

## expressions: the dvd - 2

### Transcript - chapter 4

*Dialogue and time-codes for chapter 4.*

#### 4: Generate

04:00:15:15 **Narrator**

Statistics make the situation very clear. Even though many churches have flourishing youth ministries, 40 percent have nobody attending under the age of 11 and 50 percent no one between 11 and 14. So if young people aren't in church as we know it, then fresh expressions of church are springing up wherever they are. Hope Hamilton church has a real desire to reach the young people in the Hamilton area of Leicester and meets in the local school.

04:00:47:00 **Phil White**

The community in Hamilton is a mixed community. I would say probably there's not really a sense of community because it's been built fairly rapidly over the last ten years and is still trying to find out who it is as a community. When the school opened here it presented us with a huge opportunity and a huge challenge as well. Myself and the youth team we do an assembly each week and we make that very interactive. So it's very exciting and that's really good to see the kids. They love it.

*'So if young people aren't in church as we know it, then fresh expressions of church are springing up wherever they are.'*

04:01:19:09 **Phil White**

On top of that we've had a youth playground produced which has got some really whacky games and climbing walls and basketball nets and so on. And we've just realised there was a huge opportunity there to actually work with young people of the area, so it's been a long story, a long journey, but

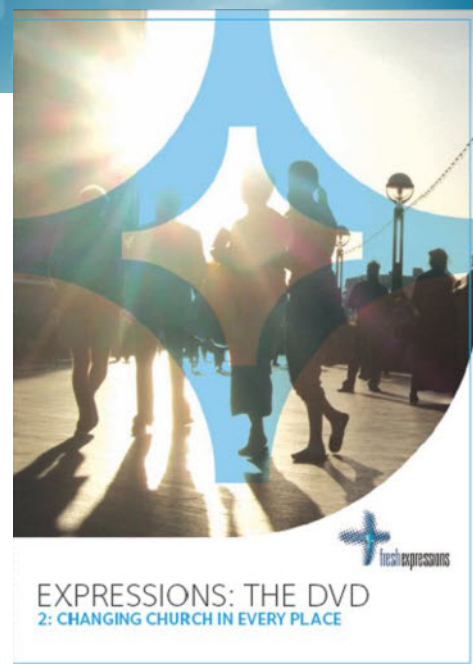
we received an American youth worker who came over in March. She's been with us now for six months. And we've now got a young Polish couple who are working with us as youth workers and we then had an English guy who said he wanted to train as a youth worker, so he's joined us as well. The four of them live in a community house in Hamilton and are trying to spend time in the schools, working at the playground as well as working with us as a church. Typically many churches lose young people at the age of 14 or so but actually it's so important that actually there's something for them. Community is very important to us because we recognise for many people that they actually need to belong to something before belief comes. And for many of my friends and neighbours actually it's been important to build relationships with them and actually to eat with them, to drink with them and so on. And it's from that that conversations come about Jesus, about faith.

04:02:36:24 **Male**

I think one of the things I really like is the fact that it gets the community together. It gets people together, we start communicating because I mean a lot of people stay indoors and they don't talk and so on and so forth. So it's really good.

04:02:50:15 **Phil White**

I remember many years ago someone said that children are so important because they're tomorrow's church. Well that sounds good but actually I think it's completely wrong because children and young people are part of today's church. They're valuable and they're essential. They're just as important as the eldest people or the middle aged people. We try to encourage them by just including them as much as we can. Sometimes they will



have their own teaching, but much of the time we try to include them and make sure they, they feel that they're part of what we're doing.

04:03:34:14 **Phil White**

We often go kite flying together and sometimes canoeing as well and my background is teaching, but I also trained as canoe instructor and a climbing instructor. So I got, got the use of a pool in Leicester and we started meeting at the pool canoeing, having some great fun together and actually praying together as part of it. And the kite flying is another thing we do, so Thursday nights we typically meet down at the field with our kites and just have a lot of fun, pray with each other. And there've been several people from the community have come down who have just told me something very, very simply about their lives and I have been able to pray with them and talk about Jesus and it's been great.

04:04:13:16 **Phil White**

Now I guess for many of you your experience of church has been very different to this. You go to a building, you sit in rows, you stand up, sit down, sing hymns and so on and then...

04:04:23:15 **Male**

We'll come and we'll do power kiting or canoeing and then we'll pray within that. So instead of asking them to come to a service and sit in a pew, you're taking the church to them with their interests and stuff. So it was basically just trying to find a way of making the church more appealing.

04:04:42:20 **Male**

I first found out about Adrenalin because Tom at school had said 'oh why don't you come along and have a look at what it is?' And as soon as I got there I found that it was amazing fun.

04:04:53:06 **Phil White**

We're encouraging people to meet one to one as much as possible. Not always easy but it's starting to happen, trying to encourage people to be accountable to each other, to encourage each other, to build each other up and to pray for each other. I think I'd like to see in 20 years time a strong church, a church that's reaching to its neighbors, a church that is, is small enough to be able to welcome people, but big enough to be able to feel that it's sustainable.

04:05:30:07 **Narrator**

And a fresh expression of church for primary school children, parents and staff is growing slowly but steadily in one Essex school.

04:05:39:08 **Paul Trathen**

The group is small. This is a small school that only has a little over 90 children in it and I really didn't expect a measure of this to be how big it grew, or it varies actually insize between as few as three and as many as 18 on occasion. And that means that it does have a built in intimacy and closeness, which means that we are in the circle, in the round and it focuses around certain central icons as well. There's always the

candles lit at the beginning and blown out at the end. But the intimacy means that actually it's a shared experience even though it's led.

04:06:15:08 **Debbie Rogan**

The stillness of the room and the music and the cushions is a really nice oasis for the staff and the parents and the children at the end of the day if they want to be part of it. So it's actually nice not for it to be in a church where everything is still and calm. The calmness in the room really helps you to settle down and stop thinking about all the things that you've been thinking about two minutes before.

04:06:36:21 **Paul Trathen**

My understanding of the New Testament is that those early Christians and their churches are recognised as being church because they meet together for fellowship; they break bread and they study the scriptures and seek to be informed by them. We do all those things. We are constrained in certain ways by church, about formally having a communion or a Eucharist, but we have shared food together. Beyond that I think the fact that we actually are rediscovering actually a lot of very ancient traditions of signs and symbols and actions, which get beyond the wordiness of a lot of particularly 20th century, early 21st century Anglicanism. People need a safe space and a holy space in which to negotiate a whole bunch of stuff about their relationship with God. Within the group there are those who have grown up with the church at an early age, but have found the church very difficult or found themselves actually excluded and are coming back into this experience, often with some hurt in the background. For others there is no church experience for two generations and so we're actually re-churching two generations of church people.

04:07:45:07 **Paul Trathen**

...touch our inner sight.

04:07:47:20 **Male**

...Welcome to the Prezence here...

04:07:50:08 **Narrator**

Often though if you're going to reach teenagers you need to take their culture really seriously. Gavin Tyte leads Prezence, a hip hop church in Southampton.

04:08:00:15 **Gavin Tyte**

Beat boxing's part of youth culture. It's also part of hip hop culture. And if you like hip hop, it's like everywhere now, invades every part of the culture of which we're now a part. I'm a human beat boxer. I love beat boxing. I beat box in the shower. I beat box in the car. It doesn't matter where I am, I'm beat boxing and all the other beat boxers will say exactly the same thing. This is what we do and so, it's just very natural for me as a Christian to say well how do I express my Christianity in the culture in which I find myself, in the beat boxing culture? So for me there's nothing more natural than to beat box and I'm beat boxing to praise God at the same time.

04:08:35:17 **Gavin Tyte**

Now everybody say cabbage.

04:08:36:22 **Crowd**

Cabbage.

04:08:37:23 **Gavin Tyte**

Cabba.

04:08:37:23 **Crowd**

Cabba.

04:08:39:04 **Gavin Tyte**

Cab.

04:08:39:17 **Crowd**

Cab.

04:08:40:13 **Gavin Tyte**

Ca.

04:08:40:23 **Crowd**

Ca.

04:08:41:10 **Gavin Tyte**

K.

04:08:41:24 **Crowd**

K.

04:08:44:06 **Gavin Tyte**

I want to invite the guys that I meet at the clubs, the guys I perform with on stage at shows and festivals to church. But if I invite them into my traditional Anglican church, they're going to just sit there and they're gonna go, ok what is this you know? We've got some very nice kind of piano and vocal led worship, songs that they just won't engage with you know. I'm going to be dressed in clothes that they're going to say well hang on why is he wearing all that stuff. And I can't invite them along and I love the church that I'm part of, the traditional church. Fantastic, I love it. But the guys that I meet night after night in clubs and online on the internet are just not into that.

04:09:21:02 **Gavin Tyte**

Beatbox.com is a, an online community of tens of thousands of people; hundreds of thousands of visitors every month. But it was a case of well, ok we have the online community, an online community of Christians as well, they're kind of sharing and expressing their faith, but when we meet together - Presence, is like a kind of like the meeting together of that where people get together to express their worship of God through the hip hop elements.

04:09:49:20 **Gavin Tyte**

For a bunch of people that love hip hop, love beat boxing, love Jesus too and they express that love for Jesus using those art forms of graffiti, DJing, MCing break dancing and beat boxing, then that's church isn't it.

04:10:04:07 **Man**

...Let's get acoustics in here. Everybody, er thanks for that, good stuff.

04:10:10:03 **Gavin Tyte**

In the gatherings we pray, we read the Bible. We do good things together, you know kind of normal spiritual disciplines together as it's just taking place in the context of hip hop culture. So it's not doing things in any way alien to the people of that culture who have come along.

04:10:27:04 **Narrator**

Because reaching young people often means just going where they are, in the diocese of Blackburn there's an ambitious plan to reach teenagers by growing church in secondary schools throughout Lancashire.

04:10:41:11 **Susie Mapledoram**

If you take a picture at the front of this school it says St Michael's Church of England High School. That Church of England has to mean something more than just having a chapel and saying grace at the end of the day.

04:10:54:04 **Liz Nicholls**

I believe the church is where the people are not where the building is. And schools are ideally placed to be worshipping communities to be church. We spend a lot of our time together. We worship together in a church school. We care for each other. We have fellowship together. We pray together and we serve the wider world together as a

school community. So I think we're ideally placed to be church.

04:11:16:17 **Craig Abbott**

I admit that the youth officer posts in schools don't look like church in the traditional sense and that we haven't got the old building. We haven't got the four walls and the pews as such that you might see in a traditional church. But for me the thing that makes this model church is the fact that it's an incarnational ministry that the youth officers in school are being God with skin on if you like. They're being Jesus around the young people and around the staff and around the school community.

04:11:51:18 **Susie Mapledoram**

I try to get in to school sort of by 8.00 o'clock. Quite a number do come early and we have breakfast, so it's a good excuse to get a bacon sandwich and sit down and you know discuss what was on tv last night, or you know whatever they want to talk about. We have worship every morning and we have assemblies every morning. Those are distinctively different. Worship is worship. There's no notices given. There's no reprimands or disciplinarily measures taken. That is a time when young people can come and reflect and think, be challenged, inspired. I think the work at here in St Michael's is distinctively church. If you look at what the book of Acts says about what church is about it talks about meeting together, praying together and having fellowship together, worshipping together, and, and looking out for each other, and, and caring for each other. Being part of a group, being part of a community is massively vital to anybody, but key for young people. And if someone's not here, it's so valuable to know that they'll be missed. We haven't by any stretch of the imagination got it in the bag, but we are church because we meet those criteria I think, I believe.

04:13:03:10 **Craig Abbott**

The young people themselves are taking on board a lot of the responsibility for the work that's done in the school. So for example at St Michael's in Chorley we have, an annual spirituality day. And some past pupils have been involved in assisting and leading on that. We've also fed some young people from the school into wider diocesan youth initiatives where they've had input in leading and and taking an active role in that.

04:13:30:10 **Susie Mapledoram**

I've seen the value in actually saying right we're going to set up this initiative and the young people are going to run it. And in my experience in youth work, those have always worked much better because if young people are running the gaff it works.

04:13:44:09 **Susie Mapledoram**

...that it doesn't surprise me at all, that's a very good question but I'm...

04:13:46:21 **Craig Abbott**

I think with traditional church models what we've tended to do is to invite people to come to a building and congregate them first and then try and engineer relationships once people have got together. I think this flips that model on its head some what and begins with relationships and begins with where young people are at. And hopefully over time that the church will develop out of those relationships. And people because they relate to each other and they relate to the youth officer, they relate to the wider church will naturally want to congregate together rather than forcing that to happen.

04:14:19:09 **Susie Mapledoram**

I think the church needs to move forward. And I'm convinced we spend too much time concentrating on

building people round church and we should be building church round people and meeting people where they're at. We come out with these glib phrases of 'yes young people are the church of tomorrow and all that, and even the church of today'. Well let's stop saying it and start doing it and make a difference and allow them to start to make a difference.

04:14:45:20 **Peter Ballard**

We constantly have to review what we do and we constantly have to look at new ways of being church. And so this might be something that lasts for five, ten years, but if it lasts for 25 years then it won't have been a success.

04:15:00:12 **Liz Nicholls**

Go and look at the work in Chorley and you will only be there a day before you will be absolutely convinced that it's made a significant difference to the life of that school and the lives of the young people in it.

04:15:11:05 **Susie Mapledoram**

Nobody knew how this was going to work out. And you know we have taken some risks and we have changed things and for the first few months people looked at me round school and thought what the heck is she doing here, nobody really knows. And it took a while to carve the roll out here, but getting young people involved in the provision and running stuff can have revolutionary consequences.

04:15:41:09 **Narrator**

And in the Lincolnshire town of Grimsby the Methodist circuit has made a real effort to offer new ways of being church to the local teenagers, particularly those on one estate.

04:15:52:09 **Elaine Watkinson**

Side Door as it's known is really quite unique because it's sitting on the end of an already established church. There's one building with a smaller congregation down one end of it, very traditional Methodist church. And the other end which was very, very underused is what we now call Side Door. And so there are two separate worshipping bodies in one building. Christian values and cultural issues on this estate are hugely diverse. God has little priority, the youngsters have low self esteem, no aspirations, very little hope of anything but growing up. And if they manage to do that without having a drug problem, or an alcohol problem then that's as much as they could ever possibly hope for.

04:16:37:15 **Elaine Watkinson**

Side Door has grown in the last six years from just a few youngsters coming in the door and those few youngsters were absolutely enough for us to begin with, to the 30 or 40 that we see now over a weekend and also within the week. It got so vast that we realised that we couldn't just facilitate things for young people, but we also had to do something with the children. And so in the weekdays we also run kids clubs as well and of course when they get too old to be in kids club, they then come up to the youth club and then into youth cells. And we really encourage them to come and to experience more and that church isn't just what they think it is. And most of our young people have been amazed. Even some of our Christian youngsters that have come from traditional churches have been amazed at what they've discovered about church.

04:17:23:18 **Male**

Where I'd be today without Side Door, if I was never guided by God to it and if God hadn't guided me to a church I

wouldn't have been in church because I would never have been in church. And I never would have the faith as strong as I have today. And fellowship is so important it just really helps.

04:17:38:04 **Female**

Side Door is different because it's gone out into the community and brought people back to us. We don't just hope that people will turn up on a Sunday. We really pray for it and go out prayer walking. And I think it does make a difference.

04:17:50:13 **Elaine Watkinson**

Side Door is absolutely church. It's not a holy huddle. If Side Door wasn't different to all our other churches, it would have no reason to exist as a church. The young people have ownership; they make decisions; they have to put their hands in their pockets. It's a complete ownership type church where they have a real say.

04:18:18:16 **Elaine Watkinson**

Out of Side Door opening on a Saturday, we have developed Sunday morning. We call it breakfast church and it can range from anything from two children to 22 to 102 of very varying ages. We never know from one week to the next what we're going to get.

04:18:33:20 **Female**

...we thank you because you had a purpose in that because you've known us right from the beginning...

04:18:35:13 **Elaine Watkinson**

On a Sunday evening we have a very informal service at 6.00 pm and youngsters come and go. After the evening service we then have youth cells, which at the moment are for our circuit youngsters and the young people that come to Side Door. And we have 25 to 30 of those and we split them into

four groups also, not so much in physical years, but into spiritual years, so that we know that they're getting the spiritual food that they need. And it's not above them, it's not beneath them; whatever age they're at. It's more important where they are spiritually. Evangelism at Side Door is done by everybody. Even their sheer presence in the place with 30 or 40 youngsters on a Saturday that we get in, is Evangelism. It's not always about talking. A lot of the time it's about listening. It's just being there when that one comment is passed over a game of pool or a game of table tennis and being able then to have the confidence to speak out and mention Jesus and God.

04:18:39:17 **Male**

...have you finished with your drill...

04:19:36:00 **Elaine Watkinson**

With Side Door from the very beginning God has and continues to lead the way and we're just doing our very best to keep up with him. He had the vision. He had the plan and we just do our best to follow it – very open and very willing. And where he leads we will go even though it's risky and it's challenging.

04:20:01:16 **CUT**