

Uniting Church Resources for Baptism and/or Confirmation – what is recommended?

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1. *Belonging* Kit

Created in Australia for the Uniting Church, the *Belonging* kit is obtainable as a one-off purchase for groups that wish to use and adapt it. It comes with a ring binder and photocopy-friendly pages, plus a data CD and a music and story CD. Many faith communities find it is a great launching pad for preparing a series of encounters, studies and activities for those exploring their faith.

It covers 12 major topics of the Christian faith, with group session guidelines. *Belonging* also encourages the appointment of mentors and provides processes for mentoring sessions and other activities. There is also a journal for each participant (although this could also be provided locally – e.g. an exercise book). *Belonging continues to be widely used in Australia.*



Edited by Cheryl Lawrie.

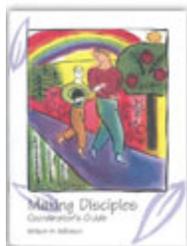
Orders available through MediaCom Education, SA – **1800 811 311** or at

<http://www.mediacom.org.au/shopping/shops/shop/index.php?Publisher=UC&ProductType=Book>

2. *Making Disciples*

Created in North America, by William H. Willimon, *Making Disciples* is a thirteen session confirmation program. It provides a Coordinator's Guide, Confirmand's Journal and Mentor support DVD. *Making Disciples* is also widely used in Australia. It may also be ordered through MediaCom Education, SA – **1800 811 311** or at:

<http://www.mediacom.org.au/shopping/shops/shop/index.php?qSearch=Making+Disciples&Go=GO>



3. *Introducing the Uniting Church in Australia* (to be released in late 2008)

Written by Andrew Dutney, this booklet is a highly readable introduction to the UCA which will also be very useful as a learning tool for adult Baptism/Confirmation groups. It has a concluding chapter of questions for discussion that are related to each of the topics on the nature, mission and theology of the UCA. It could be adapted for a variety of contexts. Also available from *MediaCom Education*, SA – **1800 811 311** or at:

<http://www.mediacom.org.au/shopping/shops/shop/index.php?qSearch=Introducing+the+Uniting+Church+in+Australia&Go=SEARCH>



4. *Becoming Disciples Process*

The Church acknowledges that this flexible process needs supporting resources. Dovetailing this process with the kinds of resources recommended above is a task that some Congregations and faith communities may wish to do for themselves, with the help of Presbytery and Synod staff where applicable.

The four phases (below) provide a neat framework for exploring the Christian faith with people.

Here is a very brief outline of the *Becoming Disciples* process:

For the church to hear again the command to “make disciples”, it first of all needs to hear again the call to follow Jesus in costly discipleship. The *Becoming Disciples* process therefore asks us to rethink what we are doing and the way we are doing it. We, too, need to be always on the path of conversion. We are on the same journey as the seekers we accompany. A well-established definition of evangelism is “one beggar showing another beggar where to find bread”.

The *Becoming Disciples* process offers a holistic way to do this. Here are 12 reasons why your congregation may find itself becoming enthusiastic about this process:

1. It addresses the widespread spiritual hunger of people today.
2. It provides a tried and tested pathway for nurturing disciples of Jesus.

3. It takes seriously the fact that evangelism is initiating people into the Reign of God.
4. It takes seriously the whole person. (It is not just providing information about Jesus, or the Christian life, or the church.)
5. It respects people as they are and takes seriously their stage of growth and their questions and issues.
6. It uses a wide range of learning styles.
7. It incorporates people into the ongoing life of a Christian community.
8. It helps congregations rediscover their central role of making disciples.
9. It uses the gifts and insights of many people in the congregation.
10. It is flexible and adaptable to any congregation.
11. It helps people discover their ministries.
12. It places baptism back in the centre of Christian life.

In essence, *Becoming Disciples* is a 4 phase process for people who want to explore the Christian faith. In this it follows the fourfold pattern we find in the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39): search, companionship, baptism, ongoing transformation.

The four phases are:

1. ***Touching the Edges*** – often called the **Inquiry Phase**
(Rite of Welcome)
2. ***Discovering the Riches*** – often called **Formation Phase**
(Rite of Calling)
3. ***Exploring the Depths*** – often called the **Candidacy Phase**
(Rite of Initiation)
4. ***Living the Life*** – often called the **Integration Phase**
(Rites of Reaffirmation)

More information about *Becoming Disciples* is available at:
<http://assembly.uca.org.au/resources/27-disciples.html>