



Task team: Congregational Witness
(The mission of God in and through Congregations)

REPORT OF CONTEXTUAL BIBLE STUDY TRAINER

CBS FACILITATOR TRAINING: ALIWAL NORTH PRESBYTERY (HILTON CONGREGATION)

1. Introduction

This is an outcome of a process that had started in 2021, the Presbytery of Aliwal North was introduced to CBS by our cluster leader Rev Masele. Now it was time of Facilitator training workshop. Communication was sent out to the Presbytery leaders to on the 13 December 2022 with proposed date for the facilitator workshop. Follow up chats between the cluster leader and the trainer continued from the 5 January to 25 January 2023 regarding numbers of people who will be available, available space and the program setup. On the 26 January 2023 we received a letter from cluster leader cancelling the workshop due to breakdown of communication from their side. Later in the month a new date for the workshop was communicated and that date was the 21 February 2023.

2. Attendance

This workshop was attended by 12 people, its was a diverse group. We had members of church council and other members from the ministries.

3. The session

The session started without me the I was getting lost to reach the venue I then asked Rev Masele to begin the session so long. He opened the session with the word from Isaiah 51:1-6 and prayer and apologised to the group on my behalf as I was running late. I reached the venue at 09:30 and they were busy with introduction I then joined in. The participants were asked what was their expectations from the session. Each mentioned what they expected from the day. The trainees were asked to share what do they remember about Contextual Bible Reading. They mentioned reading Bible as group, reading Bible guided by challenges. They were encouraged to participate and learn.

We started on how to prepare for CBS which included gathering people together be it church council member, ministry members or community members, deciding on the venue/ space for conducting CBS. We divided the people to smaller groups of 4 then proceeded to:

3.1 SEE

Different colour papers were placed on each table, people were asked to write different challenges on each colour paper. They each went to the front to present their challenges and explained why they regard them as challenges. The group was asked to decide on one common challenge and they chose "crime" – The trainer explained that is how we do SEE. We continued to the next step:



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3.2 DISCERN

The trainer asked the groups to think of Bible texts that can guide a conversation about crime. In this step it was explained that after people have decided on a challenge they can be encouraged to go back home and think of texts. CBS is not done in only one day, it is a process that requires engagement of the group. The group had Gen 4, Exodus 20, Luke 10 and Exodus 22. They decided to work on Exodus 22:1-15. We then proceeded on how to formulate question, starting from the social consciousness question of “what is the text about?”. The trainer explained that in this step people need to work with the word of the Lord. Looking at the world behind the text, exploring different sources (making use of different languages that can assist in understanding the Bible text). The trainer mentioned that in this session the facilitator need to guide by asking questions that will spark conversation about the chosen theme. The group tried to formulate at least 2 questions. We then proceeded the next step:

3.3 ACT

It was explained to the group that on this Step, this is where the participants need to come up with practical ideas that will assist with the challenge, ideas that can change the situation to be better. It was explained that in this step they should have an action plan that is SMART. From their chosen them and text they were asked to share how, what will they be doing. Each group was given an opportunity to at least share one idea.

After this part the trainer asked one of the participants to demonstrate how they would organise CBS. The group was asked to share what they have learnt about CBS and to share as a plenary and then to write their thoughts about the day.

4. FEEDBACK

When asked to share what they thought of CBS this is what some had to say:

“CBS has empowered me and has boosted my spiritual life”..Ronny Cater

“CBS workshop was very fruitful, I have learnt a lot today, I have gained so much knowledge. I will share this with my sisters in Christ at my congregation”... Monica Odendaal

“CBS is perfect for participation, eye opener, it is worth it, it has challenged my thinking”....Mareka Baisitse

“CBS has boosted my confidence as a facilitator, this session was so worthwhile and is needed in our Presbytery”Rev Boyce Masele

“This was a very fruitful exercise, I am lifted and confident about presenting anything” ...Ntsiky Landela



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5. Conclusion

This was a very interesting and exciting group to work with, it was interesting to listen to different voices from the group and to see how keen our members are to share CBS with other members of their ministries.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER - CBS FACILITATOR TRAINING – ALIWAL NORTH PRESBYTERY

1. Ntsiki Landela
2. Monica Odendaal
3. Boyce Masele
4. Desmond Saptoe
5. Catherine Jansen
6. Mareka Baisitse
7. Magau WF
8. Mascabata Tsoaei
9. Mantsho Daimane
10. Monica Mthiya
11. Ronny Cater
12. Xolani Mhobo