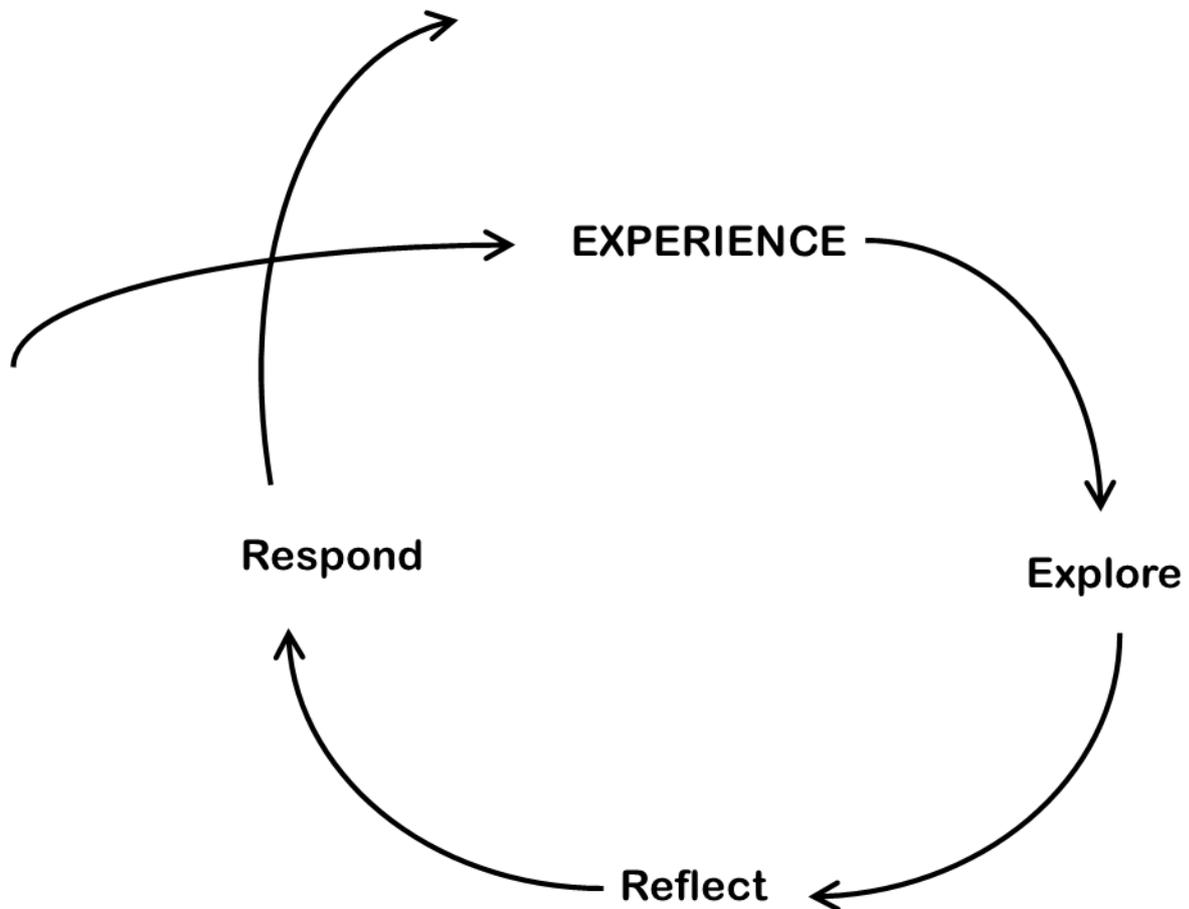




## A model of reflective practice



Laurie Green's 'Reflective Spiral', reproduced with kind permission from Laurie Green: [lauriegreen.org](http://lauriegreen.org)

I am going to talk you through a possible way to reflect on an aspect of your Messy Church. You can use this on your own or together as a team. Take time over each stage – don't rush it!

Choose a real experience of your Messy Church – one in which you can bring to mind the feelings, emotions and impressions. Try to think of something that is useful for you to reflect on, preferably something that gives you cause for wondering about it. It could be something that has been niggling you with questions: how could this have gone better? What worked really well here? What can we do about this? What did we do differently that meant things worked well? Or, why does this always happen?

Try to think of a real occasion, perhaps something from a while ago, such as a celebration time you had, a particular theme you explored or an aspect of your Messy Church, such as the meal or welcoming everyone in. It could be something recent, such as a Messy Church in a bag session, a Messy Church online or a Covid-secure Messy Church.

The first part of the spiral is **experience** – what is your experience of this situation? For this, you just need to notice the feelings that you have about it as you bring this situation to mind. Perhaps there are some very positive feelings, perhaps a niggle or some anxiety. Perhaps it feels really good, or perhaps not. Just notice.

Next is the **explore** part of the spiral. Think about what was happening. Who was there? What was said? Explore the facts of the situation, the things that happened. If you do this reflecting as a group, at this point you can share different points of view and even call in information from other places. This is an opportunity to do some reading that might help inform your future practice, or to find out how other people have done things differently. It can be helpful to ask 'power questions' here: who decided that would happen? Who benefitted most?

Next on the spiral is your opportunity to **reflect** – where is God in this experience? If you can spend longer on this part, you might want to spend some time in prayer or perhaps go back to the Bible story or theme you were exploring, but for now just notice where God might have been at work.

Finally on the spiral is **respond** – after your experiencing, exploring and reflecting on this situation or issue, how might God want you to respond? What might be different as a result of noticing and reflecting? It's a spiral rather than a circle because by intentionally taking time to notice what happened and to reflect on it, you will be changed and will have new insight. That means that even if your reflecting leads you to doing things the same way again, it will be with a deeper understanding.

If you are doing this exercise as a group, spend some time at the end listening to each other as you tell each other what you have noticed. If you are doing the exercise alone, jot things down and consider sharing them with others on your team.

**Kathy Bland, 2021**