

Comments from past participants:

A well run course - potentially life changing.

Rev. Phil Stone, Anglican Area Dean, London

This course is an invaluable resource for all church leaders and for the health and well being of churches. It offers a challenging opportunity to examine self - to self differentiate and see the implications for healing within the system.

Rev. Maureen Wilson, URC minister, Scotland

The course provides a wonderful opportunity to find a way into understanding family systems and the rich potential it offers to anyone in Christian leadership.

Rev. Nigel Coles, Baptist senior regional minister, Bristol

The course gives an insight into the characteristic ways in which congregations work and what it means to be a leader in the midst of anxiety.

Rev. Madeleine Andrews, Methodist superintendent minister, London

An excellent introduction to Bowen theory and its relevance to leadership in the church. The beginning of a journey of discovery.

Very Rev. Chris Potter, Dean of St Asaph Cathedral, Wales

This training has completely revolutionised most of my basic assumptions about human relationships. If only I'd done it 30 years ago!

Liz Holdsworth, Anglican ministry development adviser, Northampton

This is a transformative course enriched by a high quality of engagement and sharing, well and sensitively led. Inspirational!

David Ramsay, Roman Catholic consultant and facilitator, Scotland

I gained a greater understanding of conflict and the surprising correlations between conflict in the family of origin and in the congregation.

Rev. Pat Quint, Anglican parish priest, Hertfordshire

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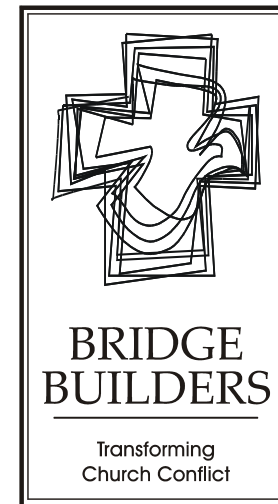
Church Leadership and Family Systems

2-5 June 2009

London Mennonite Centre

led by

Richard Blackburn



This course in *Church Leadership and Family Systems* at the **London Mennonite Centre** is designed to enhance the ability of participants to function as mature leaders within their churches. It provides a safe forum for processing challenging situations in ministry, while also facilitating reflection on a way of thinking about the human condition which has implications for all aspects of life. Following successful courses since 2005, Bridge Builders is pleased to continue to offer the course in 2009.

Since the publication of *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, by Dr Edwin Friedman, church leaders have found an understanding of Bowen family systems theory a valuable tool for understanding congregational systems. Dr Murray Bowen understood families as emotional systems impacted by two key factors: the level of anxiety within the system and the level of differentiation of family members. This course explores the relevance of Bowen's ideas for congregations and their leaders.

With today's rising level of anxiety in society and its resulting impact on families, such anxiety will affect the church with increasing intensity in the years ahead. The resulting heightened pressures in congregations and the increasing demands which that places on clergy make it vital that leaders step back occasionally from the fray to assess their own capacity to manage themselves in a calmer, more differentiated way. This course provides an opportunity for such reflection, in the light of new learning.

Church Leadership and Family Systems

2-5 June 2009 at the London Mennonite Centre

The opening day will be largely didactic, focusing on the basic concepts of Bowen family systems theory. Most of the other mornings will offer further presentations by Richard Blackburn as well as videotape input from Murray Bowen and Edwin Friedman. The other sessions will be clinical in format. On the second afternoon participants will divide into small groups to explore their own family of origin issues with guidance from a facilitator perspective. Other clinical sessions include presentation of case studies by participants from their own ministry or work setting, followed by opportunity for feedback and consultation. Each day will open with prayer and worship.

The course is intensive, so evening commitments are best avoided.

Presenter

Richard Blackburn is Executive Director of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, Chicago, USA. He has broad experience as a trainer, mediator, and consultant with conflicted churches and their leaders. The congregational intervention model he has developed represents a transformational approach, placed within the context of Bowen family systems theory. For several years he participated in Edwin Friedman's *Postgraduate Clergy Seminar in Family Emotional Process* and the Georgetown Family Center's *Postgraduate Program in Family Systems Theory and Its Applications*.

Meals and Accommodation

A main meal and refreshments will be provided each day, with an additional evening meal on Tuesday. Participants will need to arrange their own accommodation and other meals. Contact the London Mennonite Centre if you need help in finding accommodation.

Cost and Application

The cost for the course is £310 if your booking is received by 31 October 2008, or £350 thereafter. Precedence is given to participants sponsored by their church or organisation. Those on low incomes can apply for a bursary of £75, but these are limited. Training materials and a copy of the book *Extraordinary Relationships* by Roberta Gilbert (required course reading) are included in the price, as are refreshments and a main meal each day. Spaces are limited to a maximum of 16 in 2009, so do apply early.

To apply, return the enclosed application form with a cheque for £100 payable to *Bridge Builders*. The balance of the fee is due eight weeks before the start of the course. Once accepted, the £100 deposit is non-refundable. The full fee is owed if a place is cancelled within eight weeks of the course start date. Cheques will not be banked until acceptance onto the course.

Programme Overview

Tuesday 2 June 2009

11:00-11:15 *Opening worship*
11:15-12:45 Opening session on Bowen Family Systems Theory
12:45-1:45 *Lunch*
1:45-6:30 3 sessions on Bowen Family Systems Theory
6:30-7:30 *Dinner*

Wednesday 3 June 2009

9:15-9:30 *Opening worship*
9:30-12:45 2 sessions on Bowen Family Systems Theory
12:45-1:45 *Lunch*
1:45-5:15 2 sessions of Family of Origin Groups

Thursday 4 June 2009

9:15-9:30 *Opening worship*
9:30-12:45 2 sessions on Emotional Process & Congregational Systems
12:45-1:45 *Lunch*
1:45-5:15 2 sessions of Ministry Case Study Presentations
5:15-6:15 *Optional informal party*

Friday 5 June 2009

9:00-9:15 *Opening worship*
9:15-10:45 Session on Emotional Process and Congregational Systems
11:15-12:45 Ministry Case Study Presentations in smaller groups
12:45-1:00 Closing time in large group
1:00-2:00 *Lunch*

Concepts to be studied will include: triangles; differentiation of self; nuclear family emotional system and family projection process; multigenerational transmission process; sibling position; societal regression; and emotional cutoff. Reflection on such concepts will include implications for one's nuclear and extended family system, and the congregational family system.