

REPORT OF TRAINING OF FACILITATORS WITH THE CYM PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVES ON 11 FEBRUARY 2023 AT URC EERSTE RIVIER CONGREGATION, EERSTE RIVIER

INTRODUCTION

The journey with the CYM (Christian Youth Ministry) presbytery representatives started in October 2022 with an introduction of Contextual Bible Study (CBS) at the Manyano Centre in Paarl. The follow up, for training of facilitators was scheduled for the 14th of January. Unfortunately, due to circumstances outside of our control we realized that the training will not be feasible and agreed to the date of the 11th of February with the participants at URC Eerste Rivier.

As an outcome, we wish to filter the introduction and training of facilitators down to branch level of the CYM. In the session we had on the 11th of February we moved towards the training of facilitators on presbyterial level. These facilitator's role is to- with the assistance of CBS trainers- do introductions and training of CBS in their presbyteries to branch representative as to allow us achieving this goal.

We are thus pleased to report that, on the 11th of February as planned, we conducted this training session in Eerste Rivier with a few of the participants that attended the introduction session last year. We at this stage are well on our way in this process with the CYM and are truly grateful for the willingness and eagerness of the CYM participants all throughout the process since October 2022.

ATTENDANCE

The attendance was not as expected. Three of the participants out of the initial 6 that indicated their availability was present. The proponents who facilitated the training were Ashwin Thyssen, Dewald Jacobs and Jayson Gribble. In attendance was also Whitney Muller (MTh-student in New Testament at Stellenbosch University) who is in the process of becoming part of the CBS training team.

THE SESSION

The session started an hour later as communicated. As facilitators, with the agreement of the participants present, we decided to wait a little longer for the possibility of more participants arriving. None arrived and the session started at 10H00.

The first session was started with a video that was produced during the October 2022 session at Manyano Centre in Paarl. This video is testimonies or reflections of the experiences of the participants at this session. This was as an introduction a link to contextualize the process that we are undertaking. Prop Thyssen

further facilitated a conversation on the objectives of CBS and the possible outcomes it offers for the CYM. This session was deeply reflective for the participants who shared deeply about their different branches in the presbyteries and the challenges they face as leaders. As such the conversation also shifted towards the responsibilities of leadership as facilitators in and through CBS.

During the second session we focused on the question of facilitation. What is facilitation? Important aspects of facilitation such as planning and preparedness, setting boundaries, remaining impartial and flexible, importance of understanding the group dynamic, and the authenticity of facilitator, were discussed. They also spend time in discussing the important aspects of group work, in particular a focus on the handling of difficult situations. This part of the session further explored the interrelatedness of the role of leadership and facilitation amongst the CYM participants and the facilitators of the training session. As such a sharing of personal experiences. Creating thus the opportunity for organic creation of knowledge on leadership, but primarily on facilitation.

In the second part of the session, the facilitators became a group, and the participants were tasked to conduct a CBS session. The instruction was to choose one of the movements of the CBS process- see, discern, and act. The participants opted for see. As such they facilitated the group for about 15-20 minutes. After this, we together reflected on their facilitation and provided some clarity where needed. The session ended with a conversation about confidence and the importance of debriefing, review, evaluation, learning, unlearning, and relearning.

For the last session of the day, just before lunch, the focus was on conceptualizing CBS. We started with a conversation about the objectives of CBS. The key objective of CBS is community, critical-consciousness, collaboration, change, context, and contestation. This is always the session that is heavily layered with theory. The discussion of the objectives of CBS pointed toward the importance of setting a clear objective when doing a CBS. This objective should be open, flexible, but contextual. We also focused on the importance of being prepared. Preparation is key- was also a theme that flowed throughout the day's session.

The focus of the last session was on the importance of preparedness for the discern and act part of CBS. This was due to the previous sessions second part where participants were facilitating the see part. Being prepared include the importance of reading the texts and knowing the plot of each story. It was emphasized that the facilitator should allow the participants the agency to select a text for the discern part. Thus, the agency stays with the participants from the community.

Acknowledging, that many of the CYM leaders are not trained theologians, we provided a few resources such as The Bible Project website, Ujamaa Center's website and other to the participants.

In terms of the act movement three important guidelines were highlighted.

1. Tangibility (something realistic, and contextual to the community),
2. Sustainability (action should be ever changing and not a once of act), and
3. Accountability (keeping parties accountable toward the agreed upon action).

These guidelines will be helpful in keeping to the objective of the CBS process, namely transformative communities within the CYM.

The session was closed with a discussion on the way forward. A possible date was set for 6 May with the presbyteries of both Stellenbosch and Sarepta. This due to the already loaded schedules of all parties involved. The participant from the presbytery of Stellenbosch indicated the difficulties of cooperation amongst the branches and the presbytery. The solution was to send communication, and if a few branches is available, we can also do a joint training with the presbytery of Sarepta.

The session was closed with a thanks to JP Manuel (host at URC Eerste Rivier) for the hospitality of the congregation, followed with prayer by Prop Jayson Gribble.

Facilitators: *Prop Ashwin Thyssen and Prop Dewald Jacobs*

Assistants: Prop Jayson Gribble and Whitney Muller

11 February 2023.

CBS Training of facilitators for the CYM at URC Eerste Rivier on 11 Feb 2023

Attendance register:

Nr	Name & Surname	Congregation	Contact details
1.	Jean-Pierre Manuel	Eerste Rivier	074 258 2409
2.	Melayna Nel	Vlottenburg	082 891 1172
3.	Miche Petersen	Sarepta	066 304 3883