

# feedback about

## the bible year



### AIM

In the document we aim to discuss the importance of feedback to the development of the Vision4life process, providing some examples of feedback received so far to help you to develop the process in your church and for us to develop it nationally.

### **Vision4life is what you make it.**

Therefore, we need to know what you think about Vision4life.

You can visit the website and use the 'Contact us' link to send in your comments.

You can join a Forum and contribute to the discussions.

However, evaluation and feedback are two very important parts of the Vision4life process.

### EVALUATION

This is a vital part of all the Vision4life activities. You will notice three simple questions at the end of all the downloadable documents from the website. Here they are again to remind you:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

They are designed simply to help you

- reflect on what happened
- decide what to do next.

No one can guarantee success with any activity the first time, or even after several attempts. Evaluation will help the whole group to think about how it is working, own their own contribution to the process and decide where to go from here. Please try not to overlook evaluation.

### FEEDBACK SO FAR

Please try to send in your responses and any feedback you have so that we can use this to make the Vision4life process collaborative. Here are some of the comments received so far and some responses.

### **'Some of the material in the booklets is a bit thin'**

The booklets are only part of the resources of Vision4life. More material is provided on the website. If you do not have access to this yourself, then try to collaborate with someone else who has. This could be someone else from the group who is good at websites but not so confident at leading groups, someone from another church through your local support network or Synod, someone next door or a family member or friend. Be creative but get a

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look at all the material if you can. Furthermore, you need not confine yourself to the Vision4life website. We suggest links to others. Any material that provides an opportunity to be 'transformed by the Bible' is potential Vision4life Bible Year material. Remember to tell us about anything you think is useful.

### **'We were looking for more things for Advent and Christmas'**

We are sorry that due to timing problems we had difficulty getting all of the Advent and Christmas material up in good time. We hope that won't put you off planning ahead to use it next year.

### **'We can't find what we are looking for'**

Please get in touch with us if there is something particular you would like to see on the website.

### **'We have produced an activity and would like to contribute it for others to use'**

We hoped you would. So please send it in and the co-ordinator will review it and see in what way it could be used. We cannot guarantee to use everything you send in, but we will try our best to use things that are offered. It is a question of balance of material and accessibility. If we do use your material we will try to let you know and your contribution will be acknowledged. Original material suits our needs best. Material that is copyright to others cannot be used without permission of the copyright holder. Whilst we can suggest people look at other things we cannot put this kind of material directly onto the website.

### **EAVESDROPPING ON LOCAL GROUPS**

Here are some things overheard in local Vision4life conversations. Perhaps they also came up in your group.

### **'I need to know what we're going to talk about in advance so I can do some homework'.**

This comment seems to be about the confidence of the participants. We are very aware that many ordinary people do not feel confident about using the Bible. One of the founding principles of the Bible Year is the need to encourage and empower people so that they feel confident enough. Sometimes this lowered confidence is linked to patterns of ministry and group work that have happened in the past. The leadership team may need to spend some time thinking through who will lead and how. The Bible Year is not just about gaining more Bible knowledge, something offered by many approaches to the Bible, but about gaining confidence in using what you already have. So, theoretically, it is not about doing loads of homework before the session so that you don't feel foolish in front of everyone else. If this is what is happening, then it is the way the group is facilitated that needs to be addressed.

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### **'It felt like I was back at school with a patronising teacher'**

Not everyone has had positive previous learning experiences, whether of the Bible or other things. These less than positive experiences can feed into our current learning opportunities making it hard to shake off our sense of inadequacy. The style of a particular leader may bring back unpleasant memories. Try to accept feedback positively for what it teaches you about yourself and about the group. As a leadership team try to think about how to increase the positive learning opportunities for everyone. This is a tall order and there may still be those who choose not to take part because of their particular vulnerabilities. This is why we try to provide a menu of different material for the Bible Year, not all of which is about sitting down in a group and talking about the Bible. Some folks might prefer a hands-on activity.

### **'You aren't going to make us talk to each other in church like that every week, are you?'**

When introducing something new into weekly worship, including the opportunity for people to talk to each other about the Bible, it is always possible that some folks will find this more difficult than others. Comments like this usually indicate some particular anxiety. Listen again and try to find out what this could be. Based on years of experience of church culture there may be things some find more or less acceptable in worship whilst others welcome formality or informality in different ways. It can be helpful to have contrasting styles in a leadership team so that folks get a range of different approaches. However, try to avoid stereotypes if you can. Equally it can help to pace the introduction of strategies that run somewhat counter-cultural to the group with whom you are working. Try not to have 'talking to each other' every week to begin with if this is going to be too far outside the group's comfort zone. Ease them into it. Be persistent but mindful.

### **HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?**

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group about general or website V4L issues via the website or at [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

If you have comments and particularly contributions to the bible year, you can email the V4L Bible Year coordinator Janet Lees via [bible@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:bible@vision4life.org.uk)

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about future V4L years you can email:

Year 2 – Transformed through Prayer: [prayer@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:prayer@vision4life.org.uk)

Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: [evangelism@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:evangelism@vision4life.org.uk)