

Appendix 2 Making good use of a time of transition

Reaction to change

The movement of a CRCW brings with it many different reactions and a wide range of emotions. Sometimes symptoms of bereavement will predominate, at other times perhaps the excitement of a possible new beginning. The Interim Moderator will need the gifts necessary to help the church-in-community through a period of change.

Supporting

It is not easy in a transition period to support the life of the Church-in-Community. (This is particularly true where the leadership expectations have rested almost entirely on the CRCW. Church members and community groups may need help in encouraging their self-confidence and recognising their gifts. But the life of the church in community is their responsibility. Positive thinking about the present, together with the constructive view of the past will provide the best foundations for a healthy future.

Reflecting

The transition period is not a time for simply maintaining what has been the case. For the health of the Church-in-Community (and in order to be more attractive to an incoming CRCW) it should be seen as a time of reflection on where the Church-in-Community is and where its future lies. There is time to re-assess resources and discover ones previously unrecognised. The Interim Moderator as an independent observer is well placed to serve as a catalyst to this process. Square pegs and round holes can sometimes be better seen from a distance and lateral solutions to problems suggested. Adequate reflection takes time but is an important prerequisite for the writing of a clear and visionary profile.

Planning

A well-used transition period can be used to plan for the future. The Church-in-Community's participation in God's mission continues and, while there are some things which are better developed with the new CRCW, it is a mistake to put aside all new ideas, especially those which are likely to raise the spirits of members. The Interim Moderator's experience and objectivity again will help the church to analyse when to do and when to defer. It seems safe to assume that a new CRCW will look more favourably at a Church-in-Community which is moving forward rather than one which is bogged down in struggles to stay where it is.