

Responsible Grace

Pastoral Supervision as Accountable Support for Effective Ministry



Jane Leach | Wesley House Cambridge

Responsible Grace

Shape of the Session

1. The British and UMC Context – a shared context?
2. Supervision as a tool for accountable support for effective ministry
3. Implementation issues in the British context
4. Practical implications for EYA

Discussion in teams

Plenary Questions



1 A shared context?

‘when a civilisation turns God will not be found at the old landmarks.’

David Jones

- Rapid cultural change
- Denominational decline
- Political, social and economic instability
- Scarcity anxiety
- Pragmatic, presentist and parochial attitudes



A shared desire
for flourishing?

Flourishing ministers



Flourishing ministers?

'It feels as if I
am being
squashed by an
elephant...'



Kanin

"I'm an elephant podiatrist—what do you do?"



A shared desire for flourishing?

Flourishing ministers:

If personal and institutional survival are on the agenda whatever measures we put in place for clergy they need to be experienced as supportive and not received as a way of implying that if clergy were only more effective then all the ills of the Church would be solved.



A shared desire for flourishing?

Flourishing Christian communities

If the context demands new ways of remembering, reclaiming and re-expressing the faith in a changed world then whatever measures are put in place for clergy support they need to be equip them for a changed and changing context.



A shared desire for flourishing?

The Flourishing of
the whole
inhabited earth

'I look upon my
parish as the
whole world...'



‘We have had to tackle head on the question of how support and accountability relate to each other’

- #7 That a system of structured supervision for ministers be instituted to address the identified weakness in relation to accountability and support in terms of safe practice.
- #8 That serious consideration be given to producing a Code of Conduct for ministers.



A shared desire for flourishing?

The Flourishing of the whole inhabited earth

If parochialism and integrity are on the agenda then whatever measures we put in place for clergy formation need to be able to tackle the normative issues of accountability and performance in relation to clear benchmarks and expectations against the horizon of God's purposes of justice and love.



Responsible Grace

Shape of the Session

1. The British and UMC Contexts – a shared context?
2. **Supervision as a tool for accountable support for effective ministry**
3. Implementation issues in the British context
4. Practical implications for EYA

Discussion in teams

Plenary Questions



Supervision in the MCB

- 2016 pilot project in 2 districts;
- 2017 policy agreed by the Conference
- 2016-17 all district chairs (bishops) trained as supervisors and began being supervised by professional supervisors;
- 2017 trained 30 people as trainers in supervision
- 2018-19 in the process of training some 400 people as supervisors



Supervision Policy of the MCB

- By 2020 *all* ordained clergy in active work will be in supervision
- All supervisors to be trained and approved to supervise and to be in supervision themselves
- Supervision to be at least 90 minutes six times per year
- Supervision to be one to one
- Agreed records to be kept and sent to a nominated third party/minister in oversight



Support *and* accountability

- A realistic means of accountability for those in full connexion who exercise ministry under the discipline of the Conference, and as
- An embodied expression of the Conference's duty of care to those in full connexion with it
- A redemptive structure



Redemptive Structure

- ... a 'practice that shapes the encounters and interactions that happen within it in ways that promote human health and wellbeing in the light of God's self-revelation'

Ed Farley



Responsible Grace

In Wesley's thinking human beings are not only invited to receive God's gift of grace but to co-operate with it and be accountable to one another for living within the ecology of that grace...



Supervision as Responsible Grace

In ministry we are not only invited to respond to God's call but continually to equip ourselves for it and be accountable to one another for the responsible exercise of that ministry...



Aims of Supervision in the MCB

1. to support the minister in their vocation and practice and its development;
2. to safeguard the interests of those amongst whom ministry is practised, including those of children and vulnerable adults;
3. to ensure that the ministry offered in the name of the Methodist Church is collegially and accountably reflected upon in the light of God's mission and the purposes of the Methodist Church.



The three legged stool of supervision



- **Normative**
horizons, aims, priorities, boundaries, risks,
rules, norms
- **Formative**
learning, development, growth, strategies,
tools, skills, self awareness
- **Restorative**
vocation, spiritual life, impact, health,
wellbeing, rest, support

Inskipp & Proctor



Normative

- Shared theological reflection on the practices and vocation of ministry within the horizon of God's mission and within the Methodist Church's code of conduct;
- The shared identification of risks to self and others and the identification of steps to ameliorate those risks.



Formative

- Support for lifelong learning, formation and development in ministry through shared reflection;
- The exploration of creative approaches to demanding issues of ministry and relationships as they arise.



Restorative

- Ensuring that the vocation and work of the minister is shared, valued and nurtured;
- Ensuring that that health and wellbeing issues for ministers are addressed.



The Hope?



- **Normative**
horizons, aims, priorities, boundaries, risks,
rules, norms
- **Formative**
learning, development, growth, strategies,
tools, skills, self awareness
- **Restorative**
vocation, spiritual life, impact, health,
wellbeing, rest, support

Inskipp & Proctor



Normative results

- *I made a more secure intervention concerning a proposed exorcism than otherwise I would have done.*
- *To be challenged in the ways that I am working; to be accountable to someone set apart from the situation.*
- *This has reduced the 'chattering' conversations between staff that may have led to misunderstanding.*



Formative results

- *Helped me to understand better when I am trying to 'please' people rather than God.*
- *Allows me to focus on aspects that I may not have given thought to otherwise*



Restorative results

- *It is a safe place, to share some painful experiences of ministry.*
- *Confidential sharing lifts a heaviness that normally is carried on your daily routine*
- *in deepening awareness of what I need to do to enable my ministry (for example to take time to be still, time out for prayer etc) and not feel guilty about that.*



Responsible Grace

Shape of the Session

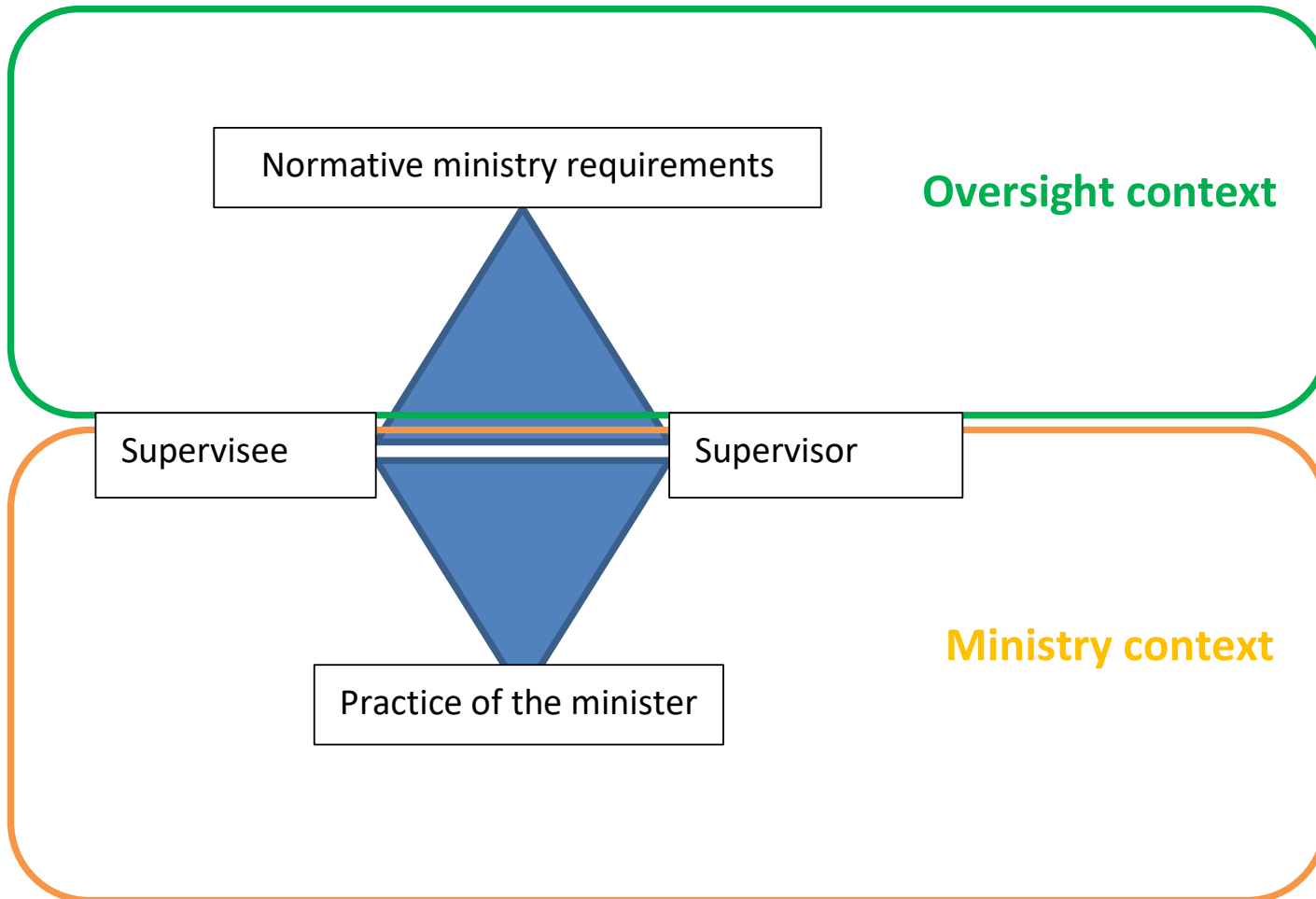
1. The British and UMC Context – a shared context?
2. Supervision as a tool for accountable support for effective ministry
3. Implementation issues in the British context
4. Practical implications for EYA

Discussion in teams

Plenary Questions



Supervision Rhombus

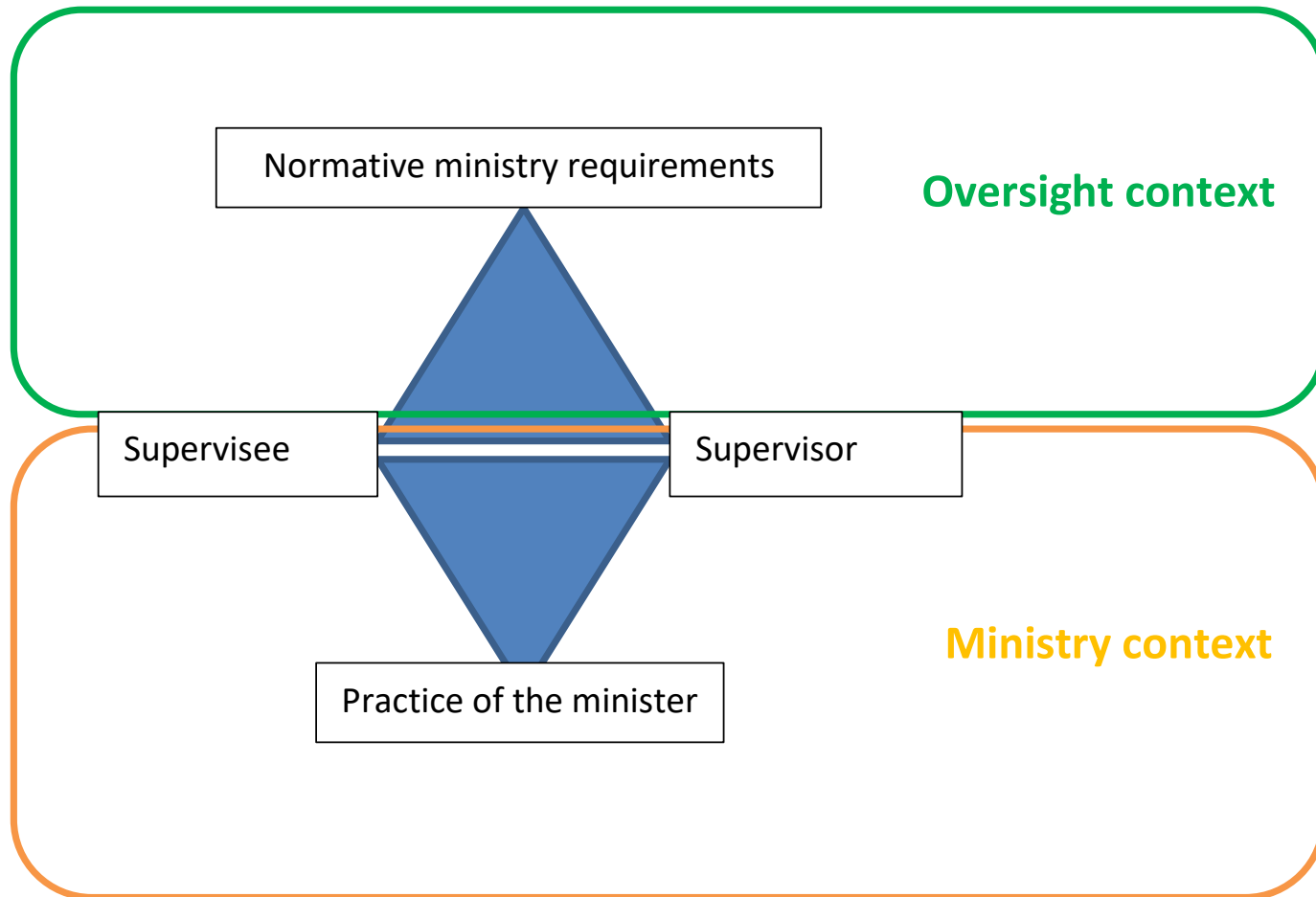


Normative Requirements

	Readiness for ordination	Readiness for stationing	Candidacy
1 Vocation, call and commitment			
2 Being in Relationship			
3 The Church's ministry in God's world			
4 Leadership and Collaboration			
5 Learning and Understanding			
6 Communication			



Supervision Rhombus



Intentional Supervision

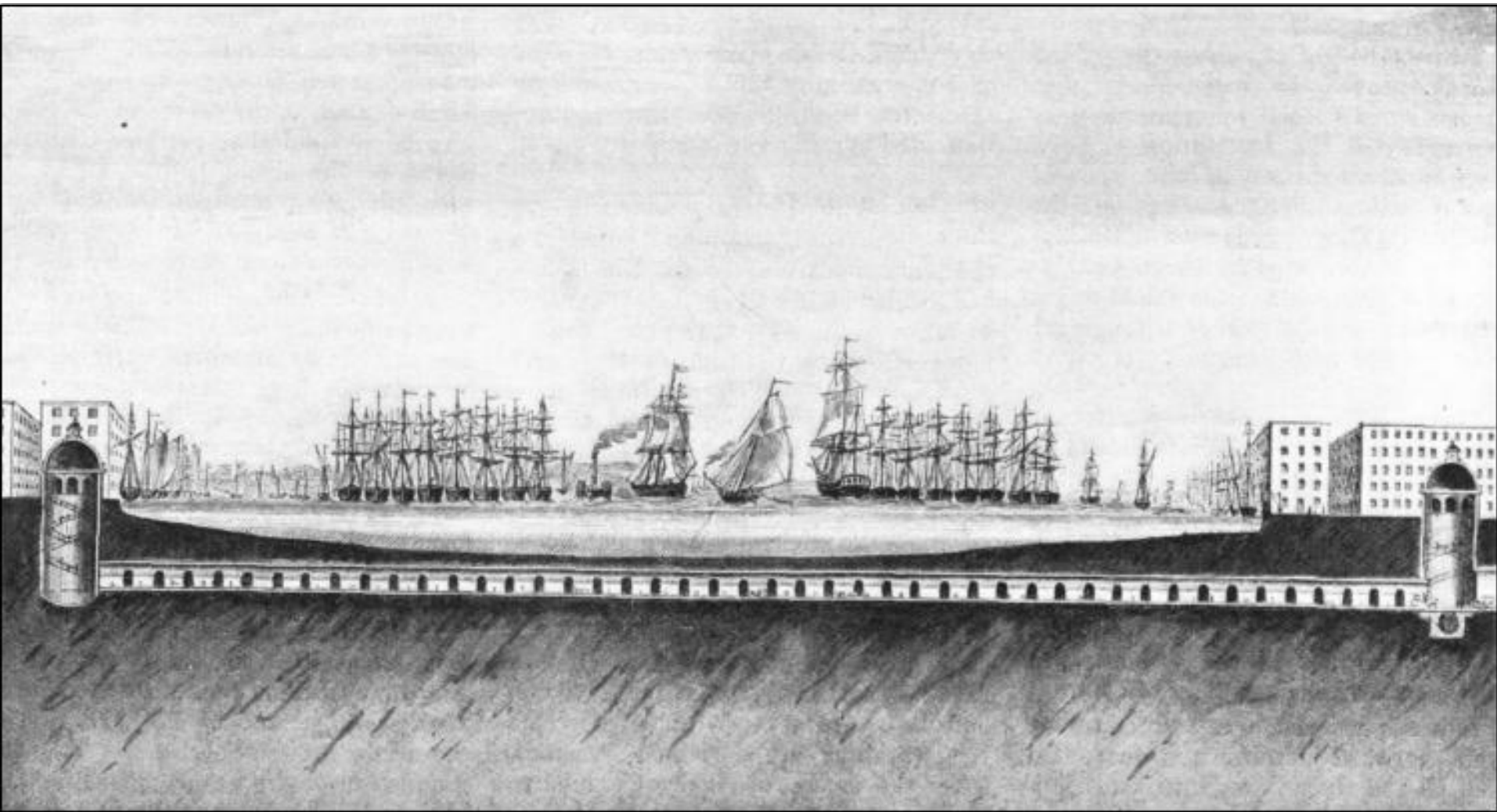
'Surely there are works of mercy, as well as works of piety, which are real means of grace.'

John Wesley, 1786

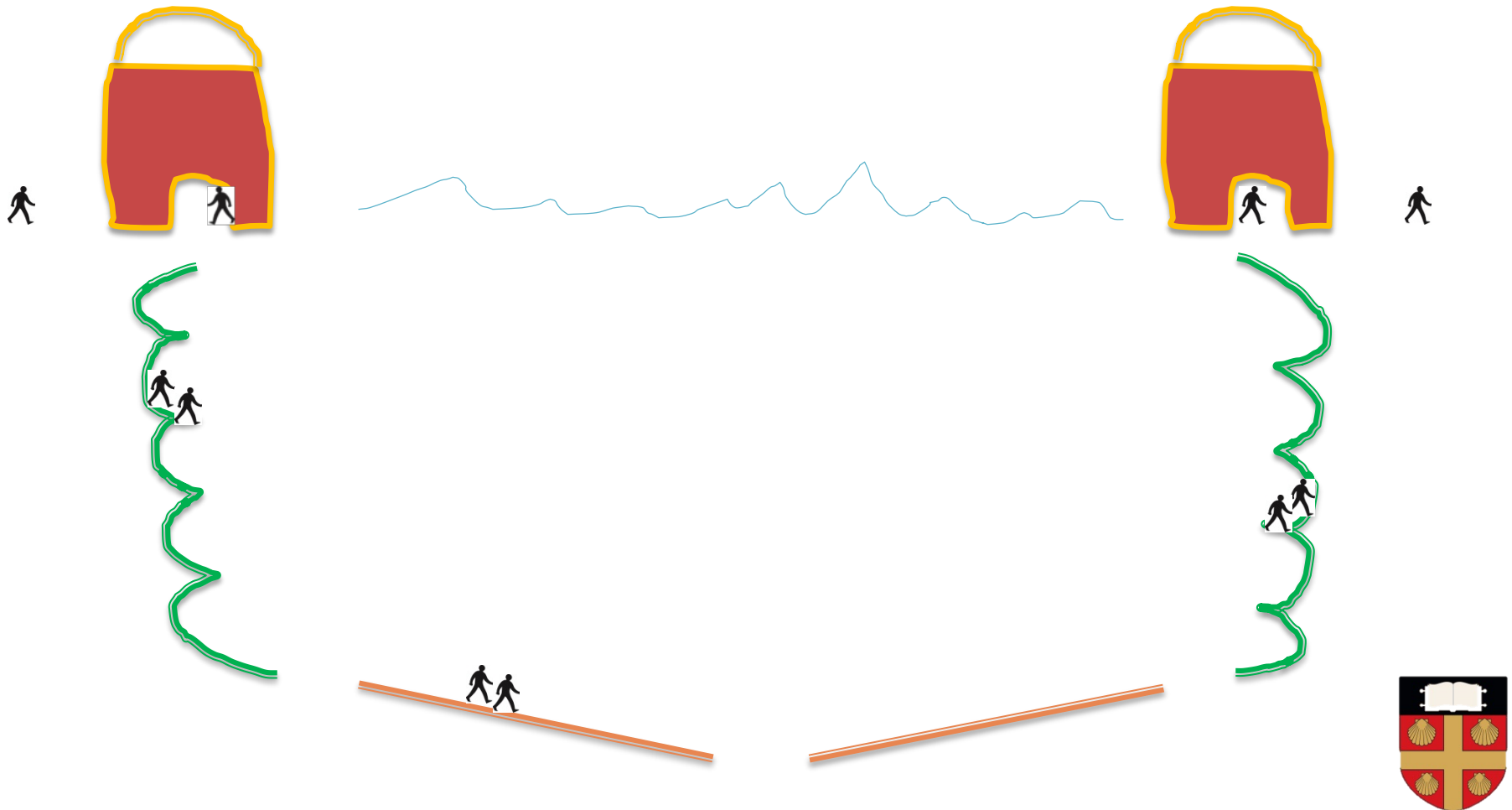
- Eccentric
- Prayerful
- Structured



Greenwich Foot Tunnel Model



Greenwich Foot Tunnel Model



Giving an account...

- This is not about ensuring perfect practice from perfect practitioners. It is about ensuring good enough practice amongst well enough supported practitioners. (ISP 2018: 1.5)



Responsible Grace

Shape of the Session

1. The British and UMC Context – a shared context?
2. Supervision as a tool for accountable support for effective ministry
3. Implementation issues in the British context
4. Practical implications for EYA

Discussion in teams

Plenary Questions



4 For Consideration

Normative Issues:

horizons, aims,
priorities, boundaries,
risks, rules, norms

- What are the benchmarks for ordained ministers at different stages of development and how are these derived?
- What are the goals of EYA and how might these be communicated as part of a broad vision for ministry?
- What kind of intentional accompaniment do ordained ministers need and what should be the relationship between support, development and accountability?



4 For consideration

Formative Issues:

learning, development,
growth, strategies,
tools, skills, self
awareness

- What skills and training are needed for those offering support for the six month period and for early years and ongoing clergy formation?
- What tools can be offered that ensure that the time is intentionally spent?
- Who will be trained to offer this support?
- What kinds of learning needs might be uncovered and how might these be addressed?
- What learning and development resources are already available and how can these be signposted?
- How can you keep learning as a team about the issues facing clergy and how to address them from this window into the life and work of practitioners?



4 For consideration

Restorative Issues:

vocation, spiritual life,
impact, health, rest,
wellbeing, support

- How are you feeling as you face this task?
- What feelings might those who first undergo this EYA be experiencing and how might they be explored and addressed?
- What difficult feelings might be encountered as clergy are invited to probe deeply into their ministries and vocations?
- What support might those supporting clergy through this process need themselves?



Referenced Works

- Ed Farley, Interpreting Situations, 2000
- Leach & Paterson, Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook, 2nd edition, 2015
- Past Cases Review: Report of the Methodist Conference 2015
- Interim Supervision Policy: Report of the Methodist Conference 2017: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/1848/supervision-policy-290617.pdf>
- MCB Draft Code of Conduct: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/1404/counc-mc17-18-ministerial-code-of-conduct-january-2017.pdf>
- John Wesley, Sermon on The Means of Grace, 1745
- John Wesley, Sermon On Visiting the Sick, 1986
- Inskipp & Proctor, Making the Most of Supervision, Part I, 1995
- Randy Maddox, Responsible Grace, 1994



Responsible Grace

Shape of the Session

1. The British and UMC Context – a shared context?
2. Supervision as a tool for accountable support for effective ministry
3. Implementation issues in the British context
4. Practical implications for EYA

Discussion in teams

Plenary Questions



Responsible Grace

Pastoral Supervision as Accountable Support for Effective Ministry



Jane Leach | Wesley House Cambridge