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*God and the Girlguiding Promise: A Study of the  
Extent to which the Spiritual Dimension of the  
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Engage with Local Girlguiding Units.*

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**God and the Girlguiding Promise:**

A Study of the Extent to which the Spiritual Dimension of the Girlguiding Promise could Provide a Suitable Vehicle for Mission and Ministry for Churches Seeking to Engage with Local Girlguiding Units.

A thesis  
submitted for the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
in Durham University  
Department of Theology and Religion  
By  
Paulette Rose-Mary de Garis Gower

2021

## **Abstract**

Although, not religious, Girlguiding is a spiritual organisation, which has a commitment to helping each girl 'develop her beliefs' through the Promise, which all members make. This thesis explores how the Guiding Promise provides an opportunity for churches to be involved with local Units of Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers. As part of a church's mission and ministry it recommends approaches they can use to build up relationships with Units and opportunities they could take to help the girls on their spiritual journey. This thesis uses a Convergent Parallel mixed methods approach to explore the relationship between one Anglican church and a local Guide Unit. The findings are put into a wider context through an Online Survey answered by leaders from all Girlguiding UK regions and countries. The results show that while many churches are looking at ways of addressing the decline of children in their congregations, they are unaware of the potential of 50,000 girls who may be meeting weekly on their premises. Moreover, 77% of Guiding leaders would welcome further opportunities to engage with their local church, yet too often they are made to feel unwanted and ignored. We live in a society where the happiness of girls has decreased from 41% to 25% in the last 10 years and 59% say social media is a main cause of stress.<sup>1</sup> This study concludes that creating partnerships with Guiding Units is not just about churches helping girls fulfil the spiritual dimension of the Promise. It is an opportunity to equip girls with the spiritual tools and resources to help them as they grow up as part of 'Generation Z' and to show them the difference, that having a faith makes to your life.

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<sup>1</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'We see the Big Picture: Girls' Attitude Survey 2018', 19-20  
<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2018.pdf> (17 April 2019)

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**Statement of Copyright**

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## **Chapter 1            Introduction**

*I Promise that I will do my best:  
To be true to myself and develop my beliefs,  
To serve the Queen and my community,  
To help other people and to keep the Guide Law.<sup>2</sup>*

### **1.1     Context**

It was in my local Methodist church, that Gillian<sup>3</sup> asked whether I wanted to join Brownies.<sup>4</sup> Over forty years later I am now a Vicar in the Anglican church in Wales and still an active member of Girlguiding UK.

With over half a million members, Girlguiding UK is the largest youth organisation in the United Kingdom.<sup>5</sup> From five-year-old Rainbows to those who have retired from running a Unit but are still active, they are part of the 'World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts' (WAGGGS). This is largest organisation for women and girls in the world, with over 10 million members in 150 countries.<sup>6</sup> Core to each member country are the Law and Promise. Although the wording maybe different, each must be based around the three key elements of 'spiritual values, personal development and commitment to helping others.'<sup>7</sup>

Despite having never been a Christian organisation, traditionally in the United Kingdom, the spiritual dimension of the Guiding Promise has been interpreted as Christianity and fulfilled by having prayers in a Unit meeting and attending church services. As I began to explore my thesis there were growing concerns

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<sup>2</sup> Girlguiding Promise from September 2013

<sup>3</sup> Names have been changed throughout to protect identity

<sup>4</sup> Brownies are the Girlguiding UK Section for girls aged 7-10

<sup>5</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'About Us', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/about-us/> (7 May 2018)

<sup>6</sup> WAGGGS, 'What We Do', <https://www.waggggs.org/en/what-we-do/> (22 May 2017)

<sup>7</sup> WAGGGS, 'About Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting', <http://wagggsworld.org/en/about/guidingscouting> (24 August 2020)

that such activities were no longer relevant. Furthermore, the spiritual dimension of the Promise as ‘Love my God’ was giving the wrong impression of what Guiding was.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.1.1 Study Rationale

I offer to this study my perspective as an ordained female Anglican minister and an experienced Guiding leader. As a Guiding leader and Christian minister, I was challenged to consider the place of God in the Promise and how churches could help girls explore what this meant to them. My initial thinking took place just as the wording of the Promise changed (Figure 1.1).

<b>Girlguiding Promise 1994-2013</b>	<b>Girlguiding Promise 2013-Present</b>
<p>I Promise that I will do my best:</p> <p><b>To love my God</b></p> <p>To serve the Queen and my country To help other people and To keep the Guide Law.</p>	<p>I Promise that I will do my best:</p> <p><b>To be true to myself and develop my beliefs,</b></p> <p>To serve the Queen and my community, To help other people and To keep the Guide Law.</p>

**Figure 1.1: Changes to the Girlguiding Promise with the Spiritual Dimension in Bold**

Significantly for this study was the change in the spiritual dimension, with ‘to love my God’ becoming, ‘to be true to myself and develop my beliefs.’ The word God no longer being used was interpreted by some as a victory for secularisation.<sup>9</sup> However, instead of that I believed that the new wording could provide opportunities for girls to actively engage in exploring the spiritual

<sup>8</sup> Guide Association, *Background and Concepts of the Promise and Law for Trainers*, (London: The Guide Association, 2013), 2

<sup>9</sup> Jonathan Wynne-Jones, ‘Girl guides set to drop oath to God in bow to secularists’, *The Daily Telegraph*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/8901378/Girl-guides-set-to-drop-oath-to-God-in-bow-to-secularists.html> (5 June 2012)

dimension in their lives. Furthermore, if done appropriately, such exploration, could be part of the mission and ministry of a church.

My thinking also coincided with the latest Church in Wales review. In 2012 the publication of the 'Harris Report' highlighted the need to address the absence of children and young people in churches.<sup>10</sup> This motivated a clergy colleague to think about encouraging more families to attend his church. Our subsequent discussion showed he was totally unaware that over 90 children attended the Rainbow Unit, two Brownie Units and Guide Unit that met weekly in his church halls. This coupled with the change to the wording of the Promise heightened the relevance of this research.

#### *1.1.2 Research Questions*

With the challenges that churches face trying to increase the number of children and young people, the potential not only of having a group of children meeting regularly on their premises, but also ones who are willing to explore the spiritual dimension to their lives, I believe, has been overlooked.

God and the Girlguiding Promise is a study of the extent to which the Spiritual dimension of the Guiding Promise could provide a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry for churches seeking to engage with local Guiding Units. Having established the focus of the study the primary research question asks, '*is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*'

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<sup>10</sup> Church in Wales, 'The Church in Wales Review, July 2012', (The Harris report), 11-12, <http://s3.amazonaws.com/cinw/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Church-in-Wales-review-English.pdf> (6 April 2018)



To provide focus three supplementary research questions ask:

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*
- iii) How can the spiritual dimension of the Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*

### **1.1.3 Study Focus**

The nature of the questions suggested adopting a practical theological approach. Having considered the epistemological and methodological debates within it, to justify my chosen methodology. I decided that a 'mixed methods' approach would be most suitable. With data being gathered through participant observation, interviews, focus groups and surveys, systematic thematic analysis could then be carried out using NVivo 12.<sup>11</sup>

I concentrated on the links between Guiding Units within the Girlguiding County of Clwyd and the Church in Wales Anglican Diocese of St Asaph, where I live. To make the study more manageable within the time frame I planned to work with one church and an associated Guiding Unit.

Initially, I felt that the church and Unit should be outside my Parish. However, this changed when following the publication of the 'Harris Report' the Church in Wales decided to change its structure, with churches to become part of wider Ministry Areas<sup>12</sup> (or Mission Areas as the Diocese of St Asaph decided to call them).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> QSR International (1999) NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software

<sup>12</sup>The Church in Wales, '2020 Ministry Areas-August 2013', <http://www.Churchinwales.org.uk/structure/representative-body/publications/downloads/review/> (16 December 2017)

Such changes brought about a time of uncertainty and this coupled with several changes among clergy and Guiding Unit leadership meant that the original Parishes and Units approached felt participation was no longer viable. Furthermore, I was appointed as vicar to the Parish of Holy Trinity Gwersyllt and decided to work with Holy Trinity church and the local Summerhill Guide Unit.

## **1.2 Outline of Thesis**

### *Chapter 2: Literature Review*

Having determined my research questions, in Chapter 2 I undertake a literature review relating to the nature of Guiding and its Promise. This was potentially a huge area and beyond the scope of this study to explore fully. Therefore, the literature review focuses on the development of the spiritual dimension of Guiding and children's spirituality.

The chapter begins with an overview of research relating to Guiding including Allen Warren and Tammy Proctor's work, from which I demonstrated the lack of research, especially into the spiritual dimension of the Guiding Promise (2.1).

The next part of the chapter focuses on how Robert Baden-Powell's beliefs, that a religious basis to your life was foundational to a person's development shaped the spiritual foundation of Guiding (2.2). I draw attention to the importance to Baden-Powell of 'nature study' as a way of pointing young people towards God and also the theme of inclusivity which I saw as a thread running through the

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<sup>13</sup> In St Asaph, Mission Areas now combine all the original Parishes in a Deanery into one Parish (Mission Area), with the originally boundaries between them dissolved. However, the research for this study was carried out before the Parish of Gwersyllt became part of the Alyn Mission Area (Nov 2016). Therefore, in this study I have retained the word Parish in its original context as it is a term more widely understood.

development of the spiritual dimension of the Promise. Both of which also created tension and division (2.3). I show how the thread of inclusivity moved from its inter-denominational foundation, through to growing ecumenism (2.4) and multi faith (2.5). I explain how this broadening of inclusivity contributed to Girlguiding UK re-evaluating the spiritual dimension of the Promise. And in 1994 changing it from 'do my duty to God' to 'love my God'. The chapter then explores how from the 1970s a growing decline in church attendance reinforced the secularisation thesis. I demonstrate how work by David Hay and Nick Spencer challenged this, showing that spirituality was still an important part of people's lives. The importance of spirituality was also highlighted by the World Girlguiding Association, WAGGGS (2.6).

I show how such factors influenced Girlguiding UK to change their focus from religion to spirituality, which became a core part of the programme. Moving into the new millennium I explore the change from religion to spiritual in other areas of society, including critically evaluating Paul Heelas, Linda Woodhead and Karin Tusting's research in Kendal, which included the significant theme of no-religion. I also explore the impact of generation Y (2.7) I explain how all these contributed to a further re-evaluation of the spiritual dimension of the Promise and its change in 2013 from 'to Love my God' to 'be true to myself and develop my beliefs. I also detail how such a radical change reinforced misconceptions that Girlguiding 'had been a Christian organisation' and how Guiding leaders found it more difficult to understand what 'develop my beliefs' actually meant (2.8).

With the importance placed by Guiding on each girl exploring her spiritual beliefs this chapter moves on to explore what spirituality is. Having considered aspects of transcendence, missiology and journey I come to a definition of spirituality for this study as, *'a journey, in relationship with others which helps an individual develop their inner life, in order to make a difference to themselves and others.'* (2.9).

The final part of the chapter establishes the place of spirituality in children's lives through the exploration of 3 key questions and the debates surrounding them (2.10). In 'Can children have spiritual experiences?' I consider the influence of Ronald Goldman and the pioneering work of David Hay and Rebecca Nye (2.11). In exploring 'How is children's spiritual development understood?' I reveal the controversy around whether children's spiritual development needs to be understood in terms of a structured stage development as James Fowler advocates or cultural phenomenon as Hay and Nye would argue (2.12) The final debate surrounds 'How can spirituality be developed in children?' Here Adrian Thatcher argues that it is meaningless with the context of a religion, where Hay and Nye demonstrate its innate character (2.13). The chapter finishes with a summary (2.14).

### *Chapter 3: Methodology*

This chapter explains the chosen methodology and method selected to answer the research questions. It also recognises how the work of ethnographers including Mary McClintock Fulkerson, Tanya Luhrmann and Anabel Inge influenced my thinking, by providing examples of research within faith communities.

Through considering some of the epistemological and methodological debates surrounding it, the chapter begins by justifying Praxis interpreted through the Pastoral Cycle as the chosen methodology (3.1). It then explains how the Pastoral Cycle was adapted using Richard Osmer's four key questions, and the importance to me of Osmer's concept of 'Priestly Listening,' (3.2). The chapter moves on to explain the rationale behind choosing the Convergent Parallel mixed methods approach as the central research strategy (3.3). Due to the changes in circumstances, I defend why I altered my choice of church and Guiding Unit to my new Parish and how this led me to wrestle with the tensions of the researcher as insider or outsider (3.4). As part of this I develop a model of concentric circles of involvement. Although the work of Donald Weibe and others provided me with some helpful perspectives, I argue that there is a point where to become a full insider of the Christian faith you need to be a practicing believer.

The chapter moves to outline the qualitative aspects of the research, explaining the rationale for the Participant Observation which included the semi-structured interviews. I also state the ethical considerations I observed to make sure that best practice would be followed by for these and within the Guide Focus Groups. I detail how NVivo was used to analyse information from the Interviews, Focus Group notes and Survey comments, by following the three steps of: familiarisation with the data, initial coding and generating themes (3.5). The chapter continues with an explanation of the quantitative methods and the justification for my choice of the Intrinsic Spiritual Scale to measure the both spirituality of the interviewees and for use within the Guide Focus Groups (3.6). I conclude the chapter by drawing attention to my personal bias through the

three aspects of my Christian faith, power and privilege as a vicar and experience as a Guiding leader, (3.7) before a final summary (3.8).

#### *Chapter 4: Pilot Study*

The Pilot Study had the twin objectives of identifying potential churches and associated Guiding Units for the Participant Observation phase and secondly to establish suitable questions and a core set of answers which could be used in the construction of the Online Survey.

The chapter begins with an overview of the Pilot Study (4.1). It was designed as two short self-completion questionnaires given out to Anglican clergy and Guiding leaders in North Wales. Limitations to the Pilot Study were recognised, especially the choice of recipients and their restricted geographical location. It goes on to look at the results obtained (4.2) before considering their implications (4.3). Reference is made to how the information was used to identify potential partners for the Participant Observation phase and how it shaped the Online Survey (4.4). It also raised the themes of Remembrance Sunday, Developing Relationships and Clergy Attitude (4.5). The chapter concludes by drawing attention to my surprise at the disinterest and lack of knowledge, clergy had about Guiding Units who met in their church halls (4.6).

#### *Chapter 5: Participant Observation*

To answer all the research questions, it was important to develop an understanding of the community in which Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides were situated. This chapter provides the details of This Participant Observation phase which was carried out in three parts:

The chapter begins with an outline of this phase of the research (5.1) including the use of Participant Observation. It then moves to give an overview of the Information Gathering phase (5.2). This was carried out over a period of 8 months and involved gaining an understanding of the community in which Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides were situated, especially the activities available for children. It includes more detail about the church and its mission and ministry (5.3) and the work of Summerhill Guides (5.4).

The chapter then outlines the process for the semi-structured interviews. It details the criteria used for selecting the interviewees and the process of conducting the interviews. These involved the three Guide leaders and three members of the church PCC. All of whom the Intrinsic Spiritual Scale revealed as having a strong and active Christian faith (5.5). The chapter moves to analysis of the interviews using NVivo. Here 78 different nodes were identified and from these the key themes of themes of 'Church and Unit Links', 'Serving the Community', 'The Gospel in Action', 'Dispelling the Myths' and 'Develop my Beliefs' were identified (5.6). The chapter concludes with a reflection on why all the interviewees had come up with similar community-based ideas and the influence my ministry may have had on them (5.7), before looking back at the research questions and drawing some final conclusions (5.8).

#### *Chapter 6: Guide Focus Groups*

This chapter details how I used 4 Guide Focus Groups to answer the question 'How may the Girlguiding Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?' The chapter begins by explaining the design and development of the Focus Group activity (6.1). This was designed around a snakes and ladders board and

included sweets (6.2). The core of the game were 23 statement cards each starting 'I believe that...' (6.3).

The first set of 6 statements relating to spirituality were taken from Intrinsic Spirituality Scale. The second set of statements related to faith and belief were designed to reflect the six big question areas of God, Destiny, Suffering, Spiritual Realm, Purpose and The Universe, which had been identified by Nick Spencer's 'Beyond the Fringe' Research.' The final set of 8 statements related both to topical issues, such as euthanasia and celebrity status, and statements of morality and choice. Additional Icebreaker Statements (e.g. everyone should receive an extra sweet) were used to help the Guides relax and give them a chance to give an opinion in an easy way.

The chapter moves on to explain how the game was trialled with my own Guide Unit and necessary modifications made (6.3). It then looks at how the activity was run, including the confidentiality and child protection procedures put in place (6.4). These included permission from Parents and Guides and a written risk assessment. I also hold current Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks for both Girlguiding UK and The Church in Wales and have been trained in Safeguarding by both organisations.

The chapter goes on to analyse the results (6.8) and looks at them through three identified overarching themes of 'decision making,' (6.5), 'change' (6.6), and 'religious beliefs' (6.7). The chapter critically reflects on the process especially the limitations and problems raised relating to the 'Time', 'Type of Activity', 'Recording Method' and 'Tensions between being a researcher and



Guiding leader' (6.9). It then highlights four areas drawn from the analysis of 'Generation Z', 'no-religion,' 'prayer' and the 'ability to reflect' and uses other areas of the human sciences, to help gain an understanding of what may have been behind the Guides' thinking. The chapter finishes with a final summary (6.11), which draws together the findings from the chapter. It concludes that, the Focus Groups showed that Guides were interested in looking at their beliefs and motivated to discuss their thinking.

#### *Chapter 7: Online Survey*

This chapter explains the Survey and analyses the results from Guiding leaders across the UK. This chapter reveals the results of the online Survey and provides a wider context in which the results from the Participant Observation can be seen in relation to the research questions:

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Guiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Guiding Units be developed?*

It begins with the rationale for using an online Survey (7.1) prior to describing the five stages of its development and launch (7.2). Here I found Valerie Sue and Lois Ritter's work particularly helpful. The Survey was constructed using 'SurveyMonkey' and launched by email to 29 church leaders and 31 Guide leaders. An initial overview of the results highlighted the worrying lack of response from church leaders (7.3).

With 97% Guiding leaders the data was skewed, and I needed to decide how to proceed. Initial reflection indicated that a change to the recruitment process was unlikely to make much difference. Alternatively, the responses provided rich data and it was decided to just use the Guiding perspective. This was 251

responses covering all Girlguiding UK regions and countries, representing 0.3% of Guiding leaders and 490 Units, 68% of whom met on church premises.

The quantitative data and themes from NVivo were combined to provide a thematic analysis of the results (7.4, 7.5), and significant findings noted, especially the negative impact of some church leaders. The chapter concludes by drawing together themes of 'The involvement of church leaders' and the conflict between the espoused 'non-religious ethos of Guiding' and the operative belief of 74% of Guiding leaders who wanted to develop the relationship (7.6). In its conclusion it highlights the importance of leaders being made to feel wanted, a positive relationship with clergy, child friendly services and support with the Promise, within the bounds of the Guiding ethos.

#### *Chapter 8: Theological Reflection*

The results of the research phase showed Guides and Guiding leaders were interested in exploring the spiritual dimension of their Promise and developing links with churches as part of this. However, the non-religious ethos of Guiding caused tension

I begin this chapter looking at the primary research question '*Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*' and asking whether the tension between the integrity of the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding could be resolved. This led to asking the question 'what can a person know about God independently of Scripture and how valid is that knowledge?' Which I explored through the theme of natural theology.

Having set the rationale for this question (8.1) the chapter considers the background of natural theology, especially the importance of Thomas Aquinas (8.2). I recognised that it was not possible to give a full account of modern thinking on natural theology and narrowed it down to an overview of the main Christian Perspectives. These I divided into the three arguments of natural theology as; 'Reason Alone' (8.3), 'Incompatible with Christianity' (8.4), and 'Within the Embrace of Revealed Theology' (8.5). It was outside the scope of the chapter to look at all possibilities, therefore I chose examples of theologians, philosophers and scientists to illustrate some of the themes within each argument.

Although agreeing that without the lens of Christianity natural theology cannot point towards a Christian understanding of God, I still felt it could provide a step on that journey. I then showed how natural theology was part of the foundational ethos conceived by Baden-Powell to help Guides and Scouts take such a step (8.6). In recognising the lack of Christian knowledge that Guides have today I next consider how Paul's use of natural theology in Athens could provide a useful model of apologetics (8.7).

Using the work of Anne Richards and Peter Privett, and this research, I go on to show that given an appropriate environment and a chance to develop the necessary language then Guiding members are capable of reflecting theologically on different issues (8.8). Thinking of the place of adults in facilitating this led to Child Theology and the work of Keith White and Haddon Willmer (8.9). From this the question 'how would putting a Guide in the midst change our perspective?' was asked (8.10).

The chapter concludes with a reflection on three themes taken from the chapter. It finishes by taking Alexander and McLaughlin's concept of tethered and untethered spiritually and considers whether natural theology could be offered by churches as a suitable tether to help Guides explore the world. Thus, offering a potential resolution to the tension between maintaining the integrity of the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding.

#### *Chapter 9: Conclusions*

This final chapter draws together the main findings of the study and sees how they relate to answering the research questions. It begins with a summary of study showing the journey taken (9.1). It then takes each of the research questions and relates their key findings.

It begins with '*What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*' (9.2). Under the theme of presence, I explain how relationships existed not only through Units using church buildings but through their participation in a rich variety of church services and events, with Remembrance Sunday providing the strongest link. The tension between the espoused belief of Girlguiding UK and the operative beliefs of many leaders is then explored. Looking at Positive and Negative relationships, the theme of welcome is raised. Either positively engendering a sense of belonging or more negatively making leaders feeling unwanted and disregarded. Again, I highlight the attitude of the church leader as key.

I then take the second question '*How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*' (9.3). 77% of leaders in the Survey

wanted to develop this link. Improved communication, especially passing on information and discussing issues, was highlighted as making a difference. Child friendly services were also cited, although there was recognition that girls may not choose to attend. Finally support with the understanding the spiritual dimension of the Promise was mentioned by 42% of leaders, as well as those from Summerhill Guides.

I move on to looking at the findings around '*How can the spiritual dimension of the Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*(9.4). The first theme of Understanding Spirituality highlights some of the challenges faced by Guides including that of no-religion. I then expand on the themes of Prayer, Community Partnerships, Remembrance Sunday and Care of Creation and offer possibilities of how each could be used by Churches with Units, to help them take the next step on their spiritual journey.

The Conclusion (9.5) begins by looking at the Mission and Ministry Potential of churches working with Units in which I demonstrate the reasoning behind my claim that 50,000 girls aged 5-18 may be meeting weekly in church owned premises across the UK and Channel Islands. Having taken all the answers to the research questions into consideration, I then return to the Primary research question and feel confident in stating that '*the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise is a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry.*'

Two key limitations of the study are recognised and explored. Firstly, The lack of response from church leaders, significantly men (9.6). Especially in research aimed at churches the voice of its potential recipients was not heard. I needed

to ask the question whether this invalidated the research findings? I defend my findings and argue that while accepting that the voice of more church leaders would have added a different dimension to the research, it does not detract from the findings.

The second limitation recognised was Gender (9.7) and the impact of Girlguiding UK as a female organisation. It raised the question of, what the potential difference to the research findings are if this study had been carried out with Scouting members, especially boys? This was explored using the work Alyssa Bryant and others, before concluding that there was no reason to presume that carrying out this research with boys in Scouting would have produced different results.

In the final part of the chapter three recommendations are made relating to the three steps of 1: Raising Awareness (9.8), 2: Improving Communication (9.9), and 3: Developing Spirituality (9.10). Each of these include some simple suggestions which churches could use. I finish the study with a reflection that my next step would be how to raise awareness among Anglican clergy of these findings and the implications for their mission and ministry with children (9.11) before some final thoughts (9.12). Having given an overview of the thesis I now move to the literature review .

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

*Develop my beliefs' is a call to actively consider our beliefs on an on-going basis. It encompasses the journey of spiritual development that we make throughout our lives – and it requires us to stand up and take action.<sup>14</sup>*

In the introduction I presented my primary research question *'Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?'*

The chapter begins with an overview of research into Guiding that has already been published, especially that relating to the Promise (2.1). Through the theme of inclusivity, the chapter then follows the development of the spiritual dimension of the Promise. It moves from Robert Baden-Powell's initial concept of an inter-denominational organisation to the non-religious spirituality of the Promise today. It incorporates critical engagement with key spiritual changes in the wider landscape of society and how these impacted on the development of the Promise at different times (2.2-2.9).

In doing so it shows how the interpretation of the spiritual dimension of the Promise has changed from the practice of religion when Guiding was founded to today's exploration of spirituality. With the importance placed by Guiding on each girl exploring her spiritual beliefs this chapter moves on to explore what spirituality is. Having considered aspects of transcendence, missiology and journey it comes to a definition of spirituality for this study (2.10).

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<sup>14</sup> Guide Association, *Background and concepts of the Promise and Law for Trainers*, (London: The Guide Association, 2013), 9

The final part of the chapter establishes the place of spirituality in children's lives (2.10) through the exploration of the three key questions of 'Can children have spiritual experiences?' (2.11), 'How is children's spiritual development understood?' (2.12) and 'How can spirituality be developed in children?' (2.13). The chapter finishes with a summary (2.14).

## **2.1 Overview of Research Relating to Guiding and the Promise**

Despite the significant place of Guiding<sup>15</sup> and Scouting has within the world a closer look at the literature reveals there has been little academic research relating to them and none, I found looking specifically at the spiritual dimension of the Promise.

There are a number of histories of the movements available<sup>16</sup> and biographies of their founder Robert Baden-Powell,<sup>17</sup> his sister Agnes<sup>18</sup> and wife Olave.<sup>19</sup> However, most of these works are written to give a particular perspective on the development or achievements of Guiding and Scouting rather than looking at it through the more rigorous lens of academic criticism.

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<sup>15</sup> For the purpose of this research the term Guiding will also apply to the terms Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

<sup>16</sup> Rose Kerr, *The Story of the Girl Guides* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1940) or Dorothy Crocker, *All about Us: A story of the Girl Guides in Canada, 1910-1989* (Ottawa: Girl Guides of Canada, 1990)

<sup>17</sup> Tim E. Jeal, *The Boy Man: The Life of Lord Baden-Powell* (New York: William Morrow, 1990)

<sup>18</sup> Helen D. Gardner, *The First Girl Guide: The Story of Agnes Baden-Powell* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2010)

<sup>19</sup> Olave Baden-Powell, and Mary Drewery, *Window on My Heart* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977)



Previous studies make reference to Guiding as part of a much broader research question. Guiding can be found in studies on voluntary work,<sup>20</sup> swimming and lifesaving,<sup>21</sup> or its success as a non-profit making organization.<sup>22</sup> It has also been analysed in connection to lesbian<sup>23</sup> and feminist agendas,<sup>24</sup> in relationship to imperialism<sup>25</sup> or as an example of social entrepreneurship<sup>26</sup> and leadership.<sup>27</sup>

The lack of research surrounding Guiding and Scouting may, as Allen Warren points out, be because 'these are value based social phenomenon, which the academically trained researcher, usually and often necessarily an outsider, finds difficult to understand.'<sup>28</sup> The tension between being an insider and outsider and potential impact on this research is something I explore as part of the methodology (3.4.3).

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<sup>20</sup> Lynda Gonzales, 'Increasing latino engagement in sustainability and philanthropic efforts of mainstream youth development organizations in the United States', (Dissertation, DePaul University, 2010), <http://via.library.depaul.edu/etd/30/> (10 May 2017)

<sup>21</sup> Unknown, 'Swimming, service to the empire and Baden-Powell's youth movements', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 24, no.5 (2010), 682-692, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360601183277> (10 May 2017)

<sup>22</sup> Anne Abraham, 'The development of financial management practices as a necessary rationalisation for the support of mission in an Australian nonprofit organisation', (PhD Dissertation, University of Wollongong, 1999), <https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.co.uk/&httpsredir=1&article=1865&context=theses> (10 May 2017)

<sup>23</sup> Tina Gianoulis, *Girl Scouts*, <http://www.glbtc.com> (10 May 2017)

<sup>24</sup> Danielle D. Mitchell, 'Scouting 21st Century Feminism: Exploring Girl Scouts as an Activist Volunteer', (Undergraduate thesis, University of Redlands, 2008), [https://inspire.redlands.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1076&context=cas\\_honors](https://inspire.redlands.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1076&context=cas_honors) (10 May 2017)

<sup>25</sup> Allen Warren, 'Citizens of the Empire: Baden-Powell, Scouts and Guides, and an imperial idea', in John M. MacKenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 232-256

<sup>26</sup> Mario Hayek, A Wallace. Williams Jr, and Brandon Randolph-Seng, 'Towards a Model of Social Entrepreneurial Intentions: Evidence from the Founder of the Girl Scouts', *Journal of Ethics & Entrepreneurship* 4, no.2 (2014), 41-67

<sup>27</sup> Kathy Cloninger, and Fiona Soltes, *Tough Cookies: Leadership Lessons from 100 Years of the Girl Scouts* (Hoboken NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011)

<sup>28</sup> Allen Warren, 'Understanding Scouting and Guiding after a Hundred Years', in Nelson R. Block, and Tammy M. Proctor, (eds.), *Scouting Frontiers: Youth and the Scout Movement's First Century* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), xii

To promote research Warren and other interested academics met for a conference, which looked more rigorously at the history of Scouting and Guiding and its international development. From this conference a book was published which included 16 papers.<sup>29</sup> The majority did not mention the spiritual dimension of Guiding, which was left to the work of Kristine Alexander, Tammy Proctor and Sarah Mills.

Each brought a different perspective to the Guiding Promise, but only within the context of their wider research. Alexander had a particular interest in contrasting the development of Girl Guides in England, Canada and India in the 1920s and 1930s and how they were shaped by religion, race and class.<sup>30</sup> Proctor focused history of the Guiding movement.<sup>31</sup> Including the challenges it has faced, the place of religion<sup>32</sup> and spirituality as part of them.<sup>33</sup> Mills wrote from a geopolitical angle, with a particular focus on Scouting,<sup>34</sup> including work on its spiritual development.<sup>35</sup>

Other work relating to the spiritual dimension of the movement can also be found as part of wider objectives. Alta Le Roux looked at the Promise as one

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<sup>29</sup>Nelson R. Block, and Tammy M. Proctor, (eds.), *Scouting Frontiers: Youth and the Scout Movement's First Century* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009)

<sup>30</sup>Kristine Alexander, 'The Girl Guide movement and imperial internationalism during the 1920s and 1930s', *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 2, no.1 (2009), 37-63, <https://muse.jhu.edu/> (17 May 2017)

<sup>31</sup> Tammy M. Proctor, *On My Honour: Guides and Scouts in Interwar Britain* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 2002)

<sup>32</sup> Tammy M. Proctor, *Scouting for Girls: A Century of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts* (Oxford: Praeger, 2009), 16

<sup>33</sup> Proctor, *Scouting for Girls*, 60

<sup>34</sup>For example, Sarah Mills, 'Scouting for girls? Gender and the Scout Movement in Britain', *Gender, Place & Culture* 18, no.4 (2011), 537-556 and Sarah Mills, 'Be Prepared: Communism and the Politics of Scouting in 1950s Britain', *Contemporary British History* 25, no.3 (2011), 429-450

<sup>35</sup> Sarah Mills, 'Duty to God/my Dharma/Allah/Waheguru: diverse youthful religiosities and the politics and performance of informal worship', *Social & Cultural Geography* 13, no.5 (2012), 481-499,

part of the Guide 'brand,'<sup>36</sup> Natalie Stewart as one of rituals that help engender that 'sense of belonging.'<sup>37</sup> Whilst Patricia Whitney took a feminist perspective.<sup>38</sup> Within the United Kingdom, Geoff Nichols and Lindsay King were asked to consider the Promise when researching the challenges Guiding faced in the recruitment and retention of volunteers.<sup>39</sup> Within a further study they concluded that although removing the spiritual dimension to the Promise could widen the recruitment pool, it would be inappropriate as, 'The Guide Association would not accept volunteers who acted in a manner that contradicted their promise and law.'<sup>40</sup>

Although some previous research refers to the centrality of the spiritual dimension of the Promise to Guiding, there is no research into its development. In order to understand the spiritual dimension of the Promise for this study, I needed to address this gap. As the Promise was part of the founding ethos of Guiding then I begin with an understanding of the religious views of its founder Robert Baden-Powell.

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<sup>36</sup>Alta, S. Le Roux, 'Exploring branding as part of the corporate communication strategy of the Girl Guides Association Of South Africa (GGASA)', (Masters thesis, University of Pretoria, 2007), <https://repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/24862> (10 May 2017)

<sup>37</sup>Natalie Stewart, 'Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts: An Organizational and Historical Approach to Understanding Socialization and Gendered Leadership', (Sociology thesis, Georgia State University, 2014), 45-46, [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology\\_theses/46/](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology_theses/46/) (10 May 2017)

<sup>38</sup>Patricia Whitney, 'Girl Guides of Canada: The Feminist Promise in the "Promise and Law"', in Karen A. Blackford, Marie-Luce Garceau, and Sandra Kirby, (eds.), *Feminist Success Stories: Célébrons Nos Réussites Féministes* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1999),140, <https://books.openedition.org/uop/1222?lang=en> (17 May 2017)

<sup>39</sup>Geoff Nichols, and Lindsay King, 'The changing motivations and frustrations facing volunteers in youth programs: A study of the Guide Association of the United Kingdom', *Journal of Applied Recreation Research* 23 (1998), 243–262

<sup>40</sup>Nichols and King, *Redefining the Recruitment Niche*, 318

## 2.2 Baden-Powell's Views on Religion

Baden-Powell's key philosophies that 'no one religion held a monopoly of truth'<sup>41</sup> and that studying the beauties of nature can lead people to God, have caused controversy surrounding the truth of his religious beliefs. Michael Rosenthal took the opportunity to use it, as just another element in his scathing attack on Baden-Powell's character.<sup>42</sup> Whilst Jeal, as well as rebutting the majority of Rosenthal's accusations,<sup>43</sup> talks about the impact Baden-Powell's religious views had on Scouting.

What is agreed is that Baden-Powell was Christian. This is further demonstrated in his writing.<sup>44</sup> Baden-Powell considered having a religious basis to your life was not an option, but foundational to a person's development. 'No man [*sic*] is much good, either to himself or to others, unless he believes in God and obeys His laws. So every Guide should have a religion.'<sup>45</sup> Atheism or irreligion to Baden-Powell not only prevented a person from reaching their potential but was also 'dangerous', as it gave young people a distorted view of the world and undermined happiness.<sup>46</sup>

The idea that religion should play an important part in an organisation for young people was not a new idea. The Girls' Friendly Society was established in 1875

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<sup>41</sup> Tim, E. Jeal, *Baden-Powell* (London: Yale University Press, 1989), 515

<sup>42</sup> Michael Rosenthal, *The Character Factory: Baden-Powell and the Origins of the Boy Scout Movement*, (London: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd, 1986), 268-270

<sup>43</sup> Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, 9-11

<sup>44</sup> This can be seen in the way Baden-Powell uses words about God, Religion, Christian and Church, throughout his handbooks.

<sup>45</sup> Robert Baden-Powell *Girl Guiding*, (London: C. Arthur Pearson, 1948), 67

<sup>46</sup> Robert Baden-Powell, *Rovering to Success: A Guide to Young Manhood* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1922), 176

to promote Christian values and support working class girls.<sup>47</sup> Whilst in 1883 William Smith founded the Boys Brigade with the purpose of 'The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys...and all that tends towards a true Christian Manliness.'<sup>48</sup> This was done through explicit use of military drill, prayer, Bible reading, teaching and attending church services. Although accepting an honorary vice-presidency Baden-Powell, disliked the formal nature of religious instruction given.<sup>49</sup>

Religion clearly meant more to Baden-Powell than just calling yourself for example a Christian or a Jew. It was for Baden-Powell about having a relationship with God which shaped your own life and enabled you to make a positive difference to it and to others on a daily basis. Religion therefore he summed up as having two elements, 'to trust God' and 'to do good to other people.'<sup>50</sup> An ideal which was influenced by Jesus' answer to the question, which commandment is the greatest? as being, loving God and loving your neighbour (Matthew 22:34-39).<sup>51</sup> However, Baden-Powell pointed out, 'it is not enough for children to learn texts merely in the abstract...that would soon pall and would have little effect on their life and character. So, we put the two Commandments into an active form.'<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> for the history read, Agnes L. Money, 'History of the Girls' Friendly Society', [http://anglicanhistory.org/women/money\\_gfs1911/](http://anglicanhistory.org/women/money_gfs1911/) (6 August 2017),

<sup>48</sup> Donald M. McFarlan, 'First for Boys: The History of the Boys Brigade, 1883-1983', <http://www.boys-brigade.org.uk/ffb.pdf> (6 August 2017)

<sup>49</sup> Jeal, *Baden-Powell*, 359-361

<sup>50</sup> Baden-Powell, *Girl Guiding*, 67

<sup>51</sup> Baden-Powell, 'Fundamental Ethics', July 1924

<sup>52</sup> Baden-Powell, 'Fundamental Ethics', July 1924

This was at the heart of Scouting then Guiding. Religion was not part of the programme, it was instead 'part of the 'fundamental ethics.'<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, Baden-Powell considered that 'an organization of this kind would fail in its object if it did not bring its members to a knowledge of religion, but the usual fault in such cases is the manner in which this is done.'<sup>54</sup> It was this manner, which set Guiding (and Scouting) apart from other organisations.

### **2.3 The Spiritual Foundation of Guiding**

From its inception, in 1909, a distinction between the practice of religion and spiritual development was made. Guiding would be an organisation where:

The religious training will be similar to that for the Boy Scouts, entirely unsectarian.

1. Spiritual. Knowledge of God through Nature Study
2. Practical. Duty to others, by daily good turns, chivalry, charity,<sup>55</sup>

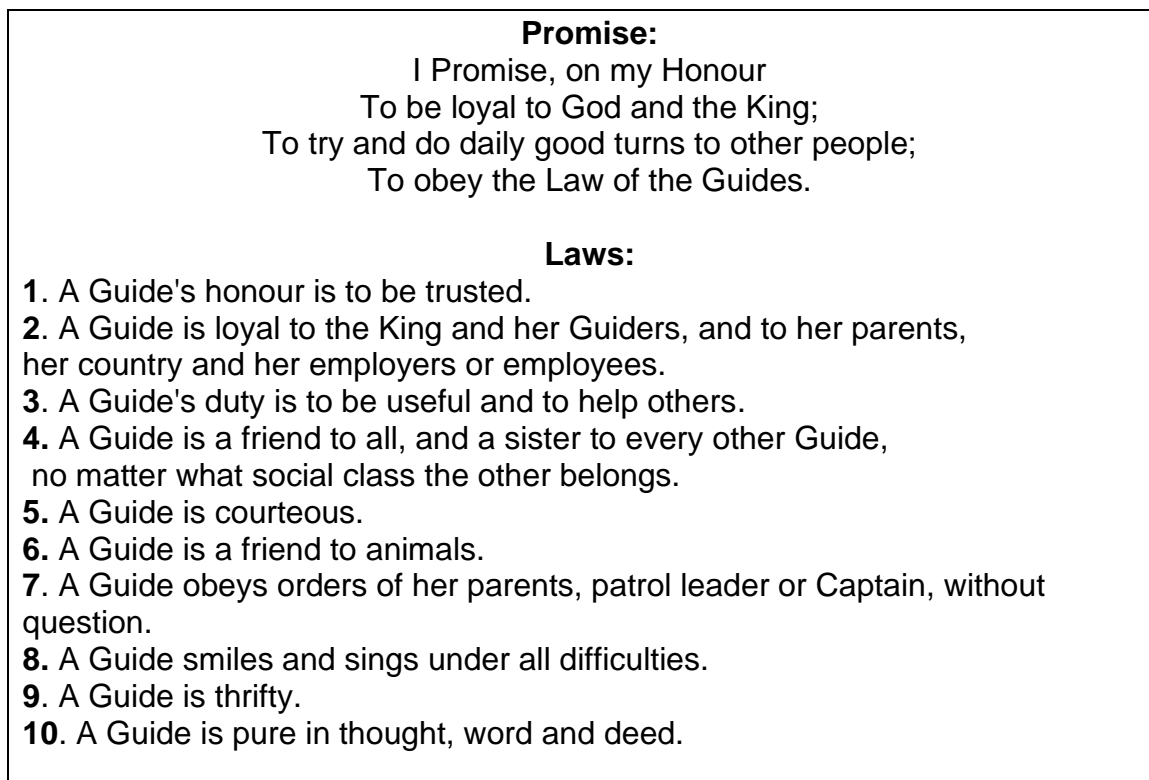
The practice of religion was something that was expected of each member. Depending on the denomination (and later the faith) she had been brought up in, she was expected to attend worship regularly and be observant in all other aspects of it. This was underpinned through the Promise and Law (Figure 2.1).

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<sup>53</sup>Robert Baden-Powell, 'Fundamental Ethics' in *B.-P.'s Outlook: Some selections from his contributions to "The Scouter" from 1909-1941* (London: C. Arthur Pearson, 1941), July 1924

<sup>54</sup> Agnes Baden-Powell, and Robert Baden-Powell, *The Handbook for Girl Guides: How Girls Can Help Build The Empire*, 1912 (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1993), 456-457

<sup>55</sup> Kerr, *Story of the Girl Guides*, 28 citing Boy Scouts Headquarters Gazette of 1909



**Figure 2.1: The Guide Promise and Laws 1912**

### *2.3.2 Knowledge of God through Nature Study*

For Baden-Powell 'nature-study' provided an opportunity for those who did not practice a faith to reflect on what God meant in their lives and for those who did to deepen their understanding.<sup>56</sup> Through studying the three-fold aspects of the Wonders, Spirit and Beauties of Nature, young people would be pointed towards the attributes of life, love and happiness, which in turn would point them to the God 'around and within us'<sup>57</sup> (Figure 2.2). Although, not using the term 'natural theology,' Baden-Powell's ideas contributed to it and form part of my later Theological Reflection (Chapter 8).

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<sup>56</sup> Baden-Powell, *Girl Guiding*, 43

<sup>57</sup> Baden-Powell, *Rovering*, 197

NATURE-STUDY Includes		
Wonders of Nature	Spirit of Nature	Beauties of Nature
-From microscopic germs to the infinite in Astronomy	-Animal Instinct	-Form and colour, sound and rhythm in Nature
-World history in Geology	-Mother Love	-Beauty in Art
-Evolution	-Male chivalry	-Self-expression instinct in Art and Play
-Reproduction	-Protection and helpfulness	-Enjoyment of Beauty
-Order of Nature	-Self-sacrifice for the common weal	Transmission of joy to others
Life	Love	Happiness
God around and within us		

**Figure: 2.1 How Baden-Powell Considered Nature-Study Points Towards God**

Nevertheless, in wanting Scouts and Guides to recognise God, Baden-Powell appreciated that nature-study may only be ‘a step, in certain cases towards gaining religion,’<sup>58</sup> and ‘not a substitute,’<sup>59</sup> as other aspects including worship and prayer were also needed.<sup>60</sup>

### 2.3.3 Religious Principles of Guiding

This philosophy was incorporated by Baden-Powell into the 1912 Guide handbook which sets out a Guide leader’s (officer) responsibilities regarding religion.

**This organisation is inter-denominational, and also non-political. Prayers are restricted to the simplest form of non-sectarian worship. We do not assume the parents’ prerogative of giving religious instruction, but insist on the observance of whatever form of religion the girl professes, and impress upon her the duty of daily practice of self-sacrifice and helpfulness to others.**

<sup>58</sup> Baden-Powell, *Rovering*, 20

<sup>59</sup> Baden-Powell, ‘Fundamental Ethics’, *B.-P.’s Outlook*, July 1924

<sup>60</sup> Baden-Powell explains the importance of worship and prayer to medieval knights as an example for Guides to follow in, Baden-Powell, *Girl Guiding*, 44-45



Religion can and ought to be taught as a natural everyday quality in every proper person, and it can be well introduced to girls through the study of Nature. **The story of God's work** is a fit subject for Sunday instruction. For this reason the course is suggested for use on Sundays in a Christian country is – to attend church or church parade, and then seek to devote part of the day to **Nature study**

Where a company consists of Guides of various religious views it is the officer's duty to encourage them to attend the service of their own denomination.<sup>61</sup>

From this 5 religious principles for Guiding can be identified:

- 1) The organisation is inter-denominational
- 2) Prayers are restricted to the simplest form of non-sectarian worship
- 3) Insistence on the observance of whatever form of religion the girl professes
- 4) Duty of daily practice of self-sacrifice and helpfulness to others
- 5) Discovering story of God's work through Nature study

Through taking the theme of inclusivity, the following sections of this chapter, look at the changing emphasis of these principles. This helps to understand how the spiritual dimension of the Promise has developed. Particularly how inter-denomination is now inter-faith and the observance of religion, spirituality. In this I also show how Guiding's 'flexibility regarding religion was also an important part of its success and longevity,'<sup>62</sup> but could also create tension and division.

#### *2.3.4 Inter-denominational*

In the early days of Guiding, it was taken for granted that Christianity was the religion referred to and Scouting and therefore Guiding was 'nothing less than applied Christianity.'<sup>63</sup> By the end of the First World War, Guides had shown

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<sup>61</sup> Baden-Powell, and Baden-Powell, *The Handbook for Girl Guides*, 456-457 (emphasis is my own)

<sup>62</sup> Proctor, *Scouting for Girls*, 16

<sup>63</sup> Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting & Christianity* (1917), 3

what they were capable of.<sup>64</sup> Guiding was growing rapidly; by 1919 it had quadrupled its 1917 membership to 123,604 and by 1923 there were more Guides (317,862) than Scouts (270,110).<sup>65</sup> Furthermore society was changing. The first women were given the right to vote. Many of these were involved in Guiding. More women's voices were being heard and Guiding was at the forefront of this.

In a society where different Christian denominations did not usually worship together, Guiding challenged that view and encouraged Catholics and Protestants to take part in simple religious services which became known as a 'Guides Own.' This generally contained prayers and reflections, often a Bible reading and a thought for the day and would be led by the leader or the girls themselves. Baden-Powell wrote that 'Boredom is not reverence, nor will it breed religion.'<sup>66</sup> Therefore he considered it extremely important that such services were interesting, with short hymns and relevant talks. They had to be accessible to all and with the underlying principle that such services should help those participating to grow in their faith.

With the increased membership, what was seen as this 'theological ambiguity'<sup>67</sup> of the movement became of increasing concern. During the 1920s Baden-Powell received a number of letters outlining concerns, including the practice of Guiding on Sundays and the attendance of Guides at church services.<sup>68</sup> Critics

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<sup>64</sup> Voeltz, 'The Antidote', 629-630

<sup>65</sup> Proctor, *On My Honour*, 35 [Guiding has continued to be the larger organisation since].

<sup>66</sup> Robert Baden-Powell, 'Some Ideas on Scout' Owns', in *B.-P.'s Outlook*, November 1928

<sup>67</sup> Proctor, *On my Honour*, 141

<sup>68</sup> Scout Association Digital letter collection, 'Founder--matters of major concern to society religion', <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15999coll21/id/12217v> (24 November 2017)

challenged the spiritual ethos of Guiding considering it not to have a defined identity and even to undermine Christian teaching. Evangelicals, and Roman Catholics in particular, expressed fears that the lack of a clear Christian programme made Guiding 'suspect.'<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, parents too were growing concerned at what they considered the irreligious nature of Guides.

It is noticeable that these were particularly Western European concerns. In countries such as India,

...you will find Hindus, Mahommedans, Christians, Jains, Parsee and Jews...They eat, sleep, work, play and pray together in perfect harmony. All bound by the common desire to be a friend to all, and a sister to every other guide.<sup>70</sup>

Nevertheless, to British society mixing denominations, let alone faiths, was causing problems and Guiding decided that compromises were needed. In other European countries including France and Sweden the solution was the establishment of separate Guiding Associations for each denomination and later religion.<sup>71</sup> In the UK it was decided to keep one Association but where needed 'closed Units'<sup>72</sup> with specific religious or denominational allegiances were founded.

A book was also published reassuring parents that 'so far from being irreligious, it [Guiding] looks upon the faith of each individual child as the most sacred thing the child possesses, to be guarded against all interference.'<sup>73</sup> And in 1933

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<sup>69</sup> Rose Kerr, (ed.), *The story of a Million Girls: Guiding and Scouting Round the World* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1937), 92-93

<sup>70</sup> WAGGGS, *Council Fire* VII, 4 (1932), 106, in Alexander, *Guiding Modern Girls*, 118-119

<sup>71</sup> Proctor, *Scouting for Girls*, 60-63

<sup>72</sup> An open Unit takes any girl who would like to join. Closed Units only take girls belonging to a designated group. For example, a Unit for those of a specific faith, church, or school.

<sup>73</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Religion and the Girl Guides* (London: Girls Guides Association, 1927), 9

Baden-Powell and his wife took 118 Roman Catholic Guides to Rome for a meeting with Pope Pius XI, who gave his blessing to the 'magnificent work of Scouting and Guiding.'<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless, the potential for religious diversity within Guiding began to become more than just acknowledgment; gradually it became an area of training and development.

## **2.4 Post World War II**

After the Second World War Guiding took the opportunity to evaluate what religion meant and how it should be interpreted.<sup>75</sup> Ecumenism was more acceptable, and publications became available to help leaders understand different denominations (Figure 2.3).

Looking at the publications, shows that the focus changed. It is noticeable that the word Spiritual was dropped, and the idea of finding God through Nature Study made theologically respectable, 'to look with wonder and reverence at the world which God has made teaches us much about the Creator, but it is really Jesus, the Son of God, who answers for us our question, "what is God like?"'<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Olave Baden-Powell O 1973 p185

<sup>75</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Duty to God: An interpretation of the First Promise offered by Guiders by the Religious Panel at Imperial Headquarters* (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1949)

<sup>76</sup> M.C. Murray, *The Guide Way of Life: Suggestions for Teaching the Promise and the Law* (Church of Scotland Youth Committee, 1951)

Year of Publication	Publication	Main Areas Covered
1949	Duty to God <sup>77</sup>	The Church of England The Roman Catholic Church The Jewish Faith
1955	Duty to God <sup>78</sup>	The Anglican Church The Church of Scotland The Roman Catholic Church The Methodist Church The Congregational Church The Baptist Church The Jewish Faith
1962	Notes on Religious Faiths for use of Guiders <sup>79</sup>	Islam, Hinduism, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity
1980	Notes for Guiders on religious faiths <sup>80</sup>	Islam, Hinduism, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity
2008	Contemplate Series <sup>81</sup>	Language matters, Spirituality, Refugees, Interfaith, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism, Islam
2016	Guiding UK Website <sup>82</sup>	Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism, Islam Notes on Spirituality and religious policy.

**Figure 2.3: History of Guiding Publications Relating to the Understanding of Different Denominations and Faiths**

Although the concept that, 'The Movement is not identified with one particular religion nor that Guiding is itself a religion embracing all other religions,'<sup>83</sup> was

<sup>77</sup> Girl Guides, *Duty to God: An interpretation*

<sup>78</sup> Girl Guides, *Duty to God* (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1955)

<sup>79</sup> W.G. Griffith, *Notes on Religious Faiths for use of Guiders* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1962)

<sup>80</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Notes for Guiders on Religious Faiths* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1980)

<sup>81</sup> Girlguiding, 'Contemplate series', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/default.aspx?page=861> (24 August 2012)

<sup>82</sup> Girlguiding UK, *Religious Differences and Girlguiding*, <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/running-your-unit/including-all/religious-differences-and-guiding/> (24 August 2017)

<sup>83</sup> Girl Guides, *Duty to God: An interpretation*, 3

reiterated and acknowledgment made of other faiths especially (possibly in the light of the holocaust) Judaism,<sup>84</sup> the focus was still very much on Christianity.

The spiritual dimension of the Promise 'Duty to God' emphasised that faith should be expressed not only through prayer and worship but in all aspects of someone's life including 'work and worship, play and prayer, social responsibility and international justice.'<sup>85</sup> In keeping with the principle that 'Prayers are restricted to the simplest form of non-sectarian worship,' publications continued to be produced; Not only prayer and hymn books,<sup>86</sup> but others which provided readings, meditations and practical exercises.<sup>87</sup>

There was still the expectation that every member would have an active faith and 'attend the services of the religious denomination to which she belongs.'<sup>88</sup> For a Guide who was not attached to a Church then the 'Guider should endeavour to put her in touch' with one.<sup>89</sup>

Moreover, Baden-Powell's concerns about the dangers of no faith could be seen in the emphasis on how the Promise might help in 'bringing children from pagan homes into a religious environment'<sup>90</sup> and how Guides might act as a 'bridge...between the world and the church.' It is this very concept of the

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<sup>84</sup> Girl Guides, *The Religious Policy of the Girl Guide Movement in Great Britain* (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1956), 3

<sup>85</sup> Girl Guides, *Duty to God: An interpretation*, 4

<sup>86</sup> For example, M.A. Campbell (ed.), *Services and Prayers for camp and other occasions* (Kent County Girl Guides, 1948)

<sup>87</sup> Tirzah Barnes, (ed.), *The Guide Promise: A month's cycle of Bible Readings and Prayers for Guiders and Commissioners* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1947)

<sup>88</sup> Girl Guides, *The Religious Policy of the Girl Guide Movement in Great Britain* (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1956), 9

<sup>89</sup> Girl Guides, *The Religious Policy of the Girl Guide Movement in Great Britain* (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1956), 9

<sup>90</sup> Girl Guides, *The Religious Policy of the Girl Guide Movement in Great Britain* (London: The Girl Guides Association, 1956), 5

Promise being a bridge that I have explored in this thesis. However, rather than Guiding being the facilitators, I have looked at whether the church can use the Promise to create that bridge instead. For this to happen then both a church and local Guiding Unit need to be willing to work together. As the answers to the research questions,

*i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*

*ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*

establish, there is a desire for such relationships, from which a bridge could be created. The church could build the necessary superstructure, with the Promise providing the decking. The church working together with Units could then offer appropriate activities to allow Guiding members to walk across, as they explore the spiritual dimension to their lives.

Such activities need to recognise the range of faiths and spiritualities that Guiding now embraces. The idea that such a bridge can lead only to Christianity, as I show, is no longer in keeping with the ethos of Guiding. The tension between the ethos of Guiding and maintaining the integrity of the Christian faith is an aspect which I come back to and forms the basis of my theological reflection (Chapter 8).

Nonetheless, although not necessarily leading to a Christian commitment, the bridge could help Guiding members develop their beliefs. Through exploring questions of meaning and purpose, such as 'what are we here for?' 'why do bad things happen in life?' reflecting on moral and ethical issues and engaging in prayer activities and reflection. These are common factors in many religions

and spiritualities and could provide opportunities for Guiding members to take steps on their spiritual journey, whilst recognising how the spiritual landscape of Guiding has changed.

## **2.5 From Ecumenism to Multi-faith**

By the 1960s society had changed. Guiding membership dropped from 547,517 in 1962<sup>91</sup> to 534,650 a year later.<sup>92</sup> Building on the results of the 1960 Essex youth survey<sup>93</sup> Guiding commissioned its own reports to look at the needs of the 1960s Guide and how the movement should adapt to accommodate them.<sup>94</sup> This highlighted that not only were the girls more mature and wanted different things from Guiding<sup>95</sup> but the influx of people, through post war immigration, meant that many Units needed to accommodate girls of different faiths.

Furthermore, the report recognised that not all adult leaders were actively committed to a religion. The 'insistence on the observance of whatever form of religion the girl professes' was dropped. Guiding members were encouraged to continue to explore what faith meant to them, bearing in mind that 'Guiding is not neutral in its attitude to religion-it stands firmly by the promise of Duty to God.'<sup>96</sup> At the same time publications changed from a focus of understanding

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<sup>91</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Annual Report 1962* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1963), 2

<sup>92</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Annual Report 1963* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1964), 2

<sup>93</sup> Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Limited, *Youth Survey, September 1960*, [http://www.esds.ac.uk/doc/2431/mrdoc/UKDA/UKDA\\_Study\\_2431\\_Information.htm](http://www.esds.ac.uk/doc/2431/mrdoc/UKDA/UKDA_Study_2431_Information.htm) (7 August 2012)

<sup>94</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Tomorrow's Guide: Report of The Working Party 1964-1966* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1966)

<sup>95</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Tomorrow's Guide*, 6

<sup>96</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Tomorrow's Guide*: 18



different Christian denominations to helping leaders gain understanding of different faith traditions (Figure 2.3).

Such a shift in 'non-sectarian worship,' from inter-denominational to inter-faith, is demonstrated very clearly in the new prayer books 'Sharing'<sup>97</sup> and 'Searching.'<sup>98</sup> Although building on the Christian heritage of the movement, they contained readings from other world religions and sources.

With a new image and a new programme<sup>99</sup> Guiding continued into the 1970s and 1980s. It would appear that for most Units there was little change in how they approached 'Duty to God.' Prayers in a meeting and church attendance fulfilled the requirement.

However, the practice of a religious faith in society was declining and Christianity was having a diminishing significance in society, with participation in Christian activities and events increasingly nominal. Statistics show attendance at church and Sunday School were decreasing (from a usual Sunday attendance of 1,606,000 in 1968 to 1,230,000 in 1980)<sup>100</sup> and an increasing number of alternative activities on a Sunday began competing for people's attention, this became even more apparent when new Sunday trading laws were introduced, Christianity no longer held the monopoly.

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<sup>97</sup> Averil Taylor, (ed.), *Sharing* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1980)

<sup>98</sup> Averil Taylor, (ed.), *Searching* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1985)

<sup>99</sup> For an analysis of this see, Jim Gledhill, 'White Heat, Guide Blue: The Girl Guide Movement in the 1960s', *Contemporary British History* 27, no.1 (2013), 65-84, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13619462.2012.722000> (17 August 2017)

<sup>100</sup> Church Society, 'Attendance', [http://www.Churchsociety.org/issues\\_new/Church/stats/iss\\_Church\\_stats\\_attendance.asp](http://www.Churchsociety.org/issues_new/Church/stats/iss_Church_stats_attendance.asp) (6 August 2017)

Analogous to this was the growing number of Guiding leaders who felt uncomfortable about leading prayers and other acts of religious observance in Unit meetings. There was also a feeling that the element of 'Duty to God' as being church attendance and prayers was no longer relevant.<sup>101</sup> Although the accuracy of such oral history can be disputed, as Mills points out, they 'provide a unique insight into...actions and practices.'<sup>102</sup>

## 2.6 To Love My God

Although the 1967 change in programme and image had clearly made a positive impact, with the Guiding membership increased to 833,294 by 1982<sup>103</sup> By 1991 Guiding membership had dropped to 719,097.<sup>104</sup>

Discussions were held on what Duty to God meant and how relevant it was to girls today.<sup>105</sup> Baden-Powell's concept that 'to do my Duty to God' was about personal development, not just church attendance or Unit prayers, had been lost. At the same time the post modernistic position that truth is a personal reality and cannot be found in any one system, culture or religion was becoming widespread. As a result, in 1994 the spiritual dimension of the Promise was changed from 'do my duty to God' to 'Love my God' (Figure 2.4).

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<sup>101</sup> Informal discussions with, May: (Guide & Senior Section Leader 1952-1996, Shrewsbury), Brenda: (Guide Leader 1956-1992, Chester), Alice: (Brownie Leader, 1961-2008, Durham), and Christine: (Guide Leader 1959-2016, Wales), August-October 2015.

<sup>102</sup> Mills, 'Scouting for girls?', 540

<sup>103</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Annual Report 1963* (London: Girl Guides Association, 1982), 2

<sup>104</sup> Girl Guides Association, *Annual Report 1991*, 4

<sup>105</sup> Devon Girl Guides, 'Minutes of County Executive Meeting', June 14 1992

<b>Guide Promise 1910-1918</b>	<b>Guide Promise 1918-1967</b>	<b>Guide Promise 1967-1994</b>	<b>Guide Promise 1994-2013</b>	<b>Guide Promise 2013-Present</b>
I Promise, on my Honour	On my honour I promise that I will do my best.	I Promise that I will do my best:	I Promise that I will do my best:	I Promise that I will do my best:
To be loyal to God	To do my duty to God	To do my duty to God	To love my God	To be true to myself and develop my beliefs,
and the King;	and the King/ Queen (1952)	To serve the Queen and my country	To serve the Queen and my country	To serve the Queen and my community,
To try and do daily good turns to other people	To help others at all times.	To help other people and	To help other people and	To help other people and
To obey the Law of the Guides.	To obey the Guide Law.	To keep the Guide Law.	To keep the Guide Law.	To keep the Guide Law.

**Figure 2.4: Development of the Promise 1910-Present**

The two reasons given, to leaders like myself,<sup>106</sup> was the need to replace the word ‘duty’ with a word more readily understandable, especially by younger girls, and that the word ‘my’ would make explicit the inclusivity of Guiding. This drive for inclusivity and its development is the key thread I have identified, which can be seen throughout the development of the spiritual dimension of the Promise. The importance of this and its implications for the church are considered more fully at the end of this section (2.8.1).

<sup>106</sup> I was a running a Unit in Chester at the time.

The change was met with resistance from some leaders who presumed Guiding had always been a Christian organisation and confusion about the wide range of interpretations that were being given to the phrase within Guiding, different faith traditions, and wider society.<sup>107</sup>

### 2.6.1 *Spirituality and Society*

At the same time there was growing concern in society at the continued decline in Sunday church attendance. The reasons behind this, especially relating to the secularization thesis and its impact has been widely researched and written on. Although, there is not space within this study to include them, the Secularization Thesis was the theme for my initial literature exploration.<sup>108</sup>

Studies particularly by Callum Brown,<sup>109</sup> Steve Bruce,<sup>110</sup> and Grace Davie,<sup>111</sup> presented the thesis that in much of the Western world, organised religion was declining. This has been challenged. As David Goodhew points out, 'Some Churches in some regions are declining, but...substantial Church growth has also taken place,'<sup>112</sup> for example 'between 1990 and 2010, the numbers of members of Anglican Churches in London rose by over 70%.'<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, although only partially true, this steady decline in church attendance was the pervading ethos.

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<sup>107</sup> Direct Personal experience

<sup>108</sup> Paulette Gower Literature Review (Unpublished essay, University of Durham, 2012)

<sup>109</sup> Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), 2

<sup>110</sup> Steve Bruce, *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 3

<sup>111</sup> Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 2

<sup>112</sup> David Goodhew, (ed.), *Church Growth in Britain: 1980 to the Present* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 4

<sup>113</sup> John Wolffe, and Bob Jackson, 'Anglican Resurgence: The Church of England in London' in Goodhew, *Church Growth*, 24

It was such a decline that David Hay expected to see in his research into the spirituality of those who do not go to church. In 1987<sup>114</sup> and again in 2000<sup>115</sup> Hay conducted a survey asking people a series of questions about their spiritual experiences. During that period church attendances had decreased by 20%<sup>116</sup> and Hay was very surprised that instead of his survey showing a similar decline in people's spiritual awareness his results showed a 15% increase.<sup>117</sup> Hay's conclusions highlighted that there was a much greater engagement with spirituality in society<sup>118</sup> and the importance of giving 'permission for people to speak about existential issues that are normally obscured in everyday life.'<sup>119</sup>

Such existential issues were explored by Nick Spencer, who identified six big question areas that people wanted to find answers to: God, Destiny, Suffering, The Spiritual Realm, Purpose, and The Universe.<sup>120</sup> Such questions were not confined to adults. WAGGGS<sup>121</sup> noted that the millennium had brought with it an increase in its members 'asking searching questions about the meaning of life, and about our relationships to each other and to God.'<sup>122</sup> They provided members with the opportunity to explore spirituality through a range of resource materials, at the same time noting that spirituality had always been an intrinsic part of Guiding, 'what is different is the increased sense of connectedness of all

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<sup>114</sup> David Hay, and Gordon Heald, 'Religion is good for you', *New Society*, 17 April 1987, 20-22

<sup>115</sup> David Hay, and Kate Hunt, *Understanding the Spirituality of People Who Don't go to Church: A report on the findings of the Adults' Spirituality Project at the University of Nottingham* (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 2000), [https://www.Churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/3678/understanding\\_spirituality\\_report.pdf](https://www.Churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/3678/understanding_spirituality_report.pdf) (11 November 2016)

<sup>116</sup> Peter Brierley, (ed.), *Religious Trends, no.2: 1999/2000* (London: Christian Research, 2000), 52

<sup>117</sup> Hay, and Hunt, *Understanding the Spirituality*, 3.4

<sup>118</sup> Hay, and Hunt, *Understanding the Spirituality*, 3.4

<sup>119</sup> Hay, and Hunt, *Understanding the Spirituality*, 7.6.1

<sup>120</sup> Nick Spencer, *Beyond the Fringe: Researching a Spiritual Age* (Calver: Cliff Collage Publishing, 2005), 17

<sup>121</sup> World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts

<sup>122</sup> WAGGGS, 'Exploring Spirituality: Resource Material for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts', <http://www.wagggsworld.org/en/grab/16/1/1ExpSpirlIntroduction.pdf> (12 August 2017)

people's, faiths and cultures, brought about through the advances of new technologies, communication and travel.<sup>123</sup>

## 2.7 From Religion to Spirituality

### 2.7.1 Change in Guiding Ethos

Following WAGGGS' lead Girlguiding UK too began to re-examine what the spiritual dimension of the Promise meant in practice and the term 'religion' was changed to 'spirituality.' Moreover, spirituality became a core part of the programme with spiritual development deemed essential to the wellbeing of an individual.

[Spirituality] is concerned with the inner life and its meaning and purpose, and making sense of the world around us...Lacking a spiritual life can lead to low self-esteem and depression. For some, especially young people, this can lead them to search elsewhere—to drugs or alcohol—for artificial 'highs'. Having a spiritual side to your life helps you cope better in many ways.<sup>124</sup>

Whether this was a deliberate echo to Baden-Powell's reasoning behind why 'every Guide should have a religion,<sup>125</sup> is not possible to ascertain. Nevertheless, his recognition that atheism or irreligion not only prevented a person from reaching their potential but was also 'dangerous', as it gave young people a distorted view of the world and undermined happiness,<sup>126</sup> was suddenly relevant again. Recent research would also agree. For example, the Theos think-tank on 'Religion and Well-Being,' showed 'a strong positive correlation between personal religious participation and well-being, most

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<sup>123</sup> WAGGGS, *Exploring Spirituality*

<sup>124</sup> Girlguiding UK, *Contemplate: Guiding and Spirituality* (London: The Guide Association, 2008), 2

<sup>125</sup> Robert Baden-Powell *Girl Guiding*, (London: C. Arthur Pearson, 1948), 67

<sup>126</sup> Robert Baden-Powell, *Rovering to Success: A Guide to Young Manhood* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1922), 176

notably mental health.<sup>127</sup> additionally, 'spiritual involvement and contribution and service,'<sup>128</sup> were part of the 'range of lifestyle factors' identified by the University of Edinburgh, which made headlines when it showed that those involved in Guiding and Scouting had better mental health in later life.<sup>129</sup>

To support the new spiritual policy Guiding issued a booklet inviting members to consider what spirituality meant to them and how to communicate this in their Units.<sup>130</sup> The change was again underscored by a new resource, 'Senses'; Helping Guiding members 'to experience prayer as more than just words.'<sup>131</sup> Instead of including any of the formal prayers in previous books, it encouraged greater creativity with opportunities for reflection.

### 2.7.2 Changes in Wider Society

The new millennium saw not only Guiding make the move from religion to spirituality. Literature relating to academia, healthcare, education among other settings, showed how 'religion' changed to become 'spirituality.' A superficial glance suggests that in some instances it was just a change of words. This can be seen in a number of journals who changed their name to include the word spirituality in the title, for example the including the 'Journal of Religious Gerontology' which became the 'Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging'<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Nick Spencer et al, *Religion and Well-being: Assessing the evidence* (London: Theos, 2016), 6, <https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/cmsfiles/archive/files/Reports/Religion%20and%20well-being%208%20combined.pdf> (29 December 2017)

<sup>128</sup> Chris Dibben, Chris Playford, and Richard Mitchell, 'Be(ing) prepared: Guide and Scout participation, childhood social position and mental health at age 50—a prospective birth cohort study', *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 71, no.3 (2017), 275-281, <https://jech.bmj.com/content/71/3/275> (10 May 2017)

<sup>129</sup> Sarah Napton, 'Scouts and guides grow up to have better mental health', *The Telegraph*, 10 November 2016, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/11/10/scouts-and-guides-grow-up-to-have-better-mental-health/> (23 January 2017)

<sup>130</sup> Girlguiding UK, *Contemplate: Guiding and Spirituality*,

<sup>131</sup> Libby Spence et al., *Senses* (London: Girlguiding UK, 2008), 7

<sup>132</sup> 'Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging', <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wrsa20> (October 15, 2018)

During this time the British Association for the Study of Spirituality (BASS) was also founded and its associated 'Journal for the Study of Spirituality.'

A more in-depth examination shows that it was not just a change in words that had occurred. A spiritual person no longer needed to be someone aligned with Christianity or another religion. Taking part in rituals and activities associated with a specific religion was just one manifestation of a much wider spiritual smorgasbord.

Over a few years an extensive amount of literature became available and research into spirituality increased. This can be seen in the number of hits on 'Google Scholar' for 'spirituality'<sup>133</sup> (Figure 2.5), where, between 2000 (13,500) and 2013 (49,800) there was a 369% increase in available material. This can only be a crude snapshot as much of the earlier material may not be digitalised, nor is there any distinction made between the type and quality of the material.

In healthcare there was not only the recognition by John Swinton and others that 'spirituality is *central* to genuinely person-centred healthcare,'<sup>134</sup> but the suggestion that 'Practitioners need to develop an understanding of their own underlying world view.'<sup>135</sup> Something which was echoed in the 'to develop my beliefs' clause of the Promise.

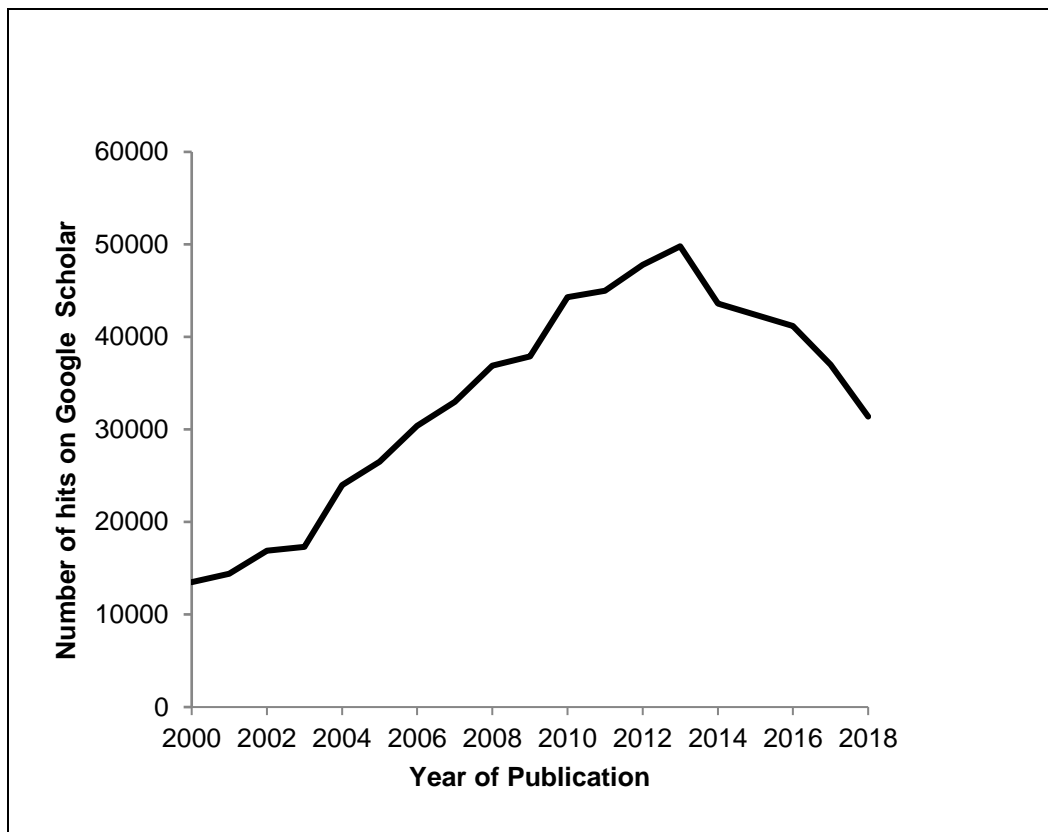
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<sup>133</sup> Google Scholar, <https://scholar.google.com/> (23 October 2018)

<sup>134</sup> John Swinton, 'Spirituality-in-Healthcare', *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* 4, no.2, (2014), 163, <https://doi.org/10.1179/2044024314Z.00000000030> (17 February 2019)

<sup>135</sup> John Wattis, Stephen Curran, and Melanie Rogers, 'What Does Spirituality Mean for Patients, Practitioners and Health Care Organisations?', in Wattis, Curran, and Rogers, *Spiritually Competent Practice in Health Care* (London: CRC Press, 2017), 8





**Figure 2.5: Number of Hits on ‘Google Scholar’ for Spirituality Published between 2000 and 2018**

Different ways of describing this change were conceived. Philip Sheldrake’s wrote about the ‘paradigm shift in the general approach to theology... [with] a movement from the static concept of ‘spiritual theology’ to the more fluid ‘spirituality.’<sup>136</sup> Whilst Hanan Alexander and Terence McLaughlin talked about the change from ‘tethered spirituality,’ which is embedded in a religious faith to ‘untethered spirituality’ which is ‘disconnected from, and may even be discomfoting to, religions.’<sup>137</sup> This is an image I found particularly helpful in the theological reflection when looking at the relationship between Guiding and natural theology (chapter 8).

<sup>136</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), 41

<sup>137</sup> Hanan Alexander, and Terence H. McLaughlin, ‘Education in Religion and Spirituality’, in Nigel Blake et al., (eds.), *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 356–373, 359-360

A further example was Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead's exploration of the move from the more traditional approach of 'Life as' spirituality to what they term 'Subjective-life' spirituality.<sup>138</sup> 'Life-as is about conformity to external authority. It is about 'life lived as dutiful wife, father, husband, strong leader.'<sup>139</sup> For Heelas and Woodhead this is identified with traditional religious practice. The focus is on the transcendent, where commitment is made to a higher truth, which is found 'out there.'<sup>140</sup> In contrast 'Subjective-life' is about 'life-in-relation.' The focus is on the 'inner self' and expresses a commitment to a deep truth that is found within an individual.<sup>141</sup> The distinction between them is further emphasised in the words chosen by Heelas and Woodhead when describing them<sup>142</sup> (Figure 2.6).

<b>'Life as' spirituality</b>	<b>'Subjective-life' spirituality</b>
<i>The truth being found 'out there'</i>	<i>Life lived in deep connection with the unique experiences of myself-in-relation</i>
obedience	harmony
surrender	balance
self-sacrifice	flow
service	integration
holiness	interaction
guidance from a higher authority.	being at one
	wholeness
	inner guidance.

**Figure 2.6: Comparison between Heelas and Woodhead's Definition of 'Life As' and 'Subjective-life Spirituality'**

### 2.7.3 The Kendal Project

Heelas and Woodhead's spiritual categorisation was a result of their research focused on the small town of Kendal in the Lake District. Having tested the

<sup>138</sup> Paul Heelas, and Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 3

<sup>139</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 3

<sup>140</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 5-6

<sup>141</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 5-6

<sup>142</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 5-6

'spiritual revolution *claim*: that traditional forms of religion, particularly Christianity, are giving way to holistic spirituality.'<sup>143</sup> They discovered that although the numbers participating in 'new age' spirituality (holistic milieu) involved 1.6% of the local population and was growing, that despite major decline, the congregational domain (church attendance) involved 7.9% of people.<sup>144</sup> Concluding that, 'although claims of a spiritual revolution are exaggerated, a major shift has occurred in the sacred landscape.'<sup>145</sup>

However, the picture they described was not necessarily accurate. For as Rob Warner pointed out no midweek church attendance or activities were counted.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, the impact of church on the local community through 'Occasional Offices', 'Pastoral Visits,' 'Schools' Work' and so forth was not considered. Therefore 'The Project almost certainly underestimated the reach and durability of the pervasive cultural influence of Christianity.'<sup>147</sup>

When, in 2016, Karin Tusting and Linda Woodhead returned to Kendal things had changed.<sup>148</sup> Spirituality was more mainstream and had become part of the consumer culture. Venues and practitioners had come and gone and the range of material available, and the purpose of it, was constantly changing, 'shaped by the needs, aptitudes and biographies of both client and practitioner.'<sup>149</sup> In contrast 'Christianity has become more counter cultural.'<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Heelas and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, x

<sup>144</sup> *The Spiritual Revolution*, 45

<sup>145</sup> *The Spiritual Revolution*, 45

<sup>146</sup> Rob Warner, *Secularization and Its Discontents* (London: Continuum, 2010), 98

<sup>147</sup> Warner, *Secularization*, 98

<sup>148</sup> Karin Tusting, and Linda Woodhead, 'Kendal Revisited: The study of spirituality then and now', in Nadia Bartolini, Sara MacKian, and Steve Pile, (eds.), *Spaces of Spirituality* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 120-134

<sup>149</sup> Tusting and Woodhead, 'Kendal Revisited', 126

<sup>150</sup> 'Kendal Revisited', 128

Their approach included a number of assumptions, which I would argue distorted these conclusions. Three examples I give are, firstly, based on the previous research they presumed Sunday church attendance would have declined by 16%.<sup>151</sup> Instead the attendance for Holy Trinity Kendal had increased by 48% going from 195<sup>152</sup> to 289.<sup>153</sup>

Secondly, nearly 90% of parents in the local church school agreed that it was important to 'promote children's spiritual development.'<sup>154</sup> This for Tusting and Woodhead meant the lessening impact of Christianity.<sup>155</sup> Consideration was not given that those asked might have thought Christian and spiritual education analogous in the context.

Finally, the three Anglican churches were deemed to have less of an impact in the community, which they linked with the shift to more Evangelical churchmanship<sup>156</sup> and their developing 'sense of distinctiveness.'<sup>157</sup> However, the Anglican churches were still there and engaged with an increased range of services and work.<sup>158</sup> (Many of which did not happen on a Sunday and therefore, as before were not counted). Distinctiveness, it not necessary negative. For these, and other churches to be recognised for what they stand

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<sup>151</sup> 'Kendal Revisited', 128

<sup>152</sup> Heelas, and Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution*, 154

<sup>153</sup> Parochial Church Council of St Thomas' Church Kendal, *Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2016*, 4  
<https://stkweb.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=190648> (19 January 2019)

<sup>154</sup> 'Kendal Revisited', 127

<sup>155</sup> 'Kendal Revisited', 126-127

<sup>156</sup> 'Kendal Revisited', 128

<sup>157</sup> 'Kendal Revisited', 133

<sup>158</sup> 'Holy Trinity Kendal Parish Church', <https://www.kendalparishChurch.co.uk/> (19 January 2019)

for and be known for what they do is, probably more helpful for people trying to negotiate an ever-changing spiritual landscape.

Nevertheless, Tusting and Woodhead did show that the religious landscape in Kendal had altered, especially people's acceptance of and familiarity with spirituality. Included in this was an important issue that a growing number of people were more willing to characterise themselves as having 'no religion' or 'nones,'<sup>159</sup>

The significance of 'no religion' becoming the majority is not just a matter of numbers it means that 'Christian' has ceased or is ceasing to be the norm not just in terms of self-identification but for many institutions, rituals and activities, including weddings and funerals.<sup>160</sup>

#### *2.7.4 Spirituality and Generation Y*

The concept of having no religion has been recognised as a characteristic of 'Generation Y', (also known as 'Millennials').<sup>161</sup> Having noted it here I return to it in detail as it is one of themes highlighted by the Guide Focus Groups (6.10.3).

A range of research has been conducted into this age group, including the spirituality of that generation. Anne Horan provided a helpful summary of various studies concluding that,

Millennials question past beliefs, and most (72%) no longer tie their identity to religious faith as did their elders...Churches are equated with hypocrisy, judgment, formalities, and inflexibility; as such, millennials are less likely to adopt statements of faith or Church doctrines, and they "shop around" for the most comfortable life perspectives...They perceive

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<sup>159</sup> James Emery, White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the new Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Books, 2017), 11

<sup>160</sup> Tusting, and Woodhead, 'Kendal Revisited', 123

<sup>161</sup> Those born from 1980-1996

spirituality as an individual pursuit where there is no right to dictate what others should or should not do.<sup>162</sup>

The negative language of ‘hypocrisy, judgment, formalities, inflexibility,’ assumed about the church compared to the freedom implied by spirituality, paints a powerful portrait, which was endorsed by Tusting’s and Woodhead’s findings, relating to the constantly changing spiritual landscape and the marginalisation of the church in the minds of the people they interviewed.

This implies a superficial nature to spiritual lives of many of this generation, which other studies would question. Burstein for example found a generation whose spirituality led them ‘to see the suffering and problems in the world-and to be motivated to do something about them.’<sup>163</sup>

The acceptability of having no religion, a rejection of the church and the individual pursuit of a spirituality that fitted in with their lifestyle, coupled with a motivation to change things. This was suggested as the spiritual landscape of the Generation Y cohort of Guiding leaders.

## **2.8 To be True to Myself and Develop my Beliefs**

At the beginning of 2013 Girlguiding UK held a new consultation on the Promise. At the same time the Scout Association was looking at their Promise and the Church of England encouraged its members to respond.<sup>164</sup> During the

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<sup>162</sup> Anne Puidk. Horan, ‘Fostering Spiritual Formation of Millennials in Christian Schools’, *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 26, no.1 (2017), 59-60  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2017.1282901> (18 May 2019)

<sup>163</sup> D. D. Burstein, *Fast future: How the millennial generation is shaping our world* (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 2013), 177

<sup>164</sup> Church of England, ‘Keeping the Promise: Scouting & Girlguiding Promise Consultations’,

consultation 'The aspect of the Promise that was seen to be most challenging was the reference to 'my God' and the implications for inclusivity.'<sup>165</sup>

The reports show how the theme of inclusivity was driving the change. Not as before in making the Promise more accessible to girls of all faiths, but now it was to all faiths and none. The issue of no religion was becoming a key principle.<sup>166</sup> 44,000 people gave their views and among other changes, the spiritual dimension of the Promise was changed from 'to love my God' to 'To be true to myself and develop my beliefs' (Figure 2.4).

The word God was gone from the Promise. Such a seemingly radical change to the ethos of Guiding made headline news.<sup>167</sup> It caused much discussion and debate and was even raised in the Church of England's General Synod.<sup>168</sup> For Woodhead there was a sadness that this change was Guiding reflecting the fragmentation of values within the wider society.<sup>169</sup> Some like Andrea Mann welcomed the change,<sup>170</sup> whilst others like Bishop Nazir Ali felt it undermined

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<http://www.salisbury.anglican.org/resources-library/whos-who/news-and-events/Keeping%20the%20Promise-%20briefing.pdf> (11 January 2013)

<sup>165</sup> Guide Association, *Background and concepts of the Promise and Law for Trainers*, (London: The Guide Association, 2013), 14

<sup>166</sup> Guide Association, *Background and Concepts*, 12

<sup>167</sup> BBC News, 'God vow dropped from Girlguiding UK promise', 19 June 2013,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-22959997> (29 December 2017), or Sarah Morrison 'I promise... to be true to myself and develop my beliefs': Girl Guides drop religious reference but pledge to self and the Queen', *The Independent*, 18 June 2013,

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/i-promise-to-be-true-to-myself-and-develop-my-beliefs-girl-guides-drop-religious-reference-but-8664110.html> (29 December 2017)

<sup>168</sup> Alison L. Ruoff, 'Private Member's Motion: Girl Guides' Promise', *General Synod Background Paper GS 1943A*, January 2014, [https://www.Churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/gs%201943a%20-%20girl%20guides%20promise%20pmm\\_Feb14.pdf](https://www.Churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/gs%201943a%20-%20girl%20guides%20promise%20pmm_Feb14.pdf) (6 April 2018)

<sup>169</sup> Cole Moreton, 'Girl Guides: Has this woman broken a sacred promise?', *The Telegraph*, 22 June 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10136374/Girl-Guides-Has-this-woman-broken-a-sacred-promise.html> (29 May 2017)

<sup>170</sup> Andrea Mann, 'Thank God the Girl Guides Are Changing Their Promise', *Huff Post*, 26 June 2013, [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/andrea-mann/girl-guide-promise\\_b\\_3486735.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/andrea-mann/girl-guide-promise_b_3486735.html) (29 May 2017)

his understanding that Guiding was 'rooted in the Christian faith.'<sup>171</sup> A misconception that resulted in Guide Units being asked to leave church premises,<sup>172</sup> or increases made to their rent, in the mistaken belief that the movement had been, and was no longer Christian. 'We used to meet in a church but said we weren't Christian any more... and when the rent was almost doubled we had no choice but to re-locate.'<sup>173</sup>

Despite Guiding trying to make it increasingly explicit, the idea that it is a Christian organisation, I have shown, has persisted since its inception. What this part of the literature review has revealed is the shift, driven by inclusivity, from the practice of religion to the exploration of spirituality. An exploration which calls for each member to develop her beliefs.

Guiding has always encouraged all members to develop their beliefs and moral framework, both inside and outside the context of a formal religion. To develop our beliefs we must actively explore, challenge and test them. Both those within a faith community and those who are not part of a formalised faith have beliefs about life, the world and our place in it. And within guiding, those beliefs should be explored and challenged so they can be developed and strengthened.<sup>174</sup>

### *2.8.1 How Should the Church Respond?*

Such a shift raises important questions about the appropriate way for a church to engage with local Units. Particularly those relating to the level of acknowledgment that should be made by churches of the different religious and spiritual beliefs members of a Unit may hold, and the appropriateness of the different activities they are offering.

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<sup>171</sup> John Bingham, 'Girl Guides split warning as Christians back rebel troop over pledge', *The Telegraph*, 22 August 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10259295/Girl-Guides-split-warning-as-Christians-back-rebel-troop-over-pledge.html> (29 May 2017)

<sup>172</sup> Email from Carol, (Guide Leader, Midlands), 16 March 2016

<sup>173</sup> 'We used to meet in a Church' Closed group Facebook Post, 12 February 2016,

<sup>174</sup> Guide Association, *Background and Concepts*, 9



As Leaders pointed out, 'Girlguiding isn't and has never been a religious organisation. Girls should be free to choose and develop their beliefs, not be shoehorned into Christianity.' (Brownie Leader-Anglican church-SW England) for 'If we tied ourselves to the parish church (or any of the others) it would impair our impartiality - and as Guiding is and always has been a multifaith organisation', (Guide Leader-Anglican church-Wales). Nevertheless, this does not prevent churches providing opportunities for Units to experience and explore what Christianity has to offer.

Here understanding the ethos of Guiding would help a church respond appropriately; knowing how to engage with Units and how to help members explore their beliefs, whilst respecting the inclusive nature of Guiding. Such a relationship does not exclude churches using explicit Christian material, such as prayer stations linked to Bible verses, providing the beliefs of each Guiding member is respected and the activities allow individuals to engage in the way most appropriate to them.

Additionally, churches can invite Units to find out more about specific aspects of the Christian faith. The latter would fit with a new range of Guiding badges linked to the religious festivals of Easter, Eid, Diwali, Hanukkah and Chinese New Year launched in 2020.<sup>175</sup> Here Units are free to choose the activities they feel appropriate, with the focus on learning something about the religion, through activities such as making Diwali lamps or having a Chinese new Year themed evening, rather than girls exploring their own beliefs.

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<sup>175</sup>Girlguiding UK, 'let's celebrate new holiday badges' <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/how-were-being-our-best/updates-for-our-members/lets-celebrate-new-holiday-badges-coming-to-the-girlguiding-shop/> (23 July 2021)

Helping individual girls develop their beliefs is something which Guiding leaders find much more difficult and what is meant by spirituality confusing. Furthermore, 'Spirituality is difficult to describe. It is an elusive and even controversial term which has come to mean different things to different people.'<sup>176</sup> Nevertheless, I needed to agree on a definition of spirituality for this study, which is the next part of this literature review.

## **2.9 A Definition of Spirituality for this Research**

A scan of selected literature associated with spirituality showed there was no commonly agreed definition of spirituality. One definition is that of spirituality being synonymous with religion and participation. A definition that, I have shown is evident in the development of the spiritual dimension of the Promise. It could also be argued that spirituality is an intrinsic part of what it means to be human. What John Drane called 'the software of humankind,'<sup>177</sup> and Sheldrake 'a word that stands for lifestyles and practices that embody an image of human life and the human spirit.'<sup>178</sup>

What Adams, Hyde, and Woolley, among others, recognised is that 'Spirituality is difficult to describe. It is an elusive and even controversial term which has come to mean different things to different people.'<sup>179</sup> Christopher Cook would

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<sup>176</sup> Adams, Hyde, & Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 11

<sup>177</sup> John Drane, *Do Christians know how to be Spiritual?* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2005), 57

<sup>178</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2

<sup>179</sup> <sup>179</sup> Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde, and Richard Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood* (London: Jessica Kinsley, 2008), 11

also agree that 'there is no universally accepted definition of this concept, and it appears to be susceptible to varying interpretations.'<sup>180</sup>

To overcome this researchers have taken different positions. Some like Heelas and Woodhead have come with their own understanding.<sup>181</sup> Others like Michael Green consider the nature of spirituality implicit to the reader and a definition superfluous.<sup>182</sup> Similarly, Nick Spencer although acknowledging the difficulty left his definition as an implicit understanding to be illuminated by the nature and direction of his research.<sup>183</sup> With this precedence of not defining spirituality, there was a strong temptation to follow. Nevertheless, despite the attraction, a working definition of spirituality needed to be arrived at, so that it was clear what I meant by the term in the context of this study.

I was drawn to Hingley's statement that spirituality, 'is not a technique to be mastered: it is a response to God.'<sup>184</sup> This resonated with my own Christian faith. However, Guiding is a spiritual rather than religious organisation and therefore I needed to balance an understanding of spirituality that was compatible both with the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding. One alternative was to choose the overarching theme of transcendence.

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<sup>180</sup> Christopher C. H. Cook, 'Keynote 4: Spirituality and Health,' *Journal for the study of spirituality* 2, no.2 (2012), 152, <https://doi.org/10.1179/jss.2.2.g7w3647127205j85> ( 30 August 2016),

<sup>181</sup> Paul Heelas, and Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 5

<sup>182</sup> Michael Green, *In Search of Spirituality* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2007)

<sup>183</sup> Nick Spencer, *Beyond the Fringe: Researching a Spiritual Age* (Calver: Cliff Collage Publishing, 2005)

<sup>184</sup> C.J.H. Hingley, 'Spirituality', in David J. Atkinson and David H. Field (eds.), *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1995), 809

### 2.9.1 Transcendence

A scan of the literature shows that transcendence has a 'plurality of understandings.'<sup>185</sup> Nonetheless, there is agreement that transcendence relates to something beyond ordinary human understanding that people want to engage with, however nebulous. What Sheldrake calls 'a framework of transcendent beliefs.'<sup>186</sup> What is disputed is how and what should be included. For example, Jonathan Long wants to make it clear that all transcendent experiences should not be interpreted as spiritual, a mistake he feels that Hay and Nye make.<sup>187</sup> However, although he gives an overview of transcendence<sup>188</sup> and how it could be used in education,<sup>189</sup> he never actually defines what it means.

In contrast Christopher Cook provides a very helpful exploration of the theology of transcendence.<sup>190</sup> He makes a clear distinction between 'self-transcendence of a kind that reaches out intrapersonally and interpersonally but not necessarily transpersonally,'<sup>191</sup> and introduces the term theological transcendence as something that 'goes beyond both self-transcendence and interpretive transcendence in requiring a faith commitment.'<sup>192</sup>

Using the term 'theological transcendence' could reduce some of the ambiguity of the term. However, the concept needs explanation and as Haye and Nye

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<sup>185</sup> Cook, 'Keynote 4', 152

<sup>186</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Brief History* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2013), 7

<sup>187</sup> Jonathan Long, 'Spirituality and the Idea of Transcendence', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 5 no.2 (2000), 157 <https://doi.org/10.1080/713670913> (19 January 2019)

<sup>188</sup> Jonathan Long, 'Spirituality' 147-150

<sup>189</sup> Jonathan Long, 'Spirituality' 159-160

<sup>190</sup> Christopher C. H. Cook, 'Transcendence, Immanence and Mental health', in Christopher C. H. Cook, (ed.), *Spirituality, Theology and Mental Health: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (London: SCM Press, 2013), 141-159

<sup>191</sup> Cook, 'Transcendence', 146

<sup>192</sup> Cook, 'Transcendence', 148

pointed out 'it is not always easy to see how to talk in a practical way about this [transcendence] with children.'<sup>193</sup> Therefore, although contained within other definitions of spirituality, transcendence is too vague a concept for this study and a more precise definition is needed.

### 2.9.2 *Missiological Perspective*

As this research looked at whether '*the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*' then thinking about the nature of mission provided a helpful perspective.

Christian mission as Andrew Kirk states, 'is quite simply, though profoundly, what the Christian community is sent to do, beginning right where it is located.'<sup>194</sup> It is God's mission which the church is invited to be part of. It involves enabling people to understand the Gospel message in order to make a commitment to the Christian faith and become disciples.

However, as Drane points out, Christianity, as has been traditionally packaged, by the Anglican church in particular, no longer resonates with where people are today.<sup>195</sup> It has been found wanting and people are looking elsewhere. Nonetheless, people who do not go to church are still seeking answers to the 'big' questions of life, and value having an opportunity to articulate them.<sup>196</sup> If such answers are presented in meaningful ways to those who are seeking, they

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<sup>193</sup> David Hay and Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child: Revised edition*, (London, Jessica Kinsley, 2006), 71

<sup>194</sup>J. Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission? Theological Explorations*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1999), 25

<sup>195</sup> John Drane, *After McDonaldization: Mission, Ministry, and Christian Discipleship in an Age of Uncertainty*, (London: DLT, 2008),

<sup>196</sup> Spencer, *Beyond*, 188-189

can make a real difference to people's attitudes towards the church and the Christian faith.

Work by John Finney showed it was more often over time, and in stages, that people come to faith, rather than through a single evangelistic event.<sup>197</sup> Additionally contemporary apologetics has made a move away from direct confrontation to one of 'building bridges between non Christians and worldviews and the gospel.'<sup>198</sup> The emphasis has become one of firstly 'finding out what God is doing and joining in,'<sup>199</sup> rather than imposing something that may neither connect with the local culture nor be what its inhabitants want or need.

The importance of forming relationships, listening to people's views and respecting their culture are all being integrated into new models of church. The idea of 'belonging before believing' which the 'Alpha course'<sup>200</sup> and 'Messy Church,'<sup>201</sup> with their focus on shared meals, resonate with the informal ways Jesus formed relationships with others. Such approaches have stimulated a range of research, which became the basis of books including, 'Evangelism in a Spiritual Age,'<sup>202</sup> 'Mission-Shaped Church,'<sup>203</sup> and its associated titles.<sup>204</sup> Each

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<sup>197</sup> John Finney, *Finding Faith Today: How does it happen?* (Swindon: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1992)

<sup>198</sup> Adrian, Hastings, Alistair, Mason, Hugh Pyper, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, (Oxford: OUP 2000), 31

<sup>199</sup> Rowan Williams, *Presidential Address at General Synod, York*, 14 July 2003, [http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/sermons\\_speeches/2003/030714.html](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/sermons_speeches/2003/030714.html) (13 June 2005)

<sup>200</sup> Nicky Gumbel, *The Alpha course: explore the meaning of life* (London: Alpha International, 2008)

<sup>201</sup> Lucy Moore, *Messy Church: Fresh Ideas for Building a Christ-centred Community* (Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2006)

<sup>202</sup> Steven Croft, et al., *Evangelism in a Spiritual Age* (London: Church House Publishing, 2005)

<sup>203</sup> Archbishops Council, *Mission-Shaped Church: Church planting and fresh expressions of Church in a changing context* (London: Church House, 2004)

<sup>204</sup> For example, Susan Hope, *Mission-shaped Spirituality* (London: Church House, 2006) or Paul Bayes, and Tim Sledge, *Mission-shaped Parish* (London: Church House, 2006)

took the view that mission was no longer about people becoming converted to Christianity, but rather helping them take the next step on their spiritual journey.

One model of spiritual journey used is that of the Engel Scale.<sup>205</sup> This was developed by James Engel as a way of representing the Christian journey, in stages, from no awareness of God to maturity as a Christian disciple with conversion as a point along it (Figure 2.7).

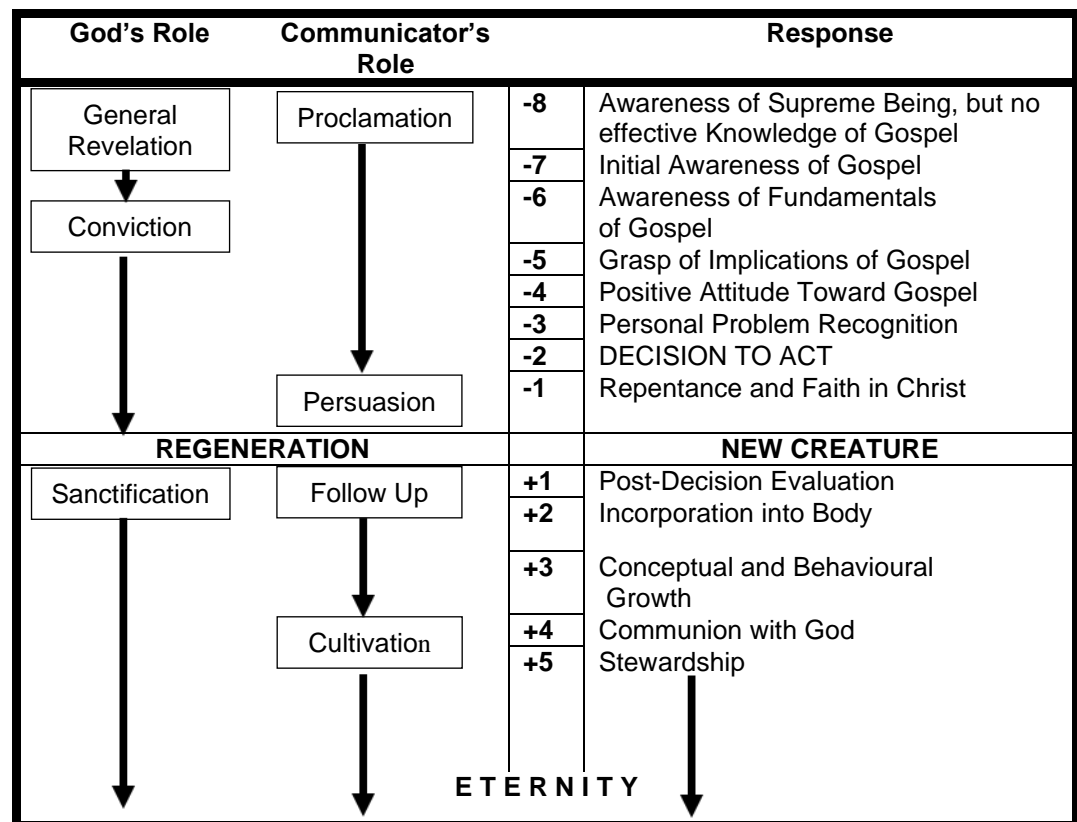


Figure 2.7 The Engel Scale of Evangelism

<sup>205</sup> James F. Engel and H. Wilbert Norton, *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest? A Communication Strategy for the Church and World Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), 45

The idea that the Christian journey can be seen as stages of development was welcomed, as Paul Hazelden points out,

'If you understand something of the journey a person must take in order to discover God, then you know that helping someone take one more step towards God is successful evangelism just as much as helping them over the final line.'<sup>206</sup>

However, Engel's representation, especially its fixed linear manner has been criticised, leading to other models including Paul Hazelden's, modified Engel scale and Frank Gray's matrix.<sup>207</sup> Furthermore, the idea that Christian discipleship is seen as a fixed process does not sit comfortably with a concept of God who is actively involved in it.

Nonetheless, if conversion to Christianity is seen as a process, then it provides the opportunity for people to begin an exploration of their spiritual beliefs without being expected to a commitment to Christianity. Such an approach would allow churches to help Guiding members explore their spiritual beliefs, whilst fitting in with the ethos of Guiding.

### *2.9.3 Spirituality as a Journey*

Furthermore, the theme of journey can also be found in Guiding's definition of spirituality as 'a journey concerned with an individual's participation in activities that help them develop their inner life.'<sup>208</sup> To have taken this definition seemed an obvious solution. The term 'inner life' can combine words such as spirit and

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<sup>206</sup> Paul Hazelden, 'The Modified Engel Scale', [http://www.hazelden.org.uk/pt02/art\\_pt068\\_modified\\_engel\\_full.htm#Background](http://www.hazelden.org.uk/pt02/art_pt068_modified_engel_full.htm#Background) (17 July 2021)

<sup>207</sup> Frank Gray, 'The Gray Matrix – Tracking its History (1977-2015)', [http://thegraymatrix.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/GrayMatrix\\_Tracking-its-History.pdf](http://thegraymatrix.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/GrayMatrix_Tracking-its-History.pdf) (17 July 2021)

<sup>208</sup> Girlguiding UK, *Contemplate: Guiding and Spirituality*, 1



soul and a relationship with an outside deity, while ‘activities,’ that are designed to help people make connections with and explore this inner life, may or may not be linked with the practice of a specific religion.

However, to focus on individual achievement rather than any embodiment, could leave me open to an interpretation of Gnosticism, as although the idea of journey and subjective-life may be included the missional perspective is missing. In her work on Generation Y, Horan emphasises that ‘Spiritual formation is a communal process supported by mentors who journey with mentees as they connect with God.’<sup>209</sup> This provided the missing aspect, of journeying with others. Combining these ideas provides a definition of spirituality for this study as, *‘a journey, in relationship with others which helps an individual develop their inner life, in order to make a difference to themselves and others.’*

As with all definitions this is open to criticism. I recognise that in choosing my own definition, I reinforced Sheldrake’s observation, that “‘spirituality” is chameleon-like in that it takes on the shape and priorities of the different contexts in which it is used.’<sup>210</sup> Nevertheless, it was a definition that I have shown fits in the missiological understanding of Christian faith as journey and the ethos of Guiding. As Guiding is an organisation for children, part of understanding how the spiritual dimension of the Promise relates to them is through examining the literature relating to children’s spirituality.

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<sup>209</sup> Horan, ‘Fostering Spiritual Formation’, 69

<sup>210</sup> Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Very Short Introduction*, 2

## 2.10 Children's Spirituality

As this study involved working with a Unit of Guides aged 10-14 and therefore cross the boundary between childhood and adolescence, it could be assumed that the focus would be on teenage spirituality rather than children's spirituality. However, work such as that carried out by Abbott-Chapman and Denholm, (those aged 15-19),<sup>211</sup> Leslie Francis and William Kay (those aged 13-15)<sup>212</sup> often focus on the older age group. As most participants in this study were under 13, although acknowledging the importance of spirituality within adolescence, this part of the literature review will look more at the work of children's spirituality which encompasses the Guide age group. Furthermore, the majority of Guiding members are aged between 5 and 12 which makes the application of children's spirituality, and the work of Rebecca Nye, among others very relevant.

The spirituality of children is a separate field of research and an evolving discipline, containing issues which are fiercely debated. The final part of this literature review looks at three of these key debates, by asking the following questions:

- Can children have spiritual experiences?
- How is children's spiritual development understood?
- How can spirituality be developed in children?

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<sup>211</sup> J. Abbott-Chapman, and C. Denholm, 'Adolescents' risk activities, risk hierarchies and the influence of religiosity', *Journal of Youth Studies* 4, no.3 (2001), 280–297.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13676260120075428> (30 May 2016)

<sup>212</sup> Leslie J. Francis, and William Kay, *Teenage Religion and Values* (Leominster: Gracewing books, 1994)

## 2.11 Can Children Have Spiritual Experiences?

Early research by Gote Klingberg<sup>213</sup> and David and Sally Elkind<sup>214</sup> concluded that children had experiences of God and were able to articulate them. Their findings became eclipsed by Ronald Goldman's work.<sup>215</sup> Goldman applied a Piagetian understanding to religious development.<sup>216</sup> He argued that spiritual experiences were not part of everyday life, and therefore 'the mystics, who claim to have direct sensations of the divine, are exceptions, but as they are extremely rare cases, rarer in adolescence and practically unknown in childhood.'<sup>217</sup>

Two events coincided, which I argue stimulated research into children's spirituality. Firstly the 1988 Education Reform Act which promoted the spiritual development of pupils as an important part of the curriculum.<sup>218</sup> And secondly in 1989 the spiritual development of children was enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>219</sup>

Studies by Robert Coles,<sup>220</sup> Elaine McCreery<sup>221</sup> and Clive and Jane Ericker,<sup>222</sup> showed that spirituality was an integral part of children's lives. These findings

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<sup>213</sup> Gote Klingberg, 'A study of religious experience in children from 9 to 13 years of age.' Trans. Elise Boulding, *Religious Education* 54, no. 3 (1959), 211-216.

<sup>214</sup> Elkind, David, and Sally Elkind, 'Varieties of religious experience in young adolescents', *Journal for the scientific study of religion* 2, no. 1 (1962), 102-112.

<sup>215</sup> Ronald Goldman, *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964)

<sup>216</sup> Goldman, *Religious Thinking*, 2

<sup>217</sup> Goldman, *Religious Thinking*, 14

<sup>218</sup> *Education Reform Act 1988: Chapter 40 Vol1/2*, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1988), 1

<sup>219</sup> *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Articles 17, 23.1, 27.1, 32.1 (Unicef 1990) <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> (9 June 2017)

<sup>220</sup> Robert Coles, *The Spiritual Life of Children*, (London: Harper Collins, 1990)

<sup>221</sup> Elaine McCreery, 'Talking to young children about things spiritual', in R. Best (ed.) *Education, Spirituality and the Whole Child*, (London: Cassell, 1996)

<sup>222</sup> Ericker, Clive. & Erricker, Jane. 'Where Angels Fear to Tread: Discovering children's

corroborated Edward Robinson's earlier study that, although retrospective, the childhood spiritual experiences that adults related to him had been real.<sup>223</sup> Although conducted differently each study took a child centred approach, showing how exploring spiritual experiences with children could be related to their everyday lives and language.

McCreery used story with 4–5-year-olds and explored the settings of home, school and television from which she showed that children had an awareness and ability to connect with spiritual themes such as death, life and mystery.<sup>224</sup> In contrast Ericker and Ericker entered more in the culture of the 8–10-year-olds they worked with. Through these they identified specific 'genres' including 'My Little Pony' and 'McDonalds' which gave cultural reference points to how the children expressed their spirituality.<sup>225</sup> Whilst Coles' researched focussed on listening to what children had to say rather than imposing adult thinking. What he discovered was that the depth of children's spiritual understanding was equal to that of adults, which he argued indicated an innate spiritual disposition.<sup>226</sup>

The concept of innate spirituality was something that was key to David Hay and Rebecca Nye's research.<sup>227</sup> They were pivotal in establishing The International Journal of Children's Spirituality, which was launched in 1996. Hay and Nye's

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Spirituality', In R. Best (ed. ) *Education, Spirituality and the Whole Child*. (London: Cassell, 1996), 184-195

<sup>223</sup> Edward Robinson, *The Original Vision*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1983)

<sup>224</sup> McCreery, 'Talking to young children' 27

<sup>225</sup> Ericker, 'Where Angels', 190

<sup>226</sup> Coles, *Spiritual Life* 15

<sup>227</sup> David Hay & Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child: Revised edition*, (London, Jessica Kingsley, 2006)

findings were backed up by work by Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde, and Richard Woolley, who also showed the centrality of spirituality for children.<sup>228</sup>

Adams, Hyde and Woolley were also concerned ‘that the spiritual voice of children is often not being heard.’<sup>229</sup> However moving on since the publication of their book children’s spiritual voices have become more prominent. This can be seen in some of the research covering children’s spirituality in relationship, to religion and church going,<sup>230</sup> theology,<sup>231</sup> digital technology,<sup>232</sup> and education.<sup>233</sup> Despite the different approaches a common thread, identified was the importance of ‘spiritual *development* [which] introduces a focus on spiritual change, transformation, growth, or maturation.’<sup>234</sup> How this development is understood, is the next area of debate.

## 2.12 How is Children’s Spiritual Development Understood?

Controversy exists around whether children’s spiritual development needs to be understood in terms of a structured stage development or a cultural phenomenon. The basis of which is the debate surrounding how a child’s mental development can relate to their understanding of spiritual matters.

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<sup>228</sup> Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde, and Richard Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2008)

<sup>229</sup> Adams, Hyde, and Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 32

<sup>230</sup> Heather Nicole. Ingersoll, ‘Making room: a place for children’s spirituality in the Christian Church’, *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality* 19, no.3-4 (2014), 164-178, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2014.979774> (16 November 2018)

<sup>231</sup> Kathy Frady, ‘Rendering theology with 2-year-old children: a Godly Play and grounded theory combination’, *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality* 24, no.2 (2019), 183-201, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2019.1619535> (16 May 2019)

<sup>232</sup> Karen-Marie Yust, ‘Digital power: exploring the effects of social media on children’s spirituality’, *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality* 19, no.2 (2014), 133-143, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2014.924908> (16 November 2018)

<sup>233</sup> Geraint Davies, ‘Spiritual development in Church schools—a survey of Welsh head teachers’ perceptions’, *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality* 12, no.3 (2007), 307-324, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13644360701714985> (16 November 2018)

<sup>234</sup> Peter L. Benson, Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, and Stacey P. Rude, ‘Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence: Toward a Field of Inquiry’, *Applied Developmental Science* 7, no.3 (2003), 210, [https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532480XADS0703_12) (11 January 2019)

### 2.12.1 Stage Development

Work by David and Sally Elkind<sup>235</sup> and Ronald Goldman<sup>236</sup> showed that children's spiritual development paralleled their cognitive understanding. Building on Goldman's thesis, James Fowler took Jean Piaget<sup>237</sup> and Lawrence Kohlberg's<sup>238</sup> work on cognitive development and combined it with Erik Erikson's work on moral development<sup>239</sup> and Reinhold Niebuhr's theology.<sup>240</sup> The result was his Faith Development Theory (FDT)<sup>241</sup> Where each of the 6 stages was 'sequential, invariant and hierarchical.'<sup>242</sup> The first 3 stages relate to childhood and adolescence, with spiritual maturity (Level 6-Universalizing Faith) only rarely achieved. Fowler's model became very influential and was welcomed by educationalists and incorporated into classroom teaching.<sup>243</sup>

### 2.12.2 Experiential Development

Others, including Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde, and Richard Woolley,<sup>244</sup> claimed that spiritual development was experiential rather than intellectual. David Hay and Rebecca Nye argued that staged development models were too cognitive and involved a level of reasoning that turned 'childhood spirituality into nothing

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<sup>235</sup>David Elkind, and Sally Elkind, 'Varieties of religious experience in young adolescents', *Journal for the scientific study of religion* 2, no.1 (1962), 102-112, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/i259915>, (30 May 2016)

<sup>236</sup> Ronald Goldman, *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 14

<sup>237</sup>Jean Piaget, *The language and thought of the child* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1926)

<sup>238</sup> Lawrence Kohlberg, 'Moral stages and moralization: The cognitive-developmental approach', in Tom Lickona (ed.), *Moral development and behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), 31-53

<sup>239</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and society*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Ltd, 1950)

<sup>240</sup> Reinhold H. Niebuhr, *The responsible self*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1963)

<sup>241</sup> James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1981)

<sup>242</sup> James W. Fowler, 'Faith development theory and the postmodern challenges', *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 11, no 3. (2001), 175

<sup>243</sup> Jeff Astley and Leslie J. Francis (ed) *Christian perspectives on faith development*. (Leominster: Gracewing, 1992), 317-396

<sup>244</sup> Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde, & Richard Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood*, (London, Jessica Kinsley, 2008)

more than a form of immaturity or inadequacy.'<sup>245</sup> There are a range of alternatives to the stage theory. The most significant include Substantive-Functional Approach, Cognitive-Cultural Theories, Developmental Systems Theories and the Spiritual Child Movement.

Proponents of the Substantive-Functional approach such as Susan Kwilecki use a quantitative<sup>246</sup> approach considering spiritual development 'has to do with imagination more than with perception and reason,'<sup>247</sup> and that religious ideas are linked with the patterns in people's lives.<sup>248</sup> In contrast Cognitive-Cultural theorists like Carl Johnson and Chris Boyatzis<sup>249</sup> argue that children develop knowledge intuitively and even young 'children are equally able to think about natural and supernatural possibilities.'<sup>250</sup> What takes time is the development of the language and cognitive skills necessary to express this. Whereas Developmental Systems Theorists including Mark Regnerus and Glen Elder<sup>251</sup> focus on the influence of the environment on a child and how factors such as church going can shape their lives and allow them to apply learned behaviours in other contexts.

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<sup>245</sup> *Haye and Nye, Spirit*, 57

<sup>246</sup> Susan Kwilecki, *Becoming Religious: Understanding Devotion to the Unseen*, (London: Associated University Presses, 1999)

<sup>247</sup> Scarlett, 'Toward a developmental', 27

<sup>248</sup> Kwilecki, *Becoming Religious*, 25

<sup>249</sup> Carl N. Johnson & Chris J. Boyatzis, 'Cognitive-cultural foundations of spiritual development,' In Eugene C. Roehlkepartian, et al., (eds.), *The handbook of spiritual development in childhood and adolescence* (London: Sage Publications. 2006), 211-223

<sup>250</sup> Johnson & Boyatzis, 'Cognitive-cultural foundations', 211

<sup>251</sup> Mark G. Regnerus, & Glen H. Elder, 'Staying on Track in School: Religious Influences in High- and Low-Risk Settings,' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 42, 2003, 633–649.

Prominent in the Spiritual Child Movement is the work of Hay and Nye.<sup>252</sup> They proposed that children are naturally spiritual beings as spirituality is rooted in our biological makeup.<sup>253</sup> Therefore spiritual development is about giving children the support and encouragement they need to access and express their spirituality. Hay and Nye identified the core of children's spirituality to be what they termed 'relational consciousness.'<sup>254</sup> and characterised by four key relationships; 'child:-God consciousness, child:-people consciousness, child:-world consciousness, child:-self consciousness.'<sup>255</sup> These allowed them to assess children's spirituality without the using traditional language, yet still have a conceptual boundary to work within.<sup>256</sup>

Controversy continues to surround which model is more suitable, especially when looking at how to help children develop their spirituality. Having trained and worked as a Primary School teacher, I was initially drawn to the stage development of spirituality, as I recognise the acquisition of skills, such as reading and maths, happen in stages with children building on what they have previously learnt. However, reading the work of Hay and Nye challenged my thinking. It helped me make sense of the deep spiritual insights that conversations with young children have given me and also my own experiences as a 2-year-old, having a profound awareness of God, but not having the language to express it. Therefore, I have decided to adopt the experiential

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<sup>252</sup> David Hay & Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child: Revised edition*, (London, Jessica Kinsley, 2006)

<sup>253</sup> See Alister Hardy, *The Divine Flame: An Essay towards a Natural History of Religion*. (London: Collins, 1966) and David Hay, "'The biology of God": What is the current status of Hardy's hypothesis?', *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 4(1), 1994, 1-23 for a full discussion of this.

<sup>254</sup> Hay & Nye, *Spirit*, 109

<sup>255</sup> Hay & Nye, *Spirit*, 115

<sup>256</sup> David Hay & Rebecca Nye, 'Identifying children's spirituality: how do you start without a starting point?.' *British Journal of Religious Education* 18, no.3 (1996): 144.



development approach taking on the Cognitive-Cultural theory of Johnson and Boyatzis.

### 2.13 How Can Spirituality be Developed in Children?

Deemed, by Jacqueline Watson essential to a child's education<sup>257</sup> the importance of developing children's spirituality has become imbedded in the National Curriculums of England and Wales and are part of the specific criteria used by 'Office for Standards in Education' (OFSTED)<sup>258</sup> and Estyn<sup>259</sup> when carrying out school inspections.

How that spirituality is developed is the subject of debate. Mike Castelli, and Abdullah Trevathan identify two schools of thought.<sup>260</sup> Firstly, as Coles<sup>261</sup> and Adrian Thatcher<sup>262</sup> advocate, 'spirituality can only take place within the context of a faith tradition.'<sup>263</sup> This for Thatcher means that it needs to be taught as part of Religious Education for 'once wrenched from its religious meaning, it [spirituality] has to be *assigned* a meaning by its advocates, and there is lack of agreement among them about what it signifies.'<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Jacqueline Watson, 'Religion, Spirituality and State-Funded Schooling', *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* 2, no.2 (2012), 193, <https://doi.org/10.1179/jss.2.2.r19k245007357081> (17 February, 2019)

<sup>258</sup> OFSTED, '*School inspection handbook: Handbook for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005*', (2016), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015> (1 May 2017)

<sup>259</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, 'National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales: Guidance for local education authorities and agreed syllabus conferences', (2008), <http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/130426-re-national-exemplar-framework-en-v2.pdf> (1 May 2017)

<sup>260</sup> Mike Castelli, and Abdullah Trevathan, 'The English public space: developing spirituality in English Muslim schools', *The International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 10, no.2 (2005), 123-131, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13644360500154151> (1 May 2017)

<sup>261</sup> Coles, *The Spiritual Life of Children*

<sup>262</sup> Adrian Thatcher, (ed.), *Spirituality and the Curriculum* (London: Cassell, 1999)

<sup>263</sup> Castelli and Abdullah, 'developing spirituality', 124

<sup>264</sup> Adrian Thatcher, 'Theology, Spirituality and the Curriculum-An Overview,' in Thatcher, *Spirituality and the Curriculum*, (London: Cassell, 1999), 3

Secondly, Hay and Nye's position that spirituality is 'an innate human quality independent of a given faith position.'<sup>265</sup> Hay and Nye identified three 'categories of spiritual sensitivity;' Awareness-sensing, (Here & now, Tuning, Flow, Focusing), Mystery-sensing (Wonder and awe, Imagination) and Value-sensing (Delight & despair, Ultimate goodness, Meaning)<sup>266</sup> These they argued allowed them to assess a child's spirituality without using traditional language, yet still have a conceptual boundary to work within.<sup>267</sup> Furthermore, for religious education they contend that

When children are helped to become aware of these dimensions of their experience they may begin to understand the perspective and inspiration of the religious believer. Only then can they appreciate the function and power of religious language.<sup>268</sup>

Although Nye does not consider that children's spirituality needs a faith perspective, it is noticeable that in other research she grounds children's learning of spirituality within Christianity.<sup>269</sup> This has led to the identification of six criteria (Space, Process, Imagination, Relationship, Intimacy and Trust: S.P.I.R.I.T)<sup>270</sup> as a focus helping children deepen their Christian faith. She also advocates the use of Jerome Berryman's 'Godly Play,' material,<sup>271</sup> to help children develop their spirituality both through learning the language they need

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<sup>265</sup> Castelli, and Abdullah, 'developing spirituality', 124

<sup>266</sup> David Hay and Rebecca Nye, 'Investigating children's spirituality: the need for a fruitful hypothesis.' *The International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 1, no.1 (1996): 9-11 (1 May 2017)

<sup>267</sup> David Hay and Rebecca Nye, 'Identifying children's spirituality: how do you start without a starting point?.' *British Journal of Religious Education* 18, no.3 (1996): 144. (1 May 2017)

<sup>268</sup> Rebecca Nye and David Hay, 'Identifying Children's Spirituality: How Do You Start Without a Starting Point?' *British Journal of Religious Education*, 18, no.3 (1996), 144-154 (1 May 2017)

<sup>269</sup> Rebecca Nye, 'Spirituality', in Anne Richards and Peter Privett, (eds.), *Through the eyes of a child: New insights in theology from a child's perspective* (London: Church House Publishing, 2009), 69-75

<sup>270</sup> Rebecca Nye, *Children's Spirituality: what it is and why it matters* (London, Church House Publishing, 2009), 41-56

<sup>271</sup> Nye, *Children's Spirituality*, 38-39

to express their thinking and be given the space to explore it.<sup>272</sup> Coupling Nye's S.P.I.R.I.T criteria and 'Godly Play' provided Cheryl Minor and Barry Grant with a way of testing relational consciousness, that was not previously available before. They concluded that there was 'a possible relationship between exposure to the six conditions and spiritual well-being.'<sup>273</sup> It could be argued that wellbeing relates to the theme of Spiritual Intelligence.

### 2.13.1 *Spiritual Intelligence*

The idea of spiritual intelligence 'seems to denote a person's ability to draw on the spiritual as a means by which to address and solve problems of meaning in life.'<sup>274</sup> Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall argue that along with 'intellectual intelligence' (IQ) and 'emotional intelligence' (EQ) a third dimension, which they call 'spiritual intelligence' (SQ) is needed to make up the 'full picture of human intelligence'.<sup>275</sup>

Spiritual intelligence has been shown to have an important role in psychological wellbeing. It helps people have meaning and purpose in their life and assists when solving problems (Robert Emmons).<sup>276</sup> Furthermore, a high spiritual intelligence is linked to those in professions, such as education (Prem Srivastava)<sup>277</sup> and healthcare (Bagheri Fariborsa)<sup>278</sup> being better able to cope

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<sup>272</sup> Jerome W. Berryman, *Godly Play: An Imaginative Approach to Religious Education* (Minneapolis: MN, Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 157

<sup>273</sup> Minor, and Grant, 'Promoting spiritual well-being', 213

<sup>274</sup> Adams, Hyde, and Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 89

<sup>275</sup> Danah Zohar, and Ian Marshall, *SQ: Spiritual Intelligence the Ultimate Intelligence* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000), 2-3

<sup>276</sup> Robert A. Emmons, 'Is Spirituality an Intelligence? Motivation, Cognition, and the Psychology of Ultimate Concern,' *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 10, No.1, 3-26, (2009), DOI: 10.1207/S15327582IJPR1001\_2, (16 July 2021)

<sup>277</sup> Prem Shankar Srivastava, 'Spiritual Intelligence: an overview.' *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 3, No.3, (2016), 224-227.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321875385\\_Spiritual\\_intelligence\\_An\\_overview](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321875385_Spiritual_intelligence_An_overview) (16 July 2021)

with the demands placed on them. Those who have a highly developed SQ display certain characteristics (Figure 2.8).

- the capacity to be flexible (actively and spontaneously adaptive)
- a high degree of self-awareness
- a capacity to face and use suffering
- a capacity to face and transcend pain
- a quality of being inspired by vision and values
- a reluctance to cause unnecessary harm
- a tendency to see connections between diverse things (being 'holistic')
- a marked tendency to ask 'Why?' or 'What if?' questions and to seek 'fundamental' answers
- being what psychologists call 'field-independent' -possessing a facility for working against convention

**Figure 2.8: Zohar and Marshall's Indications of a Highly Developed SQ**

Adams, Hyde, and Woolley point out that these and other such SQ characteristics can be exhibited by children.<sup>279</sup> However David Fontana<sup>280</sup> and John Mayer are sceptical of whether SQ really exists, with Mayer suggesting that the distinction between spiritual and SQ in children would be difficult to ascertain.<sup>281</sup> Nonetheless, Adams, Hyde, and Woolley make the case for helping children develop their spiritual intelligence.<sup>282</sup>

## 2.14 Summary

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<sup>278</sup> Bagheri Fariborsa , Akbarizadeh Fatemehb, Hatami Hamidrezac, 'The relationship between nurses' spiritual intelligence and happiness in Iran,' *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, (2010), 1556-1561, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.325> (16 July 2021)

<sup>279</sup> Adams, Hyde, and Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 90

<sup>280</sup> David Fontana, *Psychology, Religion and Spirituality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 81-82

<sup>281</sup> John D. Mayer (2000) 'Spiritual Intelligence or Spiritual Consciousness?', *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 10, no.1 (2000), 49-50, [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327582IJPR1001\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327582IJPR1001_5) (18 January 2019)

<sup>282</sup> Adams, Hyde, and Woolley, *The Spiritual Dimension*, 99-102

In this literature review I have demonstrated the lack of research into the spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise, which this thesis aims to address. I have shown by taking the theme of inclusivity how the Promise developed from, Baden-Powell's initial ideas to the theme of Spirituality today and how changes in society and perspectives on spirituality impacted this. The link between religion and the spiritual dimension of the Promise looked to have been severed. It would seem that the answer to my research question, '*Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*' would be no! However, as the rest of the thesis shows, the link between churches and Units is still very important and Guiding leaders want to develop the relationship and would welcome help and support with the spiritual dimension of the Promise.

As part of understanding more fully what spirituality is and what it may mean to girls in Guiding. I looked first to define spirituality. Having considered aspects of transcendence, missiology and journey I came to a definition of spirituality for this study as 'a journey, in relationship with others which helps an individual develop their inner life, in order to make a difference to themselves and others.'

In the final part I looked at children's spiritual through the three key debates of

- Can children have spiritual experiences?
- How is children's spiritual development understood?
- How can spirituality be developed in children?

Having established a purpose for this research, in the next chapter I explain the methodology and evaluate the methods chosen to answer the research questions.



### **Chapter 3                      Methodology**

*Practical theological interpretation...creates a bridge between the subdisciplines of academic practical theology and between the academy and the church. It draws attention to the web of life in which ministry takes place.<sup>283</sup>*

The literature review highlighted the lack of research into the Girlguiding Promise. It also laid the foundation for what is being explored through the primary research question, including a definition of spirituality for this research. This chapter explains the chosen methodology and research method selected to answer the primary research question, *'is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission?'*

Through considering some of the epistemological and methodological debates surrounding it, the chapter begins by justifying Practical Theology as the chosen discipline (3.1). It then shows how the Pastoral Cycle was adapted using Osmer's key tasks and questions to give shape to the research (3.2), before outlining why mixed methods was chosen as the central research method (3.3). It then looks at the rationale for the church and Guiding unit which were chosen and how this highlighted the tension between that of researcher as insider or outsider (3.4). The chapter goes onto discuss the choice of qualitative (3.5) and quantitative techniques (3.6). The chapter concludes with a discussion of personal reflexivity (3.7) before a final summary (3.8).

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<sup>283</sup> Richard R. Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Wm B Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2008), 17

### 3.1 Practical Theology

Whilst other theological disciplines such as Systematic or Dogmatic theology are rooted in more abstract and theoretical concepts, practical theology is an academic discipline which reflects theologically on current issues affecting the church and modern society with a view to the practical application of the outcome. It is a 'dynamic process'<sup>284</sup> involving 'critical, theological reflection'<sup>285</sup> which 'conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical and practically transforming.'<sup>286</sup> In the last twenty years it has become a much more accepted academic discipline, as work by Elaine Graham,<sup>287</sup> John Swinton and Harriet Mowat,<sup>288</sup> has shown.

In deciding the most appropriate methodology, in relation to the research questions, it is necessary to explore the epistemological and methodological debates which surround this discipline. I will do this by considering Paul Ballard and John Pritchard's four key practical theological models, of habitus, applied theory, critical correlation and praxis.<sup>289</sup>

#### 3.1.1 *Habitus Model*

The idea that personal faith is key to practical theology forms the basis of the habitus model. Here practitioners develop 'a way of life, through which the story of Jesus continues to be told in the life of the story-shaped community of the

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<sup>284</sup> Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press 2001), 22

<sup>285</sup> John Swinton, and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 6

<sup>286</sup> Stephen Pattinson, *The Challenge of Practical Theology* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publisher, 2007), 12

<sup>287</sup> Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods* (London: SCM, 2005), 2

<sup>288</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology*

<sup>289</sup> Paul Ballard, and John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action* (London: SPCK, 1996), 57-70



church.<sup>290</sup> The habitus model has developed from Edward Farley's work.<sup>291</sup> For Farley, theology was seen as practical rather than theoretical, a way of life built on biblical wisdom.<sup>292</sup> Habitus considers the task of practical theology to be about personal spiritual development. 'a training of mind and heart.'<sup>293</sup> In which, as Pete Ward reflects, 'we absorb the knowledge of God, and in turn we find ourselves absorbed into the life of God.'<sup>294</sup> Although establishing whether personal spiritual growth has happened was not the focus of the research questions, the idea of personal development does fit into my definition of spirituality as '*a journey, in relationship with others which helps an individual develop their inner life, in order to make a difference to themselves and others,*' (2.9.4). Furthermore, personal development is one of the goals of Guiding<sup>295</sup> and the Promise as 'a training of mind and heart,' can be seen in how

Baden-Powell encouraged the development of the whole person, including spiritual, moral, physical, mental, social, intellectual and emotional aspects...[which] were instrumental in the creation of the Fundamental Principles of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting, outlined in the Original Promise and Law.<sup>296</sup>

Nevertheless, although having areas of relevance, this model does not fully engage with the research questions, and I needed to consider other approaches.

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<sup>290</sup> Graham, Walton & Ward, *Theological Reflection*, 78

<sup>291</sup> Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 35

<sup>292</sup> Farley, *Theologia*, 35

<sup>293</sup> Ballard, and Pritchard, *Practical Theology*, 68

<sup>294</sup> Pete Ward, *Introducing Practical Theology: Mission, Ministry, and the Life of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 17

<sup>295</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'Learning and Development,' <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/growing-our-membership/recruiting-and-retaining-volunteers/showing-the-benefits/> (16 July 2021)

<sup>296</sup> WAGGGS, 'The Original Promise and Law,' <https://www.waggs.org/en/about-us/our-history/original-promise-and-law/> (16 July 2021)

### 3.1.2 *Applied Theory*

Instead of personal development, applied theory promotes practical theology as a professional endeavour. Here either social sciences or theology take the lead in interpreting a pastoral situation. In the former this could lead to pastoral practice being dictated, for example by the psychology of a specific counselling approach, rather than by Christian teaching. In the latter, building on the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who wanted to 'provide theology with academic credibility,'<sup>297</sup> it is theology which takes the lead. Again, the emphasis is on theory dictating practice. In both circumstances the emphasis is on a rationalist approach expounded by elite experts rather than something accessible to most people.

It is such a concern which Andrew Todd addresses. If experience he argues is allowed to take second place to theory and knowledge, then ministry becomes 'forever subservient to the past,'<sup>298</sup> not able to respond to the needs of the present and future. Furthermore, promoting experience over applied theology is in 'keeping with a theology of knowing God in practice, rather than in abstract.'<sup>299</sup>

Although, understanding Todd's concern that a theological starting point could undermine experience, this presumes that experience and applied theology are separate disciplines. Ward would challenge such thinking. He points out that applied theology cannot be divorced from experience. For 'we carry into the

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<sup>297</sup> Ballard, and Pritchard, *Practical Theology*, 59

<sup>298</sup> Andrew Todd, 'What is Theological about Theological Reflection?' *British Journal of Theological Education*, 11 No.1 (2000), 38, (6 November 2020), DOI 10.1080/1352741X.2000.11719668.

<https://search-ebscohost-com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/login.aspx?>

<sup>299</sup> Todd, 'What is Theological?', 39

reflection on experience a theologically shaped perspective...[furthermore] while it may appear that we are starting with the Scriptures, in fact we bring our experience of life and of the church to the Scriptures.<sup>300</sup>

This duology of experience and theology can be seen in the research question, which would validate taking applied theology as a starting point. However, although keeping in mind Ward's premise that 'we carry into the reflection on experience a theologically shaped perspective'<sup>301</sup> applied theory does not provide a strong enough model for this thesis as it lacks the emphasis on the dialogue between experience and other elements.

### 3.1.3 Critical Correlation

In contrast, critical correlation 'sees the practical-theological task as bringing situations into dialectical conversations with insights from the Christian tradition and perspectives drawn from other sources of knowledge (primarily the social sciences).'<sup>302</sup> Here Don Browning's work provides a foundation.

Drawing on the hermeneutics of Gadamer and the 'revised correlational approach' of David Tracy<sup>303</sup> Browning recognises how different social science disciplines can contribute to the overall 'thick description'<sup>304</sup> when describing a church community. The resulting 'descriptive theology'<sup>305</sup> is the first of his four 'movements.' When this is brought into conversation with insights from next two

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<sup>300</sup> Ward, *Introducing Practical Theology*, 4

<sup>301</sup> Ward, *Introducing Practical Theology*, 4

<sup>302</sup> Swinton and Mowatt, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 77

<sup>303</sup> Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 44-47

<sup>304</sup> Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, 2.

<sup>305</sup> Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology* 47

movements of historical, and systematic theologies<sup>306</sup> they can provide fresh perspectives. From these changes can be discerned and made, in the fourth movement of 'practicing strategic practical theology.'<sup>307</sup>

With its emphasis on developing a 'thick description' this appeared a potential methodology. However, I would agree with Elaine Graham's concern that Browning's perspective of theology as merely 'applied ethics'<sup>308</sup> loses that 'embodiment of theological disclosure,'<sup>309</sup> that I would consider is an important aspect of developing an inner life. Something which is an essential aspect of my definition of spirituality.

Furthermore, as Graham points out, Browning 'ignores the extent to which individuals, and believing/practising communities, are shaped by symbolic, embodied and non-rational action: dreams, worship, touch, stories, touch, silence, space, movement and sacrament.'<sup>310</sup> Aspects which have a strong place within the both the church and spiritual dimension of Guiding. Although, not suitable for this study as a fourfold process Browning's structure is similar to the pastoral cycle, which is the best known of the praxis models.

#### 3.1.4 Praxis

Coming out of a Marxist tradition, and taking current practice as the starting point, praxis, Ballard and Prichard state 'is an attempt to overcome the

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<sup>306</sup> Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology* 47-54

<sup>307</sup> Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, 2

<sup>308</sup> Elaine Graham, 'Pastoral Theology: Therapy, Mission or Liberation?', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52, no.4 (1999), 451, doi:10.1017/S003693060005047X (19 January 2029) .

<sup>309</sup> Graham, 'Pastoral Theology', 451

<sup>310</sup> Graham, 'Pastoral Theology', 452

rationalistic distinction between theory and practice.<sup>311</sup> It takes, as Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Francis Ward show, seriously 'The fundamental assumption...that theory and practice are inextricably joined.'<sup>312</sup> It begins by asking questions about situation, to understand in detail what is happening and the factors influencing this. This is followed by 'theological reflection, before 'out of the juxtaposition of analysis and gospel emerges the new praxis, which itself has to be subject to the same process.'<sup>313</sup>

Although such a cycle provides a clear structure, by compartmentalising each stage it does dislocate the analysis and reflection from the current practice, as they are envisioned to happen away from the situation being studied. Furthermore, as I have argued previously<sup>314</sup> it does not acknowledge the connections and interrelationship between each element of the cycle. Such connections show that in reality, praxis is a much messier approach than suggested, as it is not possible to fully dissociate each part from the other.

However, in order to answer the research questions this study needed to begin with current practice, before analysing it and reflecting theologically on 'how the gospel should be heard in these circumstances.'<sup>315</sup> These lead onto the final interpretation and recommendations. Therefore, whilst acknowledging the limitations, praxis, interpreted through a modified form of the Pastoral Cycle provided a strong methodology.

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<sup>311</sup> Ballard and Prichard, 66

<sup>312</sup> Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Francis Ward, 170

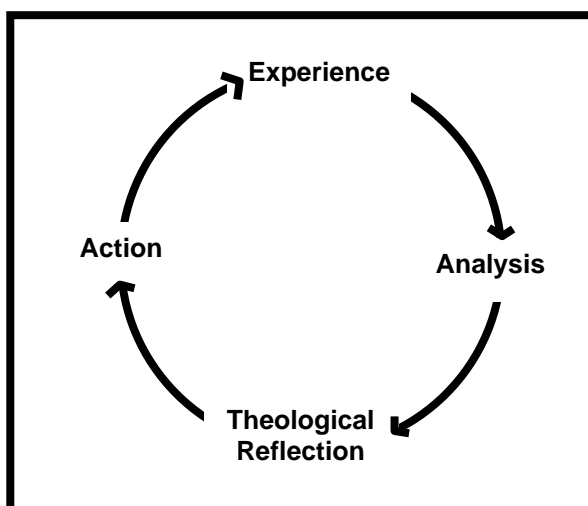
<sup>313</sup> Ballard and Prichard, 66

<sup>314</sup> Paulette Gower, *A Pilot Study into How the 'Angelic Realm' and 'Natural Realm' Spirituality Cards Connect with those on the Fringe of a Local Church* (MATM Dissertation, University of Durham, 2007), 2

<sup>315</sup> Ballard and Prichard, 67

### 3.2 The Pastoral Cycle

In the Pastoral Cycle (Figure 3.1) the four elements of Experience, Analysis, Theological Reflection and Action are used to provide a structure for reflection.<sup>316</sup>



**Figure 3.1: The Pastoral Cycle**

As I have argued previously<sup>317</sup> such cyclic models are limited, as they do not acknowledge the connections and interrelationship between each element of the cycle. Nevertheless, whilst being aware of the limitations, for the purpose of this research, the four elements of the Pastoral Cycle will be combined with Osmer's expansion of it into four key questions and core tasks<sup>318</sup> (Figure 3.2). This provides a strong basis for structuring the research. Figure 3.2 also shows how individual chapters in this study link into these four areas with acknowledgement of the overlap and interrelationship between them.

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<sup>316</sup> Ballard and Prichard, 5

<sup>317</sup> Paulette Gower, *A Pilot Study*, 2

<sup>318</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 4

### 3.2.1 Why Osmer?

Osmer's method was instigated to help church Leaders develop a rounded approach when dealing with challenges in their ministry and at the heart of it is the concept that 'theological reflection is grounded in the spirituality of leaders.'<sup>319</sup>

<b>Pastoral Cycle</b>	<b>Osmer's Key Question</b>	<b>Osmer's Core Task</b>	<b>Main Area of this Study</b>
Experience	What is going on here?	The descriptive-empirical task: Priestly Listening	Chapter 4 Pilot Study Chapter 5: Participant Observation Chapter 6: Focus Groups Chapter 7: Survey
Analysis	Why is it going on?	The interpretive task: Sagely Wisdom	Chapter 6: Focus Groups Chapter 7: Online Survey
Theological, Reflection	What ought to be going on?	The normative task: Prophetic Discernment	Chapter 8: Theological Reflection
Action	How might we respond?	The pragmatic task: Servant Leadership	Chapter 9: Conclusion

**Figure 3.2: The Pastoral Cycle with Osmer's expansion into Four Key Questions and Tasks and the Links between them and the Chapters in this Study.**

Osmer acknowledges that his work has been influenced by that of Browning;<sup>320</sup> who's four key movements of 'Descriptive theology', 'Historical theology' 'Systematic theology' and 'Strategic practical theology' were developed to help gain a better understanding of how religious communities, such as churches,

<sup>319</sup>Osmer, *Practical Theology*, back cover

<sup>320</sup>Osmer, *Practical Theology*, vii

work.<sup>321</sup> However, Osmer's work is very different as it is more focused on the action of the minister rather than the community being researched.

Osmer's first task is the descriptive-empirical task, which asks the question 'what is going on?'<sup>322</sup> This is rooted in the spirituality of presence which Osmer calls 'priestly listening.' This is more than just gathering information but is about consciously 'attending to what is going on in the lives of individuals, families, and communities.'<sup>323</sup> Osmer's second task is the interpretive task, which asks the question, 'why is this going on?' This task calls for what Osmer describes as 'sagely wisdom' and encompasses the components of thoughtfulness, theoretical consideration, and wise judgment,<sup>324</sup> which Osmer considers are needed when 'drawing on theories of the arts and sciences to interpret [a situation]'.<sup>325</sup>

His third task the 'normative task' asks 'what ought to be going on?' This requires what Osmer calls 'prophetic discernment' and involves theological interpretation, ethical reflection, and good practice.<sup>326</sup> Osmer's final task is the pragmatic task, which asks 'how might we respond?' This task draws together the information from the previous tasks, with the aim of leading congregational

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<sup>321</sup>Don S. Browning, *Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 4

<sup>322</sup> Osmer 4

<sup>323</sup> Osmer p34

<sup>324</sup> Osmer, 82-83

<sup>325</sup> Osmer, 85

<sup>326</sup> Osmer, 131-132



change<sup>327</sup> and is explored through the theme of 'servant leadership' with Jesus held up as the example to be followed.<sup>328</sup>

It could be easy to see Osmer four tasks as just four steps in a process. However, although distinct they are also connected, and there is a need to move back and forth between them, as I alluded to earlier (Figure 3.2). Osmer uses the concept of the hermeneutical circle, (or spiral as he suggests),<sup>329</sup> to illustrate this and how interpretation 'constantly circles back to tasks that have already been explored.'<sup>330</sup>

Another concern is to the extent that empathic 'priestly listening' is compatible with the demands of empirical research. This is something that Osmer addresses showing how qualitative research can be a 'genuine expression of a spirituality of presence,'<sup>331</sup> as the investment into empirical research that is needed, to gain a deeper understanding of a situation, shows the value placed on it.

Being rooted in the outworking of practical theology for those in ministry, I was drawn to this method, as it resonated not only with my position as an ordained minister, but also on the impact this study could have on my own congregations. I was also challenged when reflecting on the nature of 'priestly listening,' how it should impact the first task.

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<sup>327</sup> Osmer, 176

<sup>328</sup> Osmer, 183

<sup>329</sup> Osmer, 10-11

<sup>330</sup> Osmer, 11

<sup>331</sup> Osmer, 39

I concluded that, for me, it also underpins the rest of his method. Not just through the interaction with the other tasks, that the hermeneutical circle illustrates, but how ‘attending to what is going on in the lives of individuals, families, and communities,’<sup>332</sup> can be seen in the outworking of other tasks. Holding the concept of ‘priestly listening’ before me, kept me grounded, reminding me that at the heart of my research were individuals. It made me think about them as people not just data as I carried out thematic analysis and read the Survey answers, it helped during the theological reflection in thinking about the purpose of using natural theology and who a Guide in the midst would be. Finally, as I came to the fourth task and drew my final conclusions, it made me more aware of why my clergy colleagues may find engaging with Guiding difficult and the potential for future ministry.

Not only is ‘priestly listening’ something that should be at the heart of my ministry, but Osmer’s techniques challenged me to make it the beating heart of this research. This does not mean that the conclusions in this study can only be obtained through such a lens, nor, as discussed later (*section 3.6*), am I unaware of the challenges of personal bias. Having established my methodology, the next stage was to determine suitable methods that could be used to answer the research question.

### **3.3 Central Research Strategy**

Initially, I considered a qualitative method using a case study as the main approach. I then decided to supplement this by an online survey to provide

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<sup>332</sup> Osmer, 34

quantitative data as a way of cross-checking the information. Something which Jennifer Greene terms as 'mixed method's lite.'<sup>333</sup> However, as I began to design the study, I recognised that quantitative analysis had a more integral role and therefore a mixed methods 'heavy'<sup>334</sup> approach rather than a case study was more appropriate.

### 3.3.1 Mixed Methods

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have weaknesses. For qualitative methods, the detailed understanding of a situation can be at the expense of being able to generalise the wider results. Whereas the wider perspective of quantitative analysis can reduce the depth that a qualitative study may bring. Called by Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie 'the third methodological movement,'<sup>335</sup> mixed methods aims to offset these limitations by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in 'an intelligent dialogue.'<sup>336</sup>

As a distinct method, mixed methods has grown in prominence since the late 1980s, for it allows a 'level of interaction between quantitative and qualitative strands in the study'<sup>337</sup> that can bring a different perspective to research questions and the final interpretation given. Although, mixed methods may be more time consuming and fail to give the amount of detail that choosing a

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<sup>333</sup> Jennifer C. Greene, 'Engaging Critical Social Issues in Social Inquiry by Mixing Methods' *American Behavioral Scientist*, 56, No.6 (2012), 758, DOI: 10.1177/0002764211433794 (27 July 2020)

<sup>334</sup> Greene, 'Engaging Critical Social Issues 758.

<sup>335</sup> Abba Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, eds, *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research* (London: Sage, 2003), ix

<sup>336</sup> Betina Hollstein 'Mixed Methods Social Networks Research, 4 In Silva. Domínguez and Betina. Hollstein eds. *Mixed Methods Social Networks Research: Design and Applications* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 3-34 doi:10.1017/CBO9781139227193.003

<sup>337</sup> John W. Creswell, Vicki L. Plano Clark, eds, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (London: Sage, 2011), 64

qualitative or quantitative method would give, it can also help 'to answer research questions that could not be answered in any other way.'<sup>338</sup>

Exactly how the two should be combined, researched, and presented is debated among scholars. Whilst Tashakkori and Teddlie look at such issues in detail,<sup>339</sup> Peggy Shannon-Baker takes their idea of 'paradigmatic foundations' identifying it as a 'current major issue for mixed methods research'<sup>340</sup> and explores this through her four paradigms of pragmatic, transformative-empiricist, dialectics and critical realism.<sup>341</sup>

Additionally, the level of interaction, weighting and when the quantitative and qualitative aspects are introduced into a study depends on the research to be carried out, with different studies taking different approaches. Four main approaches have been identified by John Creswell and Vicki Plano Clark as, convergent, explanatory, exploratory and embedded<sup>342</sup> (Figure 3.3).

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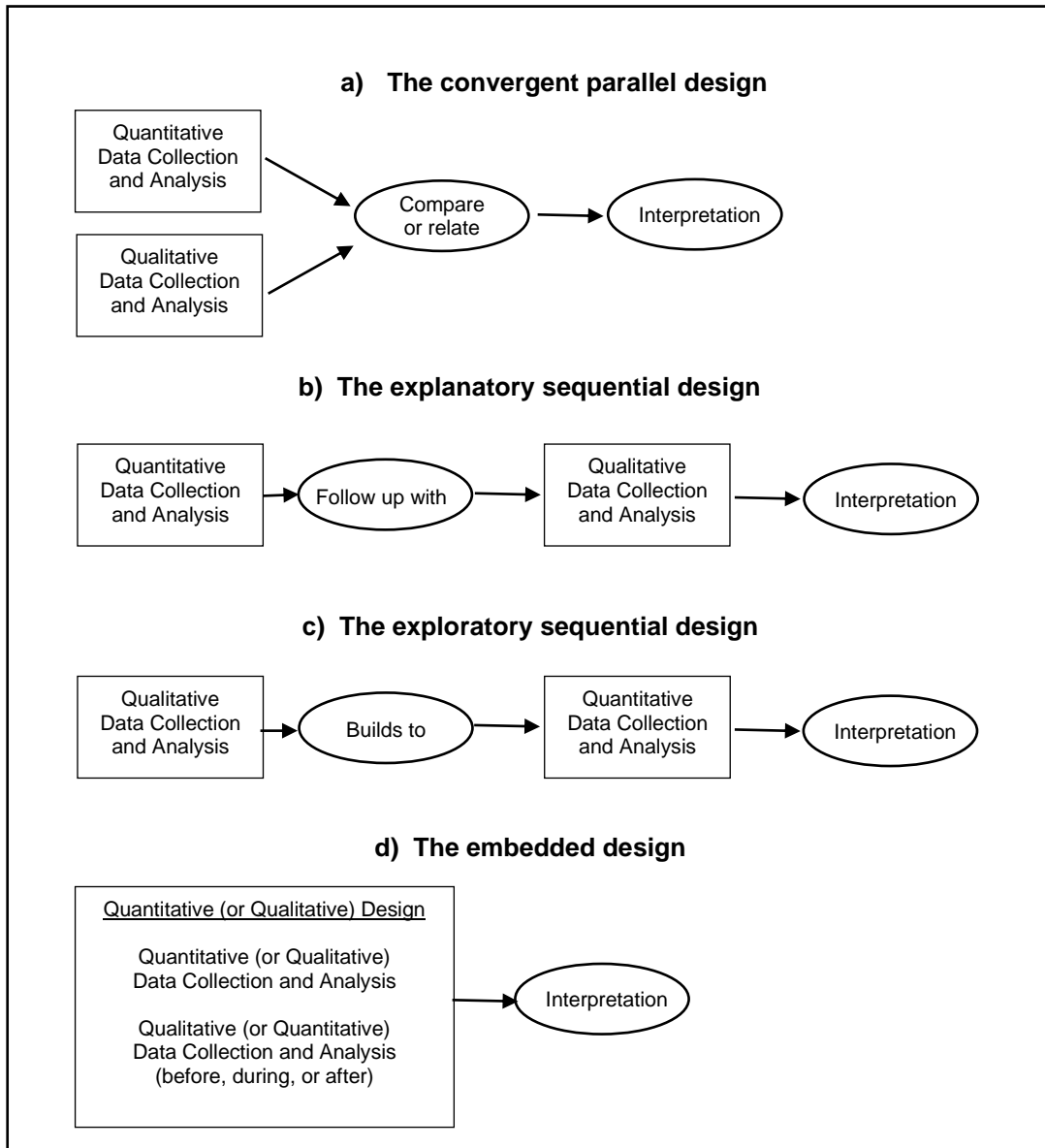
<sup>338</sup> Tashakkori and Teddlie, *Handbook of Mixed Methods*, x

<sup>339</sup> Abba Tashakkori and Charlies Teddlie, 'Major issues and Controversies in the Use of Mixed Methods in the Social and Behaviour Sciences', in Tashakkori and Teddlie, *Handbook of Mixed Methods*, 3-50

<sup>340</sup> Peggy Shanon-Baker, 'Making paradigms meaningful in mixed methods research', *Journal of Mixed methods Research*, 10, no.4 (2016), 319, DOI: 10.1177/1558689815575861, (27 July 2020)

<sup>341</sup> Shanon-Baker, 'Making paradigms meaningful, 319-334.)

<sup>342</sup> Creswell and Plan Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 69



**Figure 3.3 Cresswell and Plano Clark's Four Main Approaches to Mixed Methods Research**

### 3.3.2 Mixed Method Approaches

In choosing the most appropriate approach I firstly considered which type of qualitative and quantitative aspects would be appropriate in answering the research questions, and where in this study I would use them. I then found it helpful to apply Betina Hollstein's three conditions for research to be counted as

mixed methods.<sup>343</sup> This was less about justifying my choice of mixed methods, rather, it was the focus that her three conditions provided (Figure 3.4).

	<b>Hollstein's conditions for Mixed method research</b>	<b>Qualifying part of the study</b>
1	the studies make use of qualitative as well as quantitative data	Participant Observation, Semi-structured interviews, Focus Groups Pilot Study, Online Survey, Spirituality Questionnaire
2	both qualitative and quantitative strategies of data analysis are applied	Use of NVIVO, Analysis of Online Survey results
3	At least one stage there must be some form of integration of either data, or of data analysis or of results.	Online Survey analysis Final Interpretation

**Figure 3.4 How Hollstein's three conditions for research to be counted as mixed methods applied to this study**

Finally, I looked at how I would use the information, and which of Cresswell and Plano Clark's approaches best fitted. The Participant Observation and Online Survey was conceived to provide a method of triangulation on the research question. Therefore the 'Convergent Parallel' approach was chosen as the most compatible.

Having determined the approach, the next phase was to decide how to select the subjects, to answer the questions 'What is the existing relationship between churches and Guiding Units?' and 'How could the relationship between churches and Guiding Units be developed?'

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<sup>343</sup> Hollstein , *Mix Methods*, 5

### 3.4 Choice of Churches and Guiding Units

Within the time constraints of this thesis it was not possible to research a large number of churches and Guiding Units. Therefore, I decided that an 'exemplifying case'<sup>344</sup> would be appropriate. Here the chosen churches and Guiding Units would be one of a number of possibilities having similar characteristics. This is comparable to the example Alan Bryman gives of Russell and Tyler's choice of one shop from a particular chain store for their research.<sup>345</sup>

Like Fulkerson, the aim was that from the exemplifying case, 'would come the stories, symbols, habits and patterns'<sup>346</sup> that would provide the richness of a 'thick description' which will allow a greater understanding of the context to enable further questions to be asked about the situation. It was also felt important to see how the findings related to the wider church and Guiding contexts. Such triangulation was to be achieved by constructing a nationally available Online Survey (Chapter 7).

#### 3.4.1 Pilot Study

In order to choose an exemplifying case a Pilot Study was constructed (Chapter 4). As well as identify potential churches and associated Guiding Units the Pilot Study helped gain an understanding of the existing links between Guiding Units and local churches. These helped establish suitable questions and a core set of answers which were used in the construction of the Online Survey (Chapter 7).

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<sup>344</sup> Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 4<sup>th</sup> ed, 2012), 70

<sup>345</sup> Bryman, *Social Research*, 70

<sup>346</sup> Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 12

### 3.4.2 *Choice of Exemplifying Case*

As a result of the Pilot Study, two churches both of whom had Guiding Units meeting on their premises and who were willing to look at further involvement, were chosen.<sup>347</sup> However, due both to changes in Diocesan structures and changes within Guiding Units the original churches and Units approached felt that participation in the study was no longer viable (4.3).

Moreover, this phase of the study also coincided with my appointment as incumbent of a different Parish. As a result, I spent time reflecting on whether the necessary detachment and perspective could be maintained if I used the new Parish as the basis for the research. The tension, that Warren identified between the 'insider' and 'outsider' (2.1).

### 3.4.3 *The Tension between the 'Insider' and 'Outsider'*

As Matthew Guest points out, 'one needs to tackle the problem of how much of a participant one is. Taking care not to allow immersion to compromise the critical distance required of a sociological researcher.'<sup>348</sup> Such a tension is exemplified by Inge, as she notes how, as she become more involved in the life of the community.

I also built up a rapport with my participants and gradually became less conspicuous. This, in turn, meant that people behaved more normally around me, which increased the validity of my data. At the same time, I had to remove myself from my surroundings and relationships in order to maintain a critical distance from my data and record them as objectively as possible.<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> This included units who meet in church halls and other church buildings or whose headquarters are situated on church land.

<sup>348</sup> Matthew Guest, 'Sociological Strand-Worship in Action,' in, Helen Cameron et al., (eds), *Studying Local Churches: A Handbook* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 107

<sup>349</sup> Anabel Inge, *The Making of a Salafi Muslim Woman: Paths to Conversion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 45



It is also apparent in John Hostetler's work on the Amish.<sup>350</sup> For having grown up as a member of the Amish community he could be considered an insider. However, by choosing instead to become an academic and write about them, meant he was doing so from a different perspective. He was no longer a member of the current Amish community. Nevertheless, his former membership of the Amish community gave him a much greater perspective of what being an insider would mean than any researcher who did not have his formative experience.

Like Hostetler I was joining a 'different group', but one in which I was expected to play a significant part, rather than being just an observer. This raised the question of whether I could bring the necessary objectivity that a true outsider would have.

Such an outsider, as Roger Walton pointed out, would have the advantage of being able to enter a group with no preconceptions, thus allowing them to see details and ask questions that an insider is unable to do.<sup>351</sup> Although, true at one level, it led me on to consider whether the dichotomy between insider and outsider is actually fixed, or whether there is another perspective.

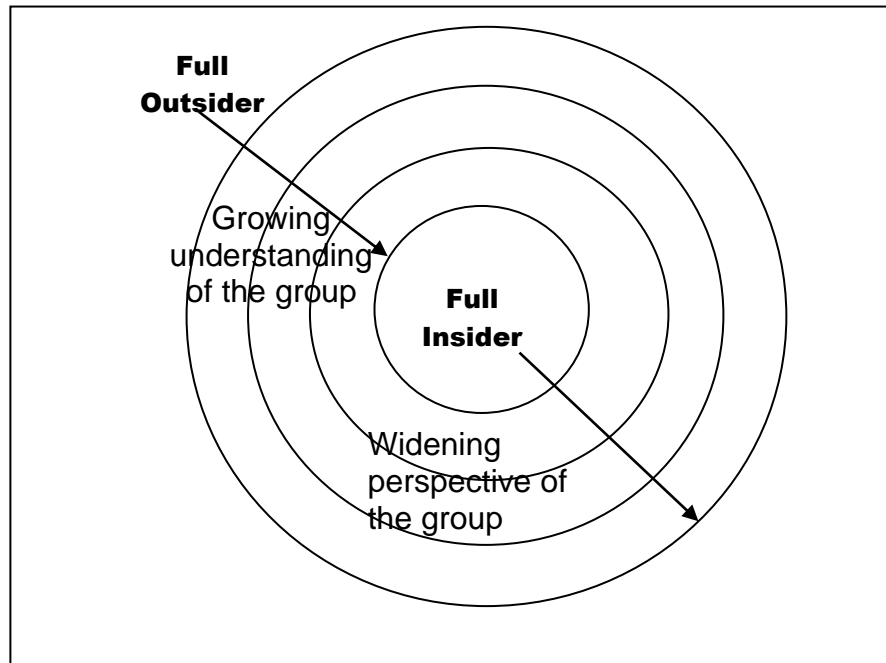
#### *3.4.4 Concentric Circles of Involvement*

Whilst acknowledging the limitations that being an insider has, it is possible, I believe, to gain a different perspective by moving your own personal focus. Rather than a simply being an insider or outsider, I propose concentric circles of involvement (Figure 3.5).

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<sup>350</sup>John A. Hostetler, *Writing the Amish: The Worlds of John A. Hostetler: Pennsylvania German History & Culture* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005)

<sup>351</sup> Roger Walton, 'Multi-Site Case Studies', Durham University Lecture, 24 June 2011



**Figure 3.5: Concentric Circles of Involvement**

At the core are those who are full insiders. The outer ring are those outsiders who have no link or involvement with the group. In between are the bands of involvement which it is possible to move through, giving rise to different perspectives. However, an insider can never become a total outsider, nor can an outsider become a full insider. The latter is particularly apparent in religious faith.

This tension is explored by Donald Weibe and others.<sup>352</sup> Although agreeing with Weibe's criticisms of MacIntyre<sup>353</sup> his conclusion that 'in general, what is true about "the tradition" is the truth about "the faith" from which that tradition emerges,'<sup>354</sup> does not resonate. Academic study can only take you so far, there is a point at which only someone who has had a particular experience of God

<sup>352</sup> Russell T. McCutcheon, (ed.), *The insider/ Outsider problem in the Study of Religion: A reader* (London: Continuum, 1999)

<sup>353</sup> Donald Weibe, 'Does Understanding Religion Require Religious Understanding?', in McCutcheon, *The insider/ Outsider problem*, 263

<sup>354</sup> Weibe, *The insider/ Outsider problem*, 270

can go. Such a transition is vividly described by C.S. Lewis as he moved from being an atheist, to a believer in God and then a Christian.<sup>355</sup>

As a result of these reflections, I concluded that it was appropriate to conduct research within my new Parish. I would be an outsider moving inwards and, provided I was conscious of the relationship between this and my research it would provide a unique opportunity.

In September 2014 I became Vicar of the Parish of Holy Trinity Gwersyllt and having spent time developing a relationship with the church and Community invited Summerhill Guides to be part of the Study. Having decided on the qualifying case, I then selected the methods to be used for the qualitative and quantitative phases and how they would be combined.

### **3.5 Qualitative Methods**

The qualitative phase involved the gathering of information for which participant observation, including semi-structured interviews, and focus groups were chosen as the most appropriate methods.

#### *3.5.1 Participant Observation*

Participant observation gave the opportunity to get to know and understand the church and Guiding contexts; the existing relationships, the people involved and to collect a range of information, to become familiar with the 'language, concepts, categories, practices, rules, beliefs, and so forth.'<sup>356</sup> Secondly

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<sup>355</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of my early life* (London, Harcourt Books 1955), 212-238

<sup>356</sup> John Van Maanen, *Tales of the Field* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 13

participant observation allowed suitable questions to be formulated for the semi-structured interviews and Guide focus groups using the context and concepts familiar to those involved. It gives, as Russell Bernard says, 'an intuitive understanding of what's going on in a culture and allows you to speak with confidence about the meaning of the data.'<sup>357</sup>

Although agreeing with many of Bernard's ideas, I would argue with his assumption that participant observation needs to involve 'a certain amount of deception and impression management.'<sup>358</sup> As a Christian and particularly a Christian minister to aim to deliberately deceive people, is for me unacceptable. This ethical tension is one which Guest raises<sup>359</sup> and understanding this was part of my reflexivity process.

Bernard also notes that participant observation 'lets you collect data... any kind of data you want, narratives or numbers.'<sup>360</sup> Kathleen and Billie DeWalt criticise Bernard's definition as too broad, believing that techniques such as interviews and text analysis should be separated out.<sup>361</sup> Such concerns are understandable. Although all-encompassing taking Bernard's definition could lead to a rather unwieldy collection of information. In the context of this research, participant observation needed to be a much more directive tool, with the specific goal of answering the research questions in mind.

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<sup>357</sup> H Russell Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2006), 343-347

<sup>358</sup> Bernard, *Research Methods*, 342

<sup>359</sup> Guest, *Studying Local Churches*, 107

<sup>360</sup> Bernard, *Research Methods*, 344

<sup>361</sup> Kathleen M. DeWalt, and Billie R. DeWalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers* (Plymouth, AltaMira Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2011), 2

Nevertheless, the interviews for this study, although arising out of participant observation were still part of it, as they helped build up a picture of what was going on. Therefore, like Fulkerson<sup>362</sup> and Luhrmann<sup>363</sup> who used interviews within their participant observation, this study also did, whilst keeping in mind the distinctive nature of them.

### *3.5.2 Semi-structured Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were held with some 'key informants' within Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides. People who 'are particularly knowledgeable about the inquiry setting and articulate about their knowledge...'<sup>364</sup> The interviews were limited to those who were considered to have the greatest influence and power to make a difference and contribute to any change. These included three church members and the three adult leaders of Summerhill Guides.

### *3.5.3 Ethical Considerations*

Due to ethical considerations the interviews were carried out only with adults. Having gained the necessary ethical approval and written permission from each participant (Appendix A) the interviews were recorded digitally and then transcribed. Where used in the study, names were changed and details grouped together to maintain anonymity, as appropriate. Recordings and transcriptions will then be held securely until no longer needed.

### *3.5.4 Conducting the Interviews*

The interaction between interviewer and interviewee is recognised as a valid part of the process. Therefore the 'Active Interview' process was chosen as

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<sup>362</sup> Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption*, 12

<sup>363</sup> Tanya Marie. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), xx

<sup>364</sup> Michael Quinn. Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2002), 321

being most appropriate for 'all the participants in an interview are inevitably implicit in making meaning.'<sup>365</sup> The interview questions were developed (Appendix B) to help structure and guide the conversation and allow individual stories about the relationship between Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides to be heard.

Although Inge was happy to 'let the conversations develop and go off on tangents,'<sup>366</sup> in this context spending up to five hours on one interview was not the most appropriate use of time. However, I also wanted to give participants enough space to tell their stories.

The importance of narrative, as a method of qualitative research, has been expounded by Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson<sup>367</sup> and James Holstein and Jaber Gubrium.<sup>368</sup> They recognise not only the stories which people have, but the importance of creating the appropriate atmosphere where people to feel relaxed enough to tell them. Therefore, I adopted a range of active listening techniques (including body language and facial expressions) as advocated by Osmer<sup>369</sup> and outlined more fully by Nelson-Jones.<sup>370</sup> This I decided rather than continual questioning would help move the interview on and allow a deeper level of sharing.

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<sup>365</sup> James A. Holstein, and Jaber F. Gubrium, *The Active Interview* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 18

<sup>366</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 52

<sup>367</sup> Wendy Hollway, and Tony Jefferson, 'Researching Defended Subjects with the Free Association Narrative Interview Method,' in Lisa M. Given, (ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (London: Sage Publications, 2000), 302-304

<sup>368</sup> Holstein, and Gubrium, *Active Interview*, 30-51

<sup>369</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 61-62

<sup>370</sup> Richard Nelson-Jones, *Basic Counselling Skills: A Helper's Manual* (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 41-96

Nevertheless, although this process encouraged a more conversational style, there is a clear difference between an interview and a conversation. Unlike an ordinary conversation which is 'normally mutual, informal and has no fixed expectations.'<sup>371</sup> I needed to keep in mind that the interviews were essentially guided 'data-gathering conversations.'<sup>372</sup> This meant that the balance of power was with me as the interviewer, not only during the interview itself but with what was recorded and written up afterwards. As Swinton and Mowat point out, 'she [the interviewer] is therefore in a position where she can control, abuse and misrepresent the person she is encountering if she is not very much aware of these hidden power dynamics.'<sup>373</sup> A power that I was very conscious of, as I reflect later (5.5.5).

### *3.5.5 Guide Focus Groups*

I decided because of the age of the participants and for ethical considerations, to use focus groups with the Guides. These would explore their understanding and interest in developing their beliefs within the context of the spiritual dimension of the Promise (Chapter 6).

Focus groups are something that both Inge,<sup>374</sup> and Luhrmann<sup>375</sup> used to gain further information about the communities they were researching. I saw the advantage, of such groups, in how the interaction between different Guides could allow me to gain a better understanding of why a girl held a particular

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<sup>371</sup> Swinton, and Mowat, *Practical Theology*, 64

<sup>372</sup> Francis Ward, 'Methodological Approaches: Practical theology', in Helen Cameron et al., *Studying Local Churches: A Handbook* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 30

<sup>373</sup> Swinton, and Mowat, *Practical Theology*, 65

<sup>374</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 45

<sup>375</sup> Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back*, 367

viewpoint. At the same time there was a need to mitigate 'group effects'<sup>376</sup> as I was concerned with some Guides feeling unable to contribute or that others might dominate or too strongly influence group members to change their thinking. As part of limiting this I designed a game for the Focus Group activity (Chapter 6).

### 3.5.6 Data Analysis

To analyse the large amount of qualitative data created I have chosen to conduct a thematic analysis. Such analysis involves the three main steps of identifying the information to be analysed, analysing it by coding, and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within the data. Themes can be identified in a deductive or inductive approach. The former involves themes which are closely linked to existing ideas, or the researcher's interests, whilst inductive analysis focuses on the data. This could mean that 'if the data have been collected specifically for the research (eg, via interview or focus group), the themes identified may bear little relation to the specific questions that were asked of the participants.'<sup>377</sup> In doing so there is the danger, that by coding the data it can lose its context and become fragmented.<sup>378</sup> However, in looking at the data with no preconceived ideas then important themes may be identified which would have been overlooked.

For this study NVivo12 was used and followed an inductive approach to analysis. Although not doing the actual analysis, the software helped with

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<sup>376</sup> Bryman, *Social Research*, 518

<sup>377</sup> Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, 'Using thematic analysis in psychology,' *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3. No.2 (2006) 83  
<https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>. (18 February 2020)

<sup>378</sup> Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 578



organising and managing the data, which made interrogating the information much easier. For each of three qualitative methods of Semi-structured Interviews, Focus Groups and the Online Survey comments, the process of data analysis was carried out separately. Although each one followed a similar 3 step process of thematic analysis.

*Step 1: Familiarisation with the data:*

This included transcribing the interviews, typing up the Focus Group notes and generating the comments from the Online Survey and reading and re-reading it. This was very time consuming, but worthwhile for in doing so I became familiar with the data and began to make notes of ideas for codes and themes.

*Step 2: Initial Coding*

Once entered on NVivo I worked methodically through each transcript/comment to generate a list of codes.

*Step 3: Generating Themes*

The individual codes were grouped into themes. Such themes would capture, 'something important about the data in relation to the research question and represent some level of patterned response or meaning with the data set.'<sup>379</sup> The themes were further refined with some becoming overarching themes which other themes became sub-themes of. The themes were then used for the final analysis

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<sup>379</sup> Braun and Clarke, 'Using thematic analysis in psychology,' 82

### 3.6 Quantitative Methods

In addition to qualitative techniques, quantitative analysis was also used. This included the Online Survey (Chapter 7) and measuring the spirituality of the interviewees.

#### 3.6.1 Measuring Spirituality

Although the interviews would provide key information, I was conscious of making assumptions about someone's faith, which might make me attribute inappropriate insights to their answers. Therefore, before the interviews, participants were asked to complete a spirituality questionnaire (Appendix C).

In choosing what spirituality scale to use I wanted something easy to administer and neither too time-consuming nor intrusive. This was particularly important as understanding the spirituality of the interviewees was about gaining additional information, rather than the main purpose.

Measuring spirituality is predominantly carried out by healthcare professionals, particularly within the areas of mental health and palliative care<sup>380</sup> and reflects a growing recognition that understanding people's spirituality is an important factor in the appropriate treatment and management of illness and disease.<sup>381</sup> To do this, a variety of scales are available of which Hill and Hood list 123.<sup>382</sup> The dominant feature of each is measuring spirituality in terms of identification with the practices and beliefs of a religious faith. I wanted something which

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<sup>380</sup> For an overview of the growing place of spirituality within British mental health care see Robert M. Lawrence, and Oyepeju Raji, 'Introduction to Spirituality, Health Care and Mental Health', <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/LawrenceOyepejuIntroSpirituality.pdf> (10 June 2017)

<sup>381</sup> L. Ross, 'The spiritual dimension: its importance to patients' health, well-being and quality of life and its implications for nursing practice', *International Journal of Nursing Studies* 32, no.5 (1995), 466-467, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0020-7489\(95\)00007-K](https://doi.org/10.1016/0020-7489(95)00007-K) (10 June 2017)

<sup>382</sup> Peter C. Hill, and Ralph W. Hood, (eds.), *Measures of religiosity* (Birmingham Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1999)

could be used by both church interviewees and also by Guiding leaders who may not subscribe to a specific faith.

This problem of spirituality scales being synonymous with measuring religious commitment led to the development of the 'Spiritual Transcendence Index' (STI),<sup>383</sup> 'The Spiritual Involvement and Beliefs Scale (SIBS)'<sup>384</sup> and the 'Intrinsic Spirituality Scale (ISS)'.<sup>385</sup> STI and SIBS use a 5-point 'Likert scale' whereas ISS adopts a 10-point numerical scale. Although slightly simpler and providing a useful structure, the statements on the STI and SIBS scales were not open-ended and flexible enough and I decided to adopt the ISS.

### 3.6.2 *The Intrinsic Spirituality Scale*

The ISS questions 'use a sentence completion format to measure various attributes associated with spirituality.'<sup>386</sup> These relate to level of impact the respondent considers their spirituality has in the following areas:

- Questions I have about life,
- Importance of my spiritual growth
- Influence on my decision making
- Level of importance in my life
- Impact on personal growth and maturity
- Impact on my life

I decided that the ISS would give the broad understanding of the influence of spirituality on each of interviewee's lives, that I wanted. Furthermore, although individual Guides were not asked to complete a spirituality questionnaire, I found

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<sup>383</sup> Larry Seidlitz, et al., 'Development of the Spiritual Transcendence Index' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41, no.3 (2002), 439–453

<sup>384</sup> Robert L. Hatch, et al., 'The Spiritual Involvement and Beliefs Scale: development and testing of a new instrument', *Journal of Family Practice* 46, no.6 (1998), 476-486

<sup>385</sup> David R. Hodge, 'The Intrinsic Spirituality Scale', *Journal of Social Service Research* 30, no.1 (2003), 41-61

<sup>386</sup> Hodge, 'The Intrinsic Spirituality Scale', 48

that the ISS flexible enough to be adapted for use within the Guide Focus Group activity (6.2.1).

### **3.7 Personal Reflexivity and Bias**

At the beginning of this study (1.1.1) I noted that my perspective was that of a ordained female Anglican minister and an experienced Guiding leader. Although, it would not be practical to detail my reflexivity during every aspect of the research, by exploring three of the key issues, I can demonstrate an awareness of my bias and how I addressed them.

Any research cannot be totally free from bias. Understanding personal bias is one of the strategies, as Sturman identifies,<sup>387</sup> for ensuring internal validity. In her work Inge spends time in personal reflexivity and the impact this had on her interactions with members of the Salafi community in regard to her dress,<sup>388</sup> the events cultural activities she felt able to participate in<sup>389</sup> and what it meant to be an agnostic within a group of believers.<sup>390</sup>

Like Inge, in understanding my own bias I aimed to minimise some of the problems they could cause, whilst at the same time recognising opportunities they could bring. As well as the tension between insider and outsider (3.3.3), in engaging in the reflexivity process I was conscious of my Christian faith, the power and privilege of my position as an ordained Anglican minister and my experience as a Guiding leader.

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<sup>387</sup> A Sturman, 'Case study Methods', in John P Keeves (ed.), *Educational Research, Methodology, and Measurement* (Cambridge: Pergamon, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1997), 61-67,

<sup>388</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 57

<sup>389</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 45

<sup>390</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 58

### *3.7.1 Christian Faith*

Firstly, there is my own Christian faith. I would consider myself a 'charismatic evangelical' Someone with a high regard for the Bible and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, through the power of prayer. These underpin whatever I do in ministry. I want to make God real to people and therefore look out for appropriate mission and evangelism opportunities.

Recognising this helped me to think about how to separate ministry from research and enable the appropriate level of involvement with individuals. Rather than asking what I could pray for or helping them discover the next step on their Christian journey, the focus needed to be on listening uncritically to what they had to say, so that they felt comfortable in sharing. Nevertheless, there were times where it was necessary to offer appropriate pastoral support or answer specific questions in my role as Vicar. Without giving specific details, I noted these in my research journal if I felt they could have an impact later.

Furthermore, knowing the value I place on prayer, the Bible and mission I was conscious when interviewing that I did not show a greater interest in these, if mentioned, than other aspects. Again, when analysing data it was important not to dismiss views that were different to mine or not what I had expected. An example of such reflexivity can be seen in the Pilot Study when I was taken aback by the disinterest and ignorance shown by clergy colleagues in Guiding Units meeting in their church halls (4.5.3).

### *3.7.2 Power and Privilege*

Although the historic deference towards clergy has lessened, I was conscious of the power and privilege that being the new Vicar of Gwersyllt brought. This was

noticeable, as I reflected during the Participant Observation phase of the study (5.2.1) in how people's attitudes towards me were shaped by both their expectation of my position and their experience of previous vicars. I was not a neutral presence. This coupled with the power I held as a researcher, I was mindful of when interviewing. Part of mitigating this included inviting interviewees to choose whether I interviewed them in their home or in the vicarage (5.5.5).

Furthermore, as their Vicar people wanted to help, some even checking during the interview whether this was the type of thing I wanted them to say. This was coupled by some with an initial hesitancy to criticise and I was careful to explain that it was important for me to understand both the positive and negative aspects of the existing relationship so that we could see how to improve in the future.

### *3.7.3 Experience of Guiding*

Thirdly, I was aware of own personal experience of Guiding both as a leader and participant. I have been a Guiding leader for 30 years in a range of different Guide Units. I am also an adult Trainer for Guiding UK. Again, there was potential tension between the researcher as insider or outsider. I was aware that familiarity could have led me to look for, and therefore attribute, a structure to the group that is not there, or had not yet developed, and I was conscious of needing to guard against this. Moreover, although my own knowledge may have given me greater insight into how things work, including why things are done in a particular way, familiarity could have led me to miss others. Finally, as a

guest in the unit I needed to guard myself against showing any criticism if I felt something was not in line with Guiding policy and practice.<sup>391</sup>

Nevertheless, whilst keeping these in mind, I felt that having knowledge of the Guiding programme and its ethos was beneficial, especially in terms of understanding language, structures and core rituals. For example, in the interviews when Sarah, one of the Guide leaders, referred to the 'BP group', her 'DivCom' or 'Taps' I did not need to interrupt and ask for clarification. This also meant that although I was unfamiliar with Summerhill Guides, I could still understand the overall structure and rituals, such as the hand up signal, for silence. These I felt made me less of a stranger to the guides which helped when building their trust.

### **3.8 Summary**

In this chapter I have shown why, to answer the research question, my methodology will follow the pastoral cycle adapted by Osmer's four key questions and explained the rationale behind choosing the Convergent Parallel mixed methods design as the central research strategy. I have outlined the different phases of the research, Pilot Study (Chapter 4), Participant Observation (Chapter 5), Guide Focus Groups (Chapter 6), and Online Survey (Chapter 7) and explained how the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the research will be combined and how NVivo will be used to find themes from the Interviews, Focus Group notes and Survey comments. I have also drawn attention to the tension of myself as researcher moving from outsider to insider

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<sup>391</sup> If I had seen a safeguarding or other urgent issue that needed to be addressed for the wellbeing of the participants then I would have taken the appropriate action.

and the implications of that. Finally, I have drawn attention to my personal bias through the three aspects of my Christian faith, power and privilege as a Vicar and experience as a Guiding leader.

The following chapter gives details of the Pilot Study conducted with Anglican clergy and Guiding leaders in North Wales. It uses Osmer's first key question of 'what is going on here?' to look at the research questions

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*

From the answers given information for the Survey was gathered and the key themes of Remembrance Sunday, Developing Relationships and Clergy Attitude, raised.



## **Chapter 4**                      **Pilot Study**

*'The PCC have already decided that they want to look at ways of encouraging more children and families into the church. The work you want to do with our church and the Brownies would be a really good start for this.'*<sup>392</sup>

Having established the methodology and outlined the methods to be used in the previous chapter, this chapter begins Osmer's descriptive-empirical task, asking the first key question, 'What is going on here?' to look at the research questions

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*

It did this through the construction of a Pilot Study to gain information from existing Anglican clergy and Guiding leaders.

The Pilot Study originally had the twin objectives of identifying potential churches and associated Guiding Units for the Participant Observation phase and secondly to establish suitable questions and a core set of answers which could be used in the construction of the Online Survey.

The chapter begins with an overview of the Pilot Study (4.1), including its design, administration, and limitations. It goes on to look at the results obtained (4.2) before considering their implications (4.3). Reference is made to how the information was used to identify potential partners for the Participant Observation phase and how it shaped the Online Survey (4.4). The chapter concludes by drawing together the three aspects of Remembrance Sunday,

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<sup>392</sup> Email from the Vicar of potential Participant Observation Church A, (22 May 2014)

Developing Relationships and Clergy Attitude, which the Pilot Study raised (4.5), before a final summary (4.6).

#### **4.1 Overview**

The Pilot Study was designed as two short (5-8mins) self-completion questionnaires, (Appendix D & E), given out to 97 Anglican clergy<sup>393</sup> and 85 Guiding leaders<sup>394</sup> from North Wales during the spring of 2014.

##### *4.1.1 Limitations*

Limitations to the Pilot Study were recognised, especially the choice of recipients and their restricted geographical location.

Firstly, as all the recipients were living in North Wales this raised the question of how the findings would relate to other Guiding counties and to clergy working within other diocese. However, to make the Pilot Study manageable and complete its objectives this was felt to be appropriate.

Secondly only 16.2% of the 526 Guiding leaders<sup>395</sup> in the county were asked. Those unavailable to attend the trainings were excluded. Again, although more recipients would have been beneficial enough leaders responded to provide the information needed.

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<sup>393</sup> The Anglican clergy were all from the Church in Wales Diocese of St Asaph and attending a compulsory diocesan training.

<sup>394</sup> The Girlguiding leaders were from the Girlguiding County of Clwyd who attend one of two Girlguiding training events.

<sup>395</sup> Guiding Clwyd, *Annual Report 2013-14 Adroddiad Blynddol*, 4, <http://Guidingclwyd.org/assets/files/resources/Girguiding-Clwyd-Annual-Report-2013-14.pdf> (8 April 2018)

Finally, although the majority of diocesan clergy were given the opportunity of completing the questionnaire other church members were not. Some of these may have had a better knowledge of existing links between their church and Units and ideas of facilitating them. However, in my original Participant Observation plans I aimed to work with different churches. Therefore, I would need the cooperation of clergy as they had the authority, at the time, to make decisions regarding the direction of a mission and ministry in their Parishes.

#### *4.1.2 Response rates*

The response of 27 Guide leaders (32%) and 21 clergy (22%) looks disappointing and would be classified by Magione as not acceptable.<sup>396</sup> Furthermore, as both groups were a 'captive audience' and I was known to the majority, then a greater response rate could have been anticipated.

However, although given out to all participants the questionnaires were targeted at those who had an existing link with their local Guiding Units or church and defined for this study as those meeting in church owned premises, mainly church halls. This could lead to criticism that this limited the number of responses and may have excluded Units and churches that had good relationships. This is acknowledged. However, for the purposes of this study it was taken that Units meeting in church owned premises already had a connection with a church, however tenuous, that may more easily be built upon for mission.

Therefore, based on personal knowledge of the location of Guiding Units within the Diocese of St Asaph then I would have expected around 40 Guiding leaders

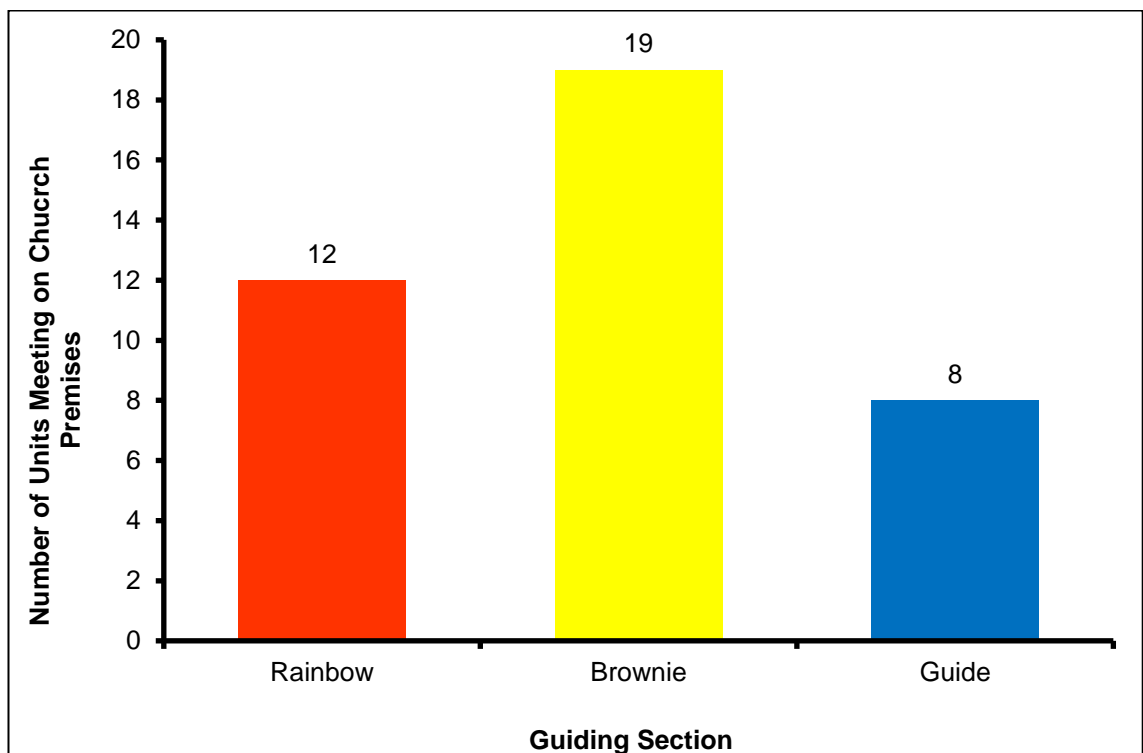
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<sup>396</sup> Bryman, *Social Research*, 235

and 45 clergy to have been able to respond. The response rate of 68% for Guiding leaders and 60% for clergy is then acceptable.

## 4.2 Survey Results

Having read the participant information sheet and given their consent, the first question asking respondents to name their church or Guiding Unit was deliberately optional, thus allowing anonymity to be retained. The next few questions related to the context of the church or Unit and the numbers who attended (Appendix D & E).



**Figure 4.1: Number of Guiding Units Meeting on Church Premises**

This was followed by questions asking which Guiding Units met on church premises and additionally for clergy asking which other uniformed groups met

on their premises. From the 48 responses received a total of 39 Guiding Units meeting on 27 different church premises were recorded (Figure 4.1).

Of those recorded 24 met on Anglican church premises, representing just over 10% of the 229 churches in the Diocese. In contrast no Boys or Girls Brigade groups were recorded and for Scouting groups only one Cub pack indicated. This was surprising as I had thought more Scouts, Cubs and Beavers would have been listed.

This this could be an example of acquiescence, where because I was interested in Guiding, clergy chose not to record them. An alternative explanation could be the difference in the ways Scouting and Guiding are structured.<sup>397</sup> Although some Guiding Units own their premises this is less common than Scout Groups.<sup>398</sup> Therefore, Guiding Units are more likely to look locally for a suitable venue, which many churches offer, something which may have implications for mission.

#### *4.2.1 Existing Links*

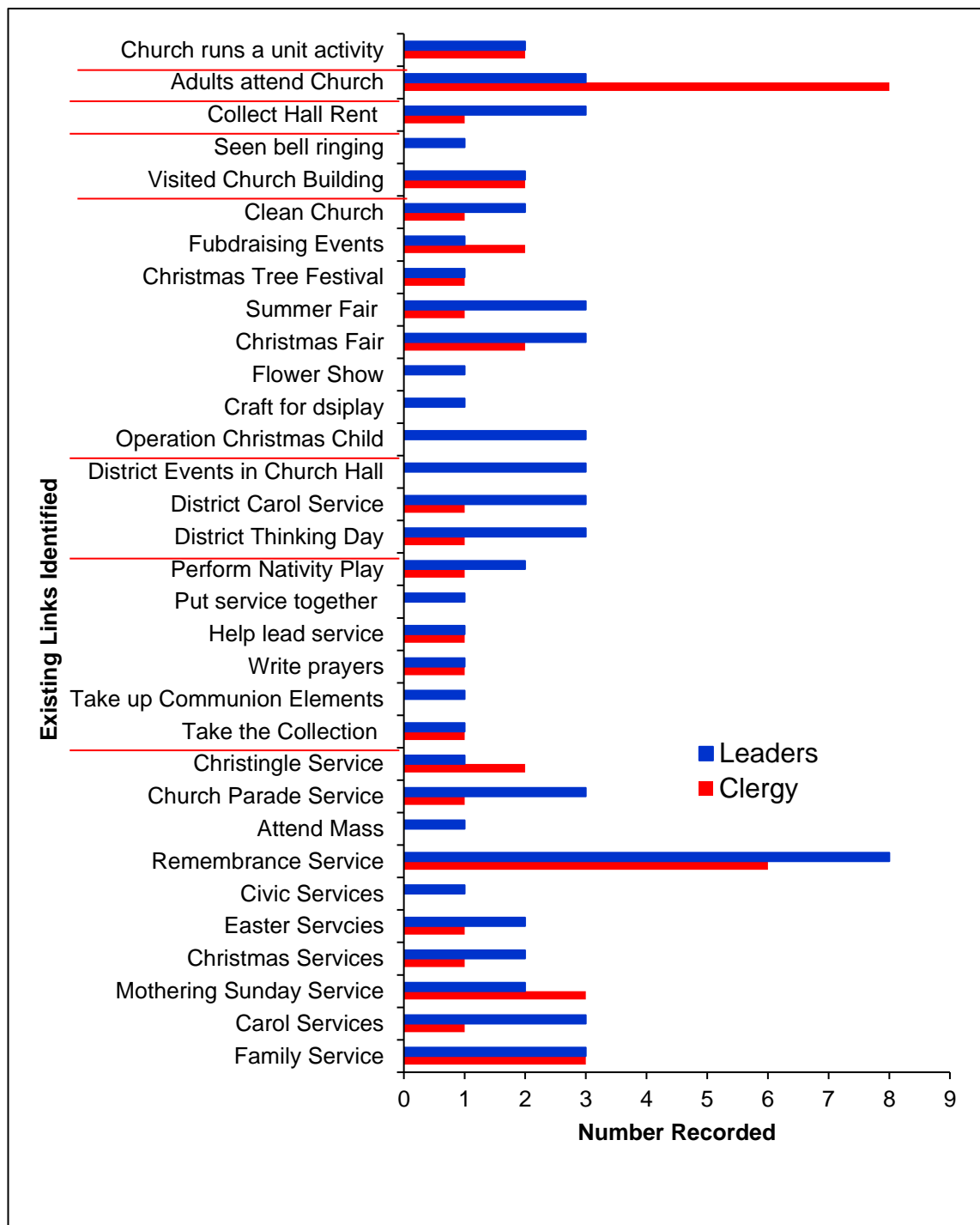
The Pilot Study provided some answers to the research questions of what existing links churches and Units had and potential links for the future. 32 existing links were recorded between 13 different churches and Guiding Units (Figure 4.2). It is recognised that some duplication of the links may have been

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<sup>397</sup> A Scout Group contains all sections and is registered as one charity; they will all usually pay the same subscription, meet on the same premises and work closely together. Each Girlguiding Unit is an independent charity. Although having links with other Units of different sections they do not necessarily meet in the same place or work together in the same way.

<sup>398</sup> 60% of Scout Groups in the diocese meet in their own halls and at least another 30% in community halls, see Clwyd Area Scouts, <http://clwydscouts.org.uk/area-team/> (11 December 2017)

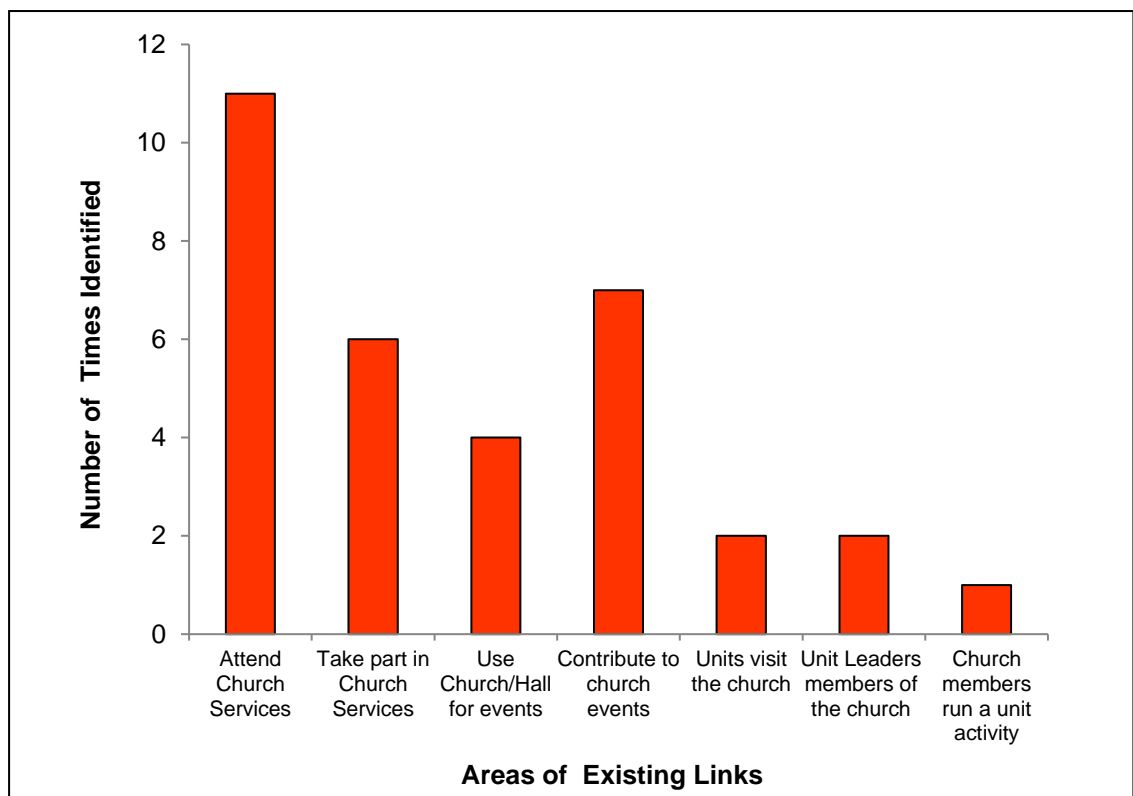
recorded by a church and an associated Unit. However, as the main purpose was to gather examples of different links this was not considered a problem.



**Figure 4.2: Existing Links between Guiding Units and Churches Recorded by Clergy and Guiding Leaders**

Of the links recorded 10 involved attending services, mostly for special occasions including Mothering Sunday, Christmas and Easter. The biggest number being those involved with Remembrance Sunday, which is traditionally a service that Guiding members and other uniformed groups attend

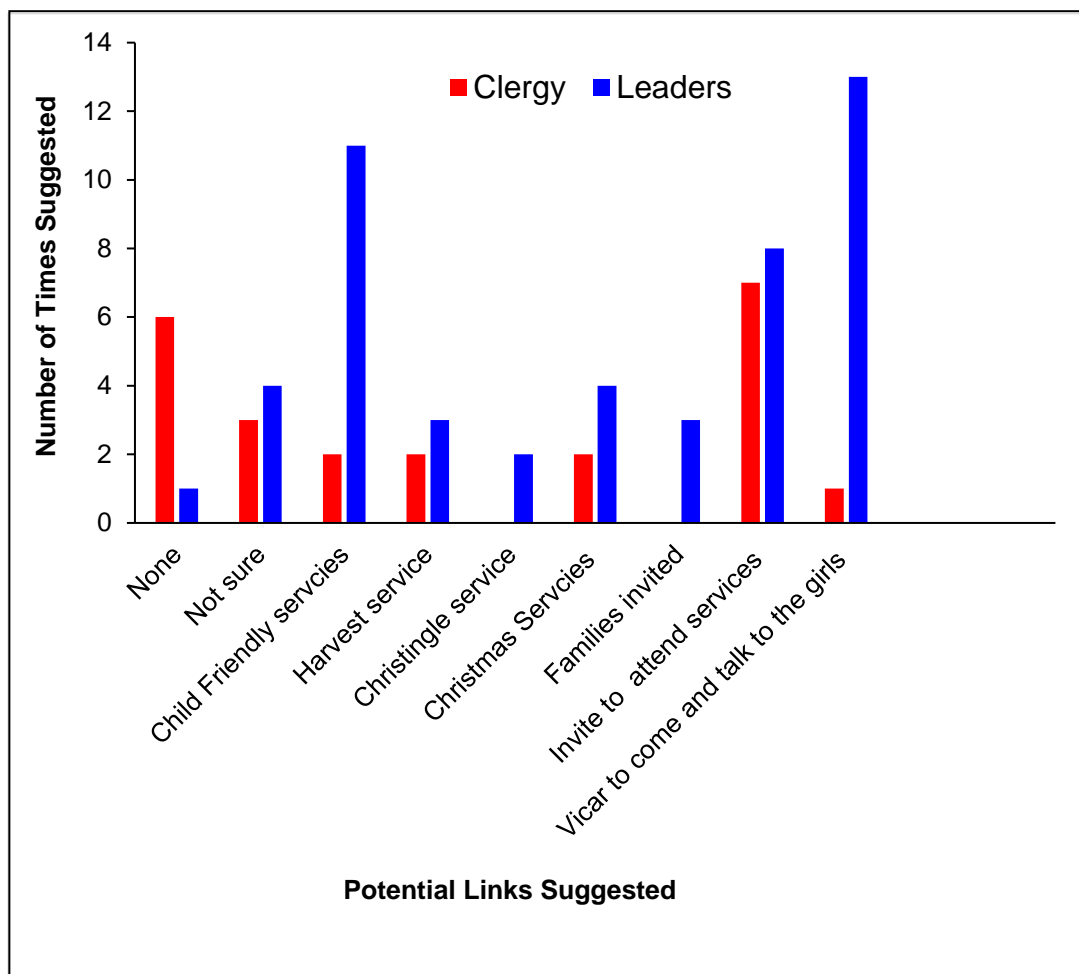
Although participation within services was much lower this did not necessarily mean no participation. In some instances where attending a service was recorded then the implication was that the girls also took part in different ways. How this related to the data was difficult to ascertain. Nonetheless, these and the other links could be grouped into 7 areas (Figure 4.3).



**Figure 4.3: Areas of Existing Links Between Guiding Units and Churches**

With most links associated with girls attending services and contributing to events. Clergy or church members going into a Unit (other than asking for rent)

are not recorded. Again, this did not necessarily mean it did not happen. However, as it was unrecorded this maybe an indication of its impact.



**Figure 4.4: Potential Links between Units and Churches suggested by Clergy and Guiding Leaders**

#### 4.2.2 Developing Links

When asked to suggest future links (Figure 4.4), 7 clergy suggested inviting Guiding members to services. Of the 6 clergy who felt that no additional links were needed, 2 commented that it would ‘take up too much of my time’ and ‘it’s not my thing.’ In contrast 2 other clergy wanted to make changes and noted that to make services more child friendly they needed to ‘talk to the PCC about how we can change the service so the children want to come’ or to ‘make it shorter and get the kids to suggest hymn[s] they know.’ 11 Guiding leaders also



suggested the importance of making services more relevant to the young people, along with a greater emphasis on the church being more proactive, either in inviting Units to services or making time to visit Units themselves. In looking at the answers from this question it was clear that some Units and Churches would like to develop a link, and these provided possibilities for the Participant Observation phase.

### **4.3 Identification of Churches and Units for Participant Observation**

Initially two churches and Units were selected, with a third church in reserve (Appendix F). However, both churches had to withdraw, and the reserve church was reluctant to take part. This was due not only to a change in key people but also the introduction of the new diocesan structure of Mission Areas.

What initially appeared a major challenge to the research process, provided a new opportunity and direction, as it coincided with my appointment as the incumbent of Gwersyllt. The Parish had existing links with Guiding and as I explained (3.4) I decided to use Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides instead.

### **4.4 Online Survey**

The second objective of the Pilot Study was the identification of suitable questions and core answers for the Online Survey (Chapter 7). As well as providing a range of options that could be incorporated into the 'fixed-choice' answers, it produced a much wider range of categories, especially those relating to how a Unit may use church premises, than my initial thinking had given. It also showed areas that needed further explanation or rephrasing and

was useful in breaking down links into specific categories and the different names that may be given to them, for example Communion, Mass, Eucharist.

## 4.5 Conclusions

Notwithstanding, the recognised limitations, the Pilot Study achieved its objectives of identifying potential Case Studies and providing information for the Online Survey. Furthermore, in considering research questions

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*

three areas for further consideration were raised.

### 4.5.1 Remembrance Sunday

Firstly, Remembrance Sunday (Figure 4.3). In looking at the relationship between churches and Guiding Units this is the most common link. It may be, as with my Guide Unit, the only time of the year when the local church invites them to attend, or as with other Units it is an expectation from the leaders. 'Dear Parents...this is an important date in our Guiding calendar, and we hope that all girls can attend,<sup>399</sup> which may reflect the importance placed on the annual Remembrance services and the civic nature of them. The Online Survey provided an opportunity to see whether this existing relationship was more widely acknowledged, and whether it could provide a possible focus for mission.

### 4.5.2 Developing Relationships

For clergy the main point of contact with Units was through adults (usually Guiding leaders) who attended their church (Figure 4.2). This suggested the importance of developing relationships with leaders, who act as 'gatekeepers,'

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<sup>399</sup> Letter from a Wrexham Division Unit 12 September 2018

to Units. This was in addition to developing relationships through personal visits and invitations to services.

The Pilot Study also highlighted how some clergy felt they did not have time to visit. Although, as some leaders suggested, 'if the vicar could pop in even once a term for 5 minutes, we would get to know him and then girls might want to come.' Rather than 'the Vicar coming in to tell us that we had to take our stuff out of the cupboard as they needed it for the WI' or 'telling us we had to pay more rent', or 'you didn't put all the tables back last week.' It was comments such as these that were most enlightening about the existing relationship.

#### *4.5.3 Clergy Attitude*

As well as such negativity, I was taken aback by the disinterest and ignorance that the Pilot Study highlighted among my clergy colleagues. Some of whom expressed no knowledge of what activities took place in their church halls and moreover were not interested in finding out.<sup>400</sup> Consequently, despite having Units who meet on their church premises, they had no apparent link between them and no desire to necessarily make one. Yet some of these same clergy were looking at ways of growing their church and bemoaning the lack of children and families.

The strength of my personal feelings highlighted the tension for me between being vicar/Guiding leader and researcher. As researcher I may not have known the additional information about who had Units meeting in their halls, that I had.

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<sup>400</sup> Of 12 colleagues who spoke to me about their reasons for not completing the questionnaire, 5 I knew had Units meeting in their Church halls. Two whom I mentioned this to were totally uninterested and a third said he had no time to visit.

However, rather than set it aside I felt it important to reflect on it. Firstly, why the disinterest? One reason could be a lack of knowledge about Guiding and what different sections could do and offer. Other factors including personal interest, time pressures and gender dynamics may have also contributed. Secondly, would clergy attitude be a key theme highlighted by the Online Survey, or was it a more local factor?

#### **4.6 Summary**

The data from the Pilot study provided useful information and highlighted key themes in answering the research questions.

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*

The disinterest and lack of knowledge of my clergy colleagues surprised me and one which I was interested to see if the Survey also drew attention to it.

In the next chapter I move on to the Participant Observation. I show how I built relationships with my new church and community including Summerhill Guides. From the broader perspective of getting to know the context of church and Community I held semi structured interviews with 3 members of the church and 3 Guiding leaders. In order to look more closely at the first two questions and begin to consider

- iii) How can the spiritual dimension of the Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*

Nvivo was used to analyse the interviews and from these the 6 themes of Serving the Community, The Gospel in Action, Dispelling the Myths and Develop my Beliefs, emerged.

## **Chapter 5                      Participant Observation**

*We obviously have a Guide Unit in Summerhill and therefore it is a readymade group to begin work with...and explore how we [Holy Trinity church] can connect with them as they can connect with us.<sup>401</sup>*

Moving on from the Pilot Study this chapter continues Osmer's descriptive-empirical task asking the first key question, 'What is going on here?' It uses Participant Observation to help answer the research questions,

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*
- iii) How can the Girlguiding Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*

This Participant Observation phased focused on Holy Trinity church in Gwersyllt and Summerhill Guides. In order to answer the research questions, it was important to develop an understanding of the community in which Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides were situated. This included the place of the Guide Unit within the community, the church's existing mission and ministry and how the working with the Guides could be part of this.

The chapter begins with an outline of this phase of the research (5.1) including the use of Participant Observation. It then moves to give an overview of the context and community of Gwersyllt (5.2) especially the activities available for children. It then moves to look at Holy Trinity church (5.3) and Summerhill Guides (5.4). Before outlining the process for the semi-structured interviews including the rationale for the selection of the interviewees (5.5). The chapter moves to analysis of the interviews using NVivo and identifies the themes of

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<sup>401</sup> Interview with Geoff from Holy Trinity Church, September 2015

'Church and Unit Links', 'Serving the Community', 'The Gospel in Action', 'Dispelling the Myths' and 'Develop my Beliefs' (56). It then reflects on the why all the interviews talks about community (5.7), before drawing some final conclusions (5.8).

## **5.1 Outline of Participant Observation Phase**

Participant observation provided the opportunity to get to know and understand the local church and Guiding contexts; the existing relationships, the people involved and to collect a range of information, in order to become familiar with the 'language, concepts, categories, practices, rules, beliefs, and so forth.'<sup>402</sup>

Having received the support and permission of the PCC<sup>403</sup> the Participant Observation phase was carried out in three parts:

- Part 1: Information Gathering,
- Part 2: Semi-structured interviews
- Part 3: Analysis.

The initial phase of information gathering focused on getting to know the context of the community where the church and Guiding Unit were situated. This helped answer questions about existing relationships and highlighted some of the factors which may influence them.

It also provided information from which to select individuals for the interview phase and formulate suitable questions, using the context and concepts familiar to the individuals taking part. The final analysis phase drew on this material to supplement the themes highlighted by NVivo from the interview transcripts.

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<sup>402</sup> Van Maanen, '*Tales of the Field*', 13

<sup>403</sup> I outlined the purpose of the study to the PCC and explained how I proposed to manage my dual role as Vicar and Researcher. Holy Trinity Gwersyllt, *PCC Minutes*, 14 September 2014

## 5.2 Information Gathering

Over an 8-month period, this involved gathering together information to build up a picture of the church and its relationship with the wider community and local Guiding Units. Time to 'just to settle in, learn a new language, gain rapport, and be in a position to ask good questions and to get good answers.'<sup>404</sup> Such information gathering is at the heart of participant observation and one which is reflected in the work of ethnographers such as Fulkerson,<sup>405</sup> Inge<sup>406</sup> and Luhrmann.<sup>407</sup> All of whom took different amounts of time, but with the same aim of developing relationships and understanding the community they were observing.

Similarly, this research involved both collecting and assessing a wide variety of data (Appendix G). It was gained from attending meetings and events, written information and time spent talking to people. These encompassed both informal chats and more formal meetings as the local vicar. The former was more about spending time with people, listening to their stories and getting to know them both in the roles they had and as individuals. The latter was more to do with engaging with pastoral needs (for example Funeral and Baptism meetings) or carrying out specific responsibilities (such as liaising with the clerk of the Community Council to organise the Remembrance Sunday service).

As the new vicar I was made very welcome by members of the church and community. At the same time people wanted to get to know me, work out the type of vicar I would be and even compare me with previous incumbents.

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<sup>404</sup> Bernard, *Research Methods*, 349

<sup>405</sup> Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption*, 11-12

<sup>406</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 45-46

<sup>407</sup> Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back*, 3-4

'Where do you come from?' 'Are you married?' and 'Do you know [a specific person]?' were the most common questions. Others focused on the contribution I could make; 'would you think about being on the Governing Body...?' 'I am putting together the WI programme for next year- we would like you to come.' and even 'bring your trumpet... Gwersyllt Brass needs some new members!'

Although focused on my role, such discussions presented opportunities to build up relationships with individuals and provided access into groups and organisations that just by being a researcher would have made much more difficult. This was about trust. People may not have known me as an individual, but they had an understanding of my role, especially how it had been exercised by the previous incumbent. This alongside being a Guiding leader gave me credibility. Therefore, that first level of trust, that Luhmann<sup>408</sup> and Inge<sup>409</sup> had to establish, was already open.

### *5.2.1 Reactivity*

When meeting people and getting to know them I anticipated that there could be problems with reactivity, when people change their behaviour because they know they are being studied. Whether this happened was not something I could discern. However, as Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson argue this does not necessarily affect the validity of the research, for 'how people respond to the presence of the researcher maybe as informative as how they react to other situations'<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> Luhmann, *When God Talks Back*, xx

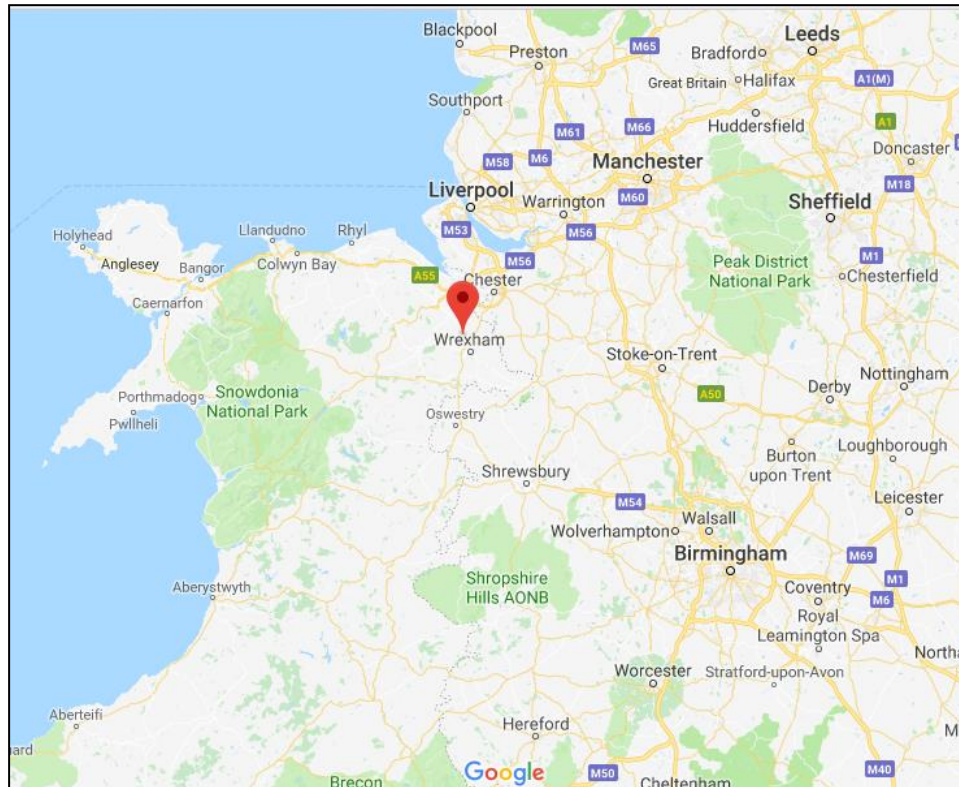
<sup>409</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 6, 22

<sup>410</sup> Martyn, Hammersley & Paul, Atkinson, *Ethnography: principles in practice*, (Oxford: Routledge, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 2007), 16



### 5.2.2 Community and Context of Gwersyllt

Comprising a population of 10677 in 4312 households,<sup>411</sup> The Parish of Gwersyllt is part of the Church in Wales Diocese of St Asaph and is an ‘urban village’ located about two miles from the centre of the town of Wrexham in North Wales (Figure 5.1).<sup>412</sup>



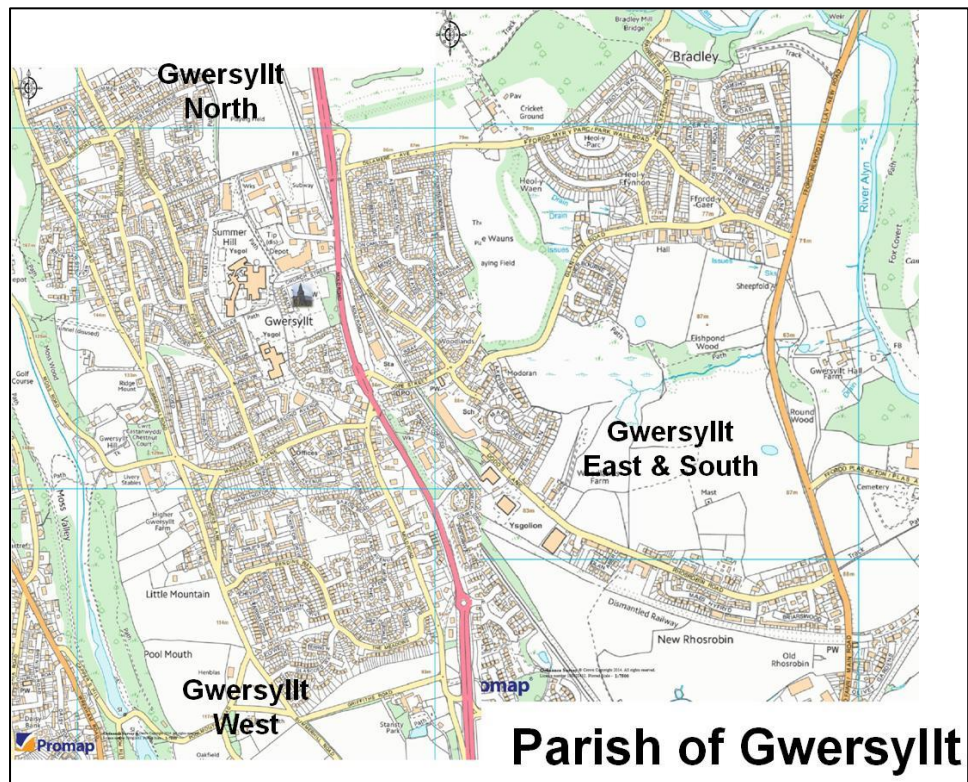
**Figure 5.1: Map Showing the Location of Gwersyllt**

The area is made up of three Local Authority wards (Figure 5.2)<sup>413</sup> and contains the communities of Gwersyllt, Summerhill, Bradley and Rhosrobin.

<sup>411</sup> UKCensusdata.com, 2011 Census Information for: Gwersyllt South & East: <http://www.ukcensusdata.com/gwersyllt-east-and-south-w05000908#sthash.FSyZQzW0.dpbs>, Gwersyllt North: <http://www.ukcensusdata.com/gwersyllt-north-w05000256#sthash.20A7rqFF.dpbs> Gwersyllt West: <http://www.ukcensusdata.com/gwersyllt-west-w05000257#sthash.PnYKc9Dz.dpbs> (23 January 2018)

<sup>412</sup> Google Maps, <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Gwersyllt,+Wrexham/@52.887618,-2.8473335,8z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x487ac6592460949d:0x7c165bc5a23dca6f!8m2!3d53.076524!4d-3.021726> (23 January 2018)

<sup>413</sup> ‘Promap’, Gwersyllt and Bradley, [www.promap.co.uk](http://www.promap.co.uk) (23 January 2018)



**Figure 5.2: Map Showing the Communities which make up Gwersyllt and the Location of Holy Trinity Church**

### 5.2.3 Community

The main road (Figure 5.2) divides the community in half, not only physically but socially and economically as well. The disparity between Gwersyllt (Gwersyllt North & Gwersyllt West), and the more affluent area of Bradley (Gwersyllt South & East) east of the main road is clear when walking around the communities. The state of repair of some houses on the Gwersyllt side, the neglected gardens, contrast to the well-groomed estates of Bradley-

Furthermore, in Gwersyllt North & West there is 7% rather than 3% unemployment. 33% rather than 19% of those able to work have no qualifications and of those who are economically inactive 26% rather than 16% are long term sick or disabled and 27% of homes, rather than 19.4% are council

owned.<sup>414</sup> Such statistics are higher than the average for Wales and as result these and other measures have been used to designate Gwersyllt North and Gwersyllt West as 'Communities First Areas.'<sup>415</sup> They receive additional funding from the Local Council, Welsh Government and special intervention measures aimed at addressing the effects of poverty, including education, employment and poor health all of which have a significant impact on this part of the local community.<sup>416</sup> Gwersyllt West also made news headlines<sup>417</sup> as having the lowest life expectancy for women (72.6yrs) in England and Wales.<sup>418</sup>

#### *5.2.4 Community Resources and Activities*

It is in Gwersyllt North and Gwersyllt West that the health centre, sports centre, local housing office and Community Resource Centre are located. The latter houses the local library as well as rooms for activities and social events. It is also in this area of the community that Summerhill Guides meet and Holy Trinity church is located.

#### *5.2.5 Church Life*

Of the 63%,<sup>419</sup> in the community who marked themselves as Christians in the last census under 2% regularly attend<sup>420</sup> worship<sup>421</sup> either at Holy Trinity or Gwersyllt Congregational Church. The latter is an independent conservative evangelical church with an average Sunday congregation of 95 adults and 42

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<sup>414</sup> UKCensusdata.com 2011: Gwersyllt South & East, Gwersyllt North and Gwersyllt West

<sup>415</sup> About Communities First in Wrexham <https://familypoint.cymru/wrexham/communities-first-wrexham/> (23 January 2018)

<sup>416</sup> WIMD (Welsh Index for Multiple Deprivation) Domains <http://wimd.wales.gov.uk/explore?lang=en#z=14&lat=53.070&lng=3.026&domain=overall&geography=wca> (23 January 2018)

<sup>417</sup> BBC, 'Wrexham ward has shortest female life expectancy' *BBC News*, 5 April 2018, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-43658568> (5 April 2018)

<sup>418</sup> Health state life expectancy by 2011 Census wards, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) (23 January 2018)

<sup>419</sup> UK Census data, for Gwersyllt South & East, Gwersyllt North and Gwersyllt West.

<sup>420</sup> For the purpose of this study regular attendance is counted as at least once a month

<sup>421</sup> Others do attend worship elsewhere, including, Methodist, Catholic and Salvation Army meetings in Wrexham, but it was not possible for this study to ascertain how many.

children. It supports a range of activities including a luncheon club, weekly foodbank distribution point, toddler group and children's clubs.

#### *5.2.6 Facilities for Children*

13% of the community are aged 5-15,<sup>422</sup> with the majority attending one of the four local schools. There is a High School (11-16) and three Primary Schools, one of which is Welsh medium (children are taught in Welsh).

For children the community includes several parks with play equipment for all ages and a skate park. Free activities including swimming and a Council drop-in play scheme are also available during the school holidays, whilst the library provides a range of events. Other activities include Drama, Martial Arts, Cricket, Morris Dancing, Fitness, Swimming, Pool and Football. Additionally, music lessons and a variety of clubs are supported by the local schools.

However, the average cost of such activities is £5 per hour with additional money needed to buy equipment and resources, as well as going on trips and outings. Where some families have had to borrow £5 to buy credits for electricity or other essential items and others regularly accessing the food bank, additional money for clubs is a luxury that not all can afford.

#### *5.2.7 Guiding and Scouts*

Financially, this is where the Guides and Scouts stand out. Gwersyllt Scouts average out at £2.50 an hour, the Guides £1.30, with the Unit often reducing the amount or waiting if a parent needs time to pay.

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<sup>422</sup> UKCensusdata.com 2011: Gwersyllt South & East, Gwersyllt North and Gwersyllt West

The local Scout Group meets weekly at Gwersyllt Resource Centre with the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts following each other. Numbers vary and all age groups have room for new members. They have attended the church for various services in the past and come to the Remembrance Sunday service at the local war memorial. Despite girls being able to join the Scouting movement there does not appear to be any competition locally between the organisations for members.

Rainbows (5-7) and Brownies (7-10) meet weekly in Bradley village hall and are run by the same team of leaders. Both Units are full and have a list of girls waiting to join. Although two of the four main leaders attend churches, these are not in this area, neither do the leaders live locally. Additionally, they are also involved in running other Rainbow and Brownie Units, which are in different areas and linked with other churches. Furthermore, having spent time with the girls and the leaders, it was realised that the Rainbows and Brownies already had a link with Gwersyllt Congregational Church, joining in their activities and services once or twice a year. This helped reinforce my thinking, that in order to answer the research questions, then working with Summerhill Guides would be appropriate.<sup>423</sup>

Summerhill Guides (10-14) meets weekly in one of the local schools not far from the Holy Trinity church. Two of the leaders are regular members of the church and the team are keen to re-establish the links that the Guides and Holy Trinity church have had in the past.

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<sup>423</sup> I would still make links as part of my ministry with the Bradley Rainbows and Brownies.

### 5.3 Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity church has 66 adults on the electoral roll<sup>424</sup> and a church family membership of 90 adults including 16 families with children, of these 20 children attended church and church groups on a monthly basis.<sup>425</sup> 49% of the adults who attend live in 'Gwersyllt', 35% in 'Bradley' and 12% from outside the Parish. All those who have moved away from the community still see Holy Trinity as their church and all, but one person, travel less than 4 miles to attend.

The church building is traditional in style, with a single aisle and pews either side. In 2011 the back of the church was refurbished to provide a toilet, kitchen facilities and a very small meeting area. On a Sunday there is a main morning service with an average attendance of 27<sup>426</sup> of whom 30% were under the age of 60 and 10% aged 7-16. Services are planned and led by clergy and laity, and members of the congregation of all ages are encouraged to take part as appropriate.

#### 5.3.1 Mission and Ministry

The mission and ministry of the church is directed by the vicar in consultation with the PCC and has been divided into the three areas of 'Worship & Prayer, Teaching & Nurture and Mission, Care & Evangelism.' These are underpinned by the church's vision statement 'To Grow God's Kingdom of Love and Hope, in our Lives, in Our Church and in Our Community'. Part of this is the work with children and families.

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<sup>424</sup> St Asaph Diocesan Annual return 2015

<sup>425</sup> Holy Trinity Church 2015 Annual Report

<sup>426</sup> St Asaph Diocesan Annual return 2016

### *5.3.2 Ministry to Children and Families*

28 members of the church are involved with children and youth work. As well as the monthly 'Messy Church' for families, 'Pebbles' the 7-11s after school club and GoMAD (Go Make a Difference Youth group) they facilitate a growing connection with the local schools. This includes helping GCSE students to understand 'the purpose of the church,' putting on annual Nativity and Easter Trails for younger children and inviting them to take part in 'pray for schools' days. The 'Open the Book'<sup>427</sup> book team with their weekly dramatized Bible stories in Schools have also raised the profile of the church. Other members of the church are involved in Guiding and Scouting.

Over the years Summerhill Guides have been invited to attend church services as well as participating in events such as the church Christmas fair. Although it has been over 6 years since any individual Guides attended church, the link is maintained through two of the leaders who come most Sundays. One of them is also a member of the PCC which helps keep Summerhill Guides in the mind of the church leadership.

## **5.4 Summerhill Guides**

Summerhill Guides meets on a weekday evening in a local school hall. Although they do not have to pay rent, using the school does place restrictions on them; both in the activities they can do and, as storage facilities are not available, the equipment and resources they have.

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<sup>427</sup> The Bible Society, 'Open the Book', <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book/> (16 October 2016)

The Unit is run by three qualified adult leaders, Jean, Sarah and Claire and has a membership of 22 girls<sup>428</sup> aged 10-14 from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. 82% of the Guides have been members of the local Brownies and saw Guides as a natural progression. 91% of Guides live within the Parish of Gwersyllt. 14% have a regular connection with a church, but none of them with Holy Trinity.

#### *5.4.1 The Guide Leaders.*

Central to the Unit is the relationship that the Guides have with the three leaders. Like Jean who feels more able to, ‘...relate to the older Girls’ the other leaders find working with this age group particularly rewarding. As Sarah reflected, ‘To see the progression, how a young person develops into a young adult. It’s a joy to be part of that.’

Jean and Claire also consider what Guides has to offer girls and women is very important in today’s society, not only in the range of activities and skills Guiding offers but in how it is taking a lead in areas such as body image,<sup>429</sup> mental wellbeing<sup>430</sup> and sexual harassment.<sup>431</sup>

In turn the Guides clearly have a good relationship with each of the leaders. They can laugh and joke with them and appreciate their help, support and

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<sup>428</sup> Statistics based on Unit membership September 2016

<sup>429</sup> Alexandra Topping, ‘Girls as young as 7 feel pressure to be pretty – body confidence study’, *The Guardian*, 4 October 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/oct/04/girls-as-young-as-7-feel-pressure-to-be-pretty-body-confidence-girlguiding-study-reveals> (17 December 2017)

<sup>430</sup> John Bingham, ‘Girl Guides get new ‘Think Resilient’ badge to tackle mental health issues’, *The Telegraph*, 15 March 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/girl-guides-get-new-think-resilient-badge-to-tackle-mental-health/> (17 December 2017)

<sup>431</sup> Laura Bates, ‘Sexual harassment part of daily life for British girls, says Girlguiding UK’, *The Guardian*, 2 December 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/womens-blog/2014/dec/02/sexual-harassment-party-daily-life-british-girls-girlguiding-uk> (17 December 2017)



guidance as well as respecting their authority. Subsequently the leaders work hard to facilitate the programme for the Guides and helping individuals to get the most from the programme and achieve their potential within it.

#### *5.4.2 The Guide Programme*

The Guides work in four small groups of 5-6 girls called patrols under the leadership of a Patrol Leader, making decisions, planning and enjoying a range of activities. These follow the Guiding programme for this age group<sup>432</sup> which is imbedded within the ethos of Guiding.

Over the past year they have participated in crafts and games, gained badges and gone on holiday. They have helped and supported the local community, through bulb planting and other voluntary work and partnered with Holy Trinity church in our Love Gwersyllt projects, Summer Fair and Christmas Tree Festival. Participation in such activities, Sarah said 'rounds a person's development, ...and gives them opportunities they wouldn't have and makes them part of a team and gives them that kind of the organisational skills you need for life'.

This ethos of Guiding is contained within the Five Essentials (Figure 5.3), 'which are five interlinking principles that run throughout [the] programme.'<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> From September 2019 this Girlguiding programme has been superseded. The Promise, Law and 5 essentials of Girlguiding remain unchanged. See Girlguiding UK, 'our new programme for every girl', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/our-badges-and-activities/programme-for-every-girl/> (28 June 2019)

<sup>433</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'The Five Essentials', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/programme-and-activities/the-five-essentials/>, (17 December 2017)

<b>Essential</b>	
<b>1</b>	Working together in small groups
<b>2</b>	Encouraging self-government and decision making
<b>3</b>	A balanced and varied programme which is girl-led
<b>4</b>	Caring for the individual
<b>5</b>	Sharing a commitment to a common standard.

**Figure 5.3: The Five Essentials of Girlguiding**

These principles help members of each Unit leadership team deliver the objectives for the six areas of development contained within the Educational Framework,<sup>434</sup> which applies to all girls and adult volunteers within Guiding. The first of these is ‘Spiritual development - girls develop their spiritual identity while understanding and respecting the spiritual choices of others.’<sup>435</sup> Which is underpinned by the Promise.

#### *5.4.3 The Guide Promise*

It is the Promise which sets Summerhill Guides apart from other groups, like Gwersyllt youth club. On joining Guides girls learn about the Promise and the Laws and discuss what it means to them. When they are ready, they make their Promise, reciting it in front of the other Unit members.

The changing of the Promise wording from ‘my Country’ to ‘my Community’ (1.1) has not made a difference to the programme. As Claire pointed out, ‘now that it’s changed to the community it makes it easier for girls to fulfil that role.’ Whereas the change from ‘love my God’ to, ‘to be true to myself and develop my beliefs’ is considered a greater challenge and one that all three leaders feel that the church could help with.

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<sup>434</sup> Girlguiding UK, *Girlguiding’s Educational Framework* (London, The Guide Association, 2013), 2

<sup>435</sup> Girlguiding UK, ‘Our Educational Framework’, <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/programme-and-activities/our-educational-framework/> (17 December 2017)

## **5.5 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Having spent time getting to know the church and Unit I wanted to learn more about the relationship, how it could be developed and the part that the Promise could have in that. I then moved to the semi-structured interviews., which followed a 3 step process

- 1) Formulating the interview questions
- 2) Selection of Key Informants
- 3) Conducting the interviews

### *5.5.1 Formulating the Interview Questions*

The results of the Participant Observation helped guide the design of the interview questions (Appendix B). Being a semi-structured interview, these questions provided prompts and a guide to the areas that needed to be covered rather than making it a necessity to ask every question.

Having formulated the interview questions, these were read through by two people who were not linked with the study but were part of other Guiding units and churches. This was to limit interview bias by checking whether the question wording might prompt specific answers or direct interviewees in a particular direction. As a result, two minor adjustments were made to aid clarification.

### *5.5.2 Selection of Key Informants*

All three leaders of Summerhill Guides were willing to be interviewed for the study. In choosing whom to interview from the church I applied the following criteria,

- 1) Position of influence within the church,
- 2) Engagement with children and youth ministry
- 3) Interest in growing the church through mission.

It was from the members of the PCC that the 'key informants' for the semi-structured interview phase, were selected, as they would be the people who had the most influence over the direction of mission and ministry. These included the church Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer, Lay Reader and certain individuals who had been in the church for many years and could be considered 'gate-keepers.' From this group of 9 individuals I narrowed it further to 5 members who were influential in leading children and youth work. From these 3 people were chosen, based on their interest in growing the church through mission to children and families. As a result, Geoff, Andrea and Christine were approached, all of whom were willing to be interviewed.

#### *5.5.3 Details Key Informants: Church*

Geoff, Andrea and Christine had each been members of the church for over 10 years and were influential members of the PCC. Furthermore, each had an interest in working with children which they saw as an important aspect of mission. Each scored highly (8-9 ) on each aspect of the spirituality questionnaire which provided a springboard for discussion, when talking about their faith. Geoff and Christine used it as a way of thinking about how people in the community might answer such questions, rather than relating it to their own faith as Andrea did.

#### *5.5.4 Details Key Informants: Guides*

Jean, Sarah and Claire had an active Christian faith which, as the answers to their spirituality questionnaires showed, (average score of 8 or 9 for all answers), was fundamental to how they lived their lives and the decisions they made. Furthermore, they all saw participation in Guiding as part of the outworking of their faith.

### *5.5.5 Conducting the Interviews*

Conscious of the power dynamics I discussed earlier (3.5.4) I allowed the interviewees to choose whether they were interviewed at home or in the vicarage. Two Guiding leaders and one church member chose the vicarage and one leader and two church members invited me into their homes. The motivation behind individual choices was not explored however comments such as, 'why don't you come round after...' or 'we won't be disturbed...if I come to you' gives an indication that people's choice was motivated more by practical considerations.

All 6 interviews were very relaxed. All interviewees were keen to help with the study and even checked whether what they said was what I needed. This could have distorted the data and I carefully explained that whatever they said would be helpful and also reassured them that it was fine to express concerns as this could be helpful when looking at making improvements in the future.

Although careful to explain, that I was doing this as 'researcher' I was conscious that I was no longer seen as an outsider and the interviewees appeared comfortable to trust me with information and ideas that they may not have shared with someone they knew less well. This substantiated Hammersley and Atkinson's findings that rather than being a hindrance to data collection a personal relationship with the interviewee can give rise to more truthful information. As the interviewee was more honest in their responses as they

trusted the interviewer and how the information would be used and perceived.<sup>436</sup>

## **5.6 Analysis**

### *5.6.1 Identifying Themes*

Each interview was digitally recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Some anecdotal material, in relation to an individual's personal Guiding or Christian journey,<sup>437</sup> was not considered salient and I left it out for future reference if needed. The rest of the interview was analysed using NVivo. Each interview was coded. When this was completed, there was a list of 78 different nodes, which I combined into different themes. Some themes became overarching themes, with others linking to them and some such church services became obsolete as there was not enough data to support them. As a result, 5 key themes were identified: Church and Unit Links, Serving the Community, The Gospel in Action, Dispelling the Myths and Develop my Beliefs.

### *5.6.2 Church and Unit Links*

Although not members of Guiding or Scouting Geoff, Andrea and Christine were supportive of the organisations and aware of some of the things they were involved with and wanted to make better connections. Jean, Sarah and Claire also were very positive about the opportunities strengthening the relationship could give.

Three existing links were mentioned. Firstly, Remembrance Sunday, which the Guides attended every year. Then the invitation that the Guides had been given

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<sup>436</sup> Martyn, Hammersley & Paul, Atkinson, *Ethnography: principles in practice*, (Oxford: Routledge, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2007), 47-49

<sup>437</sup> i.e. How they became a Christian or the activities they had participated in as a child in Brownies and Guides.

to participate in the Christmas Tree festival, 'you do realise how many yoghurts I had to eat for them to make the bells on it...they enjoyed it...it was something different...and they all got involved 'and secondly the importance that two of the of leaders were part of the church, 'because we have a connection and hear about them even if we don't see the girls' (Andrea).

However, thinking about links reminded people of what had happened in the past, 'when some of the Guides had been in the choir'(Christine), or, as Jean said 'they [my family] came every week until [she] grew up and things just changed' and how some Guide families had come for a bit 'but once the form was signed<sup>438</sup> they stopped,' (Andrea).

### *5.6.3 Serving the Community*

Each of those interviewed wanted to look at the church beyond the walls of the building. Geoff was exploring his vocation and was very keen on how ministry could impact the local community rather than just being about serving the church congregation. Andrea also considered that 'how the church impacts lives in our local community should be central to what we do,' whilst Christine talked about 'letting the community know that God is out there not just in here [the church building].'

They considered that working with Summerhill Guides could be an opportunity of the church being more involved in the wider community. This got Geoff excited and he talked in detail about how the Guides could be invited to help with our Messy Church, Brunch, Love Gwersyllt day and litter pick. He also

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<sup>438</sup> Form needed for Wrexham Church High school application. Signed by vicar to say child is part of the church community and family attends regularly.

reflected on how such partnership needed to be two way and how the Guides could 'help us understand a little bit more about their lives' and how 'if they have idea of doing something in the community, we might be the vehicle to help them.'

Jean suggested a 'good approach,' would be for Guides and church members to work together on a community project. Sarah talked about 'Getting them [the Guides] involved in activities.' and asked whether some of the them could help with Messy church. Claire also mentioned the Guides and church doing things together to help the community.

From talking about sharing a project, each of the interviewees reflected on about how such partnership could make a difference to those involved and even draw them into the life of the church. It 'can transform lives. It's got something to offer. But when they start, sort of start to see the church making a difference in the community, that's when they're more likely to want to be...[part of the church]' (Sarah)

#### *5.6.4 The Gospel in Action*

They talked about how Christianity was more than just words. 'The Guides need to be able to see the gospel in action.' (Andrea). 'there's more to religion than just going to church its a way of life its a way you live your life its makes you a better person and giving girls the opportunity to learn about it is one thing that the local church can do,' (Sarah).



It would be as Geoff suggested 'modelling to them what Christianity is about ...that by working with us, or us working with them to help the community they'll see that it's [church] more than just singing.' And in doing so Christine hoped that as 'they see ordinary people doing ordinary things for... if you like, for the greater good of the community, they will learn that we do it to glorify God as a Christian.'

#### *5.6.5 Dispelling the myths*

Jean also believed that if the Guides and church worked together it would help with 'dispelling that myth about church and what church is' Maybe they're thinking that '...it's a group of people that meet in that big building sort of once a week and they don't know anything about that.' (Andrea) or 'It's like we go to Guides here on Tuesday they [think I] go to Club on Sunday.'(Claire). 'I think they're always thinking that if they don't attend a church...they don't know what to expect. And I think that's part of why they're reticent come to'. (Sarah). Sarah also parallels with how people see Guiding, 'the image people have of Guiding is the image they have of the church. What we do is dispel those myths..old person things, middle class thing, white thing.'

#### *5.6.6 Develop my Belief*

There was a feeling that the church could help facilitate the Guides in developing their beliefs by working with them out in the community, rather than expecting them to attend services for as Geoff expressed, 'coming into church for a service all they can do is just sit there. They can participate in some ways in singing and reading. But working together is different. They're actually getting something real out of it then.'

There was a lot of thought from the Guide leaders about what difference the wording of the Promise made. 'I think we're so used to it, it being just the word God.' (Claire). Sarah found herself reflecting aloud, 'Develop my belief...It's quite open...quite a fluid sort of thing. It's it doesn't make him [God] so a very bold statement...I think they it's something that they say...when they make that promise, when they're 10 or 7, that it's not something that is homed in on...the church could give them an insight.' And how they would welcome the input of the church to help the girls explore what 'to develop my beliefs' might mean, 'It's not about forcing beliefs on them, but it's offering them an opportunity to explore' Jean

'On my form I said about you coming into the unit and discussing that side [develop my beliefs] which I don't necessarily have the skills to do. To be able to give them the true informed information where they can make their own opinions themselves and to say that we are part of the community like the church that's to me is really important as well and we can build that bond.' (Sarah) It's about giving the opportunity. And this is giving them an opportunity to develop their beliefs in an in God or, or their belief in other kinds of, you know, spiritual aspects, if that's the approach that they wish to take. But I think it's a good idea.' (Claire)

## **5.7 Reflection**

When asking the question 'what things do you think that Holy Trinity can do to facilitate that exploration? [of the 'develop my beliefs' aspect of the Promise], I had not expected each participant to talk about working with the Guides in the

community. I had presumed that the suggestions would be around inviting the Guides to different services and the contributions they could make to them as answers from the Pilot Study and Survey showed.

Their answers made me reflect firstly on whether there had been any collusion between the interviewees and secondly whether in the interviews I had asked some leading questions or prompted the interviewees in some way. However, I knew that the interviewees had not talked together, especially as with the Guide leaders the interviews took place over one day.

Secondly on reviewing the transcripts the only previous questions had been 'Do you feel that strengthening the link with Summerhill Guides/ Holy Trinity church is worthwhile?' and having if necessary, explained the Guide Promise asked 'do you feel that there is an opportunity for Holy Trinity church to engage with the Guides through the words of the Promise?'

I went on to think about whether this was an example of the 'deference effect,'<sup>439</sup> when people say what they think you want to hear and whether people would have given such an answer 8 months previously. I recognised that the vision and direction of Holy Trinity was shaped by a partnership between the vicar and PCC. This dynamic has varied over the years depending on the incumbent, their interests and the type of leader they were. Although, it is not possible to say for certain, I think as I became more of an insider, then my own vision and understanding of ministry influenced them.

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<sup>439</sup> Bernard, *Research Methods*, 241-241

However, in the context of this research this is not necessarily negative. For just as building up her relationship with Salafi women Inge helped to dispel some of the suspicion of outsiders that a previous undercover researcher had caused.<sup>440</sup> Then my ministry was possibly encouraging people to approach mission and ministry in different ways.

## 5.8 Conclusions

The information gathered through the Participant Observation phase has provided the opportunity to explore the research questions,

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Girlguiding Units be developed?*
- iii) How can the Girlguiding Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*

It has demonstrated that Guide leaders and church members are willing to develop a stronger relationship. Moreover, this link need not necessarily involve inviting the Guides into the church building for services, as I had expected they would suggest.

Instead, it is more about the church meeting the Guides in the community, in a more familiar environment and showing them through shared community projects what it, means to be a Christian and what the Gospel looks like in action. It is about walking with them on a journey, a conclusion that's links in with the definition of spirituality established earlier (2.9.3). In the following chapter, I demonstrate how Focus Groups of Guides were both interested in exploring their beliefs and able to articulate them.

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<sup>440</sup> Inge, *The Making of a Salafi*, 3-4

## **Chapter 6**      **Guide Focus Groups**

*I liked the sweets...talking about what we think was good.  
If we didn't talk about what we believe we might not know if it was  
good to believe that...I think knowing what someone else believes is  
good too. When you hear them say it, it makes you think, like when  
Lucy said about her nan [who always prays for her]...can we do it  
again and can we have jellybeans next time?<sup>441</sup>*

In the previous chapter from Participant Observation of Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides and the semi-structured interviews, I showed that for the church and Unit leaders developing the relationship and facilitating mission and ministry through the Promise would be about working together in the community so the Guides could see what Christianity was like (Jean).

Whilst continuing with the descriptive-empirical task, this chapter begins the interpretive task as it explores the second of Osmer's key questions, 'Why is it going on?' Guide Focus Groups are used to explore the potential of the Promise to provide a vehicle for mission and ministry, by beginning to answer the third research question '*How can the spiritual dimension of the Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*'

Information is gathered about what the Guides believe which is interpreted with the help of NVivo. This highlights themes to be investigated, and raises questions about why certain trends are shown. These are explored further by drawing on aspects of the social sciences to put them into a wider context,

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<sup>441</sup> Claire (aged 10): feedback after the trial of the focus group activity.

The chapter begins by explaining the design and development of the Focus Group activity (6.1), including the rationale for the statements which were part of it (6.2) and how the activity was modified after trialling (6.3). It then looks at how the activity was run, including the confidentiality and child protection procedures put in place (6.4). The chapter goes on to analyse the results (6.8) and looks at them through three identified overarching themes of ‘decision making,’ (6.5), ‘change’ (6.6), and ‘religious beliefs’ (6.7). It looks at the limitations and problems found when carrying out the research and critically reflects on the process (6.9). It then highlights four areas drawn from the analysis of ‘Generation Z’, ‘no-religion,’ ‘prayer’ and the ‘ability to reflect’ and how these findings relate to wider studies (6.10). The chapter finishes with a final summary (6.11).

### **6.1 Development of the Activity**

Focus groups, as explained earlier (3.5.5), were chosen as the most appropriate way of working with the Guides. The distinctive nature of focus groups with children are outlined by Norma Hurley,<sup>442</sup> and developed by Michael Anderson, who looks at how aspects such as pretence, conformity, compliance and silence can shape children’s responses.<sup>443</sup> Recognising the challenges of such group effects on children I wanted to design an activity which would mitigate these.

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<sup>442</sup> Norma Hurley, *Straight Talk: Good Practice in Working with Children and Young People in Groups* (York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1998)

<sup>443</sup> Michael Anderson, ‘Communication and Focus Group Dynamics: An anthropological perspective on children’s groups’, in Deanna J. Trakas, (ed.), *Focus Groups Revisited: Lessons from qualitative research with children* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2008), 28-31

Furthermore, to answer the question '*How can the spiritual dimension of the Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*' the activity needed to demonstrate the spiritual understanding that individual Guides had and their willingness to explore their beliefs. At the same time the activity needed to maintain the ethos of Guiding without compromising the integrity of Christianity.

In thinking about children's spirituality, I also reflected on the debates surrounding its development (2.12-13) and the balance therefore needed, between providing enough freedom to allow each Guide to express her thinking and be able to gather the necessary data in a structured way.

In order to do this, as well as allowing the thoughts of individual Guides to be heard, I identified five criteria that needed to be met:

- Be accessible to all the Guides in the unit
- Fit into the Guide Programme
- Demonstrate the '5 essentials' (ethos) of Guiding
- Fit into the unit meeting time and location
- Be fun

#### *6.1.1 Accessibility*

Not all the Guides would have same learning style. Although as Pritchard points out 'learners are able to adopt different styles in different contexts,'<sup>444</sup> I felt it was important to produce something that could be accessed both by those with a more kinaesthetic learning style and those who need more time to think.

Initially I considered that some type of written response would be best. However, written methods may have excluded or caused stress to those Guides

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<sup>444</sup> Alan Pritchard, *Ways of Learning: Learning theories and learning styles in the classroom* (London: Routledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2009), 42

who found literacy a challenge. Therefore, an alternative approach was needed, which would still allow for individual thinking to be discerned and recorded. Furthermore, literacy may have been an issue for Guides who were educated through the medium of Welsh and discussion was held as to whether Welsh translation would be needed. However, as none of the Guides were first language Welsh and were used to working through the medium of English, at Guides, this was not felt necessary. A more active game was also rejected, both as the space available was inappropriate, and because it would be too hard to find out what individual Guides thought.

#### *6.1.2 The Activity*

As a result of these factors, I designed a game around a snakes and ladders board, which could be used with small groups of Guides (Figure 6.1). The game included cards encouraging Guides to talk about what statements starting 'I believe that...' may mean to them and at the end of each round sweets were distributed.<sup>445</sup> It was planned to be played as part of a Guide Unit meeting and therefore fulfilled the requirements of the Guide programme through its adherence to the '5 Essentials of Guiding'<sup>446</sup> (Figure 6.2). It is also intended to be fun by using the format of a game and the addition of sweets.

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<sup>445</sup> Allergies and dietary requirements were checked before sweets were used.

<sup>446</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'The Five Essentials', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/programme-and-activities/the-five-essentials/> (1 January 2018)



### Guide Focus Group Game

#### Equipment:

- Snakes & ladders board/ floor mat
- 2 dice – 1 *coloured\**, 1 numbered
- Set of statement cards
- Card with colour dice instructions on
- Counters
- Small Sweets (or beads if sweets not appropriate)
- Stickers for name badges

#### How to play:

- 1) Each Guide chooses a playing counter
- 2) Each Guide receives 5 sweets to start with
- 3) The Patrol (small group of 4-6 Girls) decides how and who will go first
- 4) First Guide rolls both dice and moves the appropriate number of squares and takes a card.
- 5) Card is read by the Guide or whoever she nominates to read it.
- 6)\* *Coloured dice is now referred to*
  - Blue: Question answered by the Guide*
  - Red: Question answered by the Guide on the left*
  - Green: Question answered the Guide on the right*
  - Yellow: Question answered all the Guides*
  - White: Guide nominates anyone to answer the question*
  - Black: No one answers the question*
- 7) Sweets received
  - 1 sweet for anyone who answered the question
  - 1 sweet to Guide if she went up a ladder
  - 1 sweet to everyone else if the Guide went down a snake
- 8) Play continues with the next Guide
- 9) Game continues until end of playing time.
- 10) If 100 reached before end of time game may begin again.

\*coloured dice and step 6 removed after trialling

**Figure 6.1: Guide Focus Group Activity**

## 6.2 The Development of the Statements

At school Guides were used to discussing issues, as part of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Curriculum (SMSC) framework laid out by the National Curriculums in England and Wales.<sup>447</sup> Furthermore, Guiding also follows the

<sup>447</sup> See Amelia Peterson et al., 'Appendices', *Schools with Soul: A new approach to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education* (London: RSA, 2014), 1-4

Educational Framework and advocates the inclusion of moral and ethical discussion as part of the Promise.<sup>448</sup> Therefore I decided to continue this approach with statements relating to spiritual, religious and ethical topics.

	<b>Guiding Essential</b>	<b>How this activity fits</b>
1	Working together in small groups	The Guides will work in their Patrols or other small groups
2	Decision making as individuals and groups	The group will make a decision of how aspects of the game such as who starts are made. Each Guide will be encouraged to voice her own opinion and different opinions among group members will be respected and valued.
3	A balanced and varied programme which is girl-led	This will be part of an overall evening's programme and fit within the Unit's termly plan.
4	Care for individual girls and their fulfilment	Any individual needs including, ADHD, Asperger's, dietary requirements, colour of card, type, size of font, reading ability etc. will be taken into consideration. There will be no writing and no Guide will have to answer any statement if she does not want to.
5	A shared commitment to a common standard.	This is about the Promise and the Law. Guiding is a spiritual rather than religious organisation, therefore the elements of the game are not linked to any particular faith but will encourage the Guides to reflect on what belief may mean to each of them.

**Figure 6.2: How the Focus Group Activity Fits within the 5 Essentials of Guiding**

### 6.2.1 Statements Relating to Spirituality

As explained earlier (3.6.2) the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale was chosen as a way of gauging the spiritual understanding of the Guides. As the clause in the Guide Promise relating to spirituality states 'To be true to myself and develop my beliefs' then for the Guides it was decided to adapt the statements by substituting the word spiritual with 'believe/beliefs' (Figure 6.3).

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<https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/schools-with-soul-appendices.pdf> (13 January 2015)

<sup>448</sup> Guide Association, *Background and Concepts*, 9

Understanding what I believe is really important in my life
My beliefs help me when I have to make important decisions in my life
Developing my beliefs is really important to me
My beliefs help me to grow and mature as a person
My beliefs answer all my questions about life
My beliefs affect everything I do in my life

**Figure 6.3: Statements Based on the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale**

Each Statement were asked twice, couched both in negative and positive terms (Figure 6.4). This was to act as a check to the answers, by allowing the same statement to be asked in a different context. Secondly it aimed to limit the problems of peer pressure, with girls giving the same answer as others.

1a	Understanding what I believe is really important in my life	1b	Understanding what I believe is of no importance to me in my life
2a	My beliefs help me when I have to make important decisions in my life	2b	I never think about my beliefs when I have to make important decisions in my life
3a	Developing my beliefs is really important to me	3b	I am not interested in developing my beliefs
4a	My beliefs help me to grow and mature as a person	4b	My beliefs make no difference to how I grow and mature as a person
5a	My beliefs answer all my questions about life	5b	My beliefs don't answer any of my questions about life
6a	My beliefs affect everything I do in my life	6b	My beliefs make no difference to anything I do in my life

**Figure 6.4: Initial Statements Based on the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale Couched in Positive and Negative Terms**

### 6.2.2 Statements Relating to Faith and Belief

The second set of statements related to faith and belief (Figure 6.5) were designed to reflect the six big question areas identified by Nick Spencer's 'Beyond the Fringe' Research,<sup>449</sup> that I identified in the literature review, (2.6.1).

<sup>449</sup> Spencer, *Beyond the Fringe*: 17

Statement	'Beyond the Fringe' research Big Question Area
God exists	God
When people die they go to heaven	Destiny
Praying can make a difference	Suffering/ spiritual realm
Evil exists	Suffering/ spiritual realm
Having a faith can make a real difference in your life	Purpose
The universe was created by chance	The Universe

**Figure 6.5: Statements Relating to Faith and Belief**

### 6.2.3 Statements Relating to Morality and Ethics

The final set of statements (Figure 6.6) related both to topical issues, such as euthanasia and celebrity status, and statements of morality and choice.

People who are very ill should be allowed to die if they want to
Telling lies is alright if you don't get caught
Stealing is always wrong
Being rich is the most important thing in life
Cyber bullying is wrong
I should always try to act like people who are famous
You shouldn't have to go to school unless you want to
Parents should allow children to have whatever they want

**Figure 6.6: Statements Relating to Morality & Ethics**

For spirituality as Sheldrake points out,

Spirituality has a close relationship with ethics. Spirituality is not simply concerned with religious devotion or spiritual practices but also with how to live in a virtuous way. Equally, ethics is not merely concerned with 'right' and 'wrong' actions but also with people's dispositions of character. In other words, both spirituality and ethics focus on the quality of our basic humanity.<sup>450</sup>

In choosing the questions the latest Guiding 'Girls' attitudes survey' was examined for possible topics affecting young people, especially girls.<sup>451</sup> Here

<sup>450</sup> Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Very Short Introduction*, 77

<sup>451</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'Girls' Attitude Survey 2014',

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2014.pdf> (7 August 2015)

issues surrounding 'well-being and mental health'<sup>452</sup> and 'sex and relationships'<sup>453</sup> featured highly. However due to the sensitivity of the subjects and the lack of time to address such issues appropriately, questions relating to these directly were not included. Nevertheless, the possibilities for issues surrounding these to arise, especially within the contexts of 'cyber bullying' and 'acting like people who are famous,' were considered.

Following trialing of the activity and modification (6.3) the final game contained twenty-three cards which were split into four sections (Figure 6.7). Each card had the words 'I believe that...' on the reverse. Other than cards A and B being first, the others were all mixed and the next statement drawn at random from the pile.

#### *6.2.4 Recording*

Because of the child protection status of some of the Guides, no audio, video recording or photography was possible. Therefore, I devised a recording sheet, which could be used for each Guide. I was concerned about how easily I would be able to write down what was said, without missing salient information. This was something that I felt needed to be tested during a trial of the activity.

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<sup>452</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'Girls' Attitude Survey 2014', 7

<sup>453</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'Girls' Attitude Survey 2014', 10

<b>Icebreaker Statements to help the Guides relax and give them a chance to give an opinion in an easy way</b>	
<b>A</b>	I should receive an extra sweet
<b>B</b>	We shouldn't have sweets in this game
<b>C</b>	Everyone should receive an extra sweet
<b>D</b>	Sweets are bad for our teeth so we shouldn't have them in this game
<b>Statements based on the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale</b>	
1	Understanding what I believe is really important in my life
2	My beliefs help me when I have to make important decisions in my life
3	Developing my beliefs is really important to me
4	My beliefs help me to grow and mature as a person
5	My beliefs answer all my questions about life
6	My beliefs affect everything I do in my life
<b>Statements relating to Faith and Belief</b>	
7	God exists
8	When people die they go to heaven
9	Praying can make a difference
10	Evil exists
11	Having a faith can make a real difference in your life
<b>Statements relating to Morality and Ethics</b>	
12	People who are very ill should be allowed to die if they want to
13	Telling lies is alright if you don't get caught
14	Stealing is always wrong
15	Being rich is the most important thing in life
16	Cyber bullying is wrong
17	I should always try to act like people who are famous
18	You shouldn't have to go to school unless you want to
19	Parents should allow children to have whatever they want

**Figure 6.7 Statements used in the Focus Group Activity**

### 6.3 Trialing the Game

The activity was trialed with my own Guide unit as part of the programme on understanding the Guide Promise. This enabled it to be tested and statements checked for meaning and accuracy. It was successful and generated a lot of discussion and reflection and the sweets appreciated! As a result of this the following changes were made:

### *6.3.1 Answer Each Question*

Although the initial idea had been that not everyone needed to answer every statement, what happened, more often, was that each Guide wanted to contribute to the discussion, when it was not their turn to answer. Therefore, the game was modified, by removing the coloured dice, to allow each Guide to have the opportunity to contribute.

### *6.3.2 Dual Questions Removed*

Initially the statements based on the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale were asked twice (Figure 6.4). However, those Guides who answered both statements showed no difference in how they answered the statement and furthermore, recognised and commented that 'we've already answered this.' The Guides were also willing to express their own opinion even if it was different to everyone else. Moreover, more statements added to the length of the game. Therefore, for the work with the Focus Groups it was decided to only use the 'a' set of statements

### *6.3.3 Question Removed*

It was also noticed that the statement 'I believe that the universe was created by chance' became a discussion of whether they thought God existed or not. As the statement 'I believe that God exists' was already included and gave a wider ranging set of answers, it was decided to drop this question for the Focus Groups.

### *6.3.4 Record Sheet Redesigned*

Trying to record each answer on a separate sheet for each Guide was unwieldy, especially when the discussion was moving about. Redesigning the record sheet to be one sheet per question (Appendix H) made recording much easier. My concerns about keeping up with what was being said was also less

of a problem. The majority of Guides only answered in a short sentence, also most spoke more slowly as they thought through what they wanted to say.

#### **6.4 Conducting the Activity**

The activity was carried out over two Guide unit meetings in November /December 2015. 21 Guides were interviewed in four Focus Groups of 5-6 girls, with each group playing the game for 30 minutes.

##### *6.4.1 Confidentiality and Child Protection*

Appropriate permission had been gained from the University Ethics Committee, parents (Appendix I) and also from the Guides themselves (Appendix J). With children involved it was essential that in addition to confidentiality, appropriate child protection procedures were followed. I hold current Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks for both Guiding UK and The church in Wales. I have also been trained in Safeguarding by both organisations. Furthermore, all policies and procedures linked to these institutions and the University of Durham's ethics committee were followed. In addition, I hold an up-to-date Guiding First Aid Qualification.

All the Guide leaders were present in the room at the time. They held individual contact details for the parents/guardians of each Guide and the unit First Aid kit. However, to maintain confidentiality, they did not participate in the activity but were engaged with other groups of Guides. Moreover, as part of the risk assessment (Appendix K) consideration was given to how some statements, (for example, relating to prayer and bullying) could raise issues for individual Guides. Provision was made to direct a Guide towards an appropriate leader for support if needed.



Additionally, all information was recorded by writing notes, and a pseudonym used for each Guide. Furthermore, the data was grouped together in such a way that the identification of an individual is not possible

#### *6.4.2 Playing the Game*

The Guides sat round three sides of a rectangular table, positioned at one side of the room, out of hearing but in sight of the other Guides and leaders. I sat on the fourth side but slightly back from the table so I could position my clipboard out of their view.

The activity began with each Guide making themselves a name label, as I explained the purpose of the activity, using the explanation from the Guide consent form filled in previously (Appendix J). Guides were also given the opportunity to opt out now or at any time during the activity (no one chose to). The activity was explained, counters chosen, and the first 5 sweets given out. Each group then decided who would start. Two groups chose the youngest Guide, one group for whose birthday was nearest Christmas and the final group on whose name was last in the alphabet. Play then proceeded either clockwise or anticlockwise around the table. The game began and as each statement was selected, I found the appropriate recording sheet and filled it in.

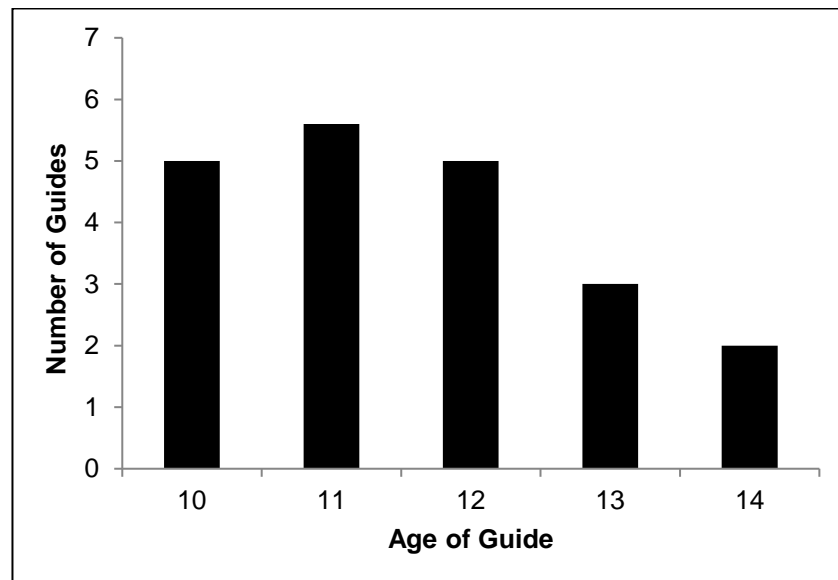
As part of the game each Guide had the right to opt out and could pass on answering any statement. Three girls chose to pass on answering their first statement, but thereafter responded to all others. Tina chose not to respond initially to the statement 'Parents should allow children to have whatever they want.' However, she did give a well-thought-out response, 'you wouldn't learn

how to look after things for when you have kids.’ when others had given their answer. Whether this was because listening to others gave her the confidence to respond, or she needed more time to reflect, was not possible to ascertain.

Very few of the answers that the Guides gave were a simple yes or no. Most girls gave a considered reply. They listened to what other Guides said and were willing to express their own opinion. Sometimes they would say they agreed with what another Guide had said, ‘I agree with Bryony. Telling lies is wrong. My mum always knows, and I get into trouble.’(Cerys) but like Cerys, generally added their own interpretation.

#### 6.4.3 Age Profile

Although the ages were recorded (Figure 6.8), there was no apparent difference in the answers given by older or younger Guides.



**Figure 6.8: Age Profile of Focus Groups**

Some of the youngest Guides gave very mature and reflected answers. whilst answers from a few older Guides answers did not reflect such a maturity of approach. For example, when discussing the statement 'having a faith can make a real difference in your life' Heidi, answered 'yes if you're religious. Anyone else who says there is not a God has to believe in what they come from.' Whilst Seren who is three years older commented 'yes, if you want to go to church.' Again, when discussing the statement 'God exists,' Darcey, suggested that God was 'definitely real [because] Jesus wouldn't have created one Father to pray to.' Much older Yvonne's answer of 'yes because of all the different types of fish' was very similar to other answers describing aspects of creation.

Such a finding concurred with Hay and Nye's observation that children's understanding of spiritual concepts is not related to age, rather whether they have the language to express it (2.13). Consequently, I did not divide the answers into age groups. Nevertheless, significant differences may have been apparent if research had been carried out in a different unit or with those of a different Guiding section, such as Brownies (7-10).

## **6.5 Analysis**

The notes made from the Focus Groups were typed up and the initial reactions collated (Figure 6.9). The responses from each of the Guides was then entered into NVivo. These were then coded, and the individual codes combined into different themes. From these, three overarching themes of 'decision making', 'change' and 'religious beliefs', became apparent, with each theme having a number of sub-themes linked to it.

	<b>Statements based on the Intrinsic Spirituality Scale</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Maybe</b>
1	Understanding what I believe is really important in my life	10	3	6
2	My beliefs help me when I have to make important decisions in my life	13	9	0
3	Developing my beliefs is really important to me	11	6	4
4	My beliefs help me to grow and mature as a person	9	10	1
5	My beliefs answer all my questions about life	0	11	10
6	My beliefs affect everything I do in my life	6	8	7
	<b>Statements relating to Faith and Belief</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Maybe</b>
7	God exists	11	8	2
8	When people die they go to heaven	12	4	5
9	Praying can make a difference	18	0	3
10	Evil exists	21	0	0
11	Having a faith can make a real difference in your life	17	0	4
	<b>Statements relating to Morality and Ethics</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Maybe</b>
12	People who are very ill should be allowed to die if they want to	13	2	6
13	Telling lies is alright if you don't get caught	0	19	2
14	Stealing is always wrong	19	2	0
15	Being rich is the most important thing in life	0	19	2
16	Cyber bullying is wrong	21	0	
17	I should always try to act like people who are famous	0	19	2
18	You shouldn't have to go to school unless you want to	2	0	19
19	Parents should allow children to have whatever they want	0	18	3

**Figure 6.9 Initial Reactions to Each Statement**

## 6.6 Decision Making

In all focus groups the statement 'my beliefs help me when I have to make important decisions in my life,' produced a lot of thoughtful discussion. For Vicky how she made decisions might vary 'because it depends on the decisions you

make.’ For others decision-making fitted into one of the three categories of: personal feeling, external influences, and moral/ethical values. Such approaches were also discernible as the Guides discussed other issues which the statements raised.

#### *6.6.1 Personal Feeling*

For Heidi decision making was about personal feeling ‘if you feel inside.’ Jeanette expanded this talking about how, ‘it is about how I think inside. If it makes me uncomfortable then maybe I won’t do that, or if I get exciting and happy then I want to do it.’ Bryony too talked about how she felt meant that ‘sometimes I keep my beliefs to myself and sometimes I let them out.’

Personal feelings were a strong factor in reasons for praying, ‘it can make you feel better’ (Kerry), ‘you get a warm feeling sometimes,’ (Cerys). For believing in Heaven, ‘when I feel sad about my gran...I can feel happy that she’s in Heaven,’ (Fiona).

The topic of cyber bullying gave rise to some passionate feelings. All the Guides were aware of it and knew of people who had been victims and the hurt it caused, ‘people shouldn’t have to suffer like that,’ (Abi) ‘it can make people feel worthless,’ (Zara). Kerry and Rebecca wanted to give examples but, recognised that they would be unable to do so and maintain the confidentiality of those involved.<sup>454</sup> The statement provided a brief opportunity to reflect on what they would do if they encountered such bullying. However, there was not time to look

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<sup>454</sup> I did check that the bullying in both cases had been reported to an appropriate adult, which it had, and in both cases had been resolved.

at the issue in the depth it needed. This is something I talked about later with the Guide leaders who would consider how to include it in the unit programme.

The challenge of dealing with cyberbullying for those in the Guide age group, is highlighted by Melanie Ackers.<sup>455</sup> It has also been recognised by the Guiding,<sup>456</sup> who issue guidelines of how to deal with it,<sup>457</sup> as well as addressing it through aspects of the programme.<sup>458</sup> Although how cyber bullying made people feel was a significant reason for the Guides to say it was wrong, both Tina and Olivia mentioned the influence of peer pressure as why people may become involved.

#### 6.6.2 External Factors

Guides recognised how peer pressure, along with other external factors such as family and friends can shape their decisions. Not only in what decision they made 'if someone says don't; then you might not but your friends might make you,' (Paula), but also the importance of thinking things through for themselves, rather than just accepting what was imposed on them by, parents, '...not just because my mum says so,' (Cerys), school, 'Mr Britten might be wrong,' (Nia) and society, 'people say things, but you need to decide if that's what's right,' (Rebecca).

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<sup>455</sup> Melanie Jane Ackers, 'Cyberbullying: through the eyes of children and young people', *Educational Psychology in Practice* 28, no.2 (2012), 141-157, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2012.665356> (6 January 2019)

<sup>456</sup> Hannah Stubbs, 'As a young woman in today's society, I found the findings in this year's Girls' Attitudes Survey shocking, but not surprising', *Girls need space to escape Cyber bullying*, Girlguiding UK (14 November 2015), <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/our-stories-and-news/blogs/girls-need-space-to-escape-cyberbullying/> (1 January 2018)

<sup>457</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'A Safe Cyberspace: Making the most of digital tools in guiding', (Girlguiding 2014), <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/safeguarding-and-risk/a-safe-cyberspace.pdf> (1 January 2018)

<sup>458</sup> For example, Girlguiding UK, 'Message Mayhem', *Guide Unit Meeting Activity Card: Be Well*, 2018

Celebrity influence around the statement 'I should always try to act like people who are famous' was part of that discussion. Whilst a 2009 survey that showed that 25% of young people saw those who were famous as a role model<sup>459</sup> this was not what any of the Guides felt, for 'you were born original' (Vicky) and 'you must be yourself' (Abi). Instead, some talked about the consequences of such decisions, for some famous people, 'could be nice but could be not' (Lowri) and you 'can upset your family if you act like someone who is a diva,' (Paula). Such answers were more in line Heather Mendick's 2018 study which showed that rather than always embracing fame, young people enact 'distinctions between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' celebrities.'<sup>460</sup> Thinking about the impact on others, links into the third area of decision making around moral and ethical values.

### 6.6.3 Moral and Ethical Values.

For Erica beliefs help you in decision making 'because you need to know if it is wrong.' The idea that we may draw on different values and factors when making decisions features in Lawrence Kohlberg's moral stages of development.<sup>461</sup> Many of the answers from the Focus Group would link into his Stage 3, where people want to live up to the expectations of those they respect, such as parents and friends, as well as concern and respect for others.<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Telegraph, 'Teenagers most influenced by celebrities: One in four teenagers admit they are more influenced by celebrities than people they know, according to a new survey', *The Telegraph*, 12 August 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/6012322/Teenagers-most-influenced-by-celebrities.html> (16 April 2014)

<sup>460</sup> Heather Mendick, et al., *Celebrity, Aspiration and Contemporary Youth: Education and Inequality in an Era of Austerity* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 162

<sup>461</sup> Lawrence Kohlberg, 'Moral stages and moralization: The cognitive-developmental approach', in Tom Lickona (ed.), *Moral development and behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), 34

<sup>462</sup> Kohlberg, 'Moral stages, 34

The impact on others drove the discussion around the statements 'telling lies is alright if you don't get caught,' 'stealing is always wrong' and 'being rich is the most important thing in life.'

The idea that it is 'ok if you tell a little white lie' (Heidi) was not something that the majority of Guides agreed with for, 'you shouldn't lie in the first place, it's not very nice' (Lowri) and 'when you're, older people won't believe you if you tell lies' (Darcey). However, 'you need to tell the truth, but you can do it in a nice way,' (Zara) was a recognition that how we say something to others is just as important.

There was no hesitation for most Guides in stating that stealing was wrong. Although affirming that it would generally be wrong, Gemma and Abi both mentioned situations, where if that was the only possible way of getting food or medicine for someone, it may not be. This caused some debate in the groups they were part of, with Guides deciding it was still wrong, but 'sometimes it is better to do something wrong then sort it out later...like getting on a train without paying, so you can keep safe,'(Tina).

The idea that money did not necessarily equate to happiness was a strong theme. Being rich is 'not the most important thing' (Abi), 'I'd rather be poor and happy than rich and miserable.' (Jeanette). Such thinking was developed by other Guides who contrasted it with the poverty of those who are homeless. 'Better to be poor even if you don't have everything...those living on the streets are better people; homeless people are nicer than richer people' (Melanie). 'I agree with Bryony, 'homeless people have just made mistakes in their life,'



(Lowri). However, others also felt that money was not all bad, for it is 'better to have a lot sometimes; you appreciate more.' (Yvonne). Erica also mentioned how her ideas about money had changed, 'when I was little, I wanted to be rich, now I know that somethings are more important than money.' The idea beliefs change is second main theme identified.

## **6.7 Change**

All the Guides recognised that beliefs do not stay static and the notion that 'some beliefs you grow out of, like I don't get any money from the tooth fairy,' (Melanie) or the 'Easter Bunny' (Cerys), was behind Nia's thinking that if your beliefs did not change then 'everything would be a bit over the top-you need grow up and mature from it, like Santa.'

However, not all the Guides felt comfortable with the idea that exploring their beliefs might lead to change. Melanie's reaction to developing her beliefs was a very cautious 'maybe. My beliefs are my beliefs.' In contrast Paula, felt that 'it [your belief] doesn't have to affect all your life, because you get to know what is important as you get older.' She like 52% of the Guides welcomed the idea of exploring their beliefs further. Kerry recognised that 'I've still got things to learn.' Whilst for others changing their beliefs was part of 'helping me to grow and be better' (Bryony) or to 'learn about other people and what they believe in,' (Paula).

Thinking about change also led Guides into discussing how some beliefs don't change as they are part of wider traditions, like 'you open presents on 25<sup>th</sup> December,' (Seren), 'sing Happy Birthday' (Fiona) or more personal ones; 'we

always light a candle on my nan's birthday to remember her and I want to do it when I get old.' (Gemma).

There was also a recognition that circumstances might lead to change. The idea of euthanasia ('people who are very ill should be allowed to die if they want to') met with a positive response from 62% of the Guides. Some felt that if someone is very ill there is 'not much point in going on and they might die anyway' (Fiona). However, those who were not sure were more cautious suggesting that 'some people do get better' (Abi) and 'you might want to change your mind if you have a good day' (Olivia). Whilst Bryony gave a firm no and said, 'I don't think God would like it.' This leads on to third theme, that of Religious Beliefs.

### **6.8 Religious Beliefs.**

Whilst the rest were not sure, 81% of the Guides felt that having a religious faith can make a real difference in your life. This was because of instruction, 'it might stop you doing things' (Paula), guidance 'show you what to do' (Abi) or support 'help you when someone is being nasty to you' (Darcey).

Notwithstanding, only 3 Guides, considered themselves part of a religious faith. This was Christianity, through belonging to a church or church youth group. However, their answers did not necessarily reflect a personal faith. As Tina said, 'I don't believe in God, but I haven't told my dad yet. I like the games we do in our [church] group and we get chocolate cake sometimes.' In contrast Darcey, who professed not to have a church link brought an understanding of Christian doctrine and beliefs, including 'if [you're] bad you go to the other

place-hell.’ She also talked about ‘God as Father’ in some of her answers. Whether this was something she had learnt from her family, or within a church or school context was not appropriate to ascertain.

Other Guides also brought their understanding of different religious practices into their answers, learnt from school, ‘Muslims wash before praying and always will,’ (Jeanette), ‘Buddhists meditate every day,’ (Gemma) or personal experience, ‘my Aunt always says a prayer before she eats, even at the ‘Red Lion’ and when we were at Andrew’s wedding,’ (Cerys). Although 86% of Guides did not profess a personal faith it did not mean that they did not believe in God or engage with elements of faith, such as prayer.

#### *6.8.1 God Exists*

Of the 52% of Guides who acknowledged the existence of God, 43% pointed to their belief in God as the creator; ‘we wouldn’t really be here’ (Cerys), ‘there wouldn’t be this planet earth,’ (Heidi), ‘all the different types of trees, plants and animals’, (Vicky) and ‘the stars, there’s billions and billions of them,’ (Melanie). If time had permitted, we could have had a much longer discussion on creation including, what it said about God, ‘when I look at how everything fits together [in a bee] I think God must be amazing’ (Vicky) and human interaction with it ‘I wonder how God feels...about pollution,’ (Lowri).

For Bryony God’s existence was reflected in the creation of humans ‘because otherwise we wouldn’t have had a good nature’ whilst Darcey reflected that God was ‘definitely real [because] Jesus wouldn’t have created one Father to pray to.’

Some of the 38% who said they did not believe in God considered the state of the world today especially wars, murder and suffering, as proof, 'If there was a God then we would not have cancer' (Seren). Such examples and more local problems, 'when people sell drugs' (Zara), 'set cars on fire in 'First Avenue' like they did last week' (Cerys), were also cited as illustrations of evil. Something which the Guides unanimously agreed existed. At the same time, such suffering was also a stimulus for prayer.

#### *6.8.2 Praying Can Make a Difference*

Praying made a difference to 86% of the Guides. For the majority prayer was something you did in times of crisis. Some talked about how it made them feel, while others cited particular examples of praying 'when my Taid [Welsh for grandfather] was in hospital' (Olivia), or 'I ask for help when I haven't done my maths homework' (Rebecca). Those that were less sure of the effectiveness of prayer talked of when prayer had not worked, 'my parents still split up,' (Heidi), 'it didn't stop the cancer' (Abi). As only 52% of Guides said they believed in God. This raises the questions, to whom or what do they think they are praying and what do they think happens when you pray? Something I explore more at the end of this chapter.

### **6.9 Limitations and Problems**

Three main limitations were recognised when reflecting on the Focus Group interviews.

### *6.9.1 Type of Activity*

Firstly, it was appreciated that the activity would not necessarily suit all personality types and learning styles, especially for those Guides who prefer more time reflect or find articulating their ideas within a group more difficult.

Nevertheless, the Guides did engage fully with the activity and their responses indicate a willingness to articulate their beliefs and reflect on them. Part of this may have been the strength of the Guide Patrol system and the leadership of the unit. Members of Summerhill Guides were used to working in those small groups. They knew each other and were used to sharing ideas and having their thoughts respected. In other units such a sharing of ideas maybe harder depending on the personalities of individual Guides and how the unit programme is lead.

Although the Guides engaged fully with all the statements, they are not all necessary and having fewer questions would allow more time for discussion. I would remove questions 1, 5 and 6, 'Understanding what I believe is really important in my life,' 'My beliefs answer all my questions about life' and 'My beliefs affect everything I do in my life.' As the initial results show (Figure 6.) the number of 'maybe' answers coupled with the discussion indicated that the Guides found these more difficult to understand and apply to their lives.

In hindsight a different set of spirituality questions may have more accessible. Exploration of newer scales and more child centred ones may provide questions which all the Guides would understand. Nevertheless, as the analysis showed the Guides did engage with them.

Although questions 18 and 19, 'You shouldn't have to go to school unless you want to' and 'parents should allow children to have whatever they want' do not have the same depth as other ethical/moral questions they were ones which each Guide found it easy to express an opinion on. Also, like questions ABCD relating to sweets, they were closed questions and injected a level of humour into what, were some very serious and in-depth reflections.

### *6.9.2 Time*

Secondly, the time per group was limited. I was conscious of moving the game on, when a much greater depth of discussion could easily have occurred around most statements, in particular 'My beliefs help me to make important decisions in my life' or those relating to prayer and the existence of God. In different circumstances I could see one statement being discussed for most of a unit meeting. However, although interesting, this would not necessarily have been relevant in answering the research questions, and therefore not an appropriate use of time. Furthermore, by keeping the game moving those Guides who found concentration more difficult were kept engaged.

### *6.9.3 Tensions*

Finally, I was conscious of the tension between my roles as researcher, Guide leader and vicar. Tension which I had anticipated and reflected on earlier (3.4.3). There were times as the Guides talked that I was aware of stopping myself from being drawn into discussions, which would have been appropriate if I had been there in my capacity as vicar or a Guide leader. Especially, when the Guides asked me what I thought about issues including euthanasia, and heaven, or even whether I should get a sweet. (They decided as I had not

answered the question I should not!). Nevertheless, I was aware of issues, and felt able to maintain the appropriate boundaries, and the Guides did not appear to have a problem with it.

#### *6.9.4 Recording Method*

One of the main criticisms that could be levelled was my choice of recording method. In other circumstances to have been able to record what the Guides said and transcribed it later would have been ideal. One solution would have been to use second observer so we could have divided the recording between us. However, as well as the issue of safeguarding, another person could have changed the dynamics of the relationship I had already established, during Participant Observation visits to the unit.

Nevertheless, by writing notes of what each Guide said, it was not possible to record verbatim everything that went on. I recognise that there were times when I was choosing what appeared to be the salient thought in what was said. Especially if the discussion moved around the group. I was aware that unconscious bias could have led me to record some things rather than others or lend more weight to them. Furthermore, in concentrating on writing down what someone said I may have missed body language that could have elucidated a point or alert me to an underlying group dynamic.

However, being aware of these problems help limit the impact. The majority answers, as when trialling the activity, were short and easy to record and I soon developed my own shorthand for frequently used words (eg thk=think, f=feel, crtn=creation, P=prayer, F=faith, G=God)

## 6.10 Conclusions

In carrying out the Focus Group study, I have identified four aspects that deserve greater attention and that raise specific questions.

### 6.10.1 'Generation Z' and No Religion

In the literature review I looked at the impact of Generation Y (2.7.4). The Guides are part of 'Generation Z,' those born from 1995 onwards, who Caelainn Barr characterised as 'gender fluid, hyper stressed, politically engaged, connected but lonely.'<sup>463</sup> A generation, Matt Kleinschmit argues, of tech-savvy entrepreneurs who are likely to spend at least 15 hours a week on their smartphones and who want to be contributors rather than consumers to the world they are part of.<sup>464</sup>

They live in a time where the internet and social media not only bring the issues of the world closer and help break down barriers, but also convey new challenges. For example, the divide between what is appropriate for different age groups is harder to maintain. This is particularly noticeable with the rise in playing 'sexually explicit music lyrics and the use of expletives.'<sup>465</sup>

Furthermore, in the latest Guiding 'Girls' Attitude Survey,' compared to ten years ago happiness has decreased from 41% to 25%; 64% rather than 50% know someone who has experienced an anxiety disorder and 59% say social

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<sup>463</sup> Caelainn Barr, 'Who are Generation Z? The latest data on today's teens', *The Guardian*, 10 December 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/dec/10/generation-z-latest-data-teens> (13 January 2019)

<sup>464</sup> Matt Kleinschmit, 'Generation Z Characteristics: 5 Infographics on the Gen Z Lifestyle', *Vision Critical*, 29 April 2019, <https://www.visioncritical.com/blog/generation-z-infographics> (17 June 2019)

<sup>465</sup> White, *Meet Generation Z*, 57



media is a main cause of stress.<sup>466</sup> This is the disturbing reality of the society the Guides are growing up in.

At the same time as having to cope with such pressures and expectations the Guides are also living, as James White notes, in a time where an increasing number of people are willing to characterise themselves as having ‘no religion’ or ‘nones,’<sup>467</sup> as he calls them.

### 6.10.2 No Religion

The growth in ‘no religion’ is something that I highlighted earlier (2.7.3) and has been explored by Woodhead in greater detail.<sup>468</sup> Her work, like the majority of research in this area, focused on adults. Aware of this gap,<sup>469</sup> Nicola Madge and Peter Hemming focused their research on 10,000 British young people of secondary school age. 20% of them identified as having no-religion<sup>470</sup> what this meant Madge and Hemming found, was more complex.<sup>471</sup>

Identification as no-religion, did not necessarily mean being an atheist or agnostic. It could mean that a young person felt that to identify as religious ‘you had to accept every belief attaining to the faith in question,’<sup>472</sup> or they had taken

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<sup>466</sup> Girlguiding UK, ‘We see the Big Picture: Girls’ Attitude Survey 2018’, 19-20 <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2018.pdf> (17 April 2019)

<sup>467</sup> White, *Meet Generation Z*, 11

<sup>468</sup> Linda Woodhead, ‘The rise of ‘no religion’ in Britain: The emergence of a new cultural majority’, *Journal of the British Academy* 4 (2016), 245–61, <https://doi.org/10.5871/jba/004.245> (17 April 2019)

<sup>469</sup> Nicola Madge, and Peter J. Hemming, ‘Young British religious ‘nones’: findings from the Youth On Religion study’, *Journal of Youth Studies* 20, no.7 (2017), 874, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2016.1273518> (17 April 2019)

<sup>470</sup> Madge, and Hemming, ‘religious ‘nones’, 877

<sup>471</sup> ‘religious ‘nones’, 890

<sup>472</sup> ‘religious ‘nones’, 875

up an issue on a position such as homosexuality which caused a clash between their personal values and religious ideology.<sup>473</sup>

For others though, it was not about whether they believed in God; it was more that God was irrelevant to them. Such a position is one which many of the Guides may have agreed with. They were not anti-religion or even uninterested, it was more that religion did not hold a place in most of their lives or the lives of their families and friends. This may bring about a new challenge for the church, for the challenge, as White postulates, is no longer about secularism for ‘the heart of secularism is a *functional* atheism. Rather than rejecting the idea of God, our culture simply ignores him.’<sup>474</sup>

Nevertheless, although in their day-to-day life spirituality may have little space, the Guides were willing to explore what it may mean, and from their response’s aspects of it, such as prayer, still had a part in their lives. This concurs with Madge and Hemming’s findings who noted that a number of those who professed no belief in God, attended services, read scriptures and prayed.<sup>475</sup>

### *6.10.3 Prayer*

Although, 86% of the Guides felt that praying made a difference, only 52% of them said they believed in God. This raised the questions, to whom or to what did they think they were praying and what did they think happened when you pray? This was an issue also identified by Spencer,

Given the fact that respondents’ ideas about prayer were confused and the God to whom prayer was directed was at best unfamiliar and at

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<sup>473</sup> ‘religious ‘nones’, 875

<sup>474</sup> White, *Meet Generation Z*, 20

<sup>475</sup> Madge, and Hemming, ‘religious ‘nones’, 881

worst highly dubious, there was a surprising amount of 'prayer' going on. Respondents' concepts of prayer, however, were often either hazy or limited to the petition or the cry of desperation.<sup>476</sup>

What difference it made to individual Guides when they prayed and how to help them engage with prayer in a meaningful way is something for further exploration. The importance of spirituality and its link to wellbeing in children is an ongoing research interest for John Fisher<sup>477</sup> and Leslie Francis, especially its relationship with prayer,<sup>478</sup> and may provide further insights in the future.

#### *6.10.4 Ability to Reflect*

The Guides were willing to think deeply about the issues and explore what they thought and felt. Such thinking goes against stage models of spirituality, I highlighted before, (2.12.1) where 'children have generally been seen as developmentally immature, without sufficient intellectual growth to manifest anything that might be understood as meaningfully reflective and/or spiritual.'<sup>479</sup> Instead as T. Hart and others have shown it is part of their lives and given the opportunity and an appropriate environment, they are able to express it. Nye too talks about not under estimating children's actions, what they do may have a far greater spiritual content and direction than what it appears.<sup>480</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Spencer, *Beyond the Fringe*, 182

<sup>477</sup> For example, John Fisher, 'Feeling Good, Living Life: A Spiritual Health Measure for Young Children', *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 25, no.3 (2004), 307–315, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1361767042000306121>

<sup>478</sup> Leslie J. Francis et al., Modelling the effect of worship attendance and personal prayer on spiritual well-being among 9- to 11-year-old students attending Anglican Church schools in Wales,' *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 23, no.1, 2018, 43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2017.1419938> (7 February 2019).

<sup>479</sup> T. Hart, 'Spiritual experiences and capacities of children and youth', in Roehlkepartan, *The handbook of spiritual development*, 163,

<sup>480</sup> Rebecca Nye, 'Spirituality' in Anne Richards, and Peter Privett, (eds.) *Through the eyes of a child: New insights in theology from a child's perspective*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2009), 74

However, as Hay and Nye identified there is a 'social taboo on speaking about spirituality'<sup>481</sup> that children quickly learn. The opportunity that Guiding provides through the spiritual dimension of the Promise is the opportunity to explore their beliefs within a safe environment.

### **6.11 Summary**

In answer to the research question, '*How can the spiritual dimension of the Promise be used to facilitate mission and ministry?*' I have shown from Focus Group activity, that it would be possible to use the Promise to generate discussion among Guides. The Guides were interested in looking at their beliefs and motivated to discuss their thinking and would have taken it further if the opportunity had allowed. This is set within the culture of 'Generation Z' with the challenges they face today, the lack of direction that a growth in no-religion indicates and the spiritual connection that many of them make through prayer.

However, although this may be true of Summerhill Guides how does this relate to the wider Guiding context? What type of relationship do other churches and Units have? Would they be open to further involvement with a church?

The following chapter explains the Survey and analysis of the results from Guiding leaders across the UK. In its conclusion it highlights the importance of leaders being made to feel wanted, a positive relationship with clergy, child friendly services and support with the Promise, within the bounds of the Guiding ethos.

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<sup>481</sup> David Hay & Rebecca Nye, *The Spirit of the Child: Revised edition*, (London, Jessica Kinsley, 2006), 132

## **Chapter 7**                      **Online Survey**

*We would quite happily clean the church, help with coffee mornings etc but we've been made to feel unwelcome at church & are never invited. Even on Remembrance Sunday service we all have to sit on the floor there is no room for us.<sup>482</sup>*

In the previous two chapters I showed that members of Holy Trinity church and leaders of Summerhill Guides were interested in using the spiritual dimension of the Promise to develop their relationship and that the Guides themselves were open to the opportunity of exploring their beliefs.

Whilst still asking, 'what is going on?' this chapter continues the interpretive task of asking 'why is it going on?' In this chapter I reveal the results of Online Survey. This sought to provide a wider context in which the results from the Participant Observation can be seen in relation to the research questions:

- i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Guiding Units?*
- ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Guiding Units be developed?*

The chapter begins with the rationale for using an online Survey (7.1) prior to describing the five stages of its development and launch (7.2). An initial overview of the results highlights some of the issues, especially the lack of responses from church leaders (7.3). The quantitative data and themes from NVivo are combined to provide a thematic analysis of the results (7.4, 7.5) and significant findings noted. The chapter concludes by drawing together themes of 'The involvement of church leaders' and the 'Espoused belief and operative belief of Guiding leaders,' (7.6), before summarising how the findings of the

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<sup>482</sup> Rainbow/Brownie Leader-Anglican Church-Scotland

Survey relate to the research questions and form the basis of the Theological Reflection.

## 7.1 Online Survey Rationale

An online survey was chosen rather than the paper-based approach used in the Pilot Study (Chapter 4). The use of online research techniques, particularly surveys was a growing field<sup>483</sup> and one which as Kevin Wright<sup>484</sup> and Bryman<sup>485</sup> pointed out had an increasing number of advantages, especially in relation to time, potential pool of people, cost and ease of data analysis; aspects which Sue and Ritter looked at in greater detail.<sup>486</sup>

Nevertheless, there were limitations. I recognised that using an online survey would exclude some people who did not access the internet and secondly, 'there is a tendency of some individuals to respond to an invitation to participate in an online survey, while others ignore it, leading to a systematic bias.'<sup>487</sup> Nonetheless, the number of potential responders, combined with the increased cost of postage made an online survey, in this context, very attractive.

## 7.2 Development of the Survey

There were five phases in the development of the Survey

- 1) Choice of Survey Tool
- 2) Design of Survey

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<sup>483</sup> Uwe Flick, *Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project* (London: Sage Publications, 2011), 165-178

<sup>484</sup> Kevin B. Wright, 'Researching Internet-Based Populations: Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Survey Research, Online Questionnaire Authoring Software Packages, and Web Survey Services', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 10, no.3 (2005), [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2005.tb00259.x/full?utm\\_source](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2005.tb00259.x/full?utm_source) (14 January 2015)

<sup>485</sup> Bryman, *Social Research*, 671

<sup>486</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 14-31

<sup>487</sup> Wright, 'Researching Internet-Based Populations', Other Sampling Concerns

- 3) Recruitment of Participants
- 4) Survey Testing
- 5) Survey Launch

### *7.2.1 Choice of Survey Tool*

Online surveys were regularly used within church and Guiding contexts. In these cases, 'SurveyMonkey<sup>488</sup>' was the preferred tool. Although a range of possibilities including Survey Gizmo,<sup>489</sup> and Bristol Online Surveys,<sup>490</sup> were explored, I decided on SurveyMonkey. It was simple to use and had security protocols built in. Furthermore, it was compatible with different devices and social media platforms. Having become familiar with SurveyMonkey, I then decided on the type of Survey I wanted.

### *7.2.2 Design of Survey*

The Survey was designed around the information needed in order to answer the research questions. Although, closed questions can limit the range of responses,<sup>491</sup> I initially chose a 'closed questionnaire' as it would allow, more easily, the analysis of a larger number of responses. However, after a trial with some 'test respondents'<sup>492</sup> I decided that an opportunity to add further comments at the end of each question should be built in. This proved worthwhile as, although adding to the time taken to analyse data, the additional comments provided valuable information.

The final Survey (Appendix N) comprised 19 questions with data from the Pilot Study used in its construction. Most questions allowed participants to register more than one answer and make additional comments. Other than initial

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<sup>488</sup> SurveyMonkey, [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) (15 April 2014)

<sup>489</sup> Survey Gizmo, [www.surveygizmo.com](http://www.surveygizmo.com) (15 April 2014)

<sup>490</sup> Bristol Online Surveys, [www.survey.bris.ac.uk](http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk) (15 April 2014)

<sup>491</sup> Bryman, *Social Research*, 249-250

<sup>492</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 130

consent, further questions did not insist on an answer. This took the risk that some participants would skip the questions. However, although some people failed to answer all of the questions, only 1 respondent skipped the majority, and their results were excluded from the analysis.

The Survey began with the necessary participant information and consent. To continue with the Survey, it was necessary to acknowledge that the information had been read and consent given. Only one person did not give their consent, which ended their involvement.

Questions 1-8 related to finding out information about the participant and the church and Unit they related to. Questions 9-16 looked at the existing links that Units and churches had, whilst questions 17-18 asked about what further links, they would find helpful. Question 19 finished the Survey with a thank you and an opportunity for participants to make additional comments.

### *7.2.3 Recruitment of Recipients*

In order to maximise the pool of recipients, enquiries were made about sending emails to all Guiding UK members and those listed on Anglican Diocesan or Methodist Circuit data bases. With over 100,000 adult Guiding Volunteers,<sup>493</sup> 27000 Ordained Anglican clergy in the UK,<sup>494</sup> 1600 Methodist Ministers,<sup>495</sup> as

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<sup>493</sup> Girlguiding UK, *Being our Best in 2015: Girlguiding's Annual Report and Financial Statements: For the Year ending 31 December 2015*, 3, <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/quality-and-compliance/girlguiding-annual-report-2015.pdf> (10 January 2016)

<sup>494</sup> Church of England, 'Crockfords Clerical Directory', <https://www.crockford.org.uk/> (9 December 2015)

<sup>495</sup> Methodist Church, 'Methodism in numbers: Statistics at a glance', [http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2767/methodism\\_in\\_numbers\\_2015.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2767/methodism_in_numbers_2015.pdf) (9 December 2015)



well as Senior church leaders<sup>496</sup> in other denominations. The potential pool of respondents was in excess of 130,000. However, the necessary permissions were not forthcoming. After reflection I decided to use personal email contacts. Limitations were recognised, especially as this could have resulted in more extensive 'coverage bias,'<sup>497</sup> with sample size becoming less representative.

Nevertheless, I had a range of potential contacts. Additionally, the relationship already established with these individuals was likely to produce a higher level of participation as 'branding of the invitation and personalization to respondents can create credibility for the survey and increase response.'<sup>498</sup> Once constructed a link to the Survey along with an explanation was emailed to my selected contacts of 28 Senior church leaders (of 7 different denominations) and 31 Guiding leaders across England and Wales (Figure 7.1).

A 'snowball technique'<sup>499</sup> was then employed by asking recipients to complete the Survey and pass it on to anyone they thought would help. It was not possible to calculate the number of potential responders for as Bryman pointed out 'when participants are recruited through invitations and postings...the size of the population of which they are a sample is almost impossible to determine.'<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> For the purpose of this research a Senior Church Leader is recognised to have or share the responsibility for leading a Church, eg. Vicar, Minister, Pastor

<sup>497</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 45

<sup>498</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 108

<sup>499</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 45

<sup>500</sup> Bryman, *Social Research*, 675

<b>Guiding Country /Region</b>	<b>Clergy Leaders emailed</b>	<b>Denomination of Clergy Leaders</b>	<b>Guiding Leaders emailed</b>
South West	3	1 Anglican 1 URC 1 Methodist	5
Anglia	2	2 Anglican	2
North West	4	2 Anglican 1 Methodist 1 Catholic	5
North East	4	2 Anglican 1 Methodist 1 Catholic	1
Midlands	4	2 Anglican 1 Baptist 1 Free Church	5
Scotland	0	-	0
South East	4	1 Anglican 1 URC 1 Methodist 1 Baptist	4
Northern Ireland	0	-	0
Wales	5	2 Anglican 1 Salvation Army 2 Free Church	9
<b>Total</b>	26		31

**Figure 7.1: Details of Personal Contacts Emailed with Survey Link**

Of the 59 initial email contacts 56 people responded within 24hrs and 2 more responded within a week. Their responses illustrated a range of recipients and the type of recruitment techniques they employed (Figure 7.2).

'I have forwarded your email to a couple of friends whose girls have gone through Brownies/Guides & they have forwarded it on to the Vicars.' (Abigail-Free church leader- South Wales.)

'Here is the Email from The Revd. Paulette Gower and I know how grateful she would be if you could spare the time to follow the link she gives and complete her Questionnaire. Thanks, in anticipation'. (Daniel -Methodist Minister - Kent),

'Will look at the survey and also pass the link on to the brown owl and rainbow leaders in our Church'. (Diane- URC Elder - Surrey).

'I have been in touch with the Bailiwick Commissioner for Guiding Guernsey, who will transmit your request to all Units in the Bailiwick.' (Alice -Anglican Minister- Guernsey).

'I was thinking the best way to get this out would be via the pin board is that okay? then hopefully those to whom it can apply.' (Adrian- Evangelical church-South Wales).

'Done and I've shared this onto the closed [Facebook] group for leaders within the church my Unit is attached to.' (Eve -Guiding Commissioner- Shropshire)

'I have also forwarded your email to my Rainbow colleague, and to our Anglican Rector, who is a Guiding Ambassador for the Units meeting at his church.' (Ann- Guiding leader- Durham)

**Figure 7.2: Range of Replies from Initial Email Asking for Help with the Survey**

#### *7.2.4 Survey Testing*

Before the Survey launch three additional 'test respondents' were recruited.

They firstly read the proposed emails checking, not only for written errors, but also whether the wording could prejudice answers from one particular group.

Secondly, they completed the Survey to check that it worked, highlighted any areas where the question wording could be ambiguous and made suggestions for other improvements. The only change made was to list the Channel Islands separately as they are not part of the UK.<sup>501</sup>

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<sup>501</sup> The Channel Islands (CI) are part of Great Britain rather than the UK.

### 7.2.5 *Survey Launch*

The Survey was launched on Wednesday 10 February 2016. A Wednesday was chosen as being one of the two optimal days for people to read emails (the other being a Tuesday).<sup>502</sup> Within 24 hours over 200 people had completed it and a debate on a closed Facebook page underway.<sup>503</sup>

### 7.2.6 *Pattern of Response and Decay*

The concentration of responses and social media activity occurred in the first few days, with 136 of the responses logged between 4pm and 6pm on Thursday 11 February 2016, rather than spread out over a longer period. This was not anticipated but fits in with the way social media operates. Such 'temporal patterns by which online content grows and fades over time'<sup>504</sup> is something Jaewon Yang and Jure Leskovec have explored through the construction of mathematical models.<sup>505</sup>

Exactly what the time frame for this would have been was not possible to predict. However, with such a quick decay of interest, the question needs to be asked whether a staggered release of the Survey or a number of reminders to the initial contacts would have increased the response rate by keeping it trending longer.

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<sup>502</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 132

<sup>503</sup> The debate I was told lasted 48rs and was only accessible to leaders in one Girlguiding County.

<sup>504</sup> Jaewon Yang, and Jure Leskovec 'Patterns of Temporal Variation in Online Media', Paper Presented at the WSDM 2011 proceedings of the *International Conference on Web Search and Data Mining* (WSDM), [InfoLab.http://ilpubs.stanford.edu:8090/984/1/paper-memeshapes.pdf](http://ilpubs.stanford.edu:8090/984/1/paper-memeshapes.pdf) (13 January 2018)

<sup>505</sup> Yang, and Jure, 'Patterns of Temporal Variation' 4-9

### **7.3 Analysis**

By 22 March 258 Surveys had been completed and initial analysis taking place.

The link was kept open and two 2 additional Surveys were received in May and September. Both were incomplete, and the results not used.

The analysis was carried out in 4 stages:

#### **Stage 1: Initial Analysis**

Data was analysed using SurveyMonkey tools and the results downloaded to Microsoft Excel (2007) for additional analysis.

#### **Stage 2: Examination of data**

The number, type and geographical location of the responses were examined, and potential issues and areas of significance highlighted.

#### **Stage 3: NVivo Coding**

Comments from the Survey were entered into NVivo where they were coded before grouping into preliminary themes.

#### **Stage 4: Thematic Analysis**

The data was looked at through the lens of the research questions and the themes refined.

#### *7.3.1 Lack of Clergy Respondents*

Initial screening of the results highlighted that only 16 of the respondents were church leaders. Moreover, only 7 of these were not also Guiding leaders. Additionally, all church members who responded were also Guiding leaders. This meant that 97% of respondents were Guiding leaders. Furthermore, of the 28 church leaders originally emailed none were Guiding leaders and only 3 were female. However, as these women said they had completed the Survey it suggested that a maximum of 4 male church leaders had.

With such a high percentage of Guiding leaders the data would be skewed, and I needed to decide how to proceed. My initial reaction was that this showed a

flaw in the recruitment process and if I made some simple changes then more church leaders, especially men would respond. I firstly considered a follow up email to the church leaders for 'one follow-up message sent about a week after the initial e-mail invitation is optimal; a second reminder will increase response rate marginally.'<sup>506</sup>

However, all the church leaders had emailed back to say they would pass on the information. Adam's email, 'As you know we don't have any guides here so I assume you don't want me to fill it in but I will pass on to the church of the Ascension that has Rainbows at least,' (Adam-Anglican Vicar-Hampshire), suggested that those I had emailed had not felt find it relevant, rather than not wanting to complete it.

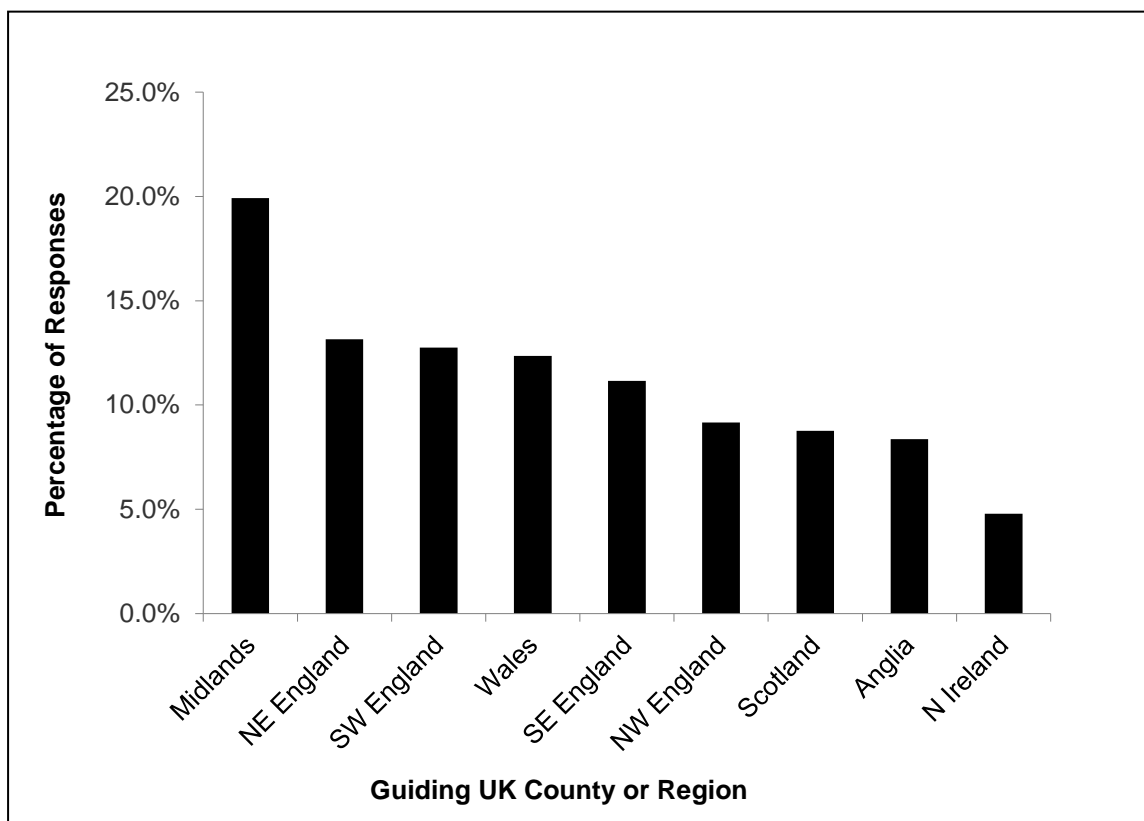
After further reflection, including a discussion with academic colleagues, and taking the result from Pilot Study into consideration, (4.5.3) I decided that within the time frame of this thesis I was unlikely to gain enough additional church leader respondents to be able to draw comparisons. Nonetheless, the Survey responses provided rich data to answer the research questions from the Guiding perspective. Therefore, the results from this chapter concentrated on the responses from Guiding leaders.

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<sup>506</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 132

### 7.3.2 Response Rate

Responses were obtained from all 9 UK Guiding Regions and Countries including the Channel Islands<sup>507</sup> (Figure 7.3), with 0.3% of UK Guiding leaders taking part (Figure 7.4) representing a total of 490 Rainbow, Brownie Guide and Senior Section Units.<sup>508</sup>



**Figure 7.3: Percentage of Responses From Each Guiding UK Country And Region**

Taking the minimum recommended numbers per unit<sup>509</sup> then the Survey represented an estimated 5250 girls. With 68% of these meeting on church premises this gave churches potential contact with over 3500 girls on a regular

<sup>507</sup> The Channel Islands were at the time included in the Anglican Diocese of Winchester and are in the Girlguiding UK South West Region and were therefore added to the SW England data.

<sup>508</sup> 100 Rainbow Units, 141 Brownie Units, 159 Guide Units and 90 Senior Section Units.

<sup>509</sup> Unit recommended numbers are Rainbows 12-18, Brownies, 12-24, Guides 12-36, Senior Section 5+: Girlguiding UK, 'meetings in your usual Meeting Place', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/running-your-unit/safeguarding-and-risk/adult-to-child-ratios/> (9 December 2017)

basis. This can only be a very rough estimate as more accurate figures would have been obtainable if Unit size had been included as part of the Survey. It had not been included originally as it was something that church leaders are unlikely to have known.

<b>Guiding Country /Region</b>	<b>Number of Adult leaders from 2016 Guiding Census<sup>510</sup></b>	<b>% of UK Adult leaders</b>	<b>% of Survey Responses</b>
South West	16000	17.3	12.4
Anglia	15300	16.5	8.4
North West	13300	14.4	9.2
North East	12200	13.2	13.1
Midlands	12000	13.0	19.7
Scotland	11800	12.7	8.8
South East	7800	8.4	11.2
Northern Ireland	2200	2.4	4.8
Wales	2000	2.2	12.4
<b>Total</b>	92600	100%	0.3%

**Figure 7.4: Table Showing How the Percentage of Survey Responses from Each UK Guiding Country/Region Compares to the Number of Guiding Leaders in that Area.**

The higher percentage of responses from Wales could be because as in my role as a Guiding Wales trainer, I was known by more members. This could be an example of cognitive dissonance, for despite a naturally helpful disposition some respondent's inclination would have been to ignore the Survey.<sup>511</sup> However because it was to help me, this motivated some Guiding leaders to overcome their reluctance, 'as it's you of course I will fill it in.'<sup>512</sup> This did not

<sup>510</sup> Several regions submitted adult membership numbers rounded to nearest 100. For consistency all membership data has been rounded to nearest 100.

<sup>511</sup> Sue, and Ritter, *Conducting Online Surveys*, 134-135

<sup>512</sup> Email from Michelle- Brownie Leader-Wales, 10 February 2016



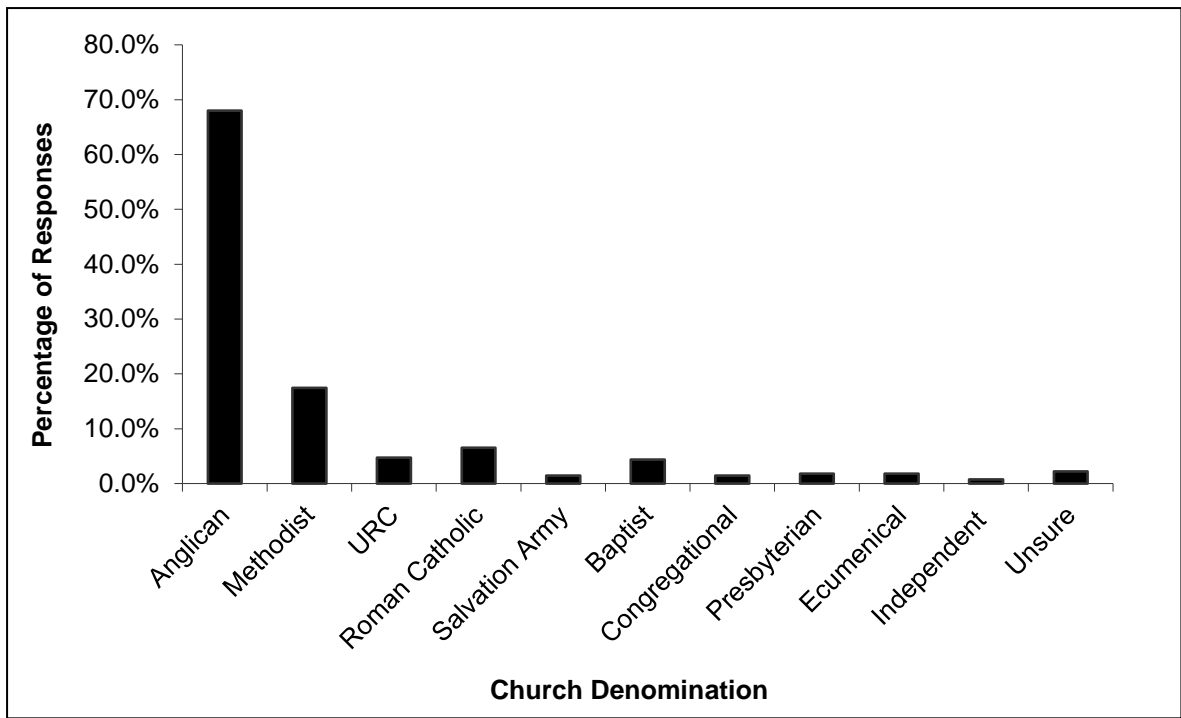
pose a problem as getting a similar proportion of respondents from each Guiding county and region was not necessary.

## **7.4 Existing Relationship**

In exploring the existing relationship between Guiding Units and churches the Survey revealed six themes: 'Church Buildings,' 'Church Services,' 'Involvement with Events and Activities,' 'Links with Church Members,' 'Attitude of the Church,' and 'Impact of the Church Leader.'

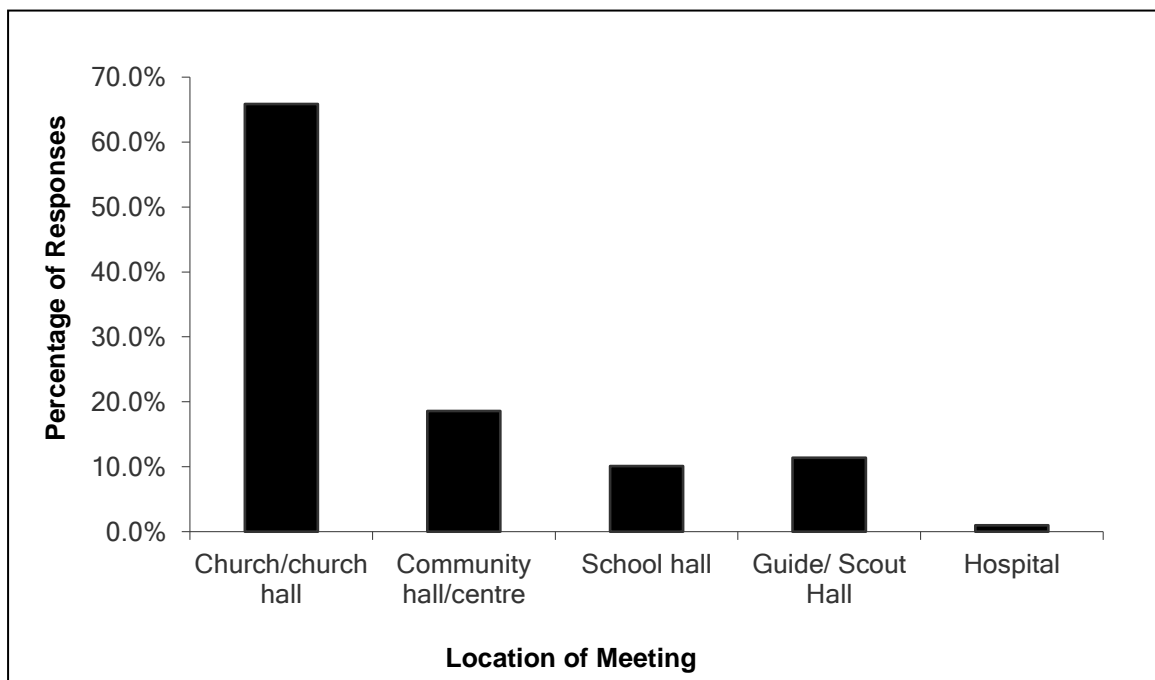
### *7.4.1 Church Buildings*

Initially leaders were asked to identify the denomination of their local church (Figure 7.5). This produced the highest skip rate for questions 1-18 in the Survey with 15 people choosing not to answer. This may have been because like 6 leaders who wrote comments under 'other,' they were unsure about 'what variety of church it is,' (Guide leader-SE England). To have included a further category of 'unsure' in the Survey would have shown this. Furthermore, another 15 of those who selected 'other' wrote 'Church of Scotland,' 1 listed 'Church in Wales' and 1 'Church of Ireland.' Rather than presuming people understood the term 'Anglican' it would have helped them to have listed the four UK Anglican provinces separately.



**Figure 7.5**  
**Denomination of Local Church**

Nevertheless, 68% of leaders recognised their local church as Anglican, with 66% of leaders having Units meeting in a church hall or building (Figure 7.6).



**Figure 7.6**  
**Guiding Unit Meeting Places**

Anglican churches dominated particularly in rural communities where 40% of leaders noted the importance of their local Anglican church in providing a meeting place. Churches not only accommodated weekly meetings. They provided Units with venues for World Thinking Day<sup>513</sup> events (28%), Carol (25%) and other special services (16%). Leaders were also able to host events including sleepovers and activity days in the buildings, with 62% of leaders making comments about relationship with the church they had as users of the building.

Where the church 'has built us new cupboards' (Brownies-Methodist-NE),<sup>514</sup> 'makes sure the heating is switched on for us when it is cold' (Rainbows-Anglican-SE), 'met with us to find out how much rent we could pay' (Guides-Anglican-Anglia) and provided storage and display boards there was a positive relationship. In return leaders mentioned how Units helped by 'setting out hall for Sunday after guide meetings,' (Guides/SeniorSection-Salvation Army-Wales), gardening (2%) including 'Brownie flower beds,' (All-Anglican-NE) or cleaned the church (6%), 'the girls love it when it is our turn to do the brasses' (Brownies-Anglican-SW).

Some Units and churches took other opportunities to develop links: 'As we meet in church we sometimes leave items on display for the congregation' (SeniorSection/Guides/Rainbows-Anglican-Anglia). 'There is church information

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<sup>513</sup> Annual service held around 22<sup>nd</sup> February when Girlguiding members around the world think about Girlguiding in other countries.

<sup>514</sup> Individual comments are annotated with (Girlguiding sections a leader helped with-church denomination her Unit was associated with-Girlguiding country or region she was part of). If more there is more than one leader with the same annotation then the first leader is A, the second B etc.

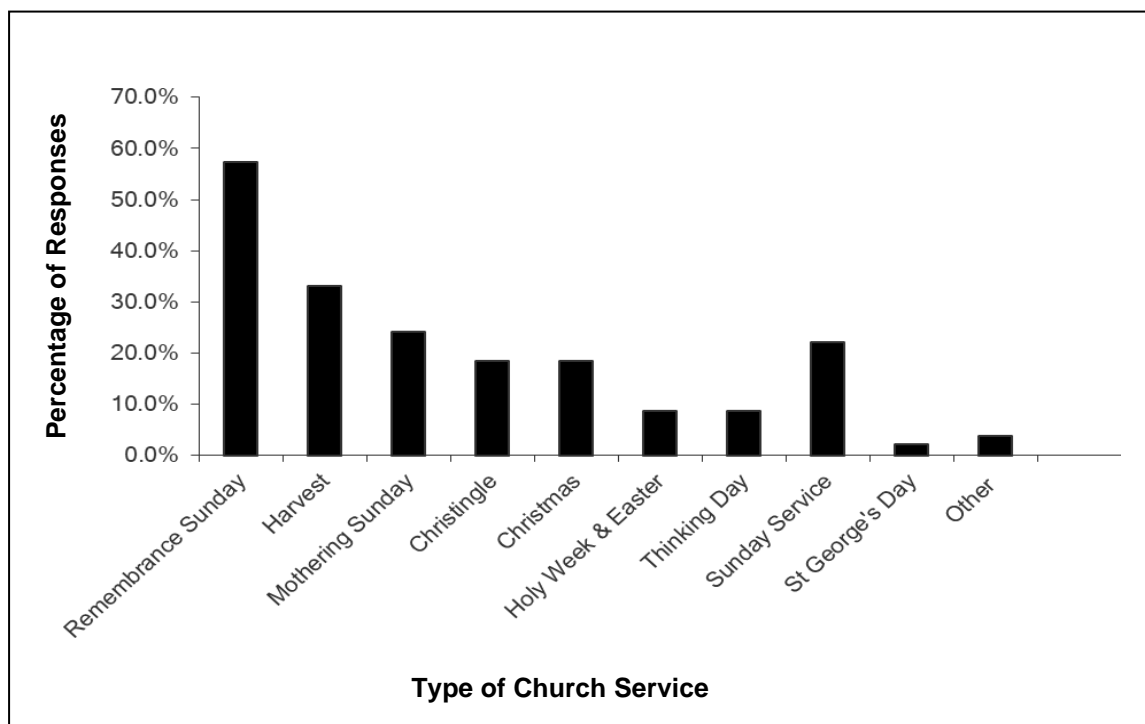
available in the foyer where parents wait to pick up their children,' (Rainbows-Anglican/Methodist-SW).

However, in other places Units were looking elsewhere, finding that the building no longer met their needs, 'We use another church in the same town for Guiding events as it doesn't have [pews] so is a more flexible space to meet' or they felt unwelcome. 'To be told 2 days ago we can't meet this week as the church wants the hall,' (Brownies-Anglican-Midlands). When 'they doubled the rent for next the month,' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Anglia), 'told us they need our cupboard now,' (Guides-Anglican-NE) or said, 'that we could not use their brand new hall,' (Guides-Anglican-SE). For leaders such attitudes showed what the church felt was important. Despite such discouragement, the same leaders mentioned church Services that their Units attended.

#### *7.4.2 Church Services*

There appeared to be no correlation between Units who met on church premises and whether they attended church services, with 78% of leaders noting their Units attended church for a variety of services (Figure 7.7). Remembrance Sunday provided the strongest link (57%), with seasonal services including Harvest, Mothering Sunday, Christmas and Christingle also popular.

Other Sunday services were listed by 22% of leaders, with 27% of these mentioning a church Parade,<sup>515</sup> often held monthly. Family/ All Services were listed by 34% compared to 5% for Communion Services.



**Figure 7.7:**  
**Church Services which Guiding Units Attended**

The challenge of Eucharistic worship was commented on;

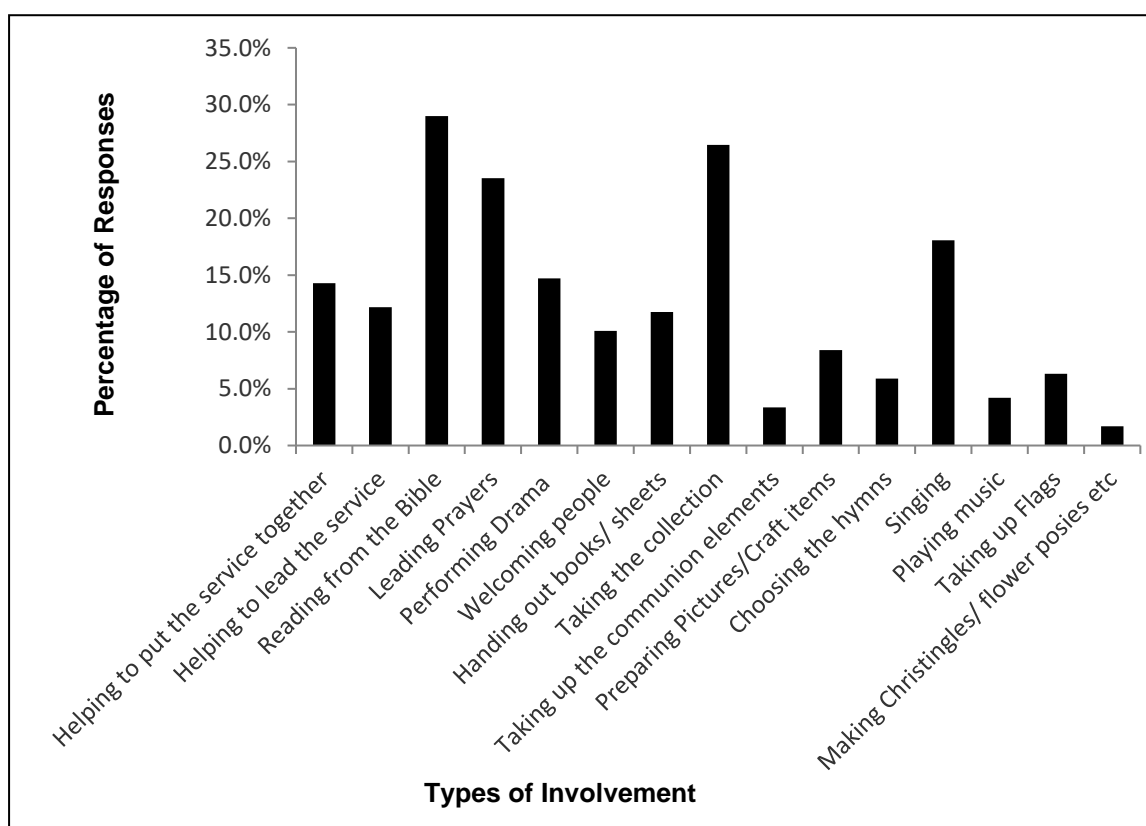
We have [a] new Vicar so he is working out which services e.g Harvest, Christmas, Mothering Sunday can be made child/family friendly as Church is Anglo Catholic and Holy Communion not the easiest to keep a child's attention. (Guide/Brownie-Anglican-SW)

and the provision of more child friendly services welcomed, 'the church started a monthly family service last year which the girls find easier as it is shorter and they use puppets and things which make it more interesting.'

(Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Anglia).

<sup>515</sup> A service (usually a regular Sunday service) where uniformed organisations are specifically invited and will often bring their flag.

Despite efforts by some churches to provide child friendly services 23 leaders noted the low attendance by their Unit. 'Monthly church Parade service, but poorly attended,' (All-Methodist-Wales) 'Our guide unit attends family services, but turn out is poor.' (Guides/SeniorSection-Anglia-Anglican). For some this was not a new development, 'We used to attend the monthly family service but this stopped approx 10 years ago due to the lack of brownies attending,' (Brownies-Anglican-Midlands).



**Figure 7.8:**  
**Involvement by Guiding Units in Church Services**

Nevertheless, there was significant involvement in services with 36% of leaders indicating that their Units took part (Figure 7.8); Bible reading, taking the collection and leading prayers were the most common. Having a role in putting together and leading services was noted by 13% as well as using their skills in music, art and drama. The type of involvement was determined 'by a rota',

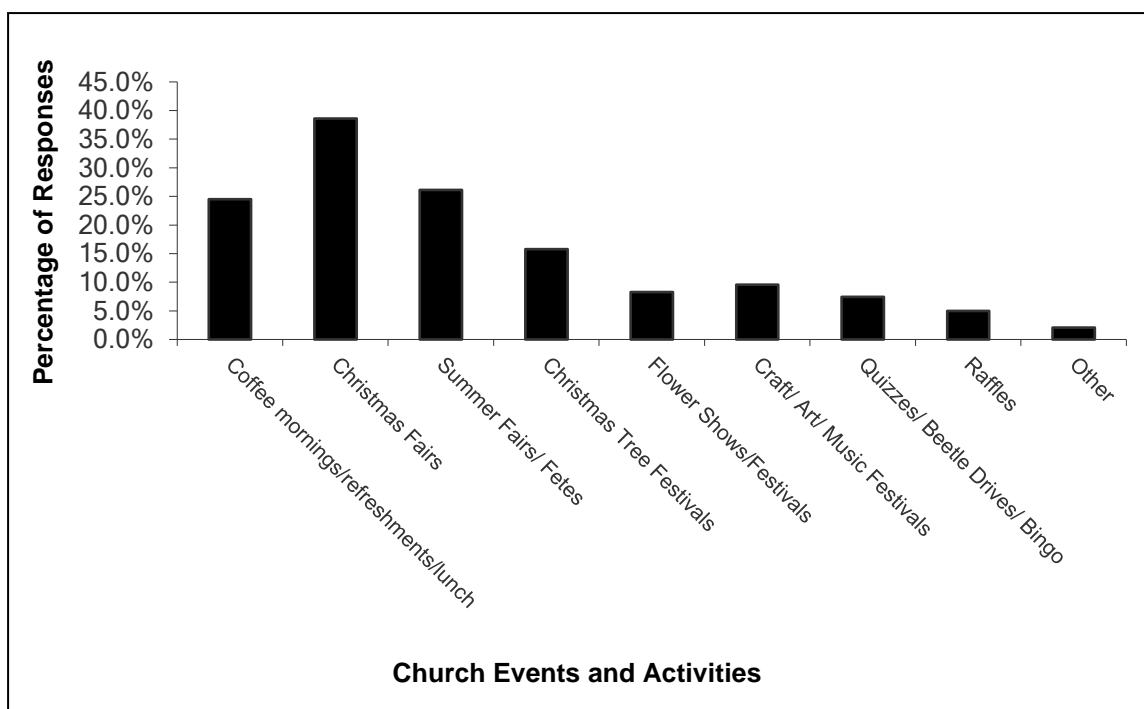
(Guides-Anglican-SW), 'who is taking the service,' (All-Methodist-Wales) or 'just being asked when they get there' (Brownies-Anglican-Wales).

For those leaders who felt it was not appropriate for their girls to take part, it was not about theology, rather the unfamiliarity of it. 'Now once a year -and the Guides don't know the routines (sigh),' (Guides-Anglican-SW) or 'we used to but as attendance is so infrequent it would be unfair to put the girls on the spot!!' (Guides-Anglican-NW). This theme of what used to happen was also mentioned when leaders commented on their involvement with church events.

#### *7.4.3 Involvement with Events and Activities*

Church events, fairs and those involving food were mentioned by 61% of leaders (Figure 7.9). Other events included a 'Scarecrow Festival', (Brownies-Anglican-SW), 'Peace Light Celebration,' (Brownies-Anglican/Methodist-SW) and an 'annual radio programme recorded in church,' (Brownies-Anglican-Midlands).

Availability appeared dependent on the congregation; 'none of the above takes place at church. the [congregation] is mainly elderly people' (Brownies-Anglican-NW), tradition, 'the church has always had a fete,' (Brownies-Anglican-Anglia B), the attitude of the clergy, 'surprised you say Christmas tree festival, when we asked about one we were told they were pagan,' (Guides-Anglican-SW) and whether Units knew what was happening, 'never heard of any of the other options happening and if they do we do not get invited,' (Guides-Roman Catholic-NE).



**Figure 7.9:**  
**Church Events and Activities Guiding Units are Involved with**

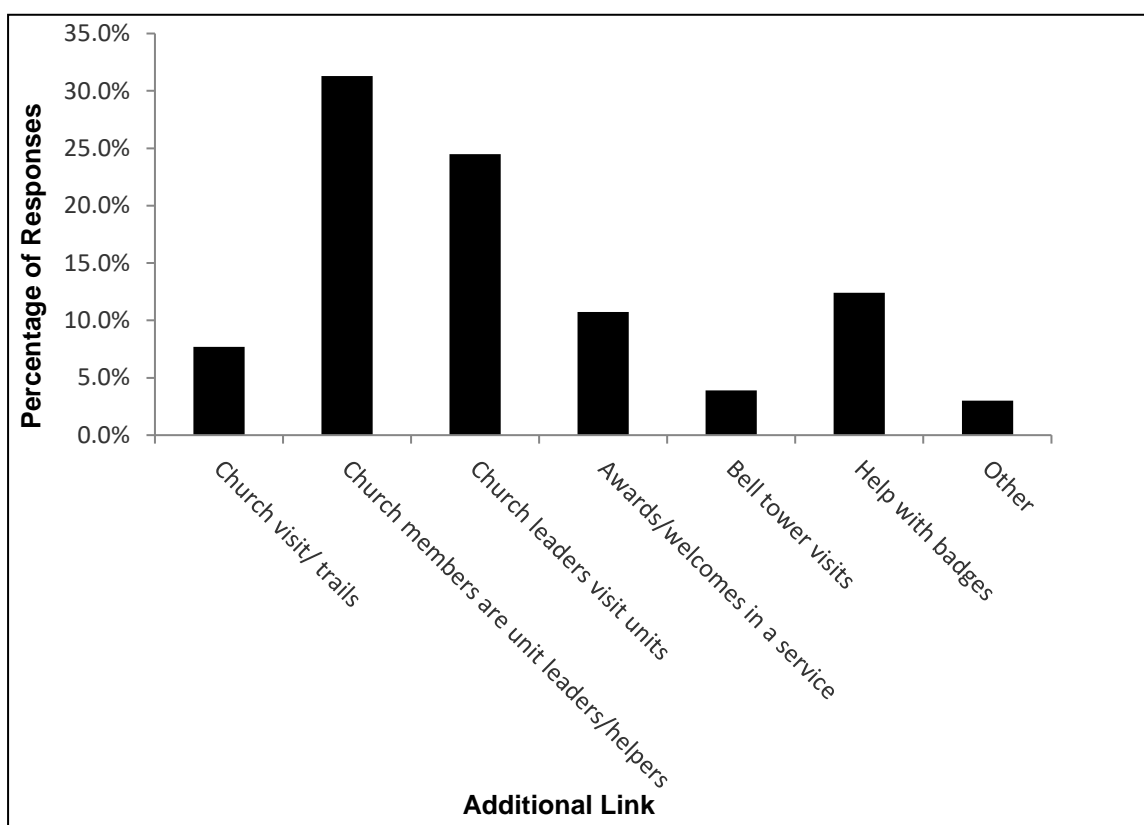
The importance of not just knowing about events, but far enough in advance so they can be put into the programme, ‘no good telling me on thursday about saturday and expect us to come’ (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Midlands) was commented on by 3 leaders. Although websites and Facebook were mentioned (24%), communication about events from the church to the Unit was predominantly through letters (41%) and making announcements (24%). In return churches were more likely to publicised Unit activities on noticeboards (50%) and in magazines and newsletters (37%).

As well as attending social events leaders listed a number of other links they had with churches (Figure 7.10). The majority involving church members.



#### 7.4.4 Links with Church Members

Church members played a significant part in supporting Units, foremost as leaders and helpers, although 6% of leaders mentioned not attending the same church as their Unit was linked to. Furthermore, 3 of these leaders, who were also Anglican vicars, mentioned that their Unit was linked with a different denomination, 'I am Anglican but we meet in the URC hall,' (Rainbows/Brownies-URC-NW).



**Figure 7.10**  
**Additional Links Units have with Churches**

Regular visits of church leaders were particularly appreciated, and the business of their schedules understood 'we know he is busy, but he pops in for a few minutes when he can so the girls get to know his face,' (Brownies/Guides-Anglican-Midlands).

Leaders also listed church members assisting in various ways. They helped girls learn new skills, 'they taught each [Brownie] to fingerspell,' (Brownies/Guides-URC-Anglia) shared their knowledge, 'he made the church building come alive for them,' (Guides-Anglican-N Ireland) and gave their time, '4 of the ringers...made sure that each of the Guides had a go' (Guides-Anglican-Wales).

However, not all encounters were positive, 'when [the] church warden showed girls around one week...I [received] a very strong email from [the] readers wife telling me off for using the church lights,' (Guides-Anglican-SW). The attitude of the church towards Units as users of their premises had a considerable impact on the relationship.

#### *7.4.5 Attitude of the Church*

Feeling valued was mentioned by 16% of leaders, who commented how they felt valued when 'we are always invited to everything' (Rainbows-Anglican-NW), asked to 'write a page in the magazine' (Guides-Anglican-NW) or 'included in prayer topics' (Brownies/Guides-Anglican-Midlands), or 'For another leader it was the fact that

Our Unit is considered part of the children's and youth ministry. The youth team provide an amazing amount of support (equipment, rooms, even lending us the church bouncy castle!), we are represented on the youth committee for the PCC, we are not charged for anything even if we are using the church halls for a sleepover or a county meeting.  
(Guides/SeniorSection-Anglican-NE)

Unfortunately, not every church was so welcoming and 59% of leaders chose to record negative experiences. Anglican churches featured in 90% of these with

31% of complaints centred around the use of the hall. Hall rents suddenly being increased were mentioned by 4 leaders whilst another her indignation at having to 'move our stuff because the church needed more room' (Guides-Anglican-SW). Feeling ignored was mentioned by 24%, 'we might as well not be there,' (Guides-Anglican-SW), 'no one visits us' (Brownies-Anglican-Scotland), and 'we are not made aware of or invited to things going on' (Guides-Anglican-SW).

For those Units who attended services a lack of welcome, and worship which 'had nothing in it for children' (Brownies-Anglican-NW) led some leaders to decide 'we won't go again' (Rainbows/Brownie-Anglican-Midlands) and a decision by one that they would go 'somewhere else now, eg local Methodists, where children are more welcome' (Guides-Anglican-SW). Key to this was the impact of the church leader.

#### *7.4.6 Impact of the Church Leader*

Although, 30% of Units had links with other denominations, Methodist and URC ministers or Roman Catholic priests were never mentioned. Whereas, in the comments, the term vicar was used 26 times, in each case relating to an Anglican church.

Whilst 4 leaders spoke positively of efforts being made by new clergy, 'asking us read the prayers on mothering Sunday' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-NW) and 'We used to attend church parade but have recently started a new project of all age services which our recent new vicar has introduced,' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Wales) 20 other comments referred to a negative relationship.

Although it was not necessarily the role of the vicar, to liaise with local groups they appeared to be the lynch pin for the relationship. 'We had good links but current vicar actively disapproves of us and we are no longer welcome at any events' (Brownies-Anglican-Wales). Furthermore, once lost, trust was hard to re-establish. As one leader noted, 'our new curate has visited [our] brownie holiday and is trying to build links but too much damage done by vicar-sorry' (Brownies-Anglican-SE). Nevertheless, comments such as

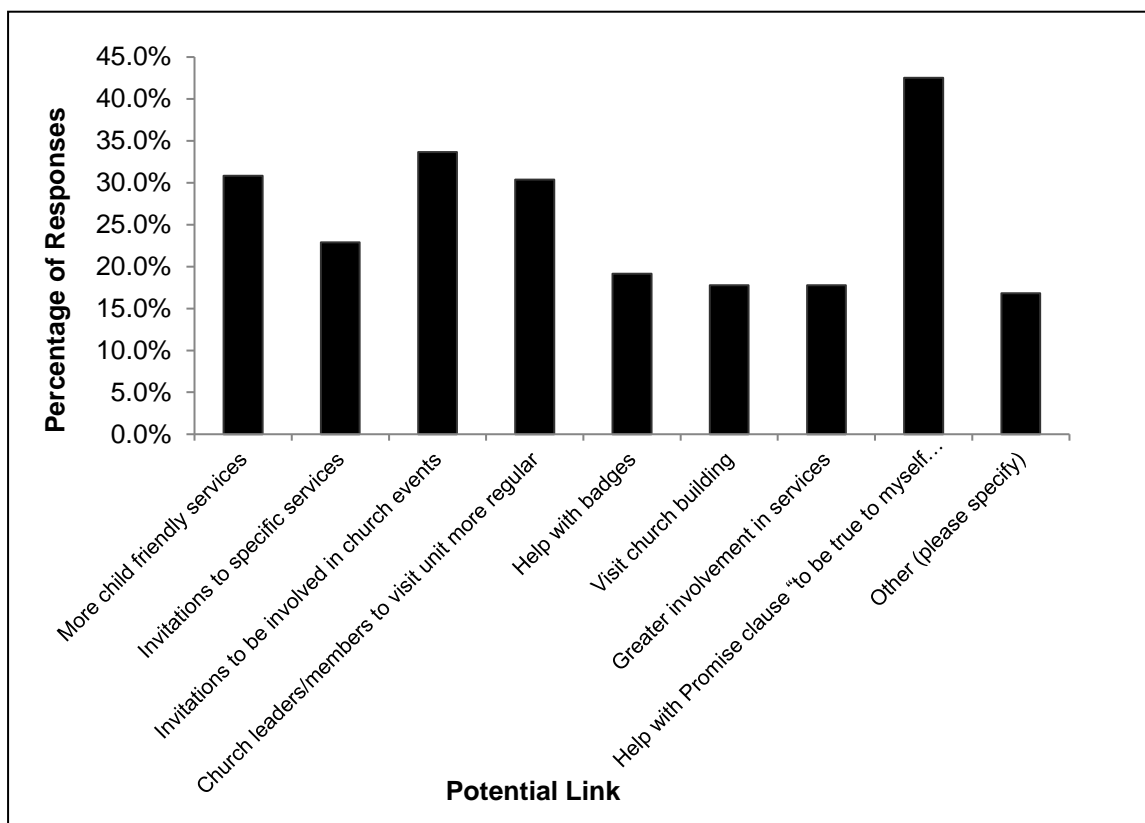
We would quite happily clean the church, help with coffee mornings etc but we've been made to feel unwelcome at church & are never invited. Even on Remembrance Sunday service we all have to sit on the floor there is no room for us. (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Scotland)

indicated an underlying desire for leaders to have a different relationship.

## **7.5 Developing the Relationship**

In exploring how the relationship might be developed leaders were asked whether they would firstly like to develop a relationship with their local church and if so what further links might be helpful. From these the 3 themes of 'Sense of Belonging,' 'Child Friendly Worship' and the 'Non-Religious Ethos of Guiding' were identified.

Ways of developing their relationship with the church were willing to be considered by 77% of leaders (Figure 7.11). Of those who answered no, it was for at least 3 leaders because they were happy with their existing relationship, 'we already have a strong link with church and are always invited to all events run in church,' (Rainbows-Anglican-NW).



**Figure 7.11:**  
**Potential Ways of Developing Links with a Church**

### 7.5.1 Sense of Belonging

For many leaders, simple changes, including invitations to services and events, or 'Involvement with church community service projects,' (Guides-Anglican-NW) would make all the difference. Additionally, if churches also showed their interest through church leaders and members visiting Units, helping with activities or even 'church members to help 'behind the scenes' eg by doing accounts,' (Brownies-Anglican-Wales) it would be appreciated. In general, it was anything, 'where the church shows us we are wanted' (Rainbows-Anglican-SE)

This feeling of being wanted and ‘actually to be recognised as a part of the community,’ (Rainbows/Brownies/Guides-URC-NE) was a theme in 21% of the comments. These were coupled with a level of frustration and sadness about the state of the relationship, ‘we [want] a feeling like we belong to [the] church family, not that we are an inconvenience,’ (Brownies/SeniorSection-Anglican-Midlands).

For this to happen 13% of leaders highlighted how a change in the attitude of the church just the ‘Consideration of our needs’ (Brownies-Salvation Army-Scotland), especially by the vicar, would make all the difference, ‘The vicar suggested when I asked for more notice [of events] that if I attended church each week I would find things out more quickly,’ (Guides-Anglican-NW).

Leaders also recognised how the attitude of the church could be shaped by the age of the congregation, ‘It’s difficult as there is such a generation gap between the church and the girls.’ (Guides/SeniorSection-Anglican-Anglia), but just longed ‘for the people who know they are important in the church to be more welcoming and accepting of the under 65s’ (Guides-Anglican-SW).’ They also appreciated efforts being made to change things and the challenges in doing so, ‘our church is mainly elderly...our vicar is trying to have 2 or 3 child friend[ly] services but hard when the [congregation] has been going since day one.70 yrs ago,’ (Brownies-Anglican-NW).

### *7.5.2 Child Friendly Services*

Having child friendly services was mentioned by 31% of leaders. Here the attitude of the vicar was key, with 7 leaders mentioning how a change in vicar

was making difference. For some there was a sense of loss, 'we have gradually decreased [number of services] as attendance has quickly declined with the new vicar who doesn't 'do' children at all well' (Guides-Anglican-SW) and for others hope that things would be different 'we have a new vicar and only have attended the harvest and [about] to attend a mothering sunday' (Brownies-Anglican-NW), 'We have [a] new Vicar so he is working out which services...can be made child/family friendly,' (Guide/Brownie-Anglican-SW).

Leaders also acknowledged 'It's more my girls that are not interested in the church than the other way around!' (SeniorSection-Anglican-SE), and recognised that the church is competing with everything else which means 'activities outside of guides with the church are difficult to get attendance, (Guides/SeniorSection-Anglican-Anglia) and for girls to come, '...their parents need to be on board.' (Brownies-Anglican-SE-A).

Others felt the onus was also on them, 'I should try harder' (Brownies-Anglican-SE-B), 'probably make an effort,' (Guides/SeniorSection-Anglican-SE) because 'I don't want the girls' to miss out' (Brownies-Anglican-NE). Nevertheless, as they only used the hall or attended services the church were the ones who could make difference and 'The church needs to wake up and find other ways of engaging with these young people.' (Brownies-Anglican-SE-A)

### *7.5.3 Non-Religious Ethos of Guiding*

Help with the spiritual dimension of the Promise, as one possible way, was noted by 42% of leaders. Thinking about the Promise gave rise to some very heartfelt comments especially the leader who saw '...'to be true to myself' as

contrary to our promise to be true to God...' (Guides/SeniorSection-Anglican-NE) and another who wanted 'Guiding to realise the new promise above is wrong for younger girls, Brownies and Rainbows. They don't understand what it means !!!!!' (Brownies-Anglican/Presbyterian-N Ireland)

Another 16% took the opportunity to underline the non-religious ethos of Guiding, 'we're an open unit, so serve children of all religions and none equally...' however, for this leader the concern was '...if we tied ourselves to the parish church (or any of the others) it would impair our impartiality,' (Brownies/Guides-Anglican-Scotland). This reluctance to be associated with a particular denomination was raised by 5 other leaders, 'since there are churches of all denominations locally unless we spent time visiting them all...I am not sure how we would make it "fair"' (Brownies-Anglican-NW) and 'I wouldn't want to just go to one church [as] that doesn't seem right.' (Rainbows/Guides-Methodist-SE)

Despite recognising that, 'we [Guiding] are not a Christian organisation' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-SE), she like other leaders listed ways her Units were already involved with her church and was keen to have further links, especially help with the Promise. Something as I discuss in these conclusions (7.6.4) highlighted the tension between the espoused belief, relating to the ethos of Guiding and the operative belief of many leaders.

## **7.6 Conclusions**

The Survey set out to help answer the questions

*i) What is the existing relationship between Churches and Guiding Units?*



*ii) How might the relationship between Churches and Guiding Units be developed?*

In doing so it aimed to provide a wider context in which to see the relationship between Holy Trinity church and Summerhill Guides and how it might be developed. Despite the lack of church leader responses from the Survey, valid observations were still possible.

*7.6.1 Links to Results from Holy Trinity Church and Summerhill Guides*

The results from the Participant Observation phase again highlighted the importance of Remembrance Sunday as a point of contact between church and Unit. And although Summerhill Guides do not meet on church premises, having church members as Unit leaders created an important link. Furthermore, there was a willingness to develop stronger links and use the Promise for this. A fuller discussion of which forms parts of the main conclusion (chapter 9).

*7.6.2 Observations from the Survey*

Most leaders who completed the Survey obviously took time over it (each participant taking around 4m:39s to complete)<sup>516</sup> with 89% making at least one additional comment and 76% making 2 or more. As well as providing information, the comments were used by many leaders as a forum, to express frustration and sadness about the relationship with their local church, 'We used to meet at the church & were a church sponsored unit, but they treat us badly & charged a ridiculous amount of rent forcing us to find another meeting place (they didn't think we could).' (Brownies-Anglican-Midlands). Some leaders hankered after the past, whilst others acknowledged that girls and Guiding today have changed.

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<sup>516</sup> Analysis of this Survey by SurveyMonkey

Although 68% Guiding leaders who responded had Units meeting on church premises, it cannot be presumed that this proportion applied to the whole of Guiding UK.<sup>517</sup> As the Survey stated that it was looking at the links between Guiding Units and churches it is likely that self-selection bias operated and only those who had an interest took part. Nevertheless the 251 Guiding leaders who completed the Survey represented 0.3% of Guiding UK leaders and came from every Guiding UK county and region. This means that the findings of this Survey are illustrative, of relationships between churches and Guiding Units across the UK and Channel Islands.

Like the leaders of Summerhill Guides and those involved in the Pilot Study there was a huge willingness among Guiding leaders, who answered the Survey, to engage with their local church and a wide range of examples of how this happened. Church attendance at Remembrance Sunday was again significant.

However, drawing together the results from the Survey two aspects are highlighted which create potential barriers not only for developing the existing relationship but in whether the Spiritual dimension of the Guiding Promise could provide a suitable vehicle for mission. The first of these was the involvement of church leaders.

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<sup>517</sup> Information request to Girlguiding UK asking for this data was not granted. Email correspondence with Girlguiding UK, 26-30 October 2017

### *7.6.3 Involvement of Church Leaders*

The disinterest of my clergy colleagues was something I drew attention to in the results from the Pilot Study (4.7.3). Without further investigation, beyond the scope of this study, it was not possible to tell whether the lack of responses to this Survey from church leaders was a further instance of this, or because the Survey was not relevant to the majority who received it.

Nevertheless, what the results from the Survey suggested was that clergy engagement with Guiding Units was not just a problem within the Diocese of St Asaph but within the wider UK and Channel Islands. Furthermore, the attitude of church leaders and their involvement with Units, or lack of it, had significant impact. Not only in the provision of child friendly services, (7.5.2) but whether Units are made to feel they are part of a church community or even wanted (7.5.1). Why this is and how this could be addressed form part of the final conclusions.

### *7.6.4 Espoused Belief and Operative Belief*

Not all Units wanted a relationship with a church, 'why would we when we are not specifically a church group we are just using an available hall space for meetings?' (Guides-Roman Catholic-NE). For others the no was related to a feeling it would show favouritism 'we are a diverse area so I would be reluctant to prioritise the church over other faith groups' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-SW). For still other leaders there was the tension between wanting a better relationship and the ethos of Guiding (7.5.3).

This is the difference between the espoused belief that Guiding promotes and the operative belief of many of its members. Although 'ongoing spiritual

development is a core part of what Guiding offers girls and young women...participation in any religious act of worship or activity in or out of the Unit meeting place must always be voluntary,<sup>518</sup> furthermore in their 'Top Tips for including all beliefs' Guiding asks members to

Consider how your unit looks to new or potential members. Holding meetings in a place of worship, or attendance at religious festivals, might make it look like your unit is for girls of only one faith...Ensure that one faith is not predominantly referred to or used in your unit. For example, a reflection during a meeting may refer to a god. This wouldn't be inclusive to members who don't believe in a god.<sup>519</sup>

Yet responses to the Survey highlight the sympathy of individuals to Christianity and the church. Despite only 28% of respondents indicating that they are members of a church 74% were willing to develop further links on a regular basis. They would welcome invitations to come to services and church events and are willing to offer their skills and experience to help in different ways. Moreover, 42% of leaders would also like the church to help with the Spiritual dimension of the Promise.

However, Guiding is a spiritual rather than religious organisation. Therefore, what level of interaction between church and Unit is possible if the integrity of the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding are to remain intact? The following chapter explores the research question '*Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*' and considers how this tension could be resolved. It does this through the lens of natural

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<sup>518</sup> Girlguiding, 'Equality and Diversity Policy: Religion or Belief', 3 July 2019, <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/girlguiding-policies/equality-and-diversity-policy/religion-or-belief/> (12 July 2019)

<sup>519</sup> Girlguiding, 'Religious Differences and Girlguiding', <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/running-your-unit/including-all/religious-differences-and-guiding/> (16 January 2019)

theology. Here I argue that although natural theology is limited and needs the lens of Christianity to make full sense of issues such as suffering, it does provide an opportunity for Guiding members to develop their beliefs.

## **Chapter 8**                      **Theological Reflection**

*I do not suggest Nature Study as a form of worship or a substitute for religion, but I advocate the understanding of Nature as a step, in certain cases, towards gaining religion.<sup>520</sup>*

The Survey results from the previous chapter showed that many Guiding leaders are sympathetic towards the Christian faith, and would welcome more opportunity to engage with the church. Furthermore, the results of the Guide Focus Groups (chapter 6) showed that the Guides are interested in exploring spiritual questions. However, what this engagement should be is complicated, as I have shown by the tension between the integrity of the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding.

Taking Osmer's third task, the normative task and asking the key question 'what ought to be going on?' this chapter seeks to answer the primary research question '*Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*' and considers how this tension could be resolved. It does this through exploring the question, 'what can a person know about God independently of Scripture and how valid is that knowledge?'<sup>521</sup> through the lens of natural theology.

Having set the rationale for this question (8.1) the chapter goes on to explore natural theology as a way of looking at it (8.2). It considers natural theology in terms of 'Reason Alone' (8.3), 'Incompatible with Christianity' (8.4), and 'Within the Embrace of Revealed Theology' (8.5). Each of these is explored by taking some of the key arguments and illustrating them with a significant proponent of

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<sup>520</sup> Baden-Powell, *Rovering*, 178

<sup>521</sup> Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary*, 817

it. The chapter then shows how exploring the natural world was foundational for Baden-Powell in helping Guides and Scouts learn about God (8.6). It then considers how Paul's use of natural theology in Athens could provide a useful model of apologetics for today (8.7). The chapter then shows how children have the ability to reflect theologically on different issues (8.8). Building on this the chapter goes on to consider Child Theology (8.9) and asks the question 'how would putting a Guide in the midst change our perspective?' (8.10) The chapter concludes by drawing together the three themes of 'Natural Theology is Compatible with Christianity,' 'Natural Theology Provides a Suitable Method of Spiritual Exploration for Guiding Members,' and 'Children Need Appropriate Reference Points to Articulate their Thinking (8.11). The chapter finishes by taking Alexander and McLaughlin's concept of tethered and untethered spiritually and considers whether natural theology could be offered by churches as a suitable tether to help Guides explore the world.

### **8.1 Rationale**

As shown in the literature review the growth in inclusivity meant that the link between the spiritual dimension of the Promise and religion had been severed. It would seem that the answer to my research question, was no. This raised the question that if Guiding members were not exposed to Christian teaching, what level of understanding of God could they develop? Was it just through activities designed to help them develop their spiritual beliefs? Furthermore, did this matter?

Personally, I feel that helping people take the next step on their spiritual journey is really important, to walk beside them as they discover the difference it makes having Jesus in their life is the motivation behind my ministry. This was reflected within my definition of spirituality as *'a journey, in relationship with others which helps an individual develop their inner life, in order to make a difference to themselves and others.'*

Yet, the ethos of Guiding is not that of the 'Great Commission.'<sup>522</sup> As a spirituality inclusive organisation Guiding members are free to explore any religion or spiritual pathway. Therefore, how can non-Christian members of Guiding have the opportunity to be on that Christian journey?

As discussed earlier, although mission is about providing people with opportunities to take the next step on their spiritual journey, such a step may not be obvious to the individual, nor necessarily lead to a Christian commitment, particularly as the initial step of spiritual awareness would be similar to the majority of faith traditions. Furthermore, the spiritual dimension of Guiding encourages its members to explore what their beliefs are and how it effects their lives.

Additionally, as this study has shown leaders and Guides want to build stronger connections with churches and work with them to develop their beliefs. This does not preclude engagement with other faiths, however it is within the context of Christian mission that this study is set and asking the question *'is the*

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<sup>522</sup> Matthew 28:19-20



Spiritual dimension of the *Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*'

Nonetheless, having Unit Bible studies and looking at spirituality only through the lens of Christian doctrine would not be acceptable in the Guiding programme, which leads to the question, 'what can a person know about God independently of Scripture and how valid is that knowledge?'<sup>523</sup> Such a question is at the heart of natural theology.

## 8.2 Natural Theology

Natural theology could be construed as an immediate impression of God's existence, power and majesty, coming from simply gazing in awe at the heavens. However, in the more academic context, natural theology has been about providing reasons and arguments for belief in God.<sup>524</sup>

Traditionally this has meant 'philosophically reflecting on the existence and nature of God independent of real or apparent divine revelation or scripture.'<sup>525</sup>

This contrasts with 'supernatural' or 'revealed theology' which is based on God's revelation made known through the witnesses of Scripture.

### 8.2.1 Thomas Aquinas

The distinction between natural and revealed theology is rooted in the work of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1323). Although the idea that the existence of God and the attributes of God may be understood from nature, was something that ancient Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle discussed. It was

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<sup>523</sup> Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary*, 817

<sup>524</sup> Rodney D. Holder, 'Natural Theology', *Faraday Paper 19* (Cambridge: The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, April 2016), [www.faraday-institute.org](http://www.faraday-institute.org) (19 October 2018)

<sup>525</sup> Charles Taliaferro, 'The Project of Natural Theology', in William Lane. Craig, and J.P. Moreland, (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 1

Aquinas who argued that by looking at nature alone then humans could comprehend certain truths about God.<sup>526</sup> Nevertheless, such human reason was secondary to God's revelation and although reason may lead to faith, it could not be a substitute for it.<sup>527</sup>

Aquinas' work laid the foundations for much of the future development of natural theology. This included the debates led by philosophers such as René Descartes (1596-1650), David Hume (1711-1776) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), as to what extent 'the God who made the world can be known through the world that was created.'<sup>528</sup>

Although the prominence of natural theology declined during the twentieth century<sup>529</sup> it has come to the fore, 'particularly in the advance of scientific knowledge concerned with the origin and structure of the universe.'<sup>530</sup> Once again Aquinas' thinking was shaping the work of philosophers and theologians including that of Denys Turner, Richard Swinburne, Alvin Plantinga and Linda Zagzebski.

There is not space within this chapter to give a full account of the modern thinking on natural theology.<sup>531</sup> However, to provide an overview of the main Christian perspectives I have chosen to divide them into the three areas. Within

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<sup>526</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1912) 1a.2.2

<sup>527</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1a.1.1,

<sup>528</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2001), 208

<sup>529</sup> For a detailed history of natural theology see John Hedley. Brooke, Russell Re. Manning, and Fraser Watts, *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9-136, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199556939.013.0008> (17 October 2018)

<sup>530</sup> David A. Wilkinson, 'The Revival of Natural Theology in Contemporary Cosmology', *Science and Christian Belief* 2, no.2 (1990), 95

<sup>531</sup> For a detailed overview I would recommend reading, Rodney D. Holder, 'Natural Theology in the Twentieth Century', in Brooke, Manning, and Watts, *The Oxford Handbook*, 118-134

each of these I will use examples from specific theologians, philosophers and scientists to illustrate particular arguments.

### **8.3 Natural Theology as Reason Alone**

Firstly, the idea that God can be understood and demonstrated from reason alone. Being able to argue for the existence of God through the process of natural theology was developed more fully during the Enlightenment. It was also behind the establishment, in 1888, of the annual Gifford Lectures with their express purpose 'to discuss natural theology as a science that is, "without reference to or reliance upon any supposed special exceptional or so-called miraculous revelation."<sup>532</sup> Reasoned approaches include those surrounding Roman Catholic Doctrine, Evidential Arguments, Intelligent Design and Probability. Such approaches also present problems for Christianity including how to address evil and suffering.

#### *8.3.1 Turner: Roman Catholic Doctrine*

Since the first Vatican Council in 1870 (Vatican I) the idea that God has revealed himself both naturally and supernaturally has formed part of Roman Catholic doctrine.<sup>533</sup> For, 'if anyone says that the one, true God, our creator and lord, cannot be known with certainty from the things that have been made, by the natural light of human reason: let him be anathema.'<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>532</sup> Gifford Lectures, 'History of the Gifford Lectures', <https://www.giffordlectures.org/overview/history> (16 November 2018),

<sup>533</sup> Catholic Culture.org, 'Vatican 1: 1869 to 1870 A.D.', Norman Tanner (trans.), Chapter 2.1, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=5413#can2> (17 January 2019)

<sup>534</sup> Catholic Culture.org, 'Vatican 1', Canons 2.1

Denys Turner agrees with this doctrine<sup>535</sup> and argues that, ‘there are reasons of faith for maintaining that the existence of God must be demonstrable by reason alone.’<sup>536</sup> However, he also recognises the ‘clutter of misconception, philosophical and theological, which has for several centuries stood in the way of a more theological positive understanding of reason.’<sup>537</sup> His defence of the ‘Vatican I’ decree forms the second of his two arguments for a defence of natural theology,<sup>538</sup> the first being that of theological error, (Heidegger’s concept of onto-theology)<sup>539</sup> associated with, what Turner would consider, a misunderstanding of the Aquinas’ work.<sup>540</sup> Turner goes on to use Aquinas to make forceful arguments, throughout his book, of why reason is compatible with Christianity.<sup>541</sup>

### 8.3.2 Craig and Moreland: Evidential Arguments

The importance of being able to prove the existence of God by looking at the evidence provides the basis for Craig and Moreland’s book.<sup>542</sup> Here each of their contributors takes a different topic such as cosmology, morality, and evil, and shows how each can become an argument for the existence of God. However, such thinking presupposes the existence of God and is built on circular reasoning where:

- i: X would only exist if there was a God
- ii: X exists
- iii: Therefore, because X exists there must be a God.

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<sup>535</sup> Denys Turner, *Faith, Reason, and the Existence of God* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3-6

<sup>536</sup> Turner, *Faith, Reason*, 14

<sup>537</sup> *Faith, Reason*, 262

<sup>538</sup> *Faith, Reason*, 28

<sup>539</sup> For a wider perspective on ontotheology see, Alister E. McGrath, *Re-Imagining Nature: The Promise of a Christian Natural Theology* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 132-134

<sup>540</sup> *Faith, Reason*, 26-28

<sup>541</sup> *Faith, Reason*, 262

<sup>542</sup> William Lane. Craig, and J. P. Moreland, (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)

This can be clearly seen in how Criag and Sinclair, use each part of the ‘*Kalam* Cosmological argument;’<sup>543</sup>

- Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
- The universe began to exist.
- Therefore, the universe has a cause.

to argue ‘it is therefore plausible that an uncaused, personal Creator of the universe exists.’<sup>544</sup>

### 8.3.3 Behe and Dembski: Intelligent Design

The concept that the world is the product of design, which is seen through the complexity of nature, was famously argued by William Paley (1743-1805) who put forward the idea of the Divine Watchmaker.<sup>545</sup> Such an idea forms the basis of Intelligent Design (ID). Arguments for which are built around biochemist Michael Behe’s theory of ‘Irreducible complexity’<sup>546</sup> and mathematician William Dembski’s ‘specified complexity.’<sup>547</sup> It is contended that these show that certain aspects of creation are too complex to have evolved naturally and must have been designed.<sup>548</sup> Consequently ID is also promoted as a scientific alternative to Darwin’s theory of evolution. However, others would argue that their ideas are misleading, and that ID is pseudoscience.<sup>549</sup>

Moreover, ID’s contention that what science cannot explain must be the result of an intelligent designer is clearly a ‘God of the gaps’ argument. Such

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<sup>543</sup> William Lane. Craig and James D. Sinclair, ‘The *Kalam* Cosmological argument’, in Craig, and Moreland, *The Blackwell Companion*, 101

<sup>544</sup> Craig, and Sinclair ‘The *Kalam*’, 196

<sup>545</sup> William Paley, *Natural Theology* [1802], eds. Matthew D. Eddy, and David Knight, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

<sup>546</sup> Michael J. Behe, *Darwin’s Black Box* (London: Free Press, 1996), especially 232-233

<sup>547</sup> William A. Dembski, *No Free Lunch: Why Specified Complexity Cannot Be Purchased Without Intelligence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002)

<sup>548</sup> J. P. Moreland, *The Creation hypothesis: scientific evidence for an intelligent designer* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1994)

<sup>549</sup> For an account of evidence refuting ID see, Barbara Forrest and Paul R. Goss, *Creationism’s Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

arguments inevitably lead to the problem that where once God seemed the only possible explanation, scientific progress has shown otherwise, (this is seen in how ‘scaffolding’ type structures could now account for some of Behe’s complex molecular systems).<sup>550</sup> God becomes squeezed out as the more science is able to explain, the less room is left for God. Which as Wilkinson points out shows ‘the fallacy of trying to prove God through the design argument because God is not the only answer for design.’<sup>551</sup>

#### 8.3.4 Swinburne: *The Probability of God*

Richard Swinburne takes a different approach. For Swinburne, ‘in order to have a justified belief that there is a God, most of us need natural theology.’<sup>552</sup> In his key work ‘The Existence of God,’ Swinburne sets out to prove step by step the existence of God.<sup>553</sup> To do this he applies a mathematical equation (Bayes’s Theorem)<sup>554</sup> to show that the probability of God’s existence is greater than not.<sup>555</sup> However, I question the idea that God’s existence can be proved through a mathematical theorem. For if, as John Hick shows, a different weight is placed on, for example, the existence of evil,<sup>556</sup> then a different conclusion may be drawn.

#### 8.3.5 *Problems of a Reason Alone Approach*

It is all very well being able to say that God can be discerned from reason alone. Someone may see a beautiful sunset, or marvel at the intricacies of the

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<sup>550</sup> Jamie T. Bridgham, Sean M. Carroll, and Joseph W. Thornton, ‘Evolution of Hormone-Receptor Complexity by Molecular Exploitation’, *Science* 312, no.5770, (7 April 2006), 97-101, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1123348> (17 January 2019)

<sup>551</sup> David Wilkinson, *God, Time, & Stephen Hawking* (London: Monarch Books, 2001), 147

<sup>552</sup> Richard Swinburne, ‘The Revival of Natural Theology’, *Archivio di Filosofia*, 75, no.1/2 (2007), 303-322, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24488467> (17 June 2019)

<sup>553</sup> Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2004)

<sup>554</sup> Swinburne, *The Existence of God*, from 67

<sup>555</sup> For summary of Swinburne’s thinking see, John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (London: Yale University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2005), 104-110

<sup>556</sup> Hick, *An Interpretation*, 107-109

human eye. They could agree with the principal of anthropic balances or get excited about the molecular world and even say that God is behind them all. But what type of God does this lead them to?

The idea that God can be demonstrated by reason alone raises several problems. These include the 'God of the gaps' argument, already mentioned (8.3.3), and the challenge of pantheism, which Michael Levine develops as a legitimate alternative to theism or atheism.<sup>557</sup>

For others natural theology may lead to deism, where God is seen as remote deity who having created the universe, and set up the laws by which it functions, no longer needs to interact with it.<sup>558</sup> Such thinking is in variance with scripture. Here we see a picture of a God who is an integral part of the world, who interacts with creation and cares for each part of it. Additionally, deism, as with other reasoned approaches, leaves the question of suffering and evil without a satisfactory answer.

#### *8.3.6 Suffering and Evil*

The problem of suffering was one which several Guides gave as their reason for not believing in God (6.4.4). John Robinson is reported to have said 'It is easy to see God in the sunset, but it is very hard to see him in the cancer.'<sup>559</sup> John Macquarrie picks up on this, writing, 'I do not know whether it is possible to see

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<sup>557</sup> Michael P. Levine, *Pantheism: A Non-Theistic Concept of Deity* (London: Routledge 1994), 2

<sup>558</sup> For more detail see Peter A. Byrne, *Natural Religion and the Religion of Nature: The Legacy of Deism* (London: Routledge, 1989), 52-70

<sup>559</sup> John Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments* (London: SCM Press, 1997), 6

God in a cancer, but if he is there, he is certainly hidden. This incidentally shows us the limits of natural theology.<sup>560</sup>

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to address these limits. However, a useful overview is provided by Stephen Evans. Evans contrasts the approaches to the nature of evil and suffering in natural theology from the perspectives of evidentialists and reformed epistemologists.<sup>561</sup> He concludes that 'even if evil does constitute evidence against God's reality, that evidence is outweighed by positive evidence, which might be found in religious experiences, in a special revelation from God, and even in the theistic natural signs.'<sup>562</sup>

Linda Zagzebski sums up the problems stating that 'the conviction that evil exists...will not go away unless the background metaphysics or natural theology used to eliminate the problem is bolstered by a compelling theodicy.'<sup>563</sup> N.T. Wright and Alister McGrath also point out natural theology based on reason alone side steps problem of evil and suffering. The solution for Zagzebski, McGrath and Wright was for each to develop a different 'compelling theodicy,' which as mentioned later (8.5), underpinned their alternative stances on natural theology. Another approach is to reject natural theology entirely.

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<sup>560</sup> Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments*, 6

<sup>561</sup> C. Stephen. Evans, *Natural Signs and Knowledge of God: A New Look at Theistic Arguments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010), 3

<sup>562</sup> Evans, *Natural Signs and Knowledge of God*, 187

<sup>563</sup> Linda Trinkaus. Zagzebski, *Divine Motivation Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2004), 314



## 8.4 Natural Theology as Incompatible with Christianity

The rejection of natural theology as incompatible with Christian teaching has been considered from the time of William of Ockham (c1287-1347).<sup>564</sup> The main objections are based on arguments surrounding Theological, Philosophical, and Biblical thinking.

### 8.4.1 Barth's Theological Objections

Despite being formed over eighty years ago, Karl Barth's objections are still considered an important part of any discussion surrounding natural theology.<sup>565</sup> Barth's thinking stemmed from a paper which Emil Brunner published in 1934<sup>566</sup> which included his thinking on natural theology. This for Barth was unacceptable. Revealed theology and natural theology were totally incompatible,<sup>567</sup> and 'Nein!' as the title of his angry response<sup>568</sup> emphasised this.

Barth had a high view of Christology. For him the only way that people could know God was through revelation and that revelation was only through Jesus. Natural theology implied that 'God needed help to become known, or that human beings somehow cooperated with God in the act of revelation.'<sup>569</sup> This was intolerable. Even so the strength of Barth's polemic against Brunner appears rather disproportionate, as the ensuing conflict led to an estrangement between

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<sup>564</sup> Ernest A. Moody, 'Philosophical Writings by Ockham and Philotheus Boehner Review', *Speculum* 33, no.1 (1958), 117, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2848898> (5 April 2019)

<sup>565</sup> McGrath, *Re-Imagining Nature*, 144-148

<sup>566</sup> Emil Brunner, 'Nature and Grace', in *Natural Theology*, trans. Peter Fraenkel (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946), 15-64.

<sup>567</sup> For a detailed discussion of this see, Andrew Moore, 'Theological Critiques of Natural Theology', in Brooke, Manning, and Watts, *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*, 227-244

<sup>568</sup> Karl Barth, 'No! Answer to Emil Brunner', in *Natural Theology*, trans. Peter Fraenkel, 65-128.

<sup>569</sup> McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 215

the former friends.<sup>570</sup> Furthermore, 'Barth effectively succeeded in placing natural theology off-limits for consideration by serious Protestant theologians for most of the twentieth century.'<sup>571</sup>

Nonetheless, it would appear rather strange, having dismissed natural theology so completely, that Barth delivered the 1937-1938 Gifford Lectures.<sup>572</sup> However, instead of using the opportunity to emphasise his position, Barth considered natural theology such a 'none subject' he chose not to bother even discussing it!<sup>573</sup>

To understand Barth's perspective McGrath considers it important to consider the cultural context and the type of natural theology being rebutted.<sup>574</sup> In doing so McGrath concludes that 'while Barth's criticisms...of natural theology must be taken seriously, his understanding of natural theology must be called into question.'<sup>575</sup>

#### 8.4.2 Plantinga's Philosophical Objections

In contrast to Barth, Alvin's Plantinga's objections are more philosophical. Like Wolterstorff and others who work from a reformed theological perspective,<sup>576</sup>

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<sup>570</sup> James Barr, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology: The Gifford Lectures for 1991: Delivered in the University of Edinburgh* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 6

<sup>571</sup> Russell Re. Manning, 'Protestant Perspectives on Natural Theology', in John Hedley Brooke, Russell Re. Manning, and Fraser Watts, *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 199, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199556939.013.0015> (17 November 2018)

<sup>572</sup> For a deeper understanding of Barth's thinking, especially in relation to his Gifford Lecture see Stanley Hauerwas, *With the Grain of the Universe: The Church's Witness and Natural Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 141-204

<sup>573</sup> Barr, *Biblical Faith*, 9

<sup>574</sup> McGrath, *Re-Imagining Nature*, 144-145

<sup>575</sup> McGrath, *Re-Imagining Nature*, 145

<sup>576</sup> For an overview see Manning, 'Protestant Perspectives', in Brooke, Manning, and Watts, *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*, 204-2010

Plantinga considers that 'natural theology does not provide a satisfactory answer to the question...Is it rational to believe in God?'<sup>577</sup>

For Plantinga you cannot argue for or prove the existence of God. Such thinking is misguided because it presupposes the need to justify a belief in God through a belief in natural theology.<sup>578</sup> This he considers undermines the concept that Christian belief is self-evident, (what Plantinga calls 'properly basic').<sup>579</sup> Although, still maintaining the importance of a properly basic belief, as Graham Oppy points out, Plantinga's stance has changed over the years and in his later works<sup>580</sup> he is less absolute in his rejection of natural theology.<sup>581</sup>

#### 8.4.3 Moore's Biblical Objections

One of Andrew Moore's objections centres on the interpretation of Pauline theology.<sup>582</sup> Biblical justification for natural theology usually uses the whole of Romans chapter 1 starting at verse 18. Moore instead starts at verse 16.<sup>583</sup> In doing so he gives a different perspective on Paul's thinking from which he

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<sup>577</sup> Alvin Plantinga, *God and Other Minds: A Study of the Rational Justification of Belief in God* (London: Cornell University Press, 1967), 111

<sup>578</sup> Plantinga, *God and Other Minds*, 1-5

<sup>579</sup> Alvin Plantinga, 'Is Belief in God Properly Basic?' *Noûs* 15, no.1 (1981), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2215239> (16 March 2019)

<sup>580</sup> Alvin Plantinga, 'The Prospects for Natural Theology', in James E. Tomberlin (ed.), *Philosophical Perspectives 5: Philosophy of Religion 1991* (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1991), 312, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2214098.pdf> (16 March 2019)

<sup>581</sup> Graham Oppy, 'Natural Theology', in Deane-Peter Baker, (ed.), *Alvin Plantinga* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511611247.002> (16 March 2019)

<sup>582</sup> Andrew Moore, 'Should Christians do Natural Theology?', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 63, no.2 (2010), 130-136, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0036930610000013> (17 October 2018)

<sup>583</sup> <sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'The one who is righteous will live by faith.'<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. (Romans 1:16-18)

argues that 'there is no evidence here that he [Paul] thinks the revealed gospel needs to be shown to be rational by appeal to natural theology.'<sup>584</sup>

Furthermore, for those of us who accept Romans 1 as pointing towards Paul using natural theology, Moore uses other passages including 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.<sup>585</sup> These he considers endorse his perspective that Paul did not consider natural theology appropriate. However, Moore does not refer to Paul's mission to Athens (Acts 17:16-34), whereas argued later (8.7), Paul makes use of natural theology as an apologetic.

### **8.5 Natural Theology within the Embrace of Revealed Theology**

Such arguments made me ask, why God who created the world cannot also be revealed through it. The beginning verses of John's gospel<sup>586</sup> emphasise that it is God who has brought all things into being and in Romans<sup>587</sup> we are reminded that God's character is reflected through creation. Psalms sing the praises of God as creator<sup>588</sup> and passages in Isaiah<sup>589</sup> and Job<sup>590</sup> illustrate the details and riches of creation, and God's ongoing involvement in it.

However, John Brooke suggests that this view maybe too simplistic and natural theology needs to be understood in the context of time and culture. For in 'premodern cultures...the existence of God was rarely an issue,' therefore

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<sup>584</sup> Moore, 'Should Christians', 130-131

<sup>585</sup> Moore, 'Should Christians' 135,

<sup>586</sup> John 1:2-3

<sup>587</sup> Romans 1:18-20

<sup>588</sup> Psalm 19:1

<sup>589</sup> Isaiah 42:5

<sup>590</sup> Job: 38, 39

scriptural references such as these are 'an affirmation of faith in, not an attempted proof of, divine wisdom.'<sup>591</sup>

By considering natural theology as such an affirmation of faith, other theologians have taken the perspective that natural theology need not be dismissed. However, for them it only makes sense when it 'is brought within the embrace of revealed theology.'<sup>592</sup> For it is only in doing so that the issues, such as suffering and evil, can be properly addressed. This was part of the motivation that led Zagzebski to offer her Divine Motivation theory, McGrath a new Christian natural theology and most recently Wright his epistemology of love.

#### *8.5.1 Zagzebski: Divine Motivation Theory*

Zagzebski wanted to find a resolution to the tension between ethics and religion. Her work was further driven by finding a solution to, what she called three sets of puzzles,<sup>593</sup> the third of which was natural theology, which, included the problem of evil and suffering.<sup>594</sup> Having rejected Divine Command Theory, as it 'ignores the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation,'<sup>595</sup> she offers instead a virtue based ethics built around emotions and people's desire to imitate. In the secular world this will be someone they admired. Zagzebski takes this a step further to look at what would this mean if that person to be imitated was God. The result was Divine Motivation Theory, (DMT)<sup>596</sup> where, 'God's

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<sup>591</sup> John Hedley. Brooke, 'Natural Theology', in Gary B. Ferngren (ed.), *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2017), 141

<sup>592</sup> David A. Wilkinson, 'The Revival of Natural Theology in Contemporary Cosmology', *Science and Christian Belief* 2, no.2 (1990), 115

<sup>593</sup> Zagzebski, *Divine Motivation*, 8

<sup>594</sup> Zagzebski, *Divine Motivation*, 15-17, 304-338

<sup>595</sup> Linda Zagzebski, in William J. Wainwright, (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 360-361,

<https://doi.org/10.1093/0195138090.001.0001> (26 April 2019)

<sup>596</sup> For a full explanation of this see Zagzebski, *Divine Motivation*, 187-346

motives are perfectly good and human motives are good in so far as they are similar to the divine motives.’<sup>597</sup>

The inference is that imitating God is always positive. However, trying to fully imitate God is not necessarily desirable. The attributes of God as revealed by Jesus’ incarnation, such as his love, perfect life, prayer, forgiveness are ones we can try and model. But Zagzebski theory breaks down when trying to imitate Jesus’ life as a single, Jewish, male. For it would be like trying to make a world of clones and take away the individual self that God has created each of us to be.

Furthermore, striving to imitate other aspects of God’s divinity relating to his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence could have negative consequences, as Daniel Johnson put it, ‘if each of us started thinking of ourselves as divine governors of the whole world, we would have problems.’<sup>598</sup>

Nevertheless, despite these and other criticisms,<sup>599</sup> such as Kayla Emerson argument that Zagzebski’s theory ‘fails to adequately meet the criteria for an

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<sup>597</sup> Linda Zagzebski, ‘The Virtues of God and the Foundations of Ethics,’ *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers*, 15, No.4, (1998), 539, <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/faithandphilosophy/vol15/iss4/7U> (23 July 2021)

<sup>598</sup> Daniel M. Johnson, ‘The Objectivity of Obligations in Divine Motivation Theory: On Imitation and Submission,’ *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 40, No.4, (2012), 514 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9795.2012.00533.x> (23 July 2021)

<sup>599</sup>

ethical theory,<sup>600</sup> DMT does provide a way of looking at natural theology from a Christian perspective, and the importance of 'Christology for ethics.'<sup>601</sup>

### 8.5.2 McGrath: A Christian Natural Theology

McGrath considers that 'there is no question' that natural theology can prove the existence of God.<sup>602</sup> However, rather than rejecting natural theology he instead offers a different approach, what he calls a Christian natural theology. He sets this out in his books 'The Open Secret' and 'Re-imagining Nature.' Here he shows instead of natural theology being a basis for faith and understanding of God, a Christian natural theology helps to enrich and deepen the faith a Christian already has.<sup>603</sup>

For McGrath the key to this is seeing natural theology through the Trinitarian lens of Christianity<sup>604</sup> and a 'tripartite framework...of truth, beauty and goodness.'<sup>605</sup> Although the Holy Spirit is hardly mentioned, the importance for McGrath is that, through the Trinity, Christian natural theology can realise a connection between the 'suffering and pain of the natural order on the one hand, and of Jesus of Nazareth on the other.'<sup>606</sup>

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<sup>600</sup> Kayla Emerson, 'Divine Motivation Theory: Psychology in the Guise of Ethics', (Thesis. Rochester Institute of Technology, 2014), 1, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/55c1/c559e4a42f6f0ba6b0d690a60f1054a965b5.pdf> (26 April 2019)

<sup>601</sup> Zagzebski, in Wainwright, *Philosophy of Religion*, 360

<sup>602</sup> Alister McGrath, *The Open Secret: A Vision for Natural Theology*, Kindle Book, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) Loc:276/9870

<sup>603</sup> McGrath, *Re-imagining*, 176

<sup>604</sup> McGrath, *Re-imagining*, 137

<sup>605</sup> McGrath, *The Open Secret*, Loc:5559/9870

<sup>606</sup> McGrath, *Re-Imagining Nature*, 64

### 8.5.3 Wright: *The Epistemology of Love*

For Wright, as well as the message of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, it is the message of new creation which also speaks into the suffering of our world. Wright also believes the cultural context to be essential when considering the place of natural theology. This is something he talks about in his 2018 Gifford lectures when looking at Epicureanism, both as a foundation of the Enlightenment and its influence on today's western society.<sup>607</sup>

Furthermore, Wright argues that to dismiss the Bible from a reasoned discussion of natural theology, by saying it is special revelation and therefore does not deal with the real world, is wrong.<sup>608</sup> For, he argues, much of the Bible, especially the Gospels are all about the world people lived in. So, if history is part of the natural world then 'you cannot keep the question of Jesus and history out of natural theology.'<sup>609</sup> Therefore, using the lens of Jesus and new creation Wright proposes a natural theology rooted in an 'epistemology of love.'<sup>610</sup> Which has brought a new dimension to the discussion of natural theology.<sup>611</sup>

I agree that without the lens of Christianity natural theology cannot point towards a Christian understanding of God. Nonetheless I am not ready to dismiss the idea that natural theology may have a role in helping Guiding members on their spiritual journey. As I outlined earlier mission is about helping

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<sup>607</sup> N.T. Wright, 'The Fallen Shrine: Lisbon 1755 and the Triumph of Epicureanism', *Gifford Lectures 2018*, no.1, video file, <https://www.giffordlectures.org/lectures/discerning-dawn-history-eschatology-and-new-creation> (18 May 2019)

<sup>608</sup> Wright, 'The Fallen Shrine'

<sup>609</sup> Wright, 'The Fallen Shrine'

<sup>610</sup> N.T. Wright, 'The Waiting Chalice: Natural Theology and the Missio Dei', *Gifford Lectures 2018*, no.8, video file, <https://www.giffordlectures.org/lectures/discerning-dawn-history-eschatology-and-new-creation> (18 May 2019) Time:12.55-13.00

<sup>611</sup> N.T. Wright, *History and Eschatology: Jesus and the Promise of Natural Theology* (London: SPCK, 2019)



an individual to take the next step on their spiritual journey, with initial stages relating to the recognition of a spiritual dimension to life. Engaging with natural theology can provide the opportunity for someone to ask questions and to engage with different issues relating to the natural world, and to explore how these relate to their beliefs. For some this may lead to a Christian interpretation, for others the journey may take them somewhere different. Nevertheless, through engagement with natural theology a valid step has been taken on the spiritual journey.

Having shown that natural theology can provide a way for adults to engage spiritually I return to the research question, '*Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*' and ask the whether there is a place for natural theology in Guiding and if so how appropriate a vehicle for mission might it be?

## **8.6 Baden-Powell and Natural Theology**

Although, there is little work on children and natural theology, it is referred to in aspects of educational research. Jacqueline Watson also mentions it when considering the work of Hay and Nye,<sup>612</sup> whilst Olivera Petrovich has written about it from the perspective of developmental psychology.<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> Jacqueline Watson, 'Whose Model of Spirituality Should Be Used in the Spiritual Development of School Children?', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 5, no.1 (2000), 97-98, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713670894> (20 May 2019)

<sup>613</sup> Olivera Petrovich, *Natural-Theological Understanding from Childhood to Adulthood* (London: Routledge, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315674964> (20 May 2019)

Nevertheless, learning about God through the natural world has, as I demonstrated (2.3.2) been part of Scouting and Guiding since their inception.

This for Baden-Powell meant,

...the study of Nature in her numerous forms, and the appreciation of all her wonders and beauties...plants, the animals, the birds, the rocks...The mystery of the sea and the heavens, and the fascination of the colouring of the scene... Even where the out-of-doors observation is difficult, there are new wonders to be investigated in every inch of our own anatomy, the knowledge of which...can be of infinite value...in showing the Creator's marvellous work.<sup>614</sup>

Although, not using the term 'natural theology' Baden-Powell ideas of nature-study incorporate the different elements of it. For, through studying the three-fold aspects of the wonders, spirit and beauties of nature,<sup>615</sup> young people would be pointed towards the attributes of life, love and happiness, which in turn would point them to the God 'around and within us'<sup>616</sup> (Figure 2.1).

Building on Baden-Powell's thinking Guiding encourages its members to reflect on the natural world as part of exploring the spiritual dimension of the Promise. This is something which is reflected in the new programme resources, especially those linked to the care of creation.<sup>617</sup>

Baden-Powell never suggested that nature study should take the place of adherence to a religious faith, rather it was a way of complementing their

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<sup>614</sup> Baden-Powell, 'Fundamental Ethics', *B.-P.'s Outlook*: July 1924

<sup>615</sup> Interestingly, such a Trinitarian approach is echoed in McGrath's tripartite framework of truth, beauty and goodness (8.5.2).

<sup>616</sup> Baden-Powell, *Rovering*, 197

<sup>617</sup> For example, Girlguiding UK, 'Biodiversity blitz', *Guide Unit Meeting Activity Card: Have Adventures*, 2018

understanding of God. Something made clear to the first Guide leaders (officers) in the 1912 handbook.

The story of God's work is a fit subject for Sunday instruction. For this reason the course is suggested for use on Sundays in a Christian country is – to attend church or church parade, and then seek to devote part of the day to Nature study.<sup>618</sup>

Although, Baden-Powell recognised that the God some Guides worshipped would not be that of Christianity.<sup>619</sup> It was Christianity that he expected the majority of Guides and Scouts in Britain to follow and that they would be familiar with the Christian faith through school, church and the wider society.<sup>620</sup>

For Baden-Powell 'nature-study' provided an opportunity for those who did not practice a faith to reflect on what God meant in their lives and for those who did to deepen their understanding.

You know from your lessons at school [about the sun and the planets] And when you hold up a shilling at arms's length and look at the sky, the shilling covers no less than two hundred of these suns, each with their different little worlds circling round them. And you begin to realise what an enormous endless space the Heavens comprise. You realise perhaps for the first time the enormous work of God.<sup>621</sup>

## **8.7 Paul's Use of Natural Theology**

In Paul's address to the Athenians (Acts 17:16-34) he initially draws alongside his listeners and makes a connection with them. He neither condemns nor commends what they are doing, instead he uses it as a starting point to present them with an alternative perspective. Not only does Paul display an

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<sup>618</sup> Baden-Powell A & Baden-Powell R (1912) p457 (Officers' responsibilities)

<sup>619</sup> Baden-Powell, *Girl Guiding*, 45

<sup>620</sup> This is reflected in the way Baden-Powell uses words such as God, Religion, Christian and Church, throughout his handbooks.

<sup>621</sup> Baden-Powell, *Girl Guiding*, 43

understanding of Athenian religious practices but also their culture and way of thinking.

In contrast to this usual Christocentric approach,<sup>622</sup> Paul argues instead from the basis of natural theology. Furthermore, although drawing on Old Testament concepts of God, he does not quote from the Hebrew Scriptures. Instead, he quotes examples from the Greek poets, which would be more familiar to them. This is a discrepancy that has led some, including C. Barrett<sup>623</sup> and Luke Johnson<sup>624</sup> to argue that this speech must be entirely Luke's own composition. Such arguments generally centre on Paul's decision in his letter to the Corinthians<sup>625</sup> to preach nothing but Christ crucified, maintaining that any other approach is therefore not Pauline.

However, such conclusions, like Moore's, fail to put Paul's teaching in its wider context. Despite Moore's interpretation (8.4.3), I contend that Paul's letter to the Romans<sup>626</sup> shows that he considers natural theology to be an appropriate conversation partner.

<sup>19</sup>For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup>Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse; <sup>21</sup>for though they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. <sup>22</sup>Claiming to be wise, they became fools; <sup>23</sup>and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. <sup>24</sup>Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup>because they exchanged the truth

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<sup>622</sup> Typically, 1 Corinthians 2:2

<sup>623</sup> C K. Barrett, *Acts: A Shorter Commentary* (London, T&T Clark, 2002), 265

<sup>624</sup> Luke Timothy. Johnson, *Sacra Pagina: The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 319

<sup>625</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:1-4

<sup>626</sup> Romans 1:18-25

about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever! Amen. (Romans 1: 19-25)

Firstly, these verses show that Paul recognised that gentiles had a natural theology of their own upon which the Christian faith could be built and secondly Paul shows that knowledge of God can be gained from God's revelation in creation. Furthermore, if as Paul argues he tries to become all things to all people,<sup>627</sup> then it makes sense that he meets the Athenians where they are and uses the language and concepts, they are familiar with. In this case the Christology is not as James Dunn suggests subordinated to theology,<sup>628</sup> rather it becomes integrated with it.

Moreover, understanding the culture he was trying to connect with was very important in Paul's apologetic. The idea that people already had a spirituality which can be built on was something that he recognised and therefore as he explored Athens, he spent time trying to understand it and look for points of contact between himself and his listeners. Having done so, Paul chooses natural theology as the most appropriate conversation partner. For, although it was not 'logically inevitable'<sup>629</sup> that natural theology would lead to God, Paul wanted the Athenians to see that the order and design of the universe was 'most fittingly understood as the creation of the living God.'<sup>630</sup>

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<sup>627</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:20-23

<sup>628</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Peterborough: Epworth, 1996), 231

<sup>629</sup> John Polkinghorne, 'Where is Natural Theology Today?' *Science and Christian Belief* 18, no.2, (2006), 171

[https://www.scienceandchristianbelief.org/serve\\_pdf\\_free.php?filename=SCB+18-2+Polkinghorne.pdf](https://www.scienceandchristianbelief.org/serve_pdf_free.php?filename=SCB+18-2+Polkinghorne.pdf) (17 October 2018)

<sup>630</sup> Polkinghorne, 'Where is Natural Theology Today?', 179

However, who this God is, what this God is like and how this God relates to the world are not necessarily clear. Although natural theology may provide an initial step in understanding God and the created universe it does little to help answer other ultimate questions. This is where the lens of revealed theology is needed to provide answers relating to questions such as destiny and purpose, as well as the challenges of suffering and evil already mentioned (8.3.6). Such questions provide major theological challenges for adults. How appropriate then is it to introduce them to children?

## 8.8 The Theology of Children

It is through their interaction with the created world that children, as Keith White notes, are most likely to ask profound questions;<sup>631</sup> questions where ‘they delve into many theological realms...in a very direct and spontaneous way.’<sup>632</sup> They also make statements and observations which show ‘rich ideas about nature, time, history, relationships and death.’<sup>633</sup> This was also demonstrated in the Focus Groups ability where individual Guides demonstrated their ability to reflect on theological issues such as prayer (6.4.3), and the nature of evil (6.4.4). Such a capability of girls to engage with theology, ‘although lacking the sophisticated level of articulation of an older mind,’<sup>634</sup> was something which Anne Phillips also showed, with creation being ‘the starting point of much of the girls’ theological reflection.’<sup>635</sup>

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<sup>631</sup> Keith White, ‘Creation’, in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, 50-53

<sup>632</sup> White, ‘Creation’, 52

<sup>633</sup> White, ‘Creation’, 53

<sup>634</sup> Anne Phillips, *The Faith of Girls : Children's Spirituality and Transition to Adulthood* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 103

<sup>635</sup> Phillips, *The Faith of Girls*, 107

Such interaction is leading to a growing awareness with children of global issues and their place in the stewardship of creation.<sup>636</sup> Maybe natural theology could, as Baden-Powell envisaged (8.6), provide an opportunity for Guiding members not only to ask about the God who created the world, but also their part in caring for that creation. Something I come back to in my final conclusions (9.3.2).

Peter Privett also recognised the value of such 'theological insights offered by children as they grapple with the big existential questions of life.'<sup>637</sup> This led him and Anne Richards to draw together a range of contributions showing how children bring new perspectives to theological themes such as sin, forgiveness, grace, judgement, heaven and hell.<sup>638</sup> The final contribution, in the book, is from 15-year-old Philip Fryar. He reflects on how his understanding of heaven and hell changed as he grew older and how external influences including school, church, home, books and films affected his thinking.<sup>639</sup> Through reading his and other contributions two aspects struck me.

#### *8.8.1 Developing Theological Language*

Firstly, most children referred to in Richards and Privett's book, had a Christian background through church, home or school. This gave them basic Christian doctrines and Bible stories as a starting point for their thinking. With only three of the Guides interviewed going to church regularly their understanding of Christianity was likely to be limited. As recent surveys show, children's basic information surrounding Christianity is very low. Within the Guide age group

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<sup>636</sup> White, 'Creation', 62-64

<sup>637</sup> Peter Privett, 'Prologue', in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, xix

<sup>638</sup> Anne Richards, and Peter Privett, *Through the eyes of a child: New insights in theology from a child's perspective* (London: Church House Publishing, 2009)

<sup>639</sup> Philip Frayer, 'Heaven and Hell', in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, 269-283

46% of children are not sure whether Jesus was a real person, with 27% saying he is a fictional character<sup>640</sup> and 30% unaware that the nativity story is in the Bible.<sup>641</sup> Therefore, although the Guides may be able to talk about doctrines such as forgiveness and judgment, they probably have limited Christian reference points to use. Without which they may not have the tools to ask deeper questions and make sense of their spiritual experiences.

### *8.8.2 Supporting Children's Theological Understanding*

Secondly part of helping children to make sense of these experiences is the need to provide the appropriate environment for them to be able to explore and communicate this. Not only the physical space but, as Nye discusses, the emotional and auditory space too.<sup>642</sup> These and the other elements of her criteria, for nurturing children's spirituality S.P.I.R.I.T: (Space, Process, Imagination, Relationship, Intimacy and Trust), rely on the facilitation of adults.

This is not only about the equipment and resources, but the attitude and role of those leading. For it is noticeable when adults 'bring their own needs and desires and agenda'<sup>643</sup> then children recognise what they say has less value. However, when children are encouraged to explore what they are thinking, without critical comment it can bring an 'intuitive response that makes their theology fascinating.'<sup>644</sup> In wanting to help Guiding members relate to the spiritual dimension of their Promise then it would be the responsibility of adults in the church to create such an environment.

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<sup>640</sup> Olofinjana and Butcher, *Talking Jesus*, 11

<sup>641</sup> Bible Society, 'Open the Book Fact Sheet' undated

<sup>642</sup> Nye, *Spirituality*, 42-45

<sup>643</sup> Peter Privett, 'Play', in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, 111

<sup>644</sup> Sandra Millar, 'Forgiveness', in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, 148



Reflecting on the theology of children I agree with Privett and rather than 'ministry 'to' [the Guides]...I now want to say a ministry 'with' and 'alongside' [the Guides].'<sup>645</sup> Part of being with and alongside someone means understanding more of the world through their eyes. So, what would it mean to look at theology from the perspective of a child? What different insights would that give about God? Such questions form the basis of Child Theology. Whereas the Theology of Children is about doing theology for and with children in order to be better able to minister to them. Child Theology is all about using individual children to understand God better.<sup>646</sup>

## 8.9 Child Theology

Taking the inspiration from Jesus placing a child in his midst,<sup>647</sup> the term Child Theology (CT) was developed by Keith White in 2001,<sup>648</sup> with the establishment of the Child Theology Movement (CTM)<sup>649</sup> the following year. Haddon Willmer and Keith White talk about how Jesus' disciples were having a theological argument about who was the greatest and how 'just as Jesus invented parables to get under the defences of resistant hearers so he placed a child to get through a theological blockage.'<sup>650</sup>

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<sup>645</sup> I have substituted 'children' for 'the Guides' - Peter Privett, 'Prologue', in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, xix

<sup>646</sup> For a more detailed explanation see, Francis Young, 'Child Theology: A Theological Response', in *Anvil: Journal of Theology and Mission* 35, no.1 (2019), 5-12, <https://www.Churchmissionsociety.org/resources/editorial-child-theology-anvil-vol-35-issue-1> (29 April 2019),

<sup>647</sup> Matthew 18:1-10

<sup>648</sup> Keith J. White 'Insights into Child Theology through the Life and Work of Pandita Ramabai', *Transformation* 24, no.2, (2007), 95-10, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43052697> (2 November 2018)

<sup>649</sup> Child Theology Movement, <http://www.childtheology.org/> (29 April 2019),

<sup>650</sup> Haddon Willmer, and Keith J. White, *Entry Point: Towards Child Theology with Matthew 18*, Kindle Book, (London: WTL Publications, 2015), Loc:749/3711

Child Theology is not as Sandra Millar suggests to 'make us think about God as a child.'<sup>651</sup> Rather just as feminist or liberationist theology, among others, 'desire to shed fresh light on the whole of theology...by using the lens of a particular group or perspective.'<sup>652</sup> Then Child Theology has been developed to give fresh theological insights through the lens of individual children.

An early example was the 2004 Consultation in Cape Town.<sup>653</sup> Two symbolic children were placed in the midst, a 12-year-old soldier and a 13-year-old prostitute. As delegates 'fleshed out' these children by sharing stories of similar children, they used them to reflect on the doctrine of sin.

Some discovered that the understanding of sin they held became problematic in the presence of these children...So there had to be hard work and constructive new thinking.<sup>654</sup>

Since its inception interest in Child Theology has grown. Work by Marcia Bunge<sup>655</sup> and Vivienne Mountain<sup>656</sup> look at how Child Theology related to other areas of child development and spirituality. Furthermore, the clear distinction between Child Theology and the Theology of Children has lessened, with a growing shared interest and overlap, as people explore how changing their theological perspective to that of a 'child in the midst' makes a difference to their theology and practice.<sup>657</sup> Moreover, the importance of Child Theology as

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<sup>651</sup> Millar, 'Forgiveness', in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*, 163

<sup>652</sup> White 'Insights into Child Theology', 95

<sup>653</sup> John Collier (ed.), *Report of the Cape Town Consultation on Child Theology 25- 27 February 2004*, [http://www.childtheology.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Cape\\_Town\\_Report\\_full.pdf](http://www.childtheology.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Cape_Town_Report_full.pdf) (2 November 2018)

<sup>654</sup> Collier, *Report of the Cape Town Consultation*, 18

<sup>655</sup> Marcia J. Bunge, 'The Child, Religion, and the Academy: Developing Robust Theological and Religious Understandings of Children and Childhood', *The Journal of Religion* 86, no.4 (2006), 549-579, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/505894> (16 November 2018)

<sup>656</sup> Vivienne Mountain, 'Four links between Child Theology and children's spirituality', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 16, no.3 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436X.2011.617729> (2 November 2018)

<sup>657</sup> For examples see, White, 'Creation', 62 and Millar, 'Forgiveness', 146-164, in Richards and Privett, *Through the eyes*

mission has been heightened with the spring 2019 edition of the *Anvil Journal* dedicated to it.<sup>658</sup>

From looking at Willmer and White's work it would be easy to conclude that the only method of conducting Child Theology is that of 'child in the midst.' Especially as it is the method adopted by other practitioners of Child Theology such as Paul Nash.<sup>659</sup> However as White writes 'to this point in time the Child Theology Movement (CTM) has not come up with an agreed definition of child theology.'<sup>660</sup> This is something which Konz picks up on as he suggests a different approach; that of 'child-attentive.'<sup>661</sup>

### **8.10 Guide in the Midst**

Nevertheless, placing a 'child in the midst' is a powerful image and makes me ask the question, what happens if I place a Guide in the midst? If I take an 11-year-old from Summerhill Guides, what questions might I ask and what insights may arise from them?

- What are the things that shape her life and the community she lives in?
- What does it mean that she is part of generation Z?
- What affect does social media have on the stresses and strains in her life?
- What would make her happy?
- What does it mean for her to be invited to take part in the annual Remembrance Service, Christmas Tree Festival or Love Gwersyllt Day?
- What does creation mean to her?
- What does the phrase in the Promise 'to be true to myself and develop my beliefs' mean to her?

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<sup>658</sup> *Anvil: Journal of Theology and Mission* 35, no.1 (2019), <https://www.Churchmissionsociety.org/resources/editorial-child-theology-anvil-vol-35-issue-1> (29 April 2019)

<sup>659</sup> Paul Nash, 'Placing a Sick Child in our Midst', *Anvil*, 43-45,

<sup>660</sup> Keith J. White, 'Child Theology as Theology', *Anvil*: 14,

<sup>661</sup> D.J. Konz, 'Child Theology and its Theological Method, Past and Future', *Anvil*, 24-27

Similar questions were raised by each of the Child Theology Consultations to help ‘flesh out’ the culture and context of the different ‘symbolic’ children in their midst.<sup>662</sup>

Having built up a picture of this Guide, how as I wrestle with aspects of Christian doctrines such as creation, sin, grace and forgiveness, does it change my view with her in front of me? As I reflect on this, I begin to recognise that this could, in some instances, highlight a difference between my espoused and operative theology.<sup>663</sup> Where for example, my espoused belief in each person as a sinner, ‘since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God’ (Romans 3:23) wrestles with my operative belief of what level of responsibility can a child have for their own sin and how much is it the effect of what others have done or not done to them. However, a more detailed analysis of this and others would need more reflection and space than this study allows. Nevertheless, what it does suggest is that in working with Guiding members, it may not be just about helping them take the next step on their spiritual journey, but it may also be about the next step that I take on mine.

## 8.11 Conclusions

I began this chapter looking at the primary research ‘*Is the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry?*’ and asking whether the tension between the integrity of the Christian faith and the

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<sup>662</sup> For example, John Collier (ed.), *Report of the First Brazil Child Theology Consultation 25 – 29 September 2006*, 10-15, <https://www.moortownbaptistChurch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CT/Brazil%20Report%20English%20full.pdf> (2 November 2018)

<sup>663</sup> This is something that some who took part in CTM consultations recognised, for instance, John Collier (ed.), *Report of the Prague Consultation on Child Theology: 1-6 April 2005*, 17 <https://www.moortownbaptistChurch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CT/Prague%20report%20full.pdf> (2 November 2018)

ethos of Guiding could be resolved. This led to asking the question ‘what can a person know about God independently of Scripture and how valid is that knowledge?’ Which I have explored this through the theme of natural theology.

#### *8.11.1 Natural Theology is Compatible with Christianity*

Despite Theological, Philosophical, and Biblical objections natural theology is compatible with Christianity. Natural theology was the theme of Paul’s teaching in Romans chapter 1 and his central apologetic in his address to the Athenians. Furthermore, it is not only in the Bible that we see God’s character reflected through creation, but in the world in which we live. Using the lens of natural theology can bring different dimension to Christianity. Whether it is through considering the ethics of Zagzebski’s ‘Divine Motivation Theory’ , deepening our understanding by reflecting on McGrath’s ‘truth, beauty and goodness’ or rooting it in Wright’s epistemology of love.

#### *8.11.2 Natural Theology Provides a Suitable Method of Spiritual Exploration for Guiding Members.*

Learning about God through the natural world was part of the foundational ethos of Guiding established by Baden-Powell and using the natural world to explore the spiritual dimension of the Promise is reflected in the current Guiding programme. Furthermore, by applying the apologetic that Paul used in Athens then, natural theology could provide a way to help Guiding members make connections, ask questions and explore the spiritual dimension of their Promise. Moreover, children are capable of using their interaction with creation to ask profound questions and reflect theologically on issues. These all contribute to helping them explore further the spiritual dimension to their lives.

*8.11.3 Children Need Appropriate Reference Points to Articulate their Thinking.* To be able to articulate their thinking then children need a chance to develop appropriate reference points. Introducing Christian concepts such as love, forgiveness, prayer may be helpful. However, these need to be in the context of an appropriate environment. This is not only through the use of suitable resources but moreover the attitude of those, usually adults, facilitating. The temptation for the adult to always see things from their perspective is challenged by 'Child Theology.' Applying these insights to that of 'Guide in the midst,' raises questions about what an individual Guide's spiritual journey would look like in the year 2021 and how her engagement with natural theology could also provide her with suitable reference points to explore her beliefs.

## **8.12 Tethered and Untethered Spiritually**

In the literature review I introduced Alexander and McLaughlin concept of tethered and untethered spiritually (2.7.2). The former is embedded in a religious faith and 'takes its shape and structure from various aspects of the religion with which it is associated... [whilst] untethered spirituality...lack a definite shape and structure.'<sup>664</sup> Alexander and McLaughlin identify 5 interrelated strands to illustrate the difference,

The first strand 'involves an emphasis on a search for meaning...[the] second strand the cultivation of "inner space..." A third strand refers to the manifestations of spirituality in life...a fourth strand 'stresses the notion of distinctive responses to aspects of the natural and human world' A fifth strand of the spiritual domain is collective or communal... dimension relating to the significance of shared memory and meaning, a sense of belonging, and a commitment to common behaviors.'<sup>665</sup>

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<sup>664</sup> Alexander and McLaughlin, 'Education in Religion and Spirituality', 359

<sup>665</sup> Alexander and McLaughlin, 'Education in Religion and Spirituality', 359-360

Roger Marples takes issue with Alexander and McLaughlin concept. He argues that untethered spiritual is unintelligible and furthermore makes no sense for children within an educational context.<sup>666</sup> Ron Best, takes a different interpretation and through taking each of Marples' arguments shows how even untethered spiritually can still help children engage and make sense of their spiritual journey.<sup>667</sup> As a way to help Guiding members explore the spiritual dimension of the Promise the concept of tethered and untethered has potential. The concept of being tethered may seem uncomfortable, producing images of an animal being tied up and unable to roam free. Untethered spirituality, with the emphasis on freedom could seem more attractive. However, there is also security in being able to move within a boundary that a religion, such as Christianity, affords.

Building on this concept maybe natural theology could become a suitable tether. Having already shown that Baden-Powell's concept of nature study links to spiritual development then this could provide Guides with a tether from which to explore their beliefs. When offered by the church such a tether may initially be linked to Christianity, giving it suitable reference points and boundaries from which to explore. To maintain the method of Guiding such a tether needs to be loosely secured, with the final choice of what they tie it on to up to the individual girl. This is a concept along with other themes that I draw together in the final chapter.

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<sup>666</sup> Roger Marples, 'Against (the use of the term) 'spiritual education'', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 11 No.2, (2006), 293-306, DOI: [10.1080/13644360600797313](https://doi.org/10.1080/13644360600797313) (23 July 2021)

<sup>667</sup> Ron Best, 'In defence of the concept of 'spiritual education': a reply to Roger Marples,' *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 13, No.4, (2008) 321-329, DOI: [10.1080/13644360802439466](https://doi.org/10.1080/13644360802439466) (23 July 2021)

## **Chapter 9**                      **Conclusions and Recommendations**

*Church might be the opportunity for some if they have an idea of doing something in the community, we might be the vehicle to help them. We've not the expertise but we've got the small volunteer workforce who are interested in helping others. So when the girls, Girl Guides want to do something ... what facilities can we offer, we might be able to help, if they want to be able to use the Recourse Centre on a Saturday morning we'll hire it, we'll put on tea and coffee for people and they come and do what that want, and they're working with us. (Geoff)*

Finally, I come to the fourth task, the pragmatic task and Osmer's last key question 'how might we respond?' In doing so this chapter draws together the main findings of the study and sees how they relate to answering the research questions. It makes the conclusion that *'the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise is a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry.'* It then looks at the limitations of the study before making recommendations of how the findings can be implemented.

This chapter begins with a summary of study showing the journey taken (9.1). It then takes each of the research questions in turn looking at their key findings (9.2-9.4) before concluding that *'the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise is a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry.'* (9.5). The limitations of the study including the lack of response from church leaders (9.6) and gender are explored (9.7) before three recommendations are made relating to Raising Awareness (9.8). Improving Communication (9.9) and Developing Spirituality (9.10). The chapter finishes with my next step (9.11) and some final thoughts (9.12).



## **9.1 Summary of the Journey Taken**

In the literature review I demonstrated the lack of research into the spiritual dimension of the Promise, a gap which this study aimed to address. I traced the development of the spiritual dimension of the Promise and as part of understanding more fully what spirituality is and what it could mean to girls in Guiding, I came to a definition of spirituality, for the study, and explored the nature of children's spirituality.

The practical research aspect of the study was shaped by a modified form of the Pastoral Cycle, using Osmer's key questions, and followed a convergent parallel mixed methods design. It used the techniques of Participant Observation including semi-structured interviews, Focus Groups and a National Online Survey to gather information relating to the research questions.

The study revealed the extent of the existing relationships between churches and Girlguiding Units, including the impact of the attitude of church leaders. It highlighted the willingness of Guiding leaders to develop this relationship and drew attention to the difference between the espoused belief of Girlguiding UK and the operative belief of many Guiding leaders, which I reflect on in more detail (9.2.2).

The study showed that Guiding leaders would welcome help with the spiritual dimension of the Promise. This in turn highlighted the tension between the integrity of the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding, which was explored through a theological reflection on the theme of natural theology. I now draw together the different elements of the study as I look in more detail at each of the research questions.

## **9.2 What is the existing relationship between Churches and Guiding Units?**

In looking at this question I have drawn together different aspects from the study, into the themes of 'Presence,' 'Positive relationships' and 'Negative relationships' the later also included clergy attitude, which I looked at in more detail in the limitations and recommendations for this study.

### *9.2.1 Presence*

Despite Girlguiding's stance, that it is not a Christian organisation and, that no one faith should have preference I have shown that strong links do exist, across the whole of the UK and Channel Islands, between Girlguiding Units and local churches, particularly Anglican ones. Furthermore, 68% of respondents to the Survey revealed their Unit met on church premises. Taking a very conservative estimate I proposed this could represent a minimum of 3500 girls in 490 Units meeting weekly on church premises (7.3.2.).

Moreover, these relationships existed not only through Units using churches and halls for meetings but through their participation in a rich variety of church services and events. Remembrance Sunday provided the strongest link, with seasonal services including Harvest, Mothering Sunday and Christmas (including Christingle) also popular. Such relationships also revealed the tension between the espoused belief of Girlguiding UK, with its non-religious policy and the operative belief of many Guiding leaders who feel that having a link with a church is important.

### *9.2.2 Espoused and Operative Belief*

This is an important finding whose implications have a direct bearing on the answer to this research question. Without the willingness of leaders to allow their Units to develop relationships with local churches it would make it almost impossible for churches to use the Promise as a basis for mission and ministry. However, Girlguiding UK is cautious about developing such relationships because they are not considered inclusive as, 'holding meetings in a place of worship, or attending religious events, might make it look like your unit is for girls of only one faith...[and] doing a reflection or song that refers to a god wouldn't be inclusive for all girls.'<sup>668</sup>

Despite such an espoused belief it is notable from this study how many Units meet on church premises and attend services. Furthermore, many Units say a prayer and the majority continue to use the traditional Brownie and Guide closing songs. 'Brownie Bells' has the words, 'O Lord our God, thy children call, grant us thy peace and bless us all.' Whilst Guide 'Taps' ends with 'God is nigh.' Reflecting on this led to three possible reasons why the operative beliefs of leaders may be at such variance with the espoused belief of the organisation, Tradition, Faith and Community Involvement.

Traditionally, many Units have always met in a local church hall, sung songs about God, had prayers at the end of the meeting and contributed to the life and worship of their local church. For some leaders it is just part of what Guiding is and has been, especially if they were members as child and considered Guiding a Christian organisation. To find out that Guiding is not the Christian

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<sup>668</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'Religious Differences and Guiding'

organisation they had always presumed, can be for some quite shocking, just as the last change to the wording of the Promise showed.

Secondly some leaders may feel that Christianity has something important to offer the girls and they want them to have the opportunity to engage with it. This would be the case for practicing Christians like myself and those in Summerhill Guides. However, although only 27% of leaders in the Survey noted they were also members of a church, 77% of leaders wanted to develop the relationship. It is possible that if asked many would identify themselves as Christian, or at least sympathetic towards it. Furthermore, as outlined earlier the term spirituality is very nebulous and difficult to understand. To be able to associate spirituality with Christianity may make it easier to understand.

Finally, community involvement. The majority of Units seem aware of a Christian presence in their community through a church building, mainly Anglican. In many communities it is the church which is associated with community activities and events and involved in fundraising for different charities. When looking at how to serve their community Units may look to do something to help the church or work in partnership with it. This does not mean Units would not consider working with other faith groups, but other than in larger towns and cities, where such places of worship are likely to be found, many Units will find it much harder to make such links.

Without further research, beyond the scope of this study these three reasons are only speculative and other areas such as age of leaders and previous

experience in Guiding may have a significant impact. Nevertheless, these are possible explanations for difference between the exposed belief of Guiding and the operative belief of many members. It is this difference that churches can build on when forming relationships.

### *9.2.3 Positive Relationships*

Where relationships worked well, and there was a 'willingness of a particular church to welcome others...[into] the real life of the community,'<sup>669</sup> benefits for both were seen. When, for instance, 'the Brownies were asked to help the church be more environmentally friendly' (Brownies-Anglican-Wales) or in 'how much the Guides loved helping the old ladies at church make memory boxes,' (Guides- Anglican-NW).

A welcome, that engendered a sense of belonging, I showed was very important to leaders and just little things made all the difference. Where the church 'asked us what we needed...' (Guides-Methodist-NE), 'Gives us their magazine free...so we know what is going on' (Brownies-Anglican-Anglia), or even 'gives the Brownies and Rainbows eggs at Easter and presents at Christmas' (Brownie/Rainbow-Anglican-Midlands). However, for other Units a totally different atmosphere was created.

### *9.2.4 Negative Relationships*

Negative experiences were recorded by 59% of leaders, with 90% of these relating to Anglican churches. Significantly it came down to whether they felt they were wanted. When they were never invited to things, or made to feel unwelcome when they came. When their needs were disregarded, because

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<sup>669</sup> Steven Croft, *Jesus' People: What the Church should do next* (London: Church House Publishing, 2009), 33

'They [the church] needed our cupboard' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Scotland) and visits were only to complain, 'the vicar came to tell us that the cloths hadn't been put away...' (Guides-Anglican-SW), some felt the only option was to move, 'We used to meet at the church & were a church sponsored unit, but they treat us badly & charged a ridiculous amount of rent forcing us to find another meeting place (they didn't think we could),' (Brownies-Anglican-Midlands). The key relationship in all of these appeared to be the attitude of the church leader towards the Unit (7.4.6).

One of the surprising and disappointing findings of the research was the attitude of church leaders, significantly Anglican clergy and the difference this made. In the Survey 59% of leaders chose to record negative experiences, 90% of these were with Anglican churches. Negative relationships included a lack of interest 'the vicar never comes to see us,' (All-Anglican-Midlands), a sense of disapproval, 'We had good links but current vicar actively disapproves of us and we are no longer welcome at any events' (Brownies-Anglican-Wales) and the type and style of services they led,' 'we have a new vicar who doesn't 'do' children at all well' (Guides-Anglican-SW). The lack of welcome in particular had an impact on whether leaders wanted to develop the relationship.

### **9.3 How Might the Relationship between Churches and Guiding Units be Developed?**

Of those who responded the online Survey, 77% of leaders wanted to develop a closer relationship with their local church. From these the main themes of 'Improved communication,' 'Child friendly services' and 'The Promise' emerged.

### *9.3.1 Improved Communication*

For many leaders just better communication would make all the difference.

Simple changes, including invitations to services and events. A recognition that advanced notice is needed, 'no good telling me on thursday about saturday and expect us to come,' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Midlands) or 'To be told 2 days ago we can't meet this week as the church wants the hall,' (Brownies-Anglican-Midlands). And the courtesy of having a discussion around the need to increase the rent, utilise their cupboard and noticeboard space for others rather than 'tell[ing] us that we had to take our stuff out of the cupboard as they needed it for the WI' (Guides-Anglican-Wales).

### *9.3.2 Child Friendly Services*

More child friendly services were wanted by 31% of leaders (7.5.2) and the efforts, particularly of a new vicar to make this happen, were appreciated. 'We have [a] new Vicar so he is working out which services...can be made child/family friendly,' (Guide/Brownie-Anglican-SW). The challenges of doing so where the congregation were elderly, 'our church is mainly elderly...our vicar is trying to have 2 or 3 child friend[ly] services,' (Brownies-Anglican-NW), or the lack of attendance from the girls, which was linked both to parental involvement and the competing needs of other activities.

### *9.3.3 The Promise*

Help from the church with the spiritual dimension of the Promise would be appreciated by 42% of Guiding leaders. The latest change, with its wording, 'to be true to myself and develop my beliefs' had caused challenges. Not only in how people reacted to removal of the word God from the Promise, but the difficulty leaders were having in understanding it and therefore communicating

this to their girls. This difficulty may have provided the catalyst for leaders to ask for support. This in turn provided new opportunities for churches.

#### **9.4 How can the Spiritual dimension of the Promise be used by Churches to facilitate mission and ministry?**

The study showed that Guiding leaders welcomed the opportunity for support with the Promise. Furthermore, I demonstrated through the Guide Focus Groups that Guides themselves were willing to explore what 'to develop my beliefs' meant to them, and able to articulate their thoughts.

##### *9.4.1 Understanding Spirituality*

To help Guiding members understand the spiritual dimension of the Promise it was necessary to decide what 'spirituality' was and how children's spirituality might be developed. For the purpose of this study, I defined spirituality as, 'a journey, in relationship with others which helps an individual develop their inner life, in order to make a difference to themselves and others' It was such a definition which I felt was both in keeping with the ethos of Guiding and maintained the integrity of the Christian faith.

Part of understanding how to develop children's' spirituality was impact of different factors whose influence I revealed through the Guide Focus Groups.

Girls including today are part of the emerging 'Generation Z.' As well as struggling with issues relating to wellbeing. One of the characteristics of this generation is the rise in having no religion. This is something I demonstrated within the Guide Focus Groups, where only 3 Guides considered themselves members of a religious faith. This did not necessarily mean the others were anti-religion or even uninterested. It appeared to be more about religion not holding a place in their lives or the lives of their families and friends.



#### *9.4.2 Prayer*

A further finding was the importance to the Guides of prayer. This was independent of their belief in God. Although prayer was most often used in a time of crisis, the positive impact it had on their feelings, such as warmth and peace were also mentioned. Prayer has also been linked to wellbeing.

Offering activities which allow Guides to explore prayer and ways of praying may provide suitable opportunities. One suggestion would be setting up a simple prayer station. This could be an interactive display, changed regularly and situated in the church hall where a Unit meets. Accessible not only by members of the Unit but by parents, and other venue users.

#### *9.4.3 Community Partnership*

There was a feeling that Holy Trinity church could help facilitate members of Summerhill Guides in developing their beliefs by working with them out in the community, rather than expecting them to attend services

Suggestions about greater involvement in services, or events were what I had expected to hear from the leaders of Summerhill Guides and members of Holy Trinity church. Instead, their focus was on mission. Meeting the Guides in an environment more familiar to them and partnering with them in community projects. Such projects would be suggested by the church or Guides. They felt it would not just be about doing something for the community, but also an opportunity for the Guides see what Christianity looked like in action. The ensuing relationship they explained could then encourage Guides to ask questions that would allow church members to explain what their faith meant to them, and if appropriate encourage the Guides to come into the church building. One such community initiative could centre around Remembrance Sunday.

#### *9.4.4 Remembrance Sunday*

The study revealed that the biggest link which Guiding Units and churches had is on Remembrance Sunday with 78% of leaders in the Survey listing it. I recognise that for some churches the annual Remembrance service provides little flexibility for changes to be made. Nevertheless, there might be ways of making small changes, inviting the girls to sing, or read, take up poppies or the collection during the service. Even inviting them to the front so they can see, may make all the difference. Alternatively, there may be a chance to set up some activities and refreshments after the main service that they can engage with.

Remembrance Sunday may provide an opportunity to invite Units to something else. Especially as this may be the only time of year, they attend a church service. However, the experience they have may determine whether they would want to come back again. For if coming means, 'we all have to sit on the floor there is no room for us,' (Rainbows/Brownies-Anglican-Scotland) or 'when all the church children left for Sunday School our girls had to sit there as we were told there was no room for them.'(Brownies-Congregational-Wales) then it will be more difficult.







#### *9.4.5 Care of Creation*

In the literature review I introduced Alexander and McLaughlin's concept of tethered and untethered spiritually,<sup>670</sup> which I explored further in the theological reflection. I suggested that Baden-Powell's concept of Nature Study could be a way of helping a Guide find a tether to link them to a faith. I also argued that although natural theology is limited and needs the lens of Christianity to make

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<sup>670</sup> Hanan Alexander, and Terence H. McLaughlin, 'Education in Religion and Spirituality', in Nigel Blake et al., (eds.), *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 356–373, 359-360

full sense of issues such as suffering, it does provide an opportunity for Guiding members to develop their beliefs. Therefore, natural theology could provide the tether for churches to use with local Guiding Units. However, in keeping with the ethos of Guiding it would be up to the individual what she finally tied her tether to. One aspect of natural theology is the care of creation. Today, as well as appreciating nature, Guiding members are encouraged to take up initiatives to care for it. Such ideas have been imbedded in the ‘Have Adventures’ and ‘Take Action’ themes of the latest Guiding Programme (Figure 9.1). Furthermore, it is enshrined in the Anglican Communion’s fifth ‘Mark of Mission’<sup>671</sup> (Figure 9.2).

Theme		Overview of Theme
Be Well		Girls learning to look after themselves and others’ physical and mental wellbeing.
Have Adventures		Girls getting out and about to explore the outdoors and nature.
Skills for My Future		Providing the building blocks for girls to become independent and successful in life
Know Myself		Girls getting to know who they are, and their role in Girlguiding and the wider world.
Express Myself		Girls getting to showcase and explore their creative side.
Take Action		Girls being empowered to make a difference and use their voice to help their local community and the wider world.

**Figure 9.1: New Girlguiding Programme for all Sections**

<b>The Five Marks of Mission</b>	
1)	To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2)	To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3)	To respond to human need by loving service
4)	To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5)	To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

**Figure 9.2: The Anglican Communion’s Marks of Mission**

<sup>671</sup>The Anglican Communion, ‘Marks of Mission’, <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx> (18 June 2017)

In helping Guiding members make a connection to God through nature I proposed Paul's use of natural theology, as an apologetic in Athens (8.7), as an appropriate model. However, rather than quoting from the poets they were familiar with,<sup>672</sup> I would argue that a more contemporary starting point would be David Attenborough's Blue Planet programme showing the effect of plastic waste.<sup>673</sup> This has already raised awareness and generated changes in people's thinking.<sup>674</sup> Include Guiding members like Ella and Caitlin who, as part of a Brownie badge, were inspired to start a campaign to get plastic toys removed from children's burger meals.<sup>675</sup>

## 9.5 Conclusion

### 9.5.1 Mission and Ministry Potential

Engaging with Guiding Units could provide a way for some churches to address issues of the absence of children and young people, which the 'Harris Report' (1.1.1) and others have highlighted.

Of those Guiding leaders who completed the Online Survey, 68% met on church premises, giving the potential of 4000 girls (7.3.3). If this number is extrapolated, then of the 500,000 Girlguiding UK members potentially 340,000 girls could be meeting on church premises. This is very unlikely, as I recognise that the 0.3% of Girlguiding leaders, who completed the Survey were not necessarily representative of all leaders, especially in their interest in the Christian faith.

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<sup>672</sup> Acts 17: 28

<sup>673</sup> BBC, 'The dangers of plastics in our oceans' from *Blue Planet II* 'Episode 7: Our Blue Planet', 10 December 2017, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05q49hq> (31 July 2019)

<sup>674</sup> Fiona Gell, 'The Blue planet effect: the plastics revolution is just about to start', *The Guardian*, 25 March 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/mar/25/plastics-revolution-marine-life> (31 July 2019)

<sup>675</sup> Girlguiding UK, 'War on Plastic', *Girlguiding Digital Team* (31 July 2019), <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/our-stories-and-news/blogs/war-on-plastic/> (14 August 2019),

Nonetheless, if only 10% of Units met on church premises this would still be around 50,000 girls. Furthermore, with average Unit numbers of 10-20 then a church may easily have, for example, 15 Brownies aged 7-10 meeting weekly in its church hall, as well as potential contact with their families. Although, Guiding members cannot be expected to engage with the Christian faith, the opportunity to create links with those who meet on church premises is there. Furthermore, this study has demonstrated the desire of leaders to further the engagement.

#### *9.5.2 Answering the Primary Research Question*

In this study I have demonstrated the willingness of Guiding members to engage with the spiritual dimension of the Promise. I have suggested how Prayer Activities, Community Partnerships and The Care of Creation could be used by churches to help Guiding members explore what 'to develop my beliefs' may mean to them. Moreover, these activities would maintain both the integrity of the Christian faith and the ethos of Guiding. Nonetheless, through them Guiding members are still offered the chance to explore the spiritual dimension to their lives and take the next step on their spiritual journey.

Therefore, in answering the primary research question I am confident to state that, 'the Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise **is** a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry.' Before moving to the recommendations, it is important to address the potential limitations.

### **9.6 Limitations**

The study highlighted two key limitations. The lack of response from church leaders and the impact of gender.

### 9.6.1 Lack of response from Church Leaders

The lack of response from church leaders, especially men, either in the Pilot Study or the Survey is of concern. In a thesis designed to answer the question 'is *the spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry.*' the voice of its potential recipients has not been heard. Has this therefore invalidated the research findings? I would argue, instead, that it has highlighted a significant challenge that churches need to address; that of the relationship between churches and Guiding Units, especially those who meet on church premises.

Furthermore, the Survey was designed to complement the core of the research, which was the Participant Observation study and Guide Focus Groups. This centred on one church and associated Guiding Unit. Therefore, while accepting that the voice of more church leaders would have added a different dimension to the research, I would argue that it does not detract from the findings.

In trying to establish reasons why church leaders did not participate, my first consideration was it showed a flaw in the Survey design or the recruitment process. Which after examination was dismissed (7.3.1). Without additional investigation beyond the scope of this study it was not possible to come to a conclusion.

Nevertheless, some possibilities maybe drawn from the Pilot Study and the responses of the clergy. Some clergy were clearly oblivious of the Units that met in their church halls. This may have been because the names Rainbows, Brownies and Guides on the questionnaire conveyed nothing to them, so, they were unaware of the nature of the group and the opportunities presented.

However, others, having been told about the groups, were clearly uninterested. Furthermore, the results from the Survey suggested that clergy engagement with Units was not just a problem within the Diocese of St Asaph but within the wider UK and Channel Islands. This could be attributed to several reasons.

### *9.6.2 Time and Relevance*

It is recognised that the pressure on individual church leaders is great. Just within the diocese of St Asaph the number of stipendiary clergy were cut from 81 to 72<sup>676</sup> in 10 years with a further reduction envisaged. This means that church leaders, like myself, must take on ever increasing responsibilities. As Leslie Francis shows this has an impact on wellbeing, with aspects such as feeling drained and frustrated all being contributory factors towards emotional exhaustion.<sup>677</sup>

Additionally, with clergy needing to make choices about how they allocate their time it is understandable that many would not see taking part in this study or, links with local Guiding Units a priority. Furthermore, with the heightened awareness of safeguarding issues, it could be argued that male clergy may be more reluctant to visit a group of girls. This leads onto the second limitation that of gender.

## **9.7 Gender**

This study has focused on Girlguiding. However, as it is female organisation then consideration needs to be given to the impact of gender on its findings. As

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<sup>676</sup> Helen Jones, 'Budget 2019: Notes for Diocesan Standing Committee', point 12, September 2018

<sup>677</sup> Leslie Francis, Patrick Laycock, and Christine Brewster, 'Work-Related Psychological Wellbeing: Testing the Balanced Affect Model among Anglican Clergy', *Religions* 8, no.7 (2017), article:118, 6 <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel8070118> (19 July 2019)

Girlguiding and Scouting have the same foundational ethos it raises the question of, what is the potential difference to the research findings if this study had been carried out Scouting members, especially boys? Although Sarah Mills<sup>678</sup> and Fiona Shelton<sup>679</sup> have considered the impact of gender on Scouting in the United Kingdom, they have not looked at it with regard to the spiritual dimension of the Promise.

Alyssa Bryant's research revealed that as boys grew older their lives were less shaped by faith.<sup>680</sup> This linked to Tucker Brown who determined that more women than men engaged with religion and spiritual practices.<sup>681</sup> The reasons surrounding this are unclear, with different studies suggesting that it could be the result of biology,<sup>682</sup> gender orientation,<sup>683</sup> or social relationships.<sup>684</sup>

Although Bryant's findings suggested that, 'women are more spiritually and religiously inclined than are men,'<sup>685</sup> she wanted to be cautious considering that it may be that the 'language used to assess spirituality...inaccurately reflects the spiritual dimensions relevant to and present in the lives of men.' Such thinking is reinforced by Nye who having observed boys and girls engaging with spiritual

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<sup>678</sup> Mills, 'Scouting for girls?'

<sup>679</sup> Fiona Shelton, 'Gender: stories and lies Debunking myth and determining reality' in Anne O'Grady, Vanessa Cottle (eds.), *Exploring Education at Postgraduate Level: Policy, theory and practice* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 49, 44-51

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<sup>680</sup> Alyssa N. Bryant, 'Gender Differences in Spiritual Development During the College Years', *Sex Roles* 56, no.11-12, (2007), 837, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11199-007-9240-2> (17 January 2019)

<sup>681</sup> For example see, I. Tucker. Brown, et al., 'Age and gender effects on the Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) scale: A cross-sectional analysis, *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 5, no.3 (2013), 94, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030137> (16 June 2019)

<sup>682</sup> Rodney Stark, 'Physiology and faith: Addressing the "universal" gender difference in religious commitment', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41, no.3 (2002), 504, , <http://www.jstor.org.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/stable/1387459> (17 June 2019)

<sup>683</sup> Edward H. Thompson, 'Beneath the Status Characteristic: Gender Variations in Religiousness', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30, no.4 (1991), 391-392, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1387275> (17 June 2019)

<sup>684</sup> Bryant, 'Gender Differences', 845,

<sup>685</sup> Bryant, 'Gender Differences', 843,



activities differently, argued that this may be the result of cultural upbringing rather than gender.<sup>686</sup> A conclusion which Tim Esau also reached.<sup>687</sup>

Consequently, there is no reason to presume that carrying out this research with boys in Scouting would have produced different results. Nevertheless, further research into whether girls and boys in Scouting do develop spirituality differently would be of interest. Therefore, the following recommendations could also be relevant to churches having links with Scouting Groups.

### **9.8 Recommendation 1: Raising Awareness**

This research suggests churches may be unaware of the potential of having a group of children meeting weekly on their premises who are interesting in developing their beliefs. Furthermore, because the word God is no longer part of the Promise, some churches may think that Girlguiding was a Christian organisation that has now become secular.

I suggest that raising awareness would include helping churches understand what Girlguiding is including:

- 1) The potential number of young people involved
- 2) That Girlguiding has never been a Christian organisation
- 3) Girlguiding's non-religious but spiritual ethos

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<sup>686</sup> Nye, *Children's Spirituality*, 88-90

<sup>687</sup> Tony Eaude, 'Do young boys and girls have distinct and different approaches and needs in relation to spiritual development?', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 9, no.1, (2004), 65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364436042000200825> (16 June 2019)

## **9.9 Recommendation 2: Improving Communication**

Building relationships is the key to effective mission and ministry. In this research I have called attention to how invitations to events and services, or just someone from church visiting the Unit, can make all the difference to the relationship and how 77% of Guiding leaders in Survey wanted to develop the links with their local church. The biggest barriers were poor communication that emphasised the feeling of not being welcome and the attitude of the church leader.

In building up the relationship I would suggest

- 1) Praying for the Unit regularly and letting them know it is happening
- 2) Designating someone to keep in regular touch with the Unit leader both to pass on any information above services and events as far in advance as possible and receive any information from the Unit.
- 3) The church leader (or a designated person) makes a positive visit<sup>688</sup> to the Unit once a term for a few minutes.
- 4) If changes need to be made to the Unit meeting place or the time of their meeting, then it would be helpful to consult with the Unit to explain why.

## **9.10 Recommendation 3: Developing Spiritually**

42% of Guiding leaders were interested in their local church supporting the spiritual dimension of the Promise. In supporting girls as they explore what 'to develop my beliefs' means for them, churches have the opportunity to show what the Christian faith is and how it can help people handle different parts of their life. In doing so, churches are inviting girls to take the next step on their

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<sup>688</sup> ie not to pass on any negative comments or information

spiritual journey. Without compromising the integrity of the Christian faith or the Ethos of Guiding. The following suggestions arise from this study.

- 1) Set up a simple prayer station in the church hall or building.
- 2) Share a Community project with a Girlguiding Unit
- 3) Invite a Unit to take part in a Care of Creation Initiative.
- 4) Consider what changes could make a service (including Remembrance Sunday) more child friendly.
- 5) Ask the local Girlguiding Unit what changes (if any) may make it easier for their girls to attend a service.

### **9.11 Next Steps**

It has been very clear from the research that the attitude of the church leader makes all the difference to a relationship and their disinterest is of concern. Moreover, 57% of Guiding leaders listed an Anglican church as the one they are linked with. Therefore, I see raising awareness among Anglican clergy of what it means to have Girlguiding Units meeting on their church premises is essential if relationships are to be developed and the potential for mission and ministry realised. Exploring how the research could be used to raise that awareness I see as my next step.

### **9.12 Final Thoughts**

Having a faith, as I showed, was one of Baden-Powell's founding principles of Guiding and Scouting. Atheism or irreligion to Baden-Powell not only prevented

a person from reaching their potential but was also 'dangerous', as it gave young people a distorted view of the world and undermined happiness.<sup>689</sup>

The spiritual dimension of Girlguiding Promise may provide one opportunity which churches can take to equip girls with spiritual tools and resources to help them navigate today's world. In doing so, churches are inviting girls to take steps on their spiritual journey, how far they go on that journey and where it takes them will be different for each girl, as Geoff said,

I think that with Holy Trinity linking to the guides we will give them the opportunity to examine the Christian belief. Maybe some will meander off and go elsewhere and not ever become involved in the Christian faith, whereas others will see it as an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding.

The Spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise is not only a suitable vehicle for mission and ministry, but an exciting opportunity too.

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<sup>689</sup> Robert Baden-Powell, *Rovering to Success: A Guide to Young Manhood* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1922), 176

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Pilot Study: Participant Information and Consent Letter
- Appendix B: Key Question Areas for Semi-Structured Interviews
- Appendix C: Spirituality Questionnaire
- Appendix D: Pilot Study Questionnaire 1: Clergy
- Appendix E: Pilot Study Questionnaire 2: Girlguiding Leaders
- Appendix F: Original Selection of Churches for Pilot Study
- Appendix G: Participant Observation Information Sources
- Appendix H: Recording Sheet Guides
- Appendix I: Focus Group: Participant Information and Consent Letter: Parents
- Appendix J: Focus Group: Participant Information and Consent Letter: Guides
- Appendix K: Focus Group: Risk Assessment
- Appendix L: SurveyMonkey Questionnaire
- Appendix M: Interview: Participant Information and Consent Letter

## Appendix A: Pilot Study Participant Information and Consent Letter



### Participant Information Sheet

Thank you for being willing to help with my dissertation research for my Doctorate in Theology and Ministry. Please read this Participant Information sheet and fill in the attached consent form.

I want to look at how churches can build on existing links with Girlguiding UK units that meet on their premises. In doing so I want to explore how churches can create appropriate partnerships with these units. The aim is to help Guide members explore the spiritual dimension to their promise and Churches to reflect on their own mission and discipleship.

To enable me to carry out the research effectively, I am conducting this pilot study to find out the type of links Churches and Girlguiding Units (Rainbows, Brownies, Guides) may already have with local churches. This will help me to establish suitable questions and a core set of answers to construct a questionnaire for use with a larger number of people.

Throughout the research confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and questionnaires, interview recordings and transcripts and other information obtained will be stored appropriately. When presenting the information I will use pseudonyms or group data together in a way that does not allow the identification of individuals unless express permission has been sought and given. If you have any queries relating to this then please speak to me.

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#### Research Consent Form

Have you read the participant information sheet?	Yes/No
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study?	Yes/ No
Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions?	Yes/ No
Have you received enough information about the study?	Yes/ No
Who have you spoken to? Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Prof/Revd _____	
Do you consent to participate in the study?	Yes/ No
Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study * at any time and * without having to give a reason for withdrawing and * (if relevant) without affecting your position in the University?	Yes/ No
Signature _____	Date _____

## **Appendix B: Key Question Areas for Semi-Structured Interviews**

### **General Welcome & Thank you**

- reminder about purpose of the research
- check that it will be alright to record the interview
- say only I will have access to interview, I will transcribe it and then after it is no longer needed, I will get rid of both

### **Spirituality Questionnaire**

- How did you feel about it?
- Were there any surprises for you as you answered it?

### **Link between Church and Guides**

- What are the existing links between the with Summerhill Guides/ Holy Trinity Church
- Do you feel that strengthening the link with Summerhill Guides/ Holy Trinity Church is worthwhile?

#### *(Church members)*

- how does this relate to our mission & ministry?
- including vision statement (to grow God's Kingdom of love in our Lives, in Our Church and in our Community)
- How do you think this would fit into 2020 Vision the wider ministry of the Church in Wales?
- what benefits do you see for the Guides/ Church in strengthening the links between them?
- What challenges could this bring?

### **Spiritual Dimension of the Guide Promise**

[if necessary explain the Guide Promise and give them a copy to refer to]

- Do you feel that there is an opportunity for Holy Trinity Church to engage with the Guides through the words of the Promise?
- What things do you think that Holy Trinity can do to facilitate that exploration?
- What would be the benefit for Church/ the Guides?
- any problems or challenges?
- how could those be addressed?

### **Ending**

- any other thoughts or comments?
- anything you want to ask?
- Thank you

## Appendix C: Spirituality Questionnaire

The following six questions provide an opportunity for you to reflect on your own Spirituality. This can be defined as your relationship with God or whatever you would consider an ultimate power to be.

Each question measures an attribute of spirituality and is written as an uncompleted phrase with two answers at either end of a scale. You are invited to circle the number (0-10) which most closely correlates to your own feeling as this time.

**Please circle the number along the continuum that best reflects your initial feeling.**

**1) In terms of the questions I have about life, my spirituality answers**

no questions											absolutely all my questions
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**2) Growing spiritually is**

of no importance to me											more important than anything else in my life
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**3) When I am faced with an important decision, my spirituality**

plays absolutely no role											is always the overriding consideration
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**4) Spirituality is**

not part of my life											the master motive of my life, directing every other aspect of my life
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**5) When I think of the things that help me to grow and mature as a person, my spirituality**

has no effect on my personal growth											is absolutely the most important factor in my personal growth
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

**6) My spiritual beliefs affect**

no aspect of my life											every aspect of my life
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	



## Appendix D: Pilot Study Questionnaire 1: Clergy

### How can the Church support the spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise?

1) Name of Church (optional)

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2) Location of Church (eg Town/ rural village etc)

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3) Average Sunday Attendance: adults \_\_\_\_\_ children \_\_\_\_\_

4) Average Midweek Attendance adults \_\_\_\_\_ children \_\_\_\_\_

5) Which uniformed groups meet on your Church premises? (please ring)

Guides Brownies Rainbows Beavers Cubs Scouts Explorer Scouts  
Girls Brigade Boys Brigade

6) Which other uniformed groups does your Church have contact with? (please ring)

Guides Brownies Rainbows Beavers Cubs Scouts Explorer Scouts  
Girls Brigade Boys Brigade

7) What existing links do you have with these Units? (continue overleaf if needed)  
(eg come to a monthly family service, help at the Church fete, read prayers on Remembrance Sunday, Vicar goes into the Unit, Guide leader is a Sunday School Teacher, perform their own nativity play at the carol service.)

8) What, if any, additional links would you like to develop in the future? (continue overleaf if needed)

Thank you for your help.

If have any queries or you want any further information, then please contact me.

## Appendix E: Pilot Study Questionnaire 2: Girlguiding Leaders

### How can the Church support the spiritual dimension of the Girlguiding Promise?

1) Name of Unit (optional)

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2) Name of Church you are linked with (optional)

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3) Location of Unit (eg Town/ rural village etc)

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4) Type of Unit: Senior Section   Guides                      Brownies      Rainbows

5) Numbers in Unit:      Adult Leaders \_\_\_\_\_      Adult helpers \_\_\_\_\_      Young  
Leaders \_\_\_\_\_      Girls \_\_\_\_\_

6) What existing links do you have with your local Church? (continue overleaf if needed)

7) What, if any, additional links would you like to develop in the future? (continue overleaf if needed)

Thank you for your help.  
If have any queries or you want any further information, then please contact me.

## **Appendix F: Original Selection of Churches for Pilot Study**

### **4.5.1 Initial Identification**

As nearly all diocesan clergy had had the chance to respond, and as Churches were the major recipients of this study, the initial identification was based on looking at the clergy questionnaires. Four criteria were established:

- A) Whether clergy had named their Church(es).
- B) Whether there were potential Units meeting on Church premises
- C) Whether clergy had indicated an interest in developing further connections with these Units by suggesting potential links.
- D) Whether clergy who had suggested their Church may want to develop further links could be matched to a Unit who had also indicated wanting to develop these links.

From these six potential Case Study Churches and Girlguiding Units were identified. Only 2 of these matched criteria D. However as not all Girlguiding leaders had attended trainings D was considered desirable rather than essential.

### **4.5.2 Refining the Criteria**

Having identified potential Case Studies, eight additional criteria were used to narrow down the selection;

- A) Clergy willing to participate
- B) Parochial Church Council (PCC) willing to participate
- C) Girlguiding Unit willing to participate
- D) Distance from home not prohibitive
- E) Units established for at least 2 years with at least 12 girls meeting regularly.
- F) At least one Unit leader having been qualified for 2 or more years.
- G) Contrasting situations
- H) Personal links not too close

From these, three Churches and Units were identified and informal discussions were held with the clergy and at least one of the Girlguiding leaders. As a result, two Churches and Units were selected as potential Case Studies, with one in reserve.

### **4.5.3 Potential Case Study A**

Church A was in an urban village within 30 minutes of home. The Vicar had been in post over ten years and welcomed the idea of making stronger links with the Brownie Unit who met weekly in their Church hall. The PCC also thought this would be a good idea as they had recently been discussing ways of making church services more attractive to children and families.

The Brownie Unit had 24 girls and participated regularly in Church coffee mornings and other fundraising events. It had been running for over 50 years but had only moved into the church hall three years previously, when one of the leaders, who attended services every couple of months, took over the Unit. Each of the three Brownie leaders had

been qualified over 4 years and all were keen to help the Unit make stronger connections with the Church.

#### 4.5.4 Potential Case Study B

Church B was in an urban community. The Vicar had been in post over 3 years and was keen to see how he could encourage the Guides, Brownies and Rainbows who met weekly on the Church premises. The PCC were also supportive of the idea.

Each of the Guide leaders ran at least two of the sections and had done so for between 4 and 40 years. Although the girls attended the Church for Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Christmas services they wanted to see what further links could be developed and how the girls could be encouraged to join in more.

#### 4.5.5 Change in Direction

However, before beginning the Case Studies both Churches decided that participation would no longer be viable. In Case Study A, the Vicar moved, at the Bishop's suggestion, to a group of Churches elsewhere in the diocese. Although a new incumbent would be appointed, what their view would be on strengthening the link with the Brownie Unit and, the direction they would want to take the Church in was unknown, therefore the PCC felt unable to proceed.

In Case Study B, three of the established Girlguiding leaders left. One retired due to ill health, one moved out of the area and a third left due to new family commitments. Although new leaders were being trained the Unit and PCC were not sure how the new relationship would develop. Furthermore, the Vicar was concerned about how the new Church in Wales structure of Mission Areas (1.3) was going to affect him. It was probable that some of the Churches he had responsibility for, including the Case Study Church may change. Therefore, he did not want to begin something he was not able to see to completion.

The change to Mission Areas brought about a time of uncertainty to other Churches and clergy. Although the reserve Case Study Church when approached did not say no, they were reluctant, and it was more as a favour to me that they did not withdraw.

However, this phase of the study also coincided with my appointment as the incumbent of Gwersyllt Parish. The Parish had existing links with Girlguiding and as explained earlier (3.2.3) it was decided to change the direction of the Case Study slightly and use my new Church and local Units for this.

## Appendix G: Participant Observation Information Sources

<b>Holy Trinity Church</b>		
<b>Written Information</b>	<b>People talked to</b>	<b>Events/Meetings attended</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Parish Profile</li> <li>-History of church</li> <li>-magazines</li> <li>-posters (services &amp; social events)</li> <li>-registers (Service, Baptism, Wedding, Banns, Burial)</li> <li>-annual reports</li> <li>-annual returns</li> <li>-website material</li> <li>-leaflets</li> <li>-Noticeboards</li> <li>-Service sheets</li> <li>-Hymn books &amp; music</li> <li>-Reader Rota</li> <li>-Sidesperson Rota</li> <li>-Flower Rota</li> <li>-Annual Accounts</li> <li>-Bibles</li> <li>-lectionary</li> <li>-Grave stones</li> <li>-churchyard regulation</li> <li>-headstone permission forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-PCC members</li> <li>-After school children's group leaders (Pebbles)</li> <li>-Messy Church Team</li> <li>-Reader in Training</li> <li>-Organist</li> <li>-Choir members</li> <li>-verger</li> <li>-sidespeople</li> <li>-cleaners</li> <li>-8.30am service members</li> <li>-Wednesday service members</li> <li>-Housebound members</li> <li>-Pastoral Assistants</li> <li>-Worship Leaders</li> <li>-Pastoral Contacts (funeral, wedding, Baptism, home communions)</li> <li>-Area Dean</li> <li>-Deanery Lay &amp; ordained ministers</li> <li>-Archdeacon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-PCC Meetings</li> <li>-Sunday services</li> <li>-Social events</li> <li>-Choir practice</li> <li>-Bible studies</li> <li>-Conformation Groups</li> <li>-Baptism Meetings</li> <li>-Christmas Tree Festival</li> <li>-Christingle service</li> <li>-Pebbles</li> <li>-Funerals</li> <li>-Baptisms</li> <li>-Weddings</li> <li>-Messy Church</li> <li>-Messy Church planning meetings</li> <li>-Pastoral Assistant Meetings</li> <li>-Worship leader Meetings</li> <li>-Theological for Life weekly course</li> <li>-Prayer meetings</li> </ul>

<b>Local Community</b>		
<b>Written Information</b>	<b>People talked to</b>	<b>Events/Meetings attended</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Community Council meeting agendas &amp; minutes</li> <li>-local police reports,</li> <li>-news paper articles,</li> <li>-social media information</li> <li>-Community posters</li> <li>-Community noticeboards</li> <li>-websites</li> <li>-Local history information</li> <li>-Wrexham Council Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Undertakers</li> <li>-Local Council Members</li> <li>-Clerk to community council</li> <li>-Chairs of School Governors</li> <li>-Headteachers</li> <li>-Deputy headteachers</li> <li>-School Administrators</li> <li>-School Cleaners/ caretakers</li> <li>- Resource Centre Staff</li> <li>-Gwersyllt Library staff</li> <li>-Police Community support Officers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-School Assemblies</li> <li>-School prize giving's</li> <li>-School Fairs &amp; Shows</li> <li>-School visits</li> <li>-Resource Centre events</li> <li>-Meals in local cafes</li> <li>-Library book group</li> <li>-Library Scrabble group</li> <li>-Beaver, cub &amp; Scout meetings</li> <li>-Congregational Church evening services &amp; Church in the Park</li> <li>-Congregational Church after school Bible Club</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Planning applications</li> <li>-Signs</li> <li>-Congregational Church website, newsletters, &amp; posters</li> <li>-School newsletters</li> <li>-School inspection reports</li> <li>-School prospectuses</li> <li>-School annual reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Police Officers</li> <li>-Mangers of local shops &amp; businesses</li> <li>-Congregational Church ministers</li> <li>- Congregational Church children's group leaders</li> <li>-Nursing home mangers</li> <li>-Local Scouting Leaders</li> </ul>	
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<b>Local Girlguiding Units</b>		
<b>Written Information</b>	<b>People talked to</b>	<b>Events/Meetings attended</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-programme plans</li> <li>-letters</li> <li>-emails</li> <li>-District/ Division notices</li> <li>-Emails/ website information from Girlguiding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Clwyd (County)</li> <li>-Cymru (Wales)</li> <li>-UK (National)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Rainbow, Brownie &amp; Guide Leaders</li> <li>-District Commissioner</li> <li>-County Commissioner</li> <li>-Assistant County Commissioner</li> <li>-Chair of local Trefoil Guild</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Rainbow, Brownie &amp; Guide meetings</li> <li>-Girl guiding Training events held at Resource Centre</li> <li>-Guide planning meetings</li> <li>-Wrexham Guide Shop</li> <li>-Trefoil Guild meeting</li> </ul>

**Appendix H: Focus Group: Record Sheet (example)**

<b>Guide Focus Group record Sheet</b>	
<b>Q1</b>	<b>Understanding what I believe is really important in my life</b>
Name of Guide	Notes/ comments

## Appendix I: Focus Group: Participant Information and Consent Letter: Parents



### Participant Information Sheet

Dear Parent/Guardian

As some of you are aware I have now been the Vicar of Holy Trinity Church for a year. I am also an experienced Guide leader and I have been the leader of Hope Guides for the last 8 years.

As you may know part of the promise girls make when they become a Guide says, "I will be true to myself and to develop my beliefs." To help girls engage with this part of their promise and get a better understanding of what this may mean, I would like to play some games with the girls at Summerhill Guides. The games will be linked to the spiritual dimension of Girlguiding and not to the expression of any particular faith.

As well as helping me get to know the Guides this is also something that will contribute towards my research for my Doctorate in Theology and Ministry. In this I want to look at how churches can create appropriate partnerships with the Guide units that meet in their communities. The aim is to help Guide members explore the spiritual dimension to their promise and Churches to reflect on what they can do to support them. Any information gathered will be made anonymous so that no individual Guide can be identified.

To enable me to do this please read this Participant Information sheet and fill in the attached consent form and return it to Summerhill Guides.

To enable me to carry out the research effectively, I want to play some games with the Guides in their patrols or small groups allowing them to think about some of the things they believe and take notes of some of their ideas and answers. In order to do this I will make sure of the following,

- No Guide will have to answer any question if she does not want to.
- The elements of the game will not be linked to any particular faith.
- The games will not involve any writing.
- Individual needs will be taken into consideration

Confidentiality and child protection procedures will be followed throughout. I hold current DBS (child protection checks) for both Girlguiding UK and The Church in Wales and will be following all policies and procedures linked to these institutions.

Any information that I collect will be stored and used in accordance to the regulations that I must follow.

When giving the information in my research I will use pseudonyms for each Guide and group data together in such a way that the identification of individual Guides will not be possible.



I would like to be able to including sweets in one of the games and will take into account any dietary requirements or any other needs that are expressed and provide suitable alternatives if necessary.

Thank you for letting your daughter participate in this. If you have any queries relating to this then please contact me.

Yours faithfully

Paulette Gower

**Research Consent Form**  
(Please return to Summerhill Guides)

Name of daughter \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Has your daughter any allergies or medical conditions that you feel I should be aware of? Yes/ No  
(please continue overleaf if needed).

Have you read the participant information sheet? Yes/ No

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study? Yes/ No

Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions? Yes/ No

Have you received enough information about the study? Yes/ No

Who have you spoken to? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you consent to your daughter participating in the study? Yes/ No

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw her from the study at any time and  
Yes/ No

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ parent/guardian Date \_\_\_\_\_

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS)

.....

## Appendix J: Focus Group: Guide Participant Information and Consent

Dear Guide,

I am writing to ask you whether you would help me in the work I am doing to explore how Holy Trinity Church can help Guides understand the Guide Promise better.

In the Guide promise you say "I Promise that I will do my best to be true to myself and to develop my beliefs". I want to help you explore some of the things you may believe by playing a snakes & ladders type game with your Patrol. To make it fun I want to include sweets as well.

I will also make some notes during the game to help me remember some of the things that people say. When I write up all that I have found out I will be very careful that it will not be possible for people to identify individual Guides. I will not use your real name, instead I will give you a pseudonym (different name), which you may like to choose.

When we play the game you will not have to answer anything you don't want to.

When the work is finished I hope that it will help other churches to make better links with the Rainbow, Brownie and Guide units that meet near them.

Please fill in the form below so that I know you are willing to help me.

Yours faithfully,

Rev Paulette

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### Research Consent Form (Guides)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help with the Guide Promise Project Yes/ No

I understand I will not have to answer any questions I don't want to Yes/ No

I understand that I can decide not to take part at any time Yes/ No

My favourite sweets are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix K: Focus Group: Risk Assessment

## Risk Assessment Form



Event/Activity: Paulette's Doctorate Focus Group Promise Activity		Date: [REDACTED]	2015			
Event Coordinator: Paulette Gower		Numbers Attending: 4	Children: 21			
Consent for Event/Activity forms completed: Yes		Venue: [REDACTED]	Instructor qualifications checked* (if applicable): Yes No			
Hazard	Who is affected?	What controls are in place?	Risk level (L/M/H)	Are further controls necessary?	Action by & date	Review by & date
Allergic reaction to sweets	Guides	-Guide information sheet will be checked to see if they are allergic to anything -changes made if needed	L			
Guides falls off a chair	Guides	-Guides reminded if needed to keep chair on 4 legs.	L			
Audio/ Video/ photographs used inappropriately or made available to the wrong people.	Guides	-No Audio/ Video/ photographs will be taken during the Focus Group Activity.	L			
Participants can be identified in the final thesis	everyone	-Pseudonyms will be used and data grouped in such a way that the identification of an individual is not possible	L			
Activity notes accessed by unauthorised people	everyone	-Original notes will be kept securely and disposed of appropriately when Doctorate process is complete.	L			
participant is injured / medical problem	everyone	-Additional leaders available -First Aid Kit available -Good Phone signal available -Guide medical information known by leaders	L			
participant has an emotional outburst or is distressed	everyone	-Additional leaders available -Designated safe place available to listen known	L			
Girl makes a (safeguarding) disclosure	everyone	-Girlguiding Safeguarding Procedure -Additional leaders available -Designated safe place available to listen -standby activities available if needed	L	-if needed Paulette will also inform Durham University and Church in Wales		

## **Appendix L: Online Survey**

Thank you for being willing to take part in this study. My name is Paulette Gower and I am a Girl Guide Leader and a Vicar just outside Wrexham in North Wales. For my Doctorate in Ministry and Theology I want to look at how churches can build on existing links with Girlguiding UK units they have connections with. In doing so I want to explore how churches can create appropriate partnerships with these units. The aim is to help Guide members explore the spiritual dimension to their promise and Churches to reflect on their own mission and discipleship.

To enable me to carry out the research effectively, I am conducting a study to find out the type of links Girlguiding Units and Churches may already have and how they may wish to build on them.

Throughout the research confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and questionnaires stored appropriately. When presenting the information I will use pseudonyms or group data together in a way that does not allow the identification of individuals, units or churches. Unless written permission has been given.

If you are happy for me to carry out this piece of research please would you indicate your consent below and continue with the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or would like any further information then please contact me at the following email address...

Questions will be in a multiple-choice format allowing more than one choice for all questions except 1, 2 & 4.

Questions 1 must be answered before continuing the Survey

If the response to Question 2 is no, then the survey will end and participant directed to the final thank you message.

**1. Have you read the information about the project?**

**2. Do you consent to participate in the study?**

**3. Are you a**

- a. A Girlguiding Leader
- b. Senior Church Leader (eg Vicar, Minister)
- c. Church Member

**4. Which part of the UK are you situated in?**

- a. Scotland

- b. NW England
- c. NE England
- d. Anglia
- e. Midlands
- f. SE England
- g. SW England
- h. N Wales
- i. S Wales
- j. N Ireland
- k. Channel Islands

**5. Do you have links with any of the following Girlguiding sections**

- a. Senior Section (14-25)
- b. Guides (10-14)
- c. Brownies (7-10)
- d. Rainbows (5-7)

**6. Is your unit/church situation**

- a. Rural
- b. Semi rural
- c. Town
- d. Village
- e. City
- f. Suburban

**7. Is your local church**

- a. Anglican
- b. Methodist
- c. URC
- d. Roman Catholic
- e. Salvation Army
- f. Baptist
- g. Other (please specify)

**8. Do your Girlguiding units meet in**

- a. A Church hall
- b. Community hall/centre
- c. School hall
- d. Guide/ Scout Hall
- e. Other (please specify)

**9. Do your Girlguiding units attend church services for**

- a. Harvest
- b. Remembrance Sunday
- c. Christingle
- d. Christmas
- e. Ash Wednesday
- f. Mothering Sunday

- g. Good Friday
- h. Easter
- i. Other (please specify)

**10. Do your Girlguiding units attend**

- a. Family/ All Age Services
- b. Holy/Family Communion Services
- c. Morning Prayer/ Worship
- d. Messy Church
- e. Sunday School/ Club
- f. Special Services
- g. Other (please specify)

**11. Do your Girlguiding units use the church building for**

- a. Guiding Thinking Day Services
- b. Guiding Carol Services
- c. Guiding Anniversary Services
- d. Other Guiding Services
- e. Other (please specify)

**12. Do your Girlguiding units take part in church**

- a. Coffee mornings
- b. Afternoon Teas
- c. Christmas Fairs
- d. Summer Fairs
- e. Christmas Tree Festivals
- f. Flower Shows
- g. Music Festivals
- h. Craft/ Art Festivals
- i. Quizzes/ Beetle Drives/ Bingo
- j. Raffles
- k. Other events (please specify)

**13. Do your Girlguiding units take part in services by**

- a. Helping to put the service together
- b. Helping to lead the service
- c. Reading from the Bible
- d. Leading Prayers
- e. Performing Drama plays
- f. Welcoming people
- g. Handing out books/ sheets
- h. Taking the collection
- i. Taking up the communion elements
- j. Preparing Pictures/Craft items
- k. Choosing the hymns
- l. Singing
- m. Playing music
- n. Ringing the bell(s)

- o. Other (please specify)

**14. Does your church publicise your Girlguiding units in any of these ways**

- a. Church noticeboard
- b. Announcements in services
- c. Church website
- d. Church facebook page
- e. Church magazine/ newsletter
- f. Articles/pictures from girls/ leaders
- g. Guide leaders/ girls talk about Unit activities/events in services
- h. Other (please specify)

**15. Does your Girlguiding unit publicise your church in any of these ways**

- a. Unit noticeboard
- b. Announcements in the Unit
- c. Guide website
- d. Guide facebook page
- e. Unit newsletter
- f. Pass on/ produce Letters/ invitations to girls for Church events
- g. Guide leaders/ members visit Unit to talk about events/ services
- h. Other (please specify)

**16. Do your Girlguiding units have any of these church links**

- a. Helping to clean the Church
- b. Cleaning the brasses
- c. Church visit/ trails
- d. Church members are Guide leaders
- e. Church members help in Units as extra adults
- f. Church leaders visit Units
- g. Badges awarded during a service
- h. New leaders/ girls welcomed in a service
- i. Bell tower visits
- j. Help with badges
- k. Other (please specify)

**17. Would you like to develop the relationship between your Girlguiding units and your church?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Maybe

**18. What further links between your Girlguiding units and your church may be helpful?**

- a. More child friendly services
- b. Invitations to specific services
- c. Invitations to be involved in Church events
- d. Church leaders/members to visit Units more regularly
- e. Help with badges/ activities

- f. Visit Church building
- g. Greater involvement in services
- h. Help with Promise clause “to be true to myself and to develop my beliefs”
- i. Other (please specify)

**19. Any other comments**

Thank you for participating in this survey. If you have any questions or would like any further information then please contact me at the following email address...



## Appendix M: Interview: Participant Information and Consent Letter



### Participant Information Sheet

Thank you for being willing to help with my dissertation research for my Doctorate in Theology and Ministry. Please read this Participant Information sheet and fill in the attached consent form.

I want to look at how churches can build on existing links with Girlguiding UK units that meet on their premises. In doing so I want to explore how churches can create appropriate partnerships with these units. The aim is to help Guide members explore the spiritual dimension to their promise and Churches to reflect on their own mission and discipleship.

To enable me to carry out the research effectively, I want to interview members of the Guide Unit Leadership Team and Church Council. Before I do this it would be helpful to know something of your own perception of the links between Summer Hill Guide Unit and Holy Trinity Church and also something about your own Spirituality. Therefore our work together will have two parts.

- 1) A short questionnaire giving you the opportunity to reflect on your Spirituality
- 2) A conversational interview to allow us to discuss your own thoughts in greater detail

Throughout the research confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained and questionnaires, interview recordings and transcripts and other information obtained will be stored appropriately. When presenting the information I will use pseudonyms or group data together in a way that does not allow the identification of individuals unless express permission has been sought and given. If you have any queries relating to this then please speak to me.

---

#### Research Consent Form

- Have you read the participant information sheet? Yes/No
- Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study? Yes/ No
- Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions? Yes/ No
- Have you received enough information about the study? Yes/ No
- Who have you spoken to? Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Prof/Revd \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you consent to participate in the study? Yes/ No
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study  
\* at any time and  
\* without having to give a reason for withdrawing and  
\* (if relevant) without affecting your position in the University? Yes/ No

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS) .....

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