

PCN and local groups

The Progressive Christianity Network is based on individual membership, but those individuals can be supported and encouraged by attending one of the expanding number of groups across Britain, currently 57. At present over half of existing members choose to attend a group and others would very much like to but none as yet exists in their area. The network encourages the formation of new groups and the affiliation to PCN of existing progressive groups. We believe that the strength and future of progressive Christianity is nurtured through the mutuality and fellowship which develops in them. There is a wide diversity among such groups, not least in size, but all share a broad commitment to the Eight Points. Each is autonomous, self-supporting and self-directing, but with access via the website and the Administrator to both programme ideas and resources, as well as to committee support when requested.

Guidelines for groups who are affiliated to PCN or who wish to affiliate

1. Affiliation is available to any group that identifies itself as being progressive Christian in outlook. Affiliated groups should be open to all comers whether or not they wish to attend a church.
2. The person who convenes the group should be a member of PCN Britain and should be at ease with the Eight Points by which we recognise progressive Christianity.
3. Membership of PCN is encouraged, but not required of other group attendees.
4. The support that PCN gives to a group is provided free (apart from DVD hire). The funding comes from PCN's membership.
5. Affiliated groups should have an informative presence on our website and keep it up to date. If a group already has its own website we are happy for you to link to it from ours, but please, at the very least keep your PCN group home page and programme page complete and up to date.
6. Groups remain constitutionally independent of PCN. PCN does not seek "ownership" of group agendas or activities. Equally, groups cannot assume that they speak on behalf of PCN nationally.

7. Groups are not required to use “PCN” in their title though they may do so if they wish. Should you decide to use our name, initials or logo in your title please talk to the administrator about what you have in mind. All groups are welcome to refer to us in a subtitle such as “Affiliated to the Progressive Christianity Network, Britain”. This, along with our logo can be used alongside your title in communications.

8. All areas of group activity, including matters such as subs and record-keeping remain the responsibility of the individual group. PCN does, however, provide public liability cover against damage or injury caused by the negligence of any PCN member organising a meeting, (eg leaving a trailing lead where someone trips over it and breaks a leg). This does not cover the liability of the owner of the premises, (eg tripping over a raised paving stone which has not been repaired).

9. PCN encourages and supports groups in the network to undertake special events such as seminars and conferences which are open to the wider public, perhaps working with other groups in their region, in order to make progressive Christianity more widely known.

10. To this end PCN offers advice and publicity and, for larger projects, help with banking, ticket sales and underwriting costs within the constraints of its resources and current policy. (See small grants and underwriting documents on website.)

11. When organising a conference or special event please let us know about it. If you wish to call it a PCN Britain event you may but we will then need to have advance sight of your publicity. This is because we are responsible for the good standing of PCN’s name. In exceptional circumstances we could ask for a change in wording or request removal of our name.

12. We do not require groups to notify us of regular meetings, nor to show us the publicity associated with them, though we are always pleased to hear what you are doing. But please post all your meetings in your group’s section on the PCN website. Any meetings posted onto your group programme will automatically be replicated elsewhere on the website, maximising your publicity.

13. Should a group create its own independent website, you should keep us informed if you intend to use the PCN name, initials or logo in the website banner.

Benefits offered to groups which affiliate to PCN Britain:

1. We have a library of DVD group study guides, including Living the Questions, which we make available for hire at a small fee. (Our DVD librarian is Jess Lee, jess.lee@pcnbritain.org.uk)
2. We will endeavour to supply PCN speakers.
3. We provide each group with its own section on the PCN website. This consists of five distinct pages.
4. We have a Group Convenors' forum available on the internet. This is one way for convenors to share ideas.
5. We offer you a spot in our magazine, Progressive Voices, for group reports.
6. We provide occasional emailed news updates for groups.
7. We provide you with free PDF versions of the PCN newsletter to share with your group attendees.
8. We have help-sheets designed to assist you with event planning, should you wish to stage a public seminar or conference. Groups sometimes join up with each other to do this.
9. We can help with the financing, ticketing and underwriting of special events.
10. We can help with publicity, for example providing mail shots to members in your area.
11. More generally, there are small grants available to groups for non-profit making initiatives (up to £50 per grant).
12. Training and support is available in the use of your group's pages on the PCN website.
13. We can provide general advice on starting and running a group