2. **1994 saw the publication of a book about the state of religion in Britain with the title, ‘Believing without belonging’. In it the author argues that although the number of people attending a place of worship had decreased, the number of people who believe in God had increased.**

**2011 saw the publication of ‘Belonging without believing, a book which argues that there is a marked increase in what the author calls, ‘Christian Atheists’ - people who are drawn to Christianity although rejecting a traditional belief in God.**

Do you have any experience of these groups? Do you know anyone who fits into these groups? Is it possible for the church to accommodate people with these particular beliefs?

**3. Look for stories in the newspapers about the successes of the church locally, nationally and internationally.** Share them with the group and ask how people feel on hearing them. Do they inspire? Do they make us feel proud? Do they challenge us? Do they make us feel guilty? Etc.

*(You could ask group members beforehand to look for their own stories and share them in the discussion.)*

**4. Ask the group to think about the other societies and social groups that they belong to. Could any of them teach the church something about what it means to ‘belong to each other?’**

***Union of Welsh Independents***

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***Y Ffordd/The Way***



**Belonging to each other**

*Year 2, Part 3*

***How to use the material***

**The film has 5 chapters with an introduction at the beginning. We suggest that you divide the film as is appropriate for your group and number of sessions. The questions for each chapter can be found on pages 2 a 3.**

**Introduction**

**Chapter 1:** *Belonging to Christ*

**Chapter 2*:*** *Belonging to the Church*

**Chapter 3*:*** *Belonging to the Cyfundeb and the Undeb*

**Chapter 4:** *Belonging to other Denominations*

**Chapter 5:** *Belonging to the world we live in*

Page 4 of this leaflet contains additional material that you can include in your sessions, if desired. But please allow some time at the end of each session to discuss the following question:

***What can we do as a church following this discussion?***

***Questions for discussion***

***Introduction and Chapter 1:* Belonging to Christ**

1. Consider the path from the bottom of the valley to the top of the mountain, where would you place your church now, and why? Are there ‘mountain top experiences’ in the story of your church?
2. Could someone belong to Christ without belonging to a church?
3. Could someone belong to a church without belonging to Christ?
4. ‘Without Christ religion is powerless ac can achieve very little.’ What does that say about the state of our churches today?

***Chapter 2*: Belonging to the Church**

1. Why do you belong to the church? What would stop you belonging?
2. How do you see the difference between belonging to the church and belonging to other societies that you are a member of?
3. Can you think of examples where your church showed a willingness to accept people, whatever their background?
4. Is unity important to your church? Why?

***Chapter 3*: Belonging to the Cyfundeb and the Undeb**

1. How does your church benefit from belonging to the Cyfundeb and the Undeb?
2. Do your church members know what is happening in the Cyfundeb and Undeb? If not who do you think is to blame?
3. The film spoke of a distance between many of the Annibynwyr churches and the Undeb. How could we improve their relationship and bring the two closer together?
4. Which best describes your church: one which thinks more of itself or one which is aware of belonging to a wider family?

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***Chapter 4*: Belonging to other Denominations**

1. Has anyone in the group belonged to a different denomination at one time? What are the main differences and are they important?
2. Are there examples of your church working with churches of other denominations? What did you learn from doing so?
3. Which is easiest, worshiping with churches of other denominations or working with them?
4. Can you foresee a time without denominations in Wales? What would bring this about?

***Chapter 5*: Belonging to the World we live in**

1. Do you think that your church deserves to be heard by the local community? If so, why?
2. Does your church have a relationship with a local school? How easy/difficult is it to maintain this relationship?
3. Does your church have relationships with churches or church bodies around the world? What inspires you about these relationships?
4. Does your church have a relationship with people from other faiths or people with no faith? What marks these relationships?

**Additional Material**

**Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31 ‘One body with different members.’**

What does this tell you about belonging to? -

1. Christ
2. The Church

Does it say anything to you about a relationship with:

1. The Cyfundeb and Undeb
2. Other denominations
3. The world we live in

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