

## Regional Inter-Denominational Learning Communities

Dear Partner

The **Eastern Region Training Partnership**, which your district/synod/diocese is one of nine members of, has agreed to fund an ecumenical regional **learning community for rural churches**. You are invited to **nominate a team** from a rural setting to participate in this two year innovative learning experience. In order to build local capacity you are also invited to **nominate an accompanier** to be trained as a guide for your rural team for the duration of the programme. They could act as a champion for the concept of learning communities in your district/synod/diocese using the materials developed.

The Regional Inter-Denominational Learning Community will commence with the first of four 36 hour gatherings at six month intervals on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> January 2016** at St Nicholas Centre, Ipswich. It is intended for **rural multi church groups**, either a benefice, part of a circuit or a partnership church. The learning community will have the **common goal of discerning and bringing new growth in rural settings**.



ERTP is working with **The Arthur Rank Centre** the ecumenical resource centre for rural churches. They have developed this concept via the formation of **Germinate Groups** with assistance from Lead Academy and CPAS. This is ideal for our largely rural region where commitment to working with people from across denominations is essential.

In determining the **appropriate team** of four to nominate they need to be committed to **five key attributes**. Able to be both a teacher and learner; seek principles behind underlying principles, be fully present for the 36 hours of each gathering, be open to change and be committed to honest conversations. In addition they should be willing to share their learning with others in your Diocese/Synod/District. It is likely that each team will contain a mixture of leaders and influences and be both lay leaders and ministers.

In determining the **appropriate accompanier** they need to share a commitment to the key attributes, have good facilitation skills; a focus on the development of the mission of the local church alongside the ministry development of individuals and the scope to develop the concept of learning communities appropriately in your context. They may be asked to assist with a second regional learning community for mid sized churches commencing in 2017.

### **The next step**

Each partner is asked to have nominated their team and accompanier with Revd Dave Gardner chair of ERTP RIDLC Project Team **by the end of September 2015**.

ERTP will cover the costs of facilitation, all materials, all refreshments and meals (excluding breakfast). The only costs to be born either by the local church or their denomination sponsor will be for accommodation (one night B&B) and travel costs. Similarly the only costs for the training of the nominated facilitator to be born by the denominational partner will be for their travel costs and B&B accommodation.

**Dates** for the Learning Community Gatherings are:

**29-30<sup>th</sup> January** and **17-18<sup>th</sup> June 2016;**                      **27-28<sup>th</sup> January** and **16-17<sup>th</sup> June 2017.**

All sessions will be from 10.30am on Friday to 4.30pm on Saturday and held at St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ.

A training day for accompaniers will be held on **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 10.30 – 1.30pm** including lunch at the same venue.

ERTP will be considering the possibility of a second Regional Inter denominational Learning Community for **mid sized/market town churches** probably commencing in 2017.

More information is contained on the enclosed sheets for the churches and accompanier. You can contact me directly via the details below and also visit the The Arthur Rank Website. <http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/mission-and-ministry/germinate>

Yours sincerely

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