

Small Church Growth Strategy

In starting a mission it is helpful to consider including a “Small Church Growth Strategy”.¹ The Rev. Suzanne E. Watson compiled a set of tools and resources in the *Small Church Growth Strategy Handbook*, Episcopal Church Congregation Development, 2007. This overview gives a summary of this. The tools and selection of resources are designed to affirm and strengthen vitality in the congregation. The minimum but crucial benefit of such a strategy is the awareness of several parameters that influence the evolution of a church group.

The following key elements of mission and small church development are discussed:

- The location and demographic makeup of the congregation
- The congregation’s identity
- The congregation’s worship
- The congregation’s activities
- And the congregation’s leadership.

1. The location and demographic makeup of the congregation

1.1. Location

- Determine your type or area: rural area, or small town – town / small city – newer suburb of a city – older suburb of a city – older residential area of a city – downtown or central city
- History of the area (local, regional and national)
- Socio-economic status of region
- Institutes, business and commercial, higher education, charitable and welfare agencies
- Geography and climate (will help understand the people’s way of being as well as the kind of ministry to focus on, i.e. seasonal ministry, hot summers long cold winters)

1.2. Demographics

- Race, ethnicity, employment, age, households with children, gender balance
- Are your members locals, ex-patriots, refugees, multiracial, multinational, multid denominational, etc ...
- Other faith traditions in the area
- What language will be used
- Who is your target congregation

¹ Rev. Suzanne E. Watson, *Small Church Growth Strategy Handbook*, Spring Edition, 2007.
<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/congdev/> - <http://smallepiscopalchurch.blogspot.com/>

2. The congregation's identity

2.1. Theological orientation of most active members: predominantly conservative, somewhat conservative, right in the "middle", somewhat liberal, predominantly liberal.

2.2. Mission and purpose of the congregation: it is important to know whether most members have a clear idea about this or not, or whether people agree about the congregation's mission or not.

Two exercises for the process of writing your mission statement:

Exercise 1: Developing your church's mission statement

A practical approach to leading your church to define purpose is to study the baptismal covenant and Bible passages, including the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.²

As your congregation begins to define/redefine your purpose, the following questions can be helpful. (Taken from *The Purpose-Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*, by Rick Warren. Copyright 1995 by Rick Warren. Used by permission of Zondervan.)³

- a) To begin to define/redefine your purpose statement ask:
 - Why does the church exist?
 - What are we to **be** as a church? (Who and what are we?)
 - What are we to **do** as a church? (What does God want accomplished in the world?)
 - How are we to do it?
- b) Put the findings in writing and summarize your conclusions in a sentence.
- c) When you have completed the first draft of your purpose statement, ask the questions:
 1. Is our purpose Biblical?
 2. Is our purpose specific?
 3. Is our purpose transferable? (Is it short enough to be remembered and passed on to everyone in your church?)
 4. Is our purpose measurable?

If you cannot, as a team, answer yes to all five questions, go back and revise!

² For a PowerPoint presentation of Bible passages with images that suggest the purpose of the Church, visit the Congregational Development website or e-mail swatson@episcopalchurch.org.

³ Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 98-101.

Exercise 2: Purpose vision faith and values: questions for groups that gather in Jesus' name

- **PURPOSE:** How does your group's existence support God's mission in the world? How does your group's existence support your congregation's part in God's mission?

Jesus Christ commissions his followers to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19-20, NRSV) The Church fulfills this mission by seeking to "restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, through prayer, worship, proclamation of the Gospel, and promoting justice, peace and love. It is through the ministry of all its members that the Church carries out its mission. (BCP, 855).

- **VISION:** What is your group going to do to fulfill this purpose?
- **FAITH:** What does your group believe?
- **VALUES:** How does your group behave and act?

2.3. *Spiritual life of the congregation:* three exercises to help increase spiritual vitality

Exercise 1 for spiritual vitality: lifeline

The purpose of the lifeline is to assist congregations in examining their past and present, and to make some projections for the future. During this process they will be able to discern themes, patterns, and trends in the lifeline, which should provide information about the congregation's behavior.

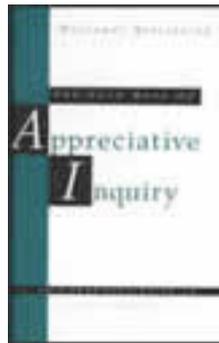
1. Draw a lifeline of your congregation. The lifeline should be how you perceive your congregation. It can take a variety of shapes and forms (i.e., it does not need to be straight). A possibility is to have your lifeline parallel your congregation's average Sunday attendance.
2. Start with your earliest collective memory, and project to some point in the future, at least one year from today.
3. Note the significant events that have shaped your congregation's life. These events do not have to be earth-shattering, but they should represent milestones.
4. For clarification, use the following symbols to further illustrate your lifeline:
 - ! a risk or chance that your congregation took (or will take)
 - X an obstacle; something or someone that prevented your congregation from getting or doing what you wanted to do
 - O a decision made for your congregation by somebody else
 - + a positive, satisfying, or appropriate decision
 - a negative, unsatisfying, or inappropriate decision
 - ? a decision that you anticipate making in the future

You may use any or all of the symbols as often as you like. A particular event could have all six symbols for further clarification. Also, feel free to create symbols that represent your particular experiences, such as times when your congregation sensed God's presence most acutely, times of great creative energy, etc.

After the lifeline is completed, the leader can discuss it in detail. The leader should ask for feedback and clarification of various events and statements made on the lifeline.

The lifeline can be an excellent way for a congregation to begin to understand itself during times of transition. It could be used early in the calling process, when new ways of leadership are being discussed, or a way for a congregation to introduce itself to new clergy. It is also a good tool for congregations that desire to shift from looking backward in time to a more forward-looking outlook.

Exercise 2 for spiritual vitality: vision for the future



Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is frequently used by Episcopal congregations as a way to refocus on the vitality of mission and ministry in the congregation. Sue Annis Hammond in *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry* identifies the three classic AI questions.⁴ These classic questions could be adapted for use by a congregation as:

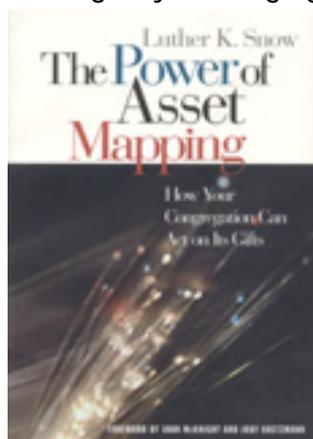
1. Think back through your time in this congregation. Locate a moment that was a high point, when you felt God's presence most intensely. Describe how you felt, and what made the situation possible.
2. Without being humble, describe what you most value about your own ministry, your congregation, and The Episcopal Church.
3. Describe three concrete wishes for the future of your congregation.

For more information on the principles of Appreciative Inquiry see *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry* by Sue Annis Hammond (Thin Book Publishing, 1998), available at www.thinbook.com.

Another resource for Appreciative Inquiry is *Appreciative Inquiry in the Catholic Church* by Susan Star Paddock. This book can assist those congregations that wish to use the principles of AI for strategic planning, relationship building, transition, community development and for spiritual renewal. Visit www.thinbook.com or phone 888.316.9544 to order.

⁴ Sue Annis Hammon, *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry* (Thin Book Publishing, 1998), 56.

Exercise 3 for spiritual vitality: focusing on your congregation's gifts



This exercise is a way to (re)focus on your congregation's gifts and assets. It is a good way to begin to change the focus from what is lacking/what you no longer have to recognizing that God has blessed your congregation with many gifts, and calls you to use them creatively and with gratitude.

The categories and questions below are reprinted from *The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Gifts* by Luther snow, with permission from the Alban Institute. Copyright c 2004 by The Alban Institute, Inc., Herndon, VA. All rights reserved. Available at <http://www.alban.org>

Physical Assets: Physical assets are things you can touch, see or feel. These include land and natural resources, buildings and space, equipment, materials, and objects. People also sometimes think of strengths like location and visibility in response to these questions.

1. *What are some physical assets of your congregation?*
2. *Think deeper: what are some very specific assets of your congregation?*
3. *What are some physical assets that are unique to your congregation?*
4. *What are some physical assets of your community?*
5. *What are some of your natural resources?*

Individual Assets: These are the talents, experience, perspective, and skills of individuals.

1. *What are some things you care a lot about? (Gifts of the heart)*
2. *What is something you know a lot about? (Gifts of the hands)*
3. *What's something you can do with your hands or body? (Gifts of the hands)*
4. *Sometimes people are shy about naming their gifts, or just don't see them. What are some talents or skills you see in someone else in your congregation?*
5. *What are some talents or skills you see in someone you know who isn't here?*
6. *What talent or skill do you think people in the congregation know you for?*

Associational Assets: These are voluntary groups, associations, networks, and organizations of individuals who gather to do or enjoy something together that they could not experience on their own. They might be more formal groups with a name, or they could be informal groups like the people who have coffee on Tuesdays at the café.

1. *What are some groups of people you get together with from the congregation?*
2. *What groups or associations are you part of outside the congregation?*
3. *What are some groups you know about but are not a part of?*
4. *What are some groups that are not represented here?*
5. *Who's the most powerful person you know about?*

Institutional Assets: These are business firms, public agencies, and nonprofit institutions with budgets, staff, and usually places of business. Institutions differ from voluntary associations in the motivation of participants. People generally participate in institutional activities because of salaries, sales, taxes, or other financial or legal considerations.

1. *What are some institutional decisions that affect the people in the congregation or community? Which institutions make those decisions?*
2. *What are some institutions represented in the congregation?*
3. *What institutions does the congregation itself partner with or do business with?*
4. *What institutions does the congregation itself partner with or do business with?*
5. *What institutions have something in common with the congregation?*

Economic Assets: Usually people think of local businesses as economic assets. We should also think of our spending power, our investing power, and our productive capacity to provide valuable goods or services.

1. *What's something the congregation spends money on?*
2. *What's something you spend money on?*
3. *What's something you can make or do, that people would pay you for?*
4. *What businesses are represented in the congregation?*
5. *Where does the congregation invest its money?*
6. *What space does the congregation control that could be rented or charged for?⁵*

⁵ Luther K. Snow, *The Power of Asset Mapping* (The Alban Institute, 2004), 50-52.

3. The congregation's worship

3.1. Determining your worship style

Charles Arn, in his book *How to Start a New Service: Your Church CAN Reach New People* (Baker Books, 1997), begins with a chapter on which congregations should, or should not, begin a new church service. By new, he means new-style, with the goal of reaching out to a new people to continue Christ's mission to make disciples. Should your congregation consider starting a new-style service? The following questions help determine the answer:

1. Is your congregation's highest priority being "like a family"?
2. Is your congregation's highest priority preserving "correct" doctrine and "correct" interpretation of Scripture?
3. Has your congregation split from a more liberal church or denomination in the past 50-75 years?
4. Is your congregation's highest priority survival (i.e. with avoiding death than pursuing life)?
5. Does your priest/pastor/leadership team plan to leave in the coming year?
6. Does your congregation seem too small to add another service?
7. Is your congregation's attendance declining?
8. Is your congregation's sanctuary less than filled on Sundays?
9. Does your congregation lack the personnel to add a new service?
10. Does your theology or liturgical beliefs not allow for a different style?
11. Is your church in a bad location?

Response: Did you answer yes to question number 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5? If so, starting a new service is probably not the best strategy for your congregation at this time. About 50% of congregations fall into this category.

Did you answer yes to question number 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 or 11? Guess what? These are excuses for not starting a new service, but they are not reasons. If the idea of a new service (despite the excuses) seems like it might have merit, consider purchasing Arn's book. And watch the Congregational Development website for the results of an ongoing pilot program for small churches interested in making new disciples through a new-style service.

3.2. Worship resources

- Visit *Sermons that Work* for sermons written specifically for small Episcopal congregations. Sermons in this series are in the public domain – they are not copyrighted – and all are invited to use them or draw from them as a resource at no cost. Go to http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sermons_that_work.htm.
- For free sermon help and starters, exegesis, liturgy and worship ideas, seasonal blessings and Prayers of the People and more visit <http://www.textweek.com>
- For resources and free downloads from the Episcopal Church Center Office of Liturgy and Music, visit

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/19625_19614_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=19613

- Visit The Worship Well, an online community for sharing and creating fresh, innovative worship resources in the Episcopal Church. at <http://www.theworshipwell.org/>
- For free downloadable music for the small church visit: <http://www.smallchurchmusic.com/>

Interested in learning more about the Emergent Church? Consider the following:⁶

- Johnny Baker's "Worship Tricks", more than 200 "fresh" ideas and examples for worship, are in the top right corner of his blog – <http://jonnybaker.blogs.com>. Baker also wrote a book on Alternative Worship in 2003 that is highly recommended with practical worship ideas – available at <http://www.amazon.com/Alternative-Worship-Resources-Emergent-Church/dp/0801091705> .
- The Greenbelt Festival – <http://www.greenbelt.org.uk/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenbelt_festival
- Highly recommended book about the Emerging Church phenomenon, covering the US, UK, and some other locales is Gibbs, Eddie and Bolger, Ryan, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Communities in Postmodern Cultures*, SPCK Publishing, 2006, available at <http://www.amazon.com/Emerging-Churches-Christian-Community-Postmodern/dp/0801027152>

Some other books to check out, by Emerging Anglicans in the UK...

Mobsby, Ian. *Emerging & Fresh Expressions of Church*, Moot Community Publishing, 2007. "Ian Mobsby is an ordained NSM Anglican priest licensed to work with the Moot Community, an Anglican Church of England Fresh Expression of Church Project in Westminster, Central London."

- Rollins, Peter. *How (Not) to Speak of God*, SPCK Publishing, 2006
Rollins is a post-modern philosopher, from Belfast, Northern Ireland, available at <http://www.amazon.co.uk/How-Not-Speak-Peter-Rollins/dp/0281057982>

⁶ Emergent Church information provided by Bowie Snodgrass, Web Content Editor at the Episcopal Church Center.

4. Deciding about the congregation's activities

4.1. *Preparing to tell your faith story*

Created by Charles Fulton and Susy Miller

1. Draw a timeline from left to right on a sheet of paper, the left being your birth, the right being the present. On the timeline, mark and identify (by year) significant events that were turning points in your life.
2. Above the line describe the context within which the event occurred. What else was going on in your life at that time?
3. Below the line describe your awareness of God at that point. Was God present or absent?
4. What was God doing with you in that event?
5. Look at the whole timeline. Are there patterns in the turning point events of your life? What initiates turning points, what is required of you, how were you different after these events?
6. What are the patterns in your experience of God and your relationship with God? Is there a consistency in God's actions and responses in your turning points? **Remember: God is the main character in this story, what God has done and is doing in your life. You are the acted upon.**
7. Imagine telling someone about your insights into God's presence and working in your life. Tell your story of how God has come into your life and what has been the result when you have recognized God's presence. Tell the story to yourself, then tell the story to a friend. Listen for the story your story will trigger in your friend.
8. Tell your story to someone outside a faith community.
9. Commit to inviting God into your life as your life line lengthens into your future, regularly engaging the Gospel with others.

4.2. *Reaching out by learning about your neighbor's need: how to find your congregation's percept report*

Percept is a company that provides the largest faith-based demographic research company in the United States.

To find your congregation's Percept report and other valuable demographic-based congregational development tools and services (including downloadable resources), visit www.Percept.info.

For a complementary copy of your congregation's Firstview Percept report (an \$80 value), along with average Sunday attendance and giving trends for your congregation and diocese visit the Study Your Congregation page on the Episcopal Church web site at: http://www.episcopalchurch.org/growth_60791_ENG_HTM.htm

1. When you reach this site, click on the name of your diocese first.
2. Once the diocese loads (which can take a moment), click on the name of your congregation.

3. Once the congregation loads (which also can take a moment), click on the desired link.
 - a. For the Firstview Percept demographic report, click on **Zip Code Profile**.
 - b. For your congregation's Average Sunday Attendance and giving trends, click on the **View Church Chart**.
 - c. For specific suggestions for your congregation's size, growth trend, and geographic location, click on **View Description and Resources** (this portion is currently being revised. While there is helpful content, check back periodically for updates.)

Reaching out to your neighbor using your congregation's Percept report:

Are there people in your community who are not involved in a faith community?

From page 4 of your congregation's Firstview Percept Report, question P1, write the total number of people who currently reside in your area. From page 6, question F1, write the percentage of households estimated to have no faith involvement as a decimal number. Multiply these two numbers to estimate how many people in your community are currently without any identified faith involvement.

Example: 10,000 people reside in area, 25% show no faith involvement.

$10,000 \times 0.25 = 2,500$ people currently residing in area with no faith involvement

Who is your neighbor?

From page 4, chart D1, which lifestyle group is most prevalent in your community? Is there one that is predominant? If not, include all that apply.

From page 4, chart D2&3, which racial/ethnic group is most prevalent in your community? Is there one that is predominant? If not, write all that apply.

From page 4, chart D4, what are the major generational groups represented? Is there one that is predominant? If not, write all that apply.

From page 5, chart D5, how traditional is family structure in your community?

From page 5, chart D6, how educated are the adults? Is there one educational level that predominates? If not, write all that apply.

What are your neighbor's concerns?

From page 5, chart C1, which concerns are highest on the minds of the people in your community? Look over the description of concerns. List these concerns.

From page 5, chart C2, what is the overall community stress level in your area?

From page 5, chart C3, how much resistance is there to change in your community?

How can your congregation reach your neighbor?

From page 6, chart F1, how likely are people in your community to become affiliated with a historic Christian denomination such as the Episcopal Church?

Financial sustainability is becoming an increasing concern. From page 6, chart F2, does the likely giving potential for community suggest that your congregation can be financially sustainable, now and in the future?

From page 6, chart F3, what style of worship, architecture and music does your community prefer?

From page 6, chart F4, which programs or services are most likely to be preferred in your community?

From page 6, chart F5, how likely are people to have some religious preference? How could your community's religious preference (or lack thereof) direct your congregation's intentional evangelism?

4.3. *Letting them know you care: a lesson in what not to do (John's Story)*

Story

Yes, this is really true. It is written by an acquaintance who had never worshipped in a church or with any faith community. He is at a point of transition in his life, having recently sold a business overseas and returned to the United States to take care of his elderly widowed mother who is ill...he was curious about Christianity and so decided to visit an Episcopal Church:

I looked in the phone book and found two Episcopal Churches listed. I went by the first one, but there was no sign and I thought it was abandoned. I wondered, "Can a church go out of business? I didn't think they could." I then went on to a larger church a little further on. I sat in the parking lot for a long time with my knees shaking, watching as people got out of their cars, and wanting to go in a little late to just sneak in to the back. However, when I finally mustered the nerve and entered the courtyard where I had seen people enter, I was faced with two closed doors. Not knowing which to choose, I opened one and entered. Unfortunately I had selected incorrectly and entered the front of the church. Trapped with everyone staring, I quickly found my way to the front row.

I was unable to follow anything anyone was doing, and no one brought me the program that they all seemed to be using. I was kind of freaked out – everyone stands, then they sit, they say prayers and words, they cross themselves, they change books. I didn't know what on earth they were doing or what was going to happen next. Increasingly intimidated, as I sat in the front row the preacher suddenly decided to "preach" from the center aisle, right next to where I was sitting. He mostly talked about something called a diocese (I wondered what a diocese is?) As he was preaching he then said something that made everyone start mumbling some phrases again, and the preacher, still in the center aisle, totally freaked me out and grabbed my hand. I thought I was being singled out, but then realized that everyone was getting up and moving all around the church hugging and shaking hands with each other (the peace).

Next, something happened at the table up front, and then everyone got up to leave. But they all headed for the front door where I'd entered. As I followed them up I realized that they weren't leaving; instead, they all kneeled and someone brought around some bread, then we all went back to our seats.

Finally, after it was all over, someone came up to me with a card and asked me to write my contact information and answer a question. The question asked what my interest at St. Swithens was. As I really didn't know what to put, I remembered that I'd often heard Christians talk about Baptism, so I wrote baptism. All the people then disappeared off into another building, I watched, and then left in my car.

Two weeks later John received a card in the mail. It read, "Thank you for visiting St. Swithens. While we are pleased to learn of your interest in baptism, our confirmation classes in preparation for Bishop X's visit in six weeks began two weeks ago. To be

considered for baptism and confirmation on that date you will need to join the classes on Wednesday night at 7PM.” John’s question to me? “What is confirmation, how is Bishop X involved, and how can I possibly attend when I work nights?”

While John’s story reads like a farce, it is, once again, instructive to those of us who profess to be followers of Christ. We never know who it is that will walk in the door (maybe even the wrong door), what issue that person may be experiencing, and if this is the only opportunity they will ever have to be introduced to the transformative love of Jesus Christ.

Is your congregation equipped to radically welcome and incorporate guests?

Your congregation’s loving actions. In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus commands that we are to “love the Lord with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (NRSV).

Part of congregational development therefore involves equipping the faith community to live out its part in Christ’s mission of love of neighbor—this translates into loving action (acts of compassion, working to transform unjust structures in the world, and environmental justice to name just some).

Resources to assist your congregation as you reach out in love include:

- *God’s Mission in the World: An Ecumenical Study Guide on Global Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals* is a study resource for congregations and other groups seeking to learn more about global poverty and to become part of the worldwide movement for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Material is organized into six easily implemented one-hour study sessions. For more information visit <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn>.
- *Beijing Circles*: a tool which can help us educate ourselves and one another about the issues affecting women globally and then to advocate within our church and the world to bring about positive change. Download at http://www.episcopalchurch.org/41685_73656_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=73689.
- “Shall We Gather? Anglican Women Together,” a film that documents a gathering of the Anglican Communion’s delegates to the 49th session of the United Nations commission on the status of women who put their faith into action. Available with out charge. Available through Episcopal Books & Resources (800-334-7626) or blucas@episcopalchurch.org
- Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) continues to carry out the ministry to the uprooted it began over 60 years ago to resettle refugees, advocate with and for immigrants, and raise awareness of the plight of the uprooted in our church. The Gospel mandate to extend hospitality to strangers and our Baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons calls us to this ministry. For more information about EMM (including a free DVD entitled “A Map of Faith-Sharing the Journey with the Uprooted” which is a resource for faith formation that explores the theme of spiritual journeying, and comes with a study guide and web links to resources) visit <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/emm.htm> or contact John Denaro, Episcopal Migration Ministries (800-334-7626; jdenaro@episcopalchurch.org).

- “Windows on Mission: Stories of DFMS Missionaries Around the World” highlights eleven unique mission journeys with missionaries who share their joys and challenges of doing God’s work throughout the world. 2 DVD Set, \$39.95. (Each of the eleven segments run between 15 and 25 minutes in length.) An accompanying study guide will soon be available for download with out charge at <http://episcopalchurch.org/agr.htm> or contact Episcopal Books & Resources (800-334-7626) or blucas@episcopalchurch.org.
- "Changing Lives: Behind the Walls at Angola" is a new feature-length video documentary following the effects of an Episcopal chaplain's ministry inside a prison once considered the bloodiest in America: the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, Louisiana. This DVD follows Deacon Charles DeGravelles as he ministers to the men inside Angola, most of whom will never set foot outside the prison. Also featured in the documentary is the Rev. Jacqueline Means, prison ministries director on the Episcopal Church Center staff. Available through Episcopal Books & Resources, 800 334-7626 or blucas@episcopalchurch.org

4.4. Evangelism

- Church Ad Project: Advertising Tools for Powerful Episcopal Evangelism. Many reasonably priced options for the small congregation. <http://www.churchad.com/>
- “Voices of Young Adults: Listening to 20-Somethings Talk About the Church.” In June 2005, the Episcopal Church invited young adults from across the US to share opinions about the church. Some of these young people are active in congregational life and some are not, but all share a wellspring of affection for the Episcopal Church. We invite you to listen to these voices. Available for download without fee at http://episcopalchurch.org/49662_78132_ENG_HTM.htm.

4.5. 4.5. Education

For information on Christian Education, visit the Educators web page on the Episcopal Church website at http://www.episcopalchurch.org/48931_ENG_HTM.htm. Here you will find foundational and theoretical information on the catechetical process in the Episcopal Church along with resources to empower Christian Educators and others to engage in theological reflection in relationship to the ministry of lifelong faith formation.

- For lesson plans for small congregations, visit http://www.episcopalchurch.org/50534_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=51914. Here you will find lesson plans that follow the Revised Common Lectionary for young children, older children and adults.
- For information on theological education, visit the Theological Education for All website at <http://www.teforall.org/>. Here you will find a reference tool for Episcopalians and all who want to study scripture, learn about church tradition, and apply God given reason to the challenges of contemporary life. At this site you can put together your own learning plan, explore web reference tools and reading lists, find out what seminaries offer, or search a

rich ecumenical data base of educational events. Christian educators will find ideas for celebrating Theological Education Sunday in your congregation.

5. Leadership of your congregation

5.1. *Shared leadership as stewardship: gathering the gifts and talents of all members*

Using the Gifts God Has Given Us to Do the Work that God Has Given Us to Do

- Visit the Stewardship pages of The Episcopal Church web site at <http://episcopalchurch.org/stewardship.htm>. At this site you will find a large amount of downloadable and very useful information designed to help leaders in congregations and dioceses to development stewardship programs that help carry out the work God is calling them to do. Most of the information found in the *Stewardship Handbook* (on the display table at events and available through the Stewardship Office) is also in downloadable format at this site. For more information contact Terry Parsons, stewardship officer, Congregational Development, tparsons@episcopalchurch.org , (800) 334-7626, ext. 6284.

5.2. *Sacramental leadership options in the small church: "There's a New Model Born Every Minute"*

A desire for a different type of leadership structure, finances, logistics, the diocese, clergy concerns, plus many other reasons prompt some small congregations to look at alternative models of ministry other than the traditional "one-priest—one altar" model. Below is a list that briefly describes some of the models. It is by no means exhaustive, and is continuously growing, changing, and evolving.

If alternative models of sacramental leadership are of interest to your congregation, consider attending the Creative Models of Sacramental Leadership conference October 7-10, 2007 at Kanuga, or request a copy of the resource that will be produced from this event (go to http://www.episcopalchurch.org/smallchurch_27512_ENG_HTM.htm)

Circuit Rider Priests: Team of priests rotate through group of churches. Can be organized, paid and deployed by the diocese.

Cluster, Solo Priest: Three or more congregations share the ministry of one priest. Strong local lay ministry team in each congregation and the existence of an inter-parish council where most successful.

Cluster, Leadership Team: Three or more congregations share the ministry of two or more clergy. Strong local lay ministry team in each congregation and the existence of an inter-parish council where most successful.

Cluster, Interdenominational: Three or more congregations with different denominational affiliation in different locations share the ministry of one or more clergy. (Ex: An ELCA congregation, an Episcopal congregation, and a Presbyterian USA).

Interdenominational/Ecumenical/Co-operating Parish: Two or more congregations with different denominational affiliation in different locations merge into one in one location.

Interfaith Congregation: Two or more faith traditions agree to share space/facilities, resources, and potentially mission.

Interim Priest: Priest hired for the transition period between sacramental leaders, or sacramental leadership models.

Merger: Two or more congregations merge into one in one location.

Minister at Large: Diocesan model where clergy is paid by the diocese and rotates through different congregations.

Pastors from other Denominations: Sacramental leadership provided by clergy from denomination other than Episcopal.

International Priests/Pastors: Sacramental leadership provided by recruiting clergy from locations other than congregation's country.

Retired Priest

Satellite Congregation Model: Larger congregation with multiple staff partners with smaller congregation and provides sacramental and other ministers (such as musicians). Can also be seen in the model where a larger congregation starts a new daughter church in a different location to reach new people and resources that congregation (ex.: store front church, middle-school location, etc.)

Seminary Student Intern: Seminary student provides sacramental leadership.

Self-Supporting Priest/Tentmaker Priest: Priest with second profession/source of income ministers to congregation with out financial compensation.

Solo Priest, Part Time

Solo Deacon: Deacon officiates at Reserved Sacrament Eucharist; periodic consecration by a neighboring priest.

Total Ministry (many styles and many names!): locally identified and trained team provides ministry of the priest as seen in the solo-priest model, including sacramental leadership.

Supply Priest: Priest paid for sacramental ministry on a service by service basis.

Yoke: Two congregations in different locations share the ministry of one priest

Tools for leadership development

For events: Go to

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/smallchurch_27512_ENG_HTM.htm.)

If you are **leading a congregation through change**, consider attending Upward Bound. **Upward Bound** is for the congregational development leader who is ready to address the following situations:

- Your primary goals are sabotaged by distracting mini-fires.
- Emotional responses are disproportionate to the situation.
- You are leading 'process' with people operating in a "yes or no" world.
- You are caught in a problem that is not yours to solve.
- There is a negative force that drains time and emotional energy.
- Passive-aggressive behaviors have reached an artful level.

Visit <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/upward.htm> for more information.

The Office for Ministry Development (OMD) assists leaders to invigorate the ministry of God's people – in daily life and within the Episcopal Church. The goal is to expand the capacity of the Church for effective and transformative mission in response to the Baptismal Covenant and the gospel of Jesus Christ. To learn more about OMD, including the programs for leadership development such as Fresh Start, visit <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministry.htm>.

The Rev. Luk de Volder

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