmail.com.

For any general information regarding the Congregational Federation Training Programmes please contact:



The Director of Learning and Development, Walter Riggans
0115 9111 460 or walter.riggans@congregational.org.uk

The Learning and Development Administrator, Maddy Varley
0115 9111 460 or madeleine.varley@congregational.org.uk

Members of the **National GIFT Team** may be available to come to your church to help plan a programme of sessions or to lead specific sessions as guest facilitators.



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