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Theology and Action Research Network News – December 2025

Dear Friends,

Before diving into the festive season, we wish to share with you exciting news. Like St Nick's bag of gifts, this newsletter is packed with upcoming events and opportunities to engage with our growing network.

We have a chance to come together once more this year to celebrate the launch of the Theological Action Research Field Guide. If you have not yet booked your ticket, you will find more details below. In the new year, James and Clare will host a Book Launch at the University of Roehampton, and we are very excited to announce that our colleagues in Sweden will host next year's TARN Seminar *TARN Conversation: Theology, Action Research and Change*. This event will be held online and we hope to see many of you then!

Aware that some of you wish to take part in our training sessions, we have already opened registrations for our June training. You can find out more about how to sign up below.

Finally, let me share a teaser with you: Clare Watkins and James Butler, working with Ian Jones from St. Peter's Saltley Trust, have completed their Edgy Learning research project, and an engaging and creative report on this work will be published in the new year. Reflecting on faith learning in 'edgy places' this work extends theological action research practice and learning in some significant ways. Keep an eye out on our website and this email for more details.

There are more events planned for 2026 and as usual, we will keep you informed with our next newsletter.

Blessed Advent season and a blessed year of 2026,

Stefanie on behalf of the TARN-team

Launch of the Theological Action Research Field Guide:

Friday, 12th December 2025, 14:00 - 15:00 pm (GMT) on Zoom.

To book yourself a ticket free of charge, please follow [this link](#).

We are looking forward to celebrating the launch of the Theological Action Research Field Guide, to which people across the network have contributed. Funded by the Susanna Wesley Foundation, this multi-authored work is aimed at doctoral students and practitioners working with theological action research. The field guide offers practical guidance, exercises and experiential vignettes that will enable and encourage you as you master your own project and research journey. For more information, please visit our [website](#).

A link to download the guide will be made available at the launch.



Book Launch on 22nd January 2026

To celebrate the release of their book *Christian Faith and Christian Learning* in August, Clare Watkins and James Butler will be presenting the key themes of the book at a Practical Theology Seminar at the University of Roehampton.

Re-figuring church for God's teaching: a call for a radical reimagining of Christian teaching and learning

Against the background of institutionally anxious churches turning to processes of education and 'discipling' the book *Christian Faith and Christian Learning* recounts a theological action research journey to offer an alternative account of how Christian faith is learnt and handed on. In this seminar, Clare and James will present how the faith learning which they have discovered through close attention to the experience of 'ordinary' Christians offers a distinctive vision of Christian learning which can enable fresh thinking and practice.

Thursday 22nd January 2026, 2pm-3.15pm GMT.

At the University of Roehampton and Online:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdPuCLiDBdLPBBegoB77SLSI_tM9RLn0SPUIb35ustoHT3t8Q/viewform?usp=dialog

TARN Conversation: Theology, Action Research, and Change

12th March 2026, 14:00 pm - 15:30 pm (GMT)

We are excited to announce that this TARN seminar is hosted by **Dr Simon Hallonsten**, Lecturer in Practical Theology, University College Stockholm, **Prof Jonas Idestrom**, Head of Department of Religious Studies and Theology at the University College Stockholm, and **Dr Maria Ledstam**, Lecturer in Practical Theology at the University College Stockholm.

In theological action research, change is both a hoped-for outcome and a key lens for understanding situations. Yet change does not always occur—or move in the direction we intend. In this conversation, we will explore the relationship between theology, action research, and change, asking why change sometimes remains elusive and what this means for how we pursue theological action research in practice, including how much the various researchers involved

should themselves shape and influence the processes of change.

To join, please follow [this link](#) to register for this event.



Training Day: June 2026

3rd and 4th June 2026 from 8.45 to 12 noon (GMT) on both days.

To participate in our next training, you can [sign up here](#). Places are limited!

The training is designed to equip you with the knowledge and skills to embark on your own theological action research project. The training is run by **Dr Helen Cameron**, Director of Research at Regent's Park College, Oxford and **Dr James Butler**, Pioneer Training Leader at the Church Mission Society, Oxford and postdoctoral researcher at the University of Roehampton, London. It will be interactive and conversational. To find out more about our training sessions, please follow [this link](#).

This is what other people say about our TAR trainings:

"Three key insights: "Be prayerfully attentive to the data. The formal voice can include other disciplines. TAR is about discernment through conversation."

"The exercises in groups and general session were informative. I really loved the polyphonic and dialogical nature of the methodology. Stimulating and inspiring."

"I have definitely learned about the power of conversational method through this training especially group conversations we had."



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