

# Place for Hope: Reconciling Relationships

In times of change, transition and conflict

Annual Review 2017-2018





## Beatitudes of Reconciliation

Blessed are those who are willing to enter into the process of being healed,  
for they will become healers.

Blessed are those who can forgive self,  
for they will become forgivers.

Blessed are those who are willing to let go of selfishness and self-centredness,  
for they will become a healing presence.

Blessed are those who will listen with compassion,  
for they will become compassionate.

Blessed are those who are willing to enter into conflict,  
for they will find transformation.

Blessed are those who know their interdependence with all creation,  
for they will become unifiers.

Blessed are those who live a contemplative life,  
for they will find God in all things.

Blessed are those who strive to live these beatitudes,  
for they will become reconcilers.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas



## Annual Review

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# Reconciling Relationships

## ...a letter from Ruth

Place for Hope has been through a time of both consolidation and change within the last year, with our staff and Practitioner team expanding to meet the increased demands in our churches and faith communities. It is with immense gratitude, as we move into our tenth year, that I pay tribute to the skill, wisdom and professionalism of our volunteer Practitioner Team. Their 'ministry of availability', along with the gifts of our Trustees and the whole Place for Hope community, brings strength, resource and resilience to our churches and faith communities in this time of rapid change and transition. This Annual Review gives you a glimpse into much of the core work that our team delivers, and indicates the growing nature of the partnerships that we are forging for peace. Now more than ever we need agents of hope and change in our churches and in the world.

Ruth Harvey, Director



*Working with Place for Hope has helped me realise that a normal part of life is that we sometimes face situations which are difficult and stressful which can lead to the breakdown of relationships if we don't handle ourselves well. Place for Hope has given me the opportunity to learn how I might face these challenges in a better way, but it has also given me the opportunity to share some of these 'tools' with others when they face stressful situations.*

Iain Goring, Place for Hope Practitioner

## ...a letter from Nancy

**“Hope is not found in a way out but a way through”** (*Robert Frost*)

Hope is a resource that sees both light and darkness, and to become this resource is a choice. It is with deep pleasure that I commend to you this Annual Review. It is a small indication of the work that our staff and volunteer Practitioners have chosen to do to support people experiencing change, challenge or conflict to embrace the force of hope that enables them to move towards more effective relationships. The feedback that we receive from grateful individuals and groups is testimony, not only to the support Place for Hope offers, but to the courage that has gone into initially seeking help and then the engagement with the work that has led to stronger relationships and positive outcomes for the faith communities. On behalf of the Trustees, it is a privilege to express our gratitude to the growing community of those serving others in this Place for Hope.

**Nancy Adams, Chair of Board of Trustees**



# Reconciling Relationships

...an overview of our year (2017-2018)

## Our work

April 2017 – March 2018 saw Place for Hope taking on 44 new support cases in addition to a further 23 existing cases. In total, our Practitioners and staff offered our support services in 67 situations, an increase from the previous year. We also delivered 43 set and tailored training workshops throughout the UK, increasing our training output by 30%.

We offered:

- Support for groups in facilitating important or potentially difficult conversations
- Awareness raising talks, workshops and lectures at events and conferences
- Coaching for church and faith community leaders
- Tailored training for groups
- Set training for church and faith community leaders

You can read more detail about our support cases and training programmes on pages 8-9.

## Our community

Our expanded Practitioner team of 23 offered support and facilitation in 67 cases and at 43 training events in 2017/18. These volunteer Practitioners are drawn from a wide representation of denominations and faiths and diverse backgrounds. Based throughout Scotland and the north of England, all undergo rigorous selection and training, as well as bi-annual CPD and regular supervision, to ensure our services are of the highest standards.

Our Practitioner team is supported by a staff team of six, professional Supervisors, and a Board of Trustees who bring wisdom and strategic leadership to the charity.

[More details about the Place for Hope community can be found on pages 20-21.](#)



## Our partners

Peacebuilding cannot be done alone and we cherish our partnership working opportunities. We have continued to build on our relationships with a number of Christian denominations, with the Church of Scotland remaining our key partner. It is important to us to focus on joint working outside churches too, and we work closely with church agencies, faith networks and peacebuilding communities in Scotland and beyond.

In October 2017 we hosted over 40 representatives of key mediation, faith and civic agencies in Scotland and beyond to consider the dynamics of 'Reconciling Relationships'. This event also launched the plans for our 2019 tenth anniversary gathering.

[More detail of our partnerships can be found on pages 12-19. A report on our Reconciling Relationships Seminar can be found on page 22.](#)

## Our future

In 2019 we will celebrate our tenth birthday. We are delighted to be working in partnership with Reconcilers Together, Bridge Builders, Glasgow Presbytery and others to host and plan the Glasgow Gathering on Conflict and Faith 2019, at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, from Thursday 31st October – Saturday 2nd November (arrivals on Wednesday 30th October). More details will be shared via our Peacemakers Network in due course. This will be a tremendous learning and networking opportunity. In addition, our hope is that this will be a launch pad for new initiatives to bring strength, wisdom and resilience to our faith communities as we negotiate change and conflict.

Looking to the future, it can be hard to tell what may be round the corner. Our hope is always that through Place for Hope training and equipping services we are supporting people within our faith communities to be agents of change and of hope in the world. From bullying to Brexit, from uniting churches to uniting nations, our skills in conflict transformation and the ability to host difficult dialogue have never been more keenly needed. In 2019 we hope to launch new training programmes to meet these needs.

# Reconciling Relationships

...with people experiencing and preparing for change, challenge and conflict

Our churches and faith groups face change, encounter difference and experience conflict. In times of change or challenge, we know that practical support can help.

We offer a range of support services for groups experiencing or preparing for change, challenge and conflict. When people contact Place for Hope looking for support, we take the time to hear them speak about the challenges they face before deciding with them on the appropriate service.

We offer:

- Support in facilitating important or potentially difficult conversations for small or large groups
- Awareness raising and lectures at events and conferences
- One-on-one coaching for church and faith community leaders

Our training programmes are designed to empower and equip people within faith communities to be peacemakers.

The second strand of our work helps people to be better equipped to navigate conflict, and to use those skills and tools to support others. Our training programmes include:

- Set Training for individuals
- Tailored Training for groups



### Set training delivered 2017/18

- Growing through Change and Conflict - Foundation
- Growing through Change and Conflict - Further Skills
- Bullying and Harassment
- Scripture, Spirituality and Conflict
- Faith in Change and Conflict (6-day programme)

### New programme dates 2018/19

#### Growing through Change and Conflict Foundation

- Friday 2 November 2018, Cumbria
- Saturday 8 December 2018, Edinburgh
- Thursday 17 January 2019, Cumbria
- Saturday 27 April 2019, Oban

#### Growing through Change and Conflict Further Skills

- Saturday 19 January 2019, Edinburgh
- Thursday 7 February 2019, Cumbria
- Saturday 18 May 2019, Oban

#### Scripture, Spirituality and Conflict

- Thursday 7 March 2019, Cumbria
- Saturday 21 September 2019, Oban

#### Bullying and Harassment

- Thursday 14 March 2019, Cumbria
- Saturday 15 June 2019, Oban

For more information, please visit: [www.placeforhope.org.uk/training/set-programmes](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/training/set-programmes)

# Reconciling Relationships

...statistics and feedback

## Summary

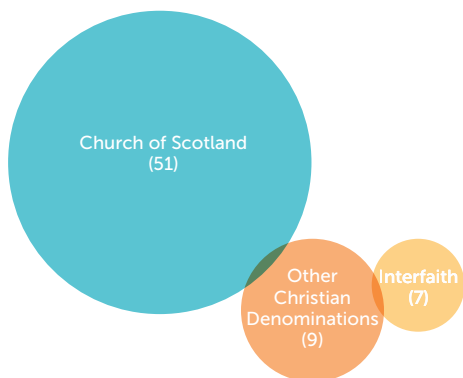
From 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018, our Practitioners worked on 67 cases (23 of these cases were carried over from the previous year) and delivered 43 training workshops – a total of 110 activities.

## Breakdown

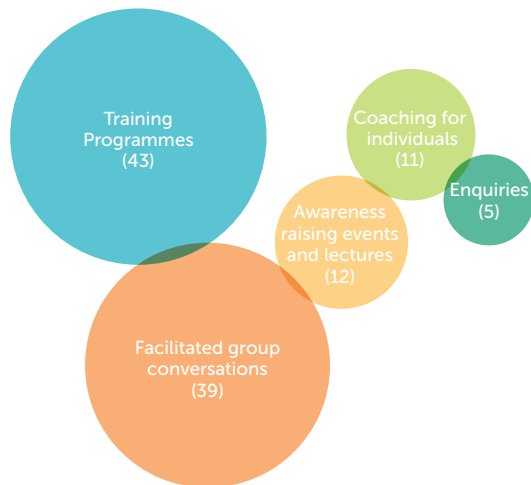
Emerging themes from our work

- Managing change in vacancies/transitions
- Patterns of ineffective or bad behaviour
- Personnel, staffing or teamwork issues
- Managing change in linkages and unions
- Bullying and harassment
- Mis-match of expectations
- Need for upskilling or training of leaders
- Theological issues
- Other themes include: Organisational change; Facilitated conversation after a community trauma; Community dialogue; Buildings closure.

## Denominational spread of casework



## Types of service



## Training programme breakdown

- 13 Growing through Change and Conflict Foundation
- 9 Growing through Change and Conflict Further Skills
- 3 Bullying and Harassment
- 4 Scripture, Spirituality and Conflict
- 2 Train the Trainer residentials: Bullying and Harassment (Methodist Church)
- 1 Training for South Sudanese delegates in Nairobi
- 3 Faith in Change and Conflict residentials (Methodist Church x 2; South Sudan delegates x 1)
- 8 Other tailored training workshops

# Reconciling Relationships

...working in partnerships

## Church of Scotland

What are the underlying cultural reasons for conflict in our churches? In what ways can we support our churches and leaders to respond creatively to change? These are some of the questions addressed in the 'Report on Congregational Conflict' prepared by the Ministries Council for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2008 which led directly to the formation of Place for Hope.

After ten years of experience and hard work, we are delighted that our relationship with the Ministries Council remains strong and focussed. Our regular meetings with key personnel ensure that our service delivery is designed to meet the real needs of clergy, leaders and congregations, as well as staff teams navigating transition, change and conflict. We are looking forward, in the next ten years, to developing our support services, and to deepening our analysis of conflict and change in our churches.

In addition to our core services of coaching, mediation and training, we are pleased that in 2017/2018 we have established a relationship with the World Mission Council of the Church of Scotland, delivering training first in Nairobi and then in Scotland to a group of church leaders from the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan and Sudan. The context in which these Christian leaders are working is one of protracted and often violent conflict. We have been humbled to learn with these dear colleagues as they strive to bring peace to a war-torn country, and to live true to the healing and reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ.



The Church of Scotland

Participants in training for  
the Presbyterian Church  
of South Sudan and Sudan



DO WHAT IS GOOD;  
SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT  
PSALM 34:14

*"It is always daunting to go into a setting with ministers and congregations who find themselves in challenging times: I have been pleased to see people begin to communicate better together. The differences may still be evident and there may not be a complete transformation at the end of the process but there has always been an improvement in levels of communication."*

**Elisabeth Spence, Practitioner for Place for Hope**

# Reconciling Relationships

...working in partnerships

## Positive Working Together - Methodist Church UK

Positive Working Together outlines the commitment the Methodist Church is making to respond to bullying, harassment and conflict. Over the last year, Place for Hope has developed and run two pilot programmes for the Methodist Church in a newly accredited six-day Intermediate Training course titled Faith in Change and Conflict. The pilot has been well received by participants (19 in total) and an agreement is now in place to run the course annually at Cliff College.

During this period, two Train the Trainer residential programmes were also delivered in the new one-day course titled Bullying and Harassment - Moving towards Dignity and Respect. 22 participants have now been trained to have the skills and confidence needed to deliver this one-day course throughout the Methodist Connexion.

*"I have enjoyed the gentleness and graciousness of your facilitators"*

*"I have been moved by the atmosphere of trust, joy and friendship formed through the course"*

The **Methodist** Church 



# Reconciling Relationships

...working in partnerships

## Reconcilers Together

Place for Hope is delighted to be a supporting partner of Reconcilers Together, an ecumenical network of Christian organisations across the UK and Ireland. Our shared mission is to inspire and equip Christian leaders to be a reconciling presence in their churches and communities. We do this through our online resources and a fully funded six-month leadership training programme: Journey of Hope.

[www.reconcilerstogether.co.uk](http://www.reconcilerstogether.co.uk)



## United Reformed Church Listening and Reconciliation Service

We continue to support the development of a Listening and Reconciliation Service pioneered by the URC Northerly Synods through regular training for their team of 12 Practitioners, and support as this crucial service expands.







*"One of the most useful days  
I have spent in ministry"*

Set Training participant,  
October 2017

*"Identifying how easily conflict can escalate and being helped to see ways to break the spiral, was so helpful. I left the day with greater insight and the building blocks with which to practice fostering more creative ways of dealing with disagreement."*

Susan Brown,  
Moderator of the General Assembly  
of the Church of Scotland



# Reconciling Relationships

...working in partnerships

## Just Peace Partnership

This network of eight faith-inspired organisations hosts workshops on dialogue, theology and peace, inter faith work and conflict transformation at the annual Solas Festival ([www.solasfestival.co.uk](http://www.solasfestival.co.uk)). In 2018 we will be running workshops on 'War and Peace: what keeps you going in your soul in times of conflict?' and 'Beyond Borders: interfaith conversations'.



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## Spirituality of Conflict ([www.spiritualityofconflict.com](http://www.spiritualityofconflict.com))

A network of six peace-focussed agencies from across the UK and Ireland, this partnership, inspired by the Corrymeela Community, hosts a web resource dedicated to reading the gospel texts through the lens of conflict and reading conflict through the lens of the gospel texts. Two of our Practitioners are actively involved in generating new material for this resource.



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# Reconciling Relationships

...through our team

As a community of people committed to the art of peacebuilding, we seek to value and enrich the contribution and gifts of everyone involved with Place for Hope.

Our community is dispersed throughout Scotland and northern England. Staff and volunteers work from home, coming together within the central belt of Scotland for regular staff meetings and bi-annual CPD. Staff use cloud based technology and video conferencing to communicate well and work collaboratively.

## Practitioner team

To deliver our services, we are privileged to have a highly trained, multi-denominational and multi-faith team of 23 volunteer Practitioners who have expertise in mediation, training and facilitation. Drawn from diverse backgrounds, each member has a personal faith and is dedicated to the art of 'navigating conflict and hosting group dialogues.' We deeply value and affirm the great skill and time commitment our volunteer Practitioners offer to make the work of Place for Hope possible. Training, Continuing Professional Development, and supervision ensure that our Practitioners offer a consistent and high-quality of service.

Preparation began for a further 15 people to undergo our six-day Faith in Change and Conflict training programme in 2018, followed by two skills assessment days, with a view to joining the Practitioner team. The programme covers key aspects of personal development, conflict and mediation skills, facilitation skills and working in a faith context, concluding with assessment and commissioning.

## Staff team

Practitioners are supported by our staff team:

Natalie Barrett, Communications and Client Care Manager

Helen Boothroyd, Business Development Manager

Ruth Harvey, Director

Deirdre McAuley, Associate Director

Abdul Rahim, Lead Trainer, Positive Working Together Programme

Neil Wykes, Administration and Finance Manager

## Trustees, Patrons and Supervisors

We are grateful to our Trustees who develop strategy, provide governance and oversee staff support, our Patrons who offer wisdom, companionship and connections to help shape, endorse and promote the work and our Supervisors who help equip and support our Practitioners to a professional standard.

## Consultants and Service Providers

As a small charity we rely on consultants in the areas of Human Resources, Accounting, Communications and some core administrative tasks. We remain grateful to all who support us in this way.

# Reconciling Relationships

...a seminar

On Tuesday 3rd October 2017, 47 delegates met in the airy space of the Mews in central Edinburgh to share reflections, visions and hopes for 'Reconciling Relationships'. Place for Hope reaches its tenth anniversary in 2019, and talk of a conference, to mirror the founding conference of Place for Hope at Aviemore in 2009, built the foundation for this seminar.

We were delighted with the interest in our event from the core constituency of Place for Hope, namely faith-based organisations seeking support in the art of conflict transformation, along with support from partners in interfaith, civic and secular agencies.

From the beginning of our planning process we recognised the synergy in such a seminar at a time when there is so much concern about the fragmentation of church and society. In addition, we were keen to celebrate the core value of partnership working which Place for Hope engenders, and were delighted to see so many of our partner agencies around the tables at the Mews.

We were particularly delighted to welcome David Brubaker, joining us via video conferencing from his office at the Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia where he directs the MBA Program and serves as Associate Professor of Organizational Studies in the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. David has been a good friend of Place for Hope since attending the Aviemore Conference as a speaker and workshop leader and has since become one of the Place for Hope Patrons.

A full report, including a video of David Brubaker's input, can be found at [www.placeforhope.org.uk/blog/reconciling-relationships-seminar-report](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/blog/reconciling-relationships-seminar-report)



*"We were so grateful for all you did with us and for us. You did all that was asked and more and demonstrated that Place for Hope is a wonderful resource for the churches".*

Recipient of tailored training,  
January 2018

# Reconciling Relationships

...with you

## Help your community in crisis

If you are aware of conflict or difficulty within your faith community, and would appreciate some support, please get in touch and see if we can help.

## Nurture your community

Encourage your church or faith group to host a community dialogue. Invite us to deliver a workshop or training session.

## Develop your skills

Join one of our learning programmes to help you understand and navigate conflict.

## Stay connected

Join our Place for Hope Peacemakers Network, visit our website and follow our social media channels to receive news about upcoming events, training and helpful articles.

## Be a champion and enabler

Help us promote peacebuilding and the work of Place for Hope by telling others about us.

## Annual Accounts 2017/2018

Our full annual accounts can be found at:  
[www.placeforhope.org.uk/about/key-documents](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/about/key-documents)

## For more information or to join our mailing list:

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Place for Hope receives funding from the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland to provide specific training and support. Place for Hope is available to work with different denominations and faiths. Costs may be applicable.