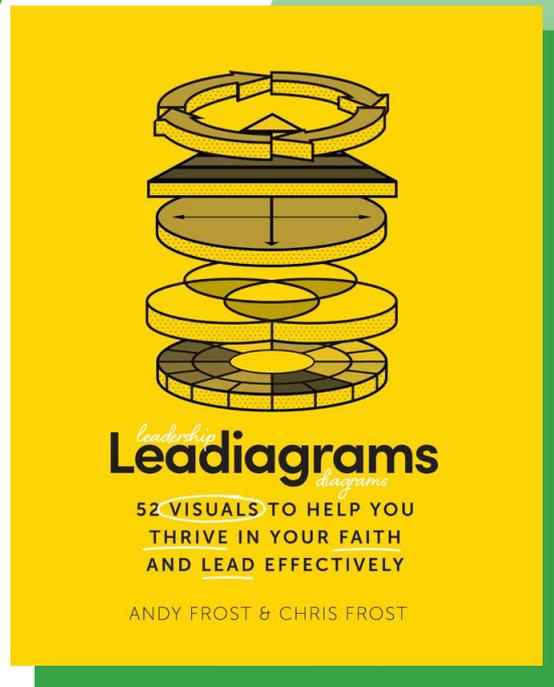


RESOURCE REVIEW



LEADIAGRAMS

Andy Frost & Chris Frost

UK: 100 Movements Publishing, 2023
ISBN 978-1-955142-35-9 | pp.238, £14

Andy and Chris Frost introduced this new book at the Ekklesia Conference in March with very short, illustrated talks on leadership, which were excellent practical contributions to the event.

Many people are visual learners, but we can spend too much time submerged in a quagmire of words. This is a great leadership resource which is very accessible because each of the 52 chapters is based on a simple diagram. The brothers have put together their learning from many years of ministry experience and produced a book packed with 'big and memorable ideas to help you thrive in your faith and lead effectively' - as it says on the back cover.

More than half the diagrams are drawn from other sources, and it is great that these visual ideas have been put together in one book and shared more widely. There is a year's worth of material for a weekly dose of helpful learning. I have dipped in and read it in a short period, but it would be far better to set aside a time each week to read and properly digest just one chapter.

I look forward to taking more time to explore this great resource to help me grow further in terms of personal development and areas of leadership - the chapters are grouped together in sections on Leading Others, Leading Projects and Leading Church Life. I like the way each chapter gives a short illustrative scene-setter before explaining the big idea; then there is some biblical thinking followed by helpful ideas on how one might apply any lessons learned.

This has been well thought through and crafted into a helpful shape that presents clear ideas and encourages deeper reflection on different areas of leadership. I highly recommend it.

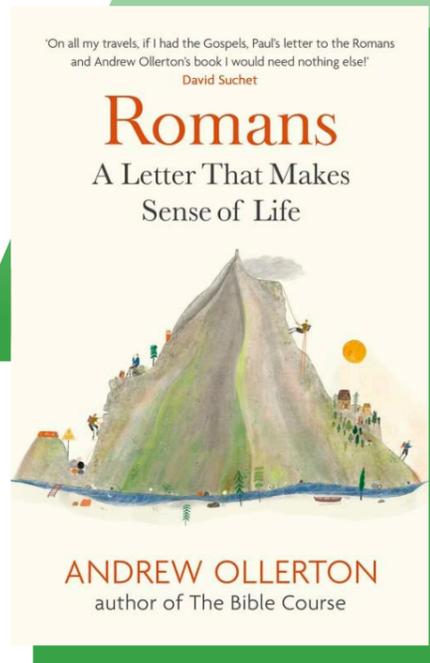
Reviewed by Rev Brian Harley, a United Reformed Church minister based on the Isle of Wight. Brian led the Group for Evangelism and Renewal within the URC (GEAR) for 20 years. He serves on the council of Evangelical Alliance and on the board of Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International (PRMI).



Ekklesia Conference - video recordings from 2023 and previous years can be accessed on the Share Jesus International YouTube Channel - www.youtube.com/@SJInews

Save the date for next year's conference:

Ekklesia 2024: 13 - 14 March 2024 at Westminster Chapel: www.sharejesusinternational.com/ekkleisia



ROMANS: A LETTER THAT MAKES SENSE OF LIFE

Andrew Ollerton

Great Britain: Hodder & Stoughton, 2023
ISBN: 978-1-399-80642-8 | pp. 267, £16.99

Andrew Ollerton's new book is fresh and accessible. The book has good hand-feel, is pleasingly laid out on the page and has an attractive cover. He lures us into the subject matter with the persuasive dexterity of a competent parent showing their child that the water is not actually shark infested. He is patient and generous with anecdotes and illustrations from his own family. He talks much of mountaineering, and – although heights and narrow ledges terrify me – Andrew talks us through the construction and presentation of Romans as though we were in fact with him on a mountain; climbing, negotiating and battling through, before carefully descending into the world to live with the understandings gained from the adventure of having explored and understood the text.

The themes and the structure are well laid out. They make sense and provide a solid, trustworthy framework onto which the complexities of the text of Romans can be laid out for ease, yes ease of understanding. He uses pictorial illustrations as well as his own stories for when we have had a surfeit of words. Maps, diagrams and charts all help us to negotiate tackling the letter. Andrew pauses, as a true mountaineer who is managing a reluctant or less fit climber, to admire the view and reflect on where we have been in the chapter with some searching questions. His style is to root us so much into the narrative of Paul's text that it is natural to apply it to our own mission, discipleship, and our understanding of doctrine and

theology. He shows us how Romans assists and educates us in the art of being Christian. I like this. Especially in today's Methodist landscape, having such a Jesus-centred book about a Jesus-centred letter is refreshing and galvanising.

As many Methodists are battling through their Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mandatory Training at the moment, Andrew offers us the biblical view. The Church in Rome was doing all of this way, way back. Andrew directs us initially to chapter 16 where we have the personal greetings and from which we deduce that the mix of enslaved people, servants, business class, the elite rich people and poor people, those from a variety of ethnic background and those with Jewish history as well as those who met Jesus while part of another culture and had their lives transformed – men and women – were all meeting together. This was radical and counter cultural when placed against the proud, Roman hierarchical structure of society. He outlines the potential issues that such a mix of people working together would face and how Jesus in their midst transforms attitudes and understanding without compromising the gospel's integrity.

Andrew's structure of the mountain with numbers to show how far we have come was good. At first I took delight in seeing my progress. Later on, when I was a good way on in the book, like the mountaineer I am, I was getting weary and

was ready to finish! It is a good system, however, please don't let my fickleness put you off pursuing the course with a steady pace and plenty of breaks. The structure is helpful and eases the reader into Paul's rhetorical style.

Throughout the book, we are challenged about the relevance of the gospel to our present society – this definitely has a post-pandemic feel to it. There is a sense of the UK culture which many authors who are not immersed in real life in the UK can miss. It is the UK's TV shows and music scene that are drawn on. It is the UK landscape and mountains that are referenced. This sense of 'home' makes it very accessible to engage with.

For ordinary disciples, Andrew's book is a grounded working out of Paul's complex theology and doctrine. He makes 'the Big R' accessible for all disciples who yearn to grow in faith. We don't need to avoid it because it is 'too hard'!

I read the whole book and was delighted by it. We are encouraged to place our very own selves into the scriptures which anchor us to God's promises. We are reminded that those same promises are real for us too.

Most importantly, the question of identity is embraced as we find ourselves located and identified 'in Christ.' When we, the people of God, embrace this for ourselves, so much makes sense.

I do commend this book to you. I've put Romans on my church preaching and study curriculum for the next Methodist year.

Reviewed by Catherine Hutton, Superintendent Minister of Sutton Circuit. Catherine is minister at Epsom & Cheam Methodist Churches, where she regularly writes bespoke Study Materials, innovates for mission and encourages deepened discipleship across the church.

**Andrew Ollerton joins us online on
Saturday 9 March to explore more of Romans**

met | Methodist
Evangelicals
Together

**AN ONLINE
BIBLE TEACHING
DAY ON ZOOM**

HOW TO CLIMB THE MT. EVEREST OF THE BIBLE

EXPLORING THE LETTER OF ROMANS

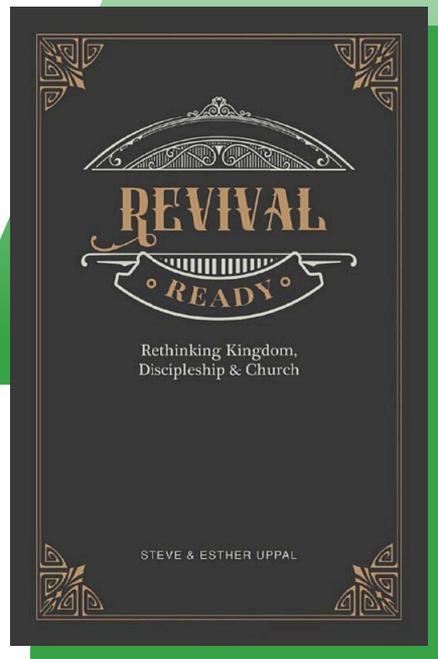
Speaker Rev Dr Andrew Ollerton
Saturday 9 March | 10.00am – 1.00pm On Zoom

Free event, donations welcome!



To book, please visit: methodistevangelicals.org.uk/romans

RESOURCE REVIEW



REVIVAL READY: RETHINKING KINGDOM, DISCIPLESHIP AND CHURCH *Steve and Esther Uppal*

Great Britain: All Nations Publishing, 2022
ISBN Paperback 978-1-73-909861-2 | pp. 300, £15.00

Are we Revival Ready? Rooted in Scripture and the prophetic, this is the most helpful book that I have read in years.

It brings an urgent message to a docile church, challenging it to awake once more.

Much has been said of late about the need for change and new wineskins being required for new wine. This easily read book begins there and then considers the practical implications as to how we can set about being revival ready by rethinking Kingdom, Discipleship and Church.

The book calls us to consider afresh our approach to church growth methodology, looking to move away from secular business models and to deepen our relationship with God, relying on him, rather than ourselves, in order to revolutionise the way we operate in discipleship and mission. Success is then measured as to our obedience to the Almighty rather than any other criteria. This contemporary challenge, written for these post-pandemic days in which we live, calls for the people of God to seek a future that is God-dependent.

The book is split into 6 parts reflecting prophetic themes. It combines Scripture with testimony as the authors share their personal journey of entering into a new way of living life as Christian disciples. At times the challenge presented in this book provides much food for thought as the reader is encouraged to go deeper in their relationship with God, setting aside the things of this world to grow more like Jesus.

At the end of each section there are helpful questions to consider for reflection and points for prayer.

I heartily recommend 'Revival Ready' for reading and reflection and am delighted that one of the authors will be speaking at our MET November Conference, 'REVIVE'. Having read this book, I am eager to hear more in person from Steve Uppal as we prepare for the way ahead in seeking God, that he may revive his Church in these lands.

Reviewed by John Hogarth, a Local Preacher with a keen interest in Discipleship and Evangelism. He has recently assisted MET with some projects as Interim Development Worker.

'Steve Uppal will be joining us as one of our speakers at the Revive National Gathering from 17-19 November 2023 at the Kings Park Conference Centre. Book online at methodistevangelicals.org.uk/revive