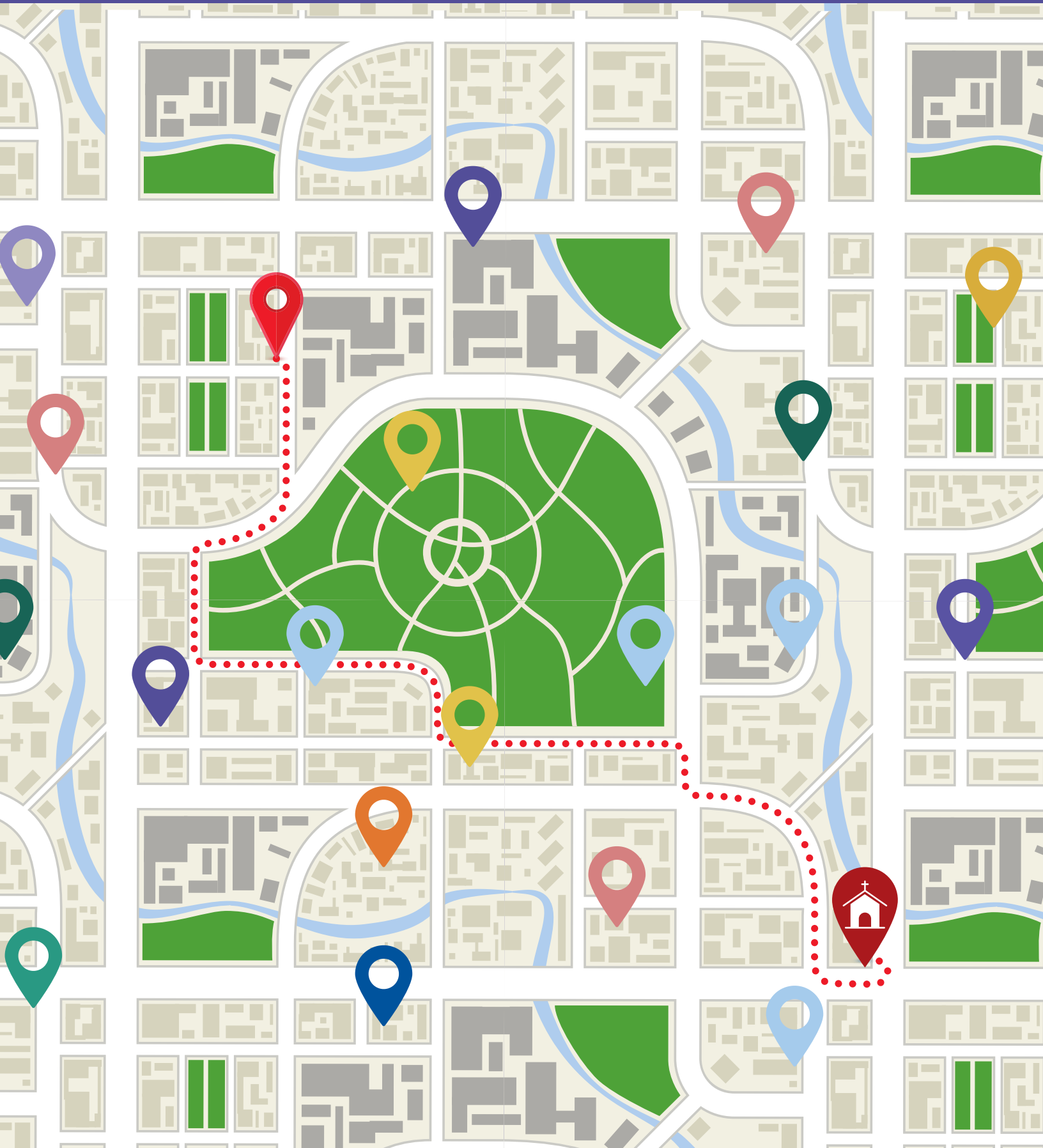


# MISSION ACTION PLAN

## CLERGY HANDBOOK



# SIGNS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Spiritual discernment is a prayerful, informed, and intentional effort to distinguish God's voice from others that influence us, that the Kingdom might come and God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The goal of spiritual discernment is to receive God's guidance.

PEACE	The pre-eminent sign: a sense of confidence at a very deep level indicates we are moving in the right direction. As a group considers an issue, the members will feel permeated with this peace as they approach God's perspective on the matter before them. God's peace does not preclude struggle. Pretending to agree can create an illusion of harmony and peace. Such apparent consonance is weak, superficial and will not last. Turbulence and turmoil are likely in early stages of discernment. The peace of God is born of bold searching, honest expression, mutual respect and genuine compassion. Ultimately the power of God's truth and love brings serenity and a sense of well-being.
CONVERGENCE	Various things that occurred independently and at different times, that heretofore had not seemed inter-related, all of a sudden converge and fit together, informing one another. A pattern emerges like pieces of a mosaic coming together.
PERSISTENCE	The same message keeps coming through unrelated channels and in different ways.
FRUITFULNESS	When certain endeavors produce abundant fruit, God may be calling us to cultivate those areas further.
DISORIENTATION <i>(followed by a sense of clarity)</i>	This occurs when a previous comprehension of truth gets shaken up and a higher truth falls into place with a sudden sense of unanticipated clarity. Suddenly, something significant becomes clear in a vivid way.
JOY	Radiance swells up from within those who are engaged and the Holy Spirit extends a sense of elation.
ENERGY	If we are getting the message right, we are infused with the energy to act on it.

*The Holy Spirit, whom God will send in my name, will teach you everything.*  
John 14:26

Farnham, Suzanne G., Stephen A. Hull, R. Taylor McLean. *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations*, Revised Edition. Morehouse Publishing. 1996.

# INTRODUCTION

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**Welcome to the spiritual journey of Onboarding and Vision, and the Mission Action Plan (MAP) process!** In every new call a congregation needs time to review the past and explore ways forward into the future. The primary goal of the MAP process is learning and discerning God's leading for your ministry together. Previously, congregations did this in the self-study and vision work in the interim time prior to a call. With a shortened search process, this work occurs after a congregation's call and includes the new clergy partner. This allows a congregation to fold in the insights and capacities of the new clergy partner into the work of developing the vision, the story telling, and relationship building that is at the heart of Onboarding and Vision, and the MAP process.

God is calling you together as priest and people into love and service, to one another, and to the world that God loves, starting with your neighbors. You are about to embark on a spiritual journey together as a congregation. God will bring you to a place of inspiration and refreshed purpose, new people to love and new life together. All this is what makes the MAP process a journey of spiritual discernment and brings new life to congregations.

## KEY INFORMATION

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The **Mission Action Plan** is a process that typically begins in the first three to four months after a new ministry starts, typically lasts a year or less, and includes five data and knowledge gathering events. The learning is cumulative as each event builds on one another. The prayer and discernment of the congregation, priest, and people and the discernment of the Holy Spirit's leading give the basic information you need for a 5-year plan. A MAP Congregation Handbook ([dioceseli.org/map-congregation-digital](https://dioceseli.org/map-congregation-digital)) explains the MAP process and provides parishioners the opportunity for journaling and note taking throughout the journey. Encourage them to bring their Handbook to each event and debrief meeting.

The **MAP Team**: A successful MAP process needs a team with a variety of skills to make it doable, enjoyable, and a spiritually uplifting experience. We have discovered special roles you may appoint for a successful Onboarding and Vision and the MAP Process. The Administrator (logistics planner), Scribe (note taker), Champion (one who exhibits enthusiasm, invites participation, displays gratitude), and Prayer Choir (team of intentional prayers) work with the Clergy and Consultant to make the events happen. Many hands make light work. **Celebrate** your Team and your successes as the process progresses.

See Appendix A for more details on Team Roles. A MAP Team Handbook ([dioceseli.org/map-team-digital](https://dioceseli.org/map-team-digital)) details the MAP Team Roles and Responsibilities for each event and debrief meeting. The Handbook allows for much note taking for each event.

# A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

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Many spiritual aspects of the work are drawn from Susan Beaumont's book, *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You are Going: Leading in a Liminal Time*. Beaumont identifies attending to the soul of an institution as the heart of finding the local parish institution's new chapter of life, which does not rely on recycling old strategies but building on the best in the congregation's story and adapting it to respond to what God reveals in the neighborhoods and communities of the parish. Engaging soul work enables the congregation to engage in God's vision. In seeking the soul of the parish the congregation needs to attend to the work of:

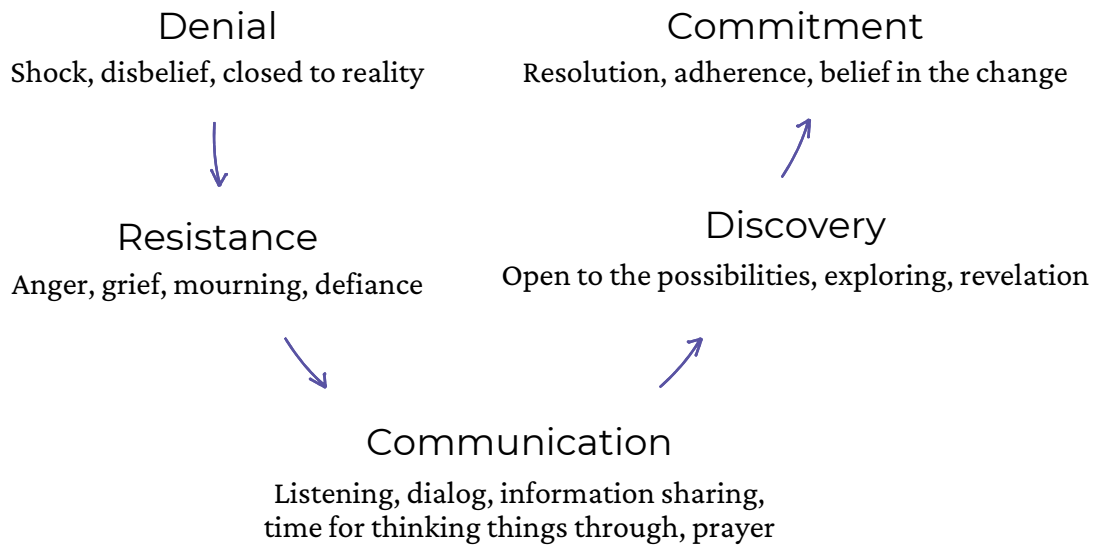
- Deepening communal discernment
- Shaping institutional memory
- Clarifying purpose
- Engaging emergence

Attending to the soul of the congregation is an activity of God's revelation to the mission of the congregation for today and taking it into the future. The MAP process allows the congregation to let go of activities and practices that are no longer life-giving and pulls them through the liminal present into their emerging future. You will experience these four actions throughout the MAP process in each of the events. Use them as a frame of reference for interpreting the experience you and your people are having. It will assist you in seeing where God is leading and what God desires to have happen in the life and mission of your congregation.

The Congregation is invited into consistent prayer and scripture reflection for each section of the MAP process. For some this will be a very new experience. Reflecting the work of the MAP process in your preaching and teaching will help the congregation form the spiritual foundation for it. You will give a short reflection of 5 minutes or less on the scripture in the Congregational Handbook at the beginning of every event. This is a journey you are all on together, and your words and prayer in the process are very important and build the experience of being led into the journey with God. When they engage the neighborhood, they will see some of Jesus' teachings that will be a call to them to build God's Reign here and now. Emphasize Jesus' teachings and Jesus' call when the community encounters God's work in the neighborhood.

Not everyone will welcome the work. It is important to remember the flowchart for Congregational Change dynamics (Phases of Change): Denial, Resistance, Communication, Discovery, and Commitment. Denial and resistance are expressions of fear and loss. People don't know where they will be on the other side of change. They will ask if there will be a place for them in the new future and if they will recognize "their church." Giving people a place both to voice fears and talk about what might be occurs in the communication phase and provides places for dialogue, learning, prayer, and exploration. The data gathering events of the MAP process will do just that: give people a place to hear, learn, discuss, and explore. Everyone has a chance to speak and hear. The data gives God the raw experience of the people to speak into and through. The scripture and prayer scaffolding likewise provide places for people to listen for and hear God speaking. At its best the MAP process provides an experience of God's inspiration and revelation to the congregation.

# Phases of Change



Scott, Jaffee

The “conversion” experience for resistant people happens when they can discover their place in the future, and their focus shifts from maintaining the past to living into the future. The leadership’s responsibility in change is to communicate clearly. They must identify the catalyst and context of change and facilitate a conversation, conversion, and commitment to the future and assure the accountability of leadership, goals, and congregational participation. Neighborhood exploration identifies the places with opportunities to engage God in the neighborhood, and the call to ministry emerges. This emerging ministry is what pulls the congregation through the liminal “doorway” and into its future. The congregation engaging what is emerging in prayer and conversation creates the vision for the future to be seen and for conversion to the future to happen.

## CONNECTING TO THE INTERIM PERIOD

The MAP process begins during the Interim period and engages two resources to prepare the congregation for the MAP process. *Grounded in God: Group Discernment for Listening Heart* (Suzanne G. Farnham, R. Taylor McLean, Stephanie A. Hull) and an appreciative inquiry process of a SOAR analysis are completed by the congregation in preparation for their new call and the onboarding and vision undertaken in the MAP process. It is important to review the Congregation’s SOAR from their Interim time. It will help you discern between actual goals and what the congregation has been saying because it is familiar. It reflects where the congregation has been. What has been in the past might not be the church’s future. The hope of the MAP process is to help congregations move strongly into the future by meeting their neighbors where they are now in the present.

You are welcome to connect with the Interim Priest-in-Charge to discuss their experience in the Interim and their impressions of the congregation.

# SOAR Model Analysis for Churches (Appreciative Inquiry)

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b> <i>What can we build on?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are we most proud of as a church?</li><li>• What makes us unique?</li><li>• What is our proudest achievement in the last year or two?</li><li>• How do we use our strengths to respond to the great commandment to love God, love our neighbors, and reach out to the stranger?</li><li>• How do our strengths fit with the realities of the surrounding community and Jesus' call to go forward and make new disciples?</li><li>• What do we do or provide that is world-class for our stakeholders: parishioners, community, potential disciples, or mission partners?</li></ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> <i>What is our surrounding community seeking?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As we explore our values and aspirations as a church, what are we deeply passionate about?</li><li>• Reflecting on our Strengths and Opportunities, who are we and who is God calling us to become, and where is God calling us to go in the future?</li><li>• What is our most compelling aspiration, our deepest sense of God's call?</li><li>• What strategic initiatives (projects, programs, processes) would support following God's compelling call?</li></ul>
<p><b>ASPIRATIONS</b> <i>What do we care deeply about in our ministry?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do we make sense of the opportunities provided by the forces and trends surrounding our church?</li><li>• What are the top 3 opportunities to focus our efforts on?</li><li>• How can we best meet the needs of our stakeholders, those who have a vested interest in our vitality and mission?</li><li>• Who are possible new disciples or mission partners?</li><li>• How can we positively differentiate ourselves from other faith communities?</li><li>• What are possible new mission areas or partnerships with which to build new discipling relationships?</li><li>• What new expressions of our strengths and core values might deepen the vitality of our relationships with the surrounding community?</li></ul>
<p><b>RESULTS</b> <i>How do we know we are succeeding in following God's call?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As we explore our values and aspirations as a church, what are we deeply passionate about?</li><li>• Reflecting on our Strengths and Opportunities, who are we and who is God calling us to become, and where is God calling us to go in the future?</li><li>• What is our most compelling aspiration, our deepest sense of God's call?</li><li>• What strategic initiatives (projects, programs, processes) would support following God's compelling call?</li></ul>

# CONSULTANT & CLERGY MEETING

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This meeting is an opportunity for you to meet the Consultant, share your ministry hopes, discuss the congregation, and ask questions about the MAP process. The Consultant is a resource for you and the congregation. They are invested in the flourishing and success of the clergy and the congregation. The Consultant will introduce you to the Harvard School of Leadership's three capacities of a great leader to use as a tool to help determine possible courses of action as the congregation experiences change and potential conflict. A great leader:

- Defines roles and elevates expectations
- Sets boundaries and accountabilities
- Cultivates vision and bonds the community to its future

In meetings with the Consultant discuss if any of these leadership skills have been present in your work or might be identified as an area needing support. The Consultant can be a helpful sounding board on leadership strategy and the MAP process. You may wish to adopt the Conversation Covenant (Appendix B) for use in Vestry and other meetings. Setting these boundaries early on can be a useful strategy in promoting a faithful culture in community and building consistency between MAP meetings and other meetings.

# SPIRITUAL & PRACTICAL RESOURCES

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Practical and spiritual resources to enhance the work of the MAP are:

**Missional:** A 4 – 6 week Bible study series developed by the Diocese of Texas. The goal of this study series is to develop curiosity around missional communities and can be used before or during the MAP process. This study will deepen the community's well of scriptural and reflective experience for God to speak through. It is built to be flexible and practical. It can be done over 4-6 weeks for groups of various sizes and requires little as far as preparation and materials. It is available in English (adult and youth versions), Spanish, and Braille (upon request). Visiting the Diocese of Texas Missional webpage can be great inspiration and help clergy develop their own missional preaching, teaching strategy for the MAP experience. The website and download for the Missional Bible Study is [epicenter.org/ministries/missional-communities](http://epicenter.org/ministries/missional-communities) (Accessible by [clicking here](#) or scanning the QR code on the following page)

***Effective Organizing for Congregational Renewal*** by Michael Green and Metro Industrial Areas Foundation, available from the Congregational Support office or by order online. This booklet gives the basic information and processes for community organizing. You will recognize many aspects of the MAP process in the booklet, and the booklet will give you expanded information on practices to make it even more useful.

**Trytank:** Trytank ([trytank.org](http://trytank.org)) is a pioneering action research lab that has initiated groundbreaking experiments reimagining church engagement throughout the Episcopal Church. They use data to empower church leaders with actionable insights and adaptive strategies. It can be a resource for innovative ideas and a way to find inspiration for your own. It is coordinated by the Rev. Lorenzo Lebrija author of *How To Try*. (Accessible by [clicking here](#) scanning the QR code on the following page)

# SPIRITUAL & PRACTICAL RESOURCES

***Holy Currencies*** by Eric Law. Law explores six currencies that he describes are like currents in a body of water that move nutrients around in the system. The six currencies are: Time & Place, Relationships, Gracious Leadership, Truth-telling, Wellness, and Money. The four intangible currencies are engaged both within and without the congregation: Relationships, Gracious Leadership, Truth-telling, and Wellness. These four intangibles are integral to the health of the two tangible currencies: Time & Place and Money. When congregations become detached from their local neighborhoods their access to local intangible currencies are reduced or can disappear. This profoundly impacts the congregation's sense of wellness. A significant outcome of the MAP process is encountering new sources of the four intangible currencies. The Vestry, MAP Team, and other leadership will do a Holy Currency assessment during the Leadership in Transition Retreat with your consultant at the launch of the MAP process.

**Evangelism:** Explore the Evangelism page on the The Episcopal Church website ([episcopalchurch.org/ministries/evangelism](http://episcopalchurch.org/ministries/evangelism)). It has basic evangelism training for congregations and a number of ideas that have been successful around the church. Download the Evangelism 101 Handbook, and read and refer to it as a resource when appropriate during the MAP process. It is available in English, Spanish and French. (Accessible by [clicking here](#) or scanning the QR code below)

**Restart:** The Episcopal Church website has a section devoted to re-starting congregations that have predominantly legacy members ([episcopalchurch.org/ministries/church-planting-redevelopment](http://episcopalchurch.org/ministries/church-planting-redevelopment)). Go here to explore strategies and receive coaching and peer support. (Accessible by [clicking here](#) or scanning the QR code below)

***The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making*** by Elizabeth Liebert. This book shares spiritual practices that work through a variety of embodied practices for a variety of people to build holistic discernment that can be done as an individual or as a group. The practices lay the foundation for growing a person's or congregation's perception of God's work in the world and loving responses to it.

## Missional



## TryTank



## TEC Evangelism



## TEC Restart





# CHOOSING YOUR TEAM

Inviting members to be on the MAP Team is analogous to inviting people to serve on the Search Committee in former search processes. They are the people who will carry out the nuts and bolts of the meetings and will be your support in leading the congregation in a fruitful MAP process. Referring to the Diffusion of Innovation model below, it is recommended to invite people who are Innovators, Early Adopters, and Early Majority to be members of the Team. While every congregation has Laggards and Resisters, this is not the place for their service at this time. They absolutely must be made to feel welcome at all the discussions, because protecting the minority voice is essential for a trustworthy leader and a successful MAP process. Everyone needs to know that their voice is valued, and that they will have many opportunities for input. They should not, however, be part of the Team planning and operation. Too much time will be lost in disruptive conversations and conjecture.

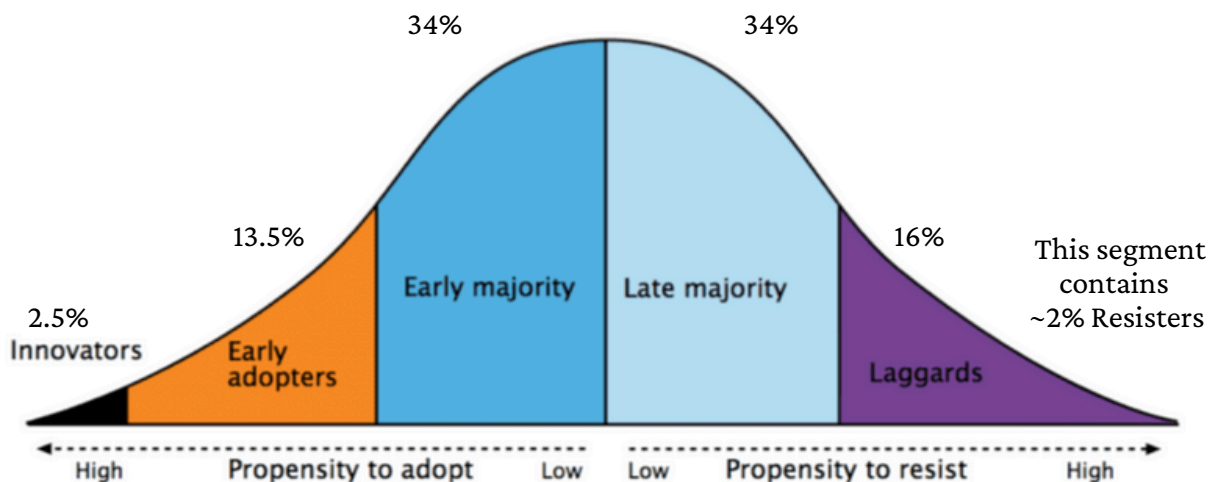
Qualities for MAP Team members are:

- Hunger for God
- Loving
- Cheerful
- Adaptive
- Sense of adventure
- Can-do attitude

## Diffusion of Innovation

Dr. Everett Rodgers

(The ability of any given group to accept innovative change)



# ONBOARDING

The onboarding time of a new clergy partner allows the leadership and congregation to share information with you to build relationships through a process of sharing stories of their lives and the life of the church. These intentional experiences provide opportunities to discover new information and grow in knowledge and love. During onboarding you will learn the joys and sorrows, strengths and weaknesses of your congregation. The Living History especially will help clarify what aspects of congregational culture need healing, development, and boundaries. As the new cleric, you have opportunities to share yourself as teacher, pastor, preacher, and leader while building love, trust, and respect for one another as you discern God's call together.

**The Leadership in Transition (LIT) Retreat** is the launch event. It includes the Vestry and MAP Team, who are not necessarily the same people.

The Goals of the Leadership in Transition retreat are:

- To experience God's goodness together
- Orient the new Clergy partner and Vestry to shared practice and covenants
- Orient Clergy and Vestry to best group communication practices and Canons governing Clergy and Vestry
- Orient Vestry and Clergy to the MAP process and experience some of the tools and ideas behind the MAP process
- To enjoy one another

The retreat can be held either onsite or at a nearby church or facility. It is a 5 hour event, facilitated by the Consultant, and includes: (See Appendix C for detailed resources.)

- Morning Prayer
- Dwelling in the Word Bible study (Ephesians is always a good source.)
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Vestry 101 (Roles & Responsibilities, Accountabilities)
- Conflict Cycle
- Holy Currencies Inventory: What do we have, what have we done, who do we know? How might God resource our call?
- Webinar on Faithful Innovation: View and discuss how other churches have reimagined their ministry with neighborhood exploration and the grace and empowerment of the Holy Spirit (see QR code below)
- Overview of the MAP process, with dates if possible

Scan the QR code  
or [click here](#) to  
watch webinar on  
Faithful Innovation  
(Start at 3:45 and  
end at 51:35).



# THE MAP EVENTS

## EVENT ONE: The Living History

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (2-3 hours, usually scheduled after Sunday worship)

*Clergy, Vestry, MAP Team, Consultant and the Congregation are invited to attend and contribute.*

### **Description:**

The Living History experience will give you more data and insight than five years of one-on-one coffee meetings. Seeing how the group interacts in sharing its stories: what is emphasized, what is omitted, where there is charity and space for each other, and where is anxiety and isolation from one another in the room. What gets negative attention and shut down? Where are they thoughtful or avoidant? Where is there laughter and expansiveness? All of this will tell you much about your church ministry partners.

All systems have some level of anxiety understood as an elevated feeling state of some kind. Surfacing and understanding how anxiety moves through your church system will help you understand sources and strategies for anxiety and conflict as it arises in the course of your life together and in conducting the MAP. As you work together on your history take time to listen and discern. If you come to history that is difficult to talk about, slow down and use the Discernment Listening Guidelines. (Appendix F)

### **Goals:**

- To engage the whole congregation in telling their stories and the story of the church
- To identify the places of power and health where the Holy Spirit has acted powerfully in the past
- To identify patterns or places of difficulty that might entangle God's vision as it emerges

### **Pre-work for Clergy and Consultant:**

- Reviewing Family Systems will enrich your experience. Watch this simple 10 minute Family Systems video.
- Review the Fresh Start Family Systems in Churches article, the Cycle of Conflict, and Vitality/Viability Grid. (See Additional Resources)
- Consultant shares the Focused Conversation method using ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretation, and Decision) and its usefulness with Clergy.
- Check in with the Team 1-2 weeks prior for questions and clarity.
- Obtain a list of past clergy leaders and dates for the parish timeline.

### **Event Agenda:**

- **Prayer Choir:** Open in Prayer.
- **Clergy:**
  - Welcome everyone and ask for someone to invite the Holy spirit into the room by reading the scripture for this event. Offer a short reflection on the scripture. Introduce the Consultant.
  - Elicit from the group the norms for sharing, such as in the Conversation Covenant from College from Congregational Development (Appendix B). If items are not mentioned, suggest them, and ask the group for adoption of the Conversation Covenant.
- **Consultant:** Post and read the purpose and facilitate the event.
- **Clergy:** Lead closing in circle of prayer, whether as a whole group or divide into smaller groups so that everyone can contribute. Start and finish with silence. When people open their eyes ask if anyone heard or felt something of the Holy Spirit. Take note. Give thanks.
- **Clergy/Consultant:** Take pictures of all newsprint and butcher paper.
- **Clergy and Consultant Debrief:** Set a date soon after the Living History to debrief the experience and share insights. This debrief is best done in person, if possible, with the Living History posted so that you can both refer to and learn from the Living History. Identify outstanding patterns, especially when the Holy Spirit was powerful and present and when conflict erupted and how/if it was resolved. Is there anything that needs time, attention and love right now? What are ways to address this?

# EVENT TWO: Neighborhood Exploration & Debrief

## Description:

Neighborhood Exploration consists of 3 different activities that span the course of 1 week. Starting with a discussion of the latest demographic information on the neighborhoods around your parish in the Mission Insight Report (available from the Congregational Support Office), you will engage in an exploration of your neighborhood through demographic information, paying attention to how your area is growing, changing, and what the concerns of the people who live there are. The Neighborhood Prayer Walks include walking and praying through the surrounding neighborhoods and gathering places where parishioners prayerfully ask God to show them what God wishes them to see. The Neighborhood Conversations use the RootedGood Neighborhood Conversations tool (see Additional Resources) to help engage neighbors in short, structured conversations with three questions. Not everyone does all the activities, your extroverts may be happy to do the neighborhood conversations and your introverts may prefer prayer walking. People are free to choose. A gathering for debrief will follow the week of Prayer Walks and Neighborhood Conversations.

## Goals:

- To identify changes and developments using demographic data study of the Mission Insight Report for your church's neighborhood/town
- To use the Neighborhood Conversations, Prayer Walks, and debrief to explore town or neighborhood changes and who is now present and what are their concerns through walking, praying and engaging with our neighbors
- To seek signs of God's presence and to listen for mission and ministry that the congregation may be called to engage

## Pre-Work for the Clergy:

- Review *Effective Organizing for Congregational Renewal*.
- Review Missional Bible Study Series. Explore scripture and the call to make disciples and go out into all the world to seek and serve Christ in all people. Available in English, Spanish. (See Additional Resources).
- Check in with the Team 1-2 weeks prior for questions and clarity.

## Clergy work with Prayer Choir:

During the Prayers of the People the Prayer Choir should offer intercession for the neighborhood, its families, peoples, joys and concerns. If laying on of hands is a practice in the congregation, ask those who will be going on Prayer Walks or seeking Neighborhood Conversations to stand in the middle of the congregation, and ask the congregation to lay hands on them as the Clergy Partner and Prayer Choir prays over them.

## Part One: Neighborhood Demographics Discussion

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (One hour)

Clergy, Vestry, MAP Team, and Congregation

*Often done during coffee hour or a morning forum on the Sunday leading into the week of Prayer Walks and Neighborhood Conversations. The Mission Insight Report (available from the Congregational Support Office,) supplies data for a parish discussion of the present demographics of the neighborhood and what it might mean for your congregation's ministry prior to Prayer Walks and Neighborhood Conversations.*

### Event Agenda:

- **Clergy:** As people assemble ask them to review the Signs of the Holy Spirit on the inside cover of their Handbooks.
- **Prayer Choir:** Open in Prayer.
- **Clergy:** Invite someone to read the scripture for the event from the Congregation Handbook. Offer short five-minute reflection on the scripture verse for this event. (See Congregational Handbook).

Lead a discussion of the Neighborhood Demographics with the following questions:

- What has changed?
- What surprises you?
- Are the people living in our neighborhood/town represented in our church?
- Describe the average person in your neighborhood/town according to the data.
- What might be the aspirations of people living in our neighborhood/town?
- What might be the worries of people living in our neighborhood/town?

Invite the Congregation to take notes and answer the questions in their handbooks.

Remind the **Scribe** to summarize important learnings.

**Prayer Choir:** Close in prayer.

## Part Two: Neighborhood Prayer Walks & Conversations

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (1 week window)

### Clergy work with Administrator:

Print a map of the surrounding neighborhoods. Divide the map into walking routes for your Prayer Walk teams. Distribute maps to Prayer Walk teams. Discuss days/time for walks. Have copies of the directions for the Prayer Walks and Neighborhood Conversations ready to hand out on the Sunday of sending out.

### Clergy work with Champion:

In the weeks leading up to the Neighborhood Exploration week make announcements for Prayer Walks and Neighborhood conversations, educate your parishioners to the details of Prayer Walks and Neighborhood Conversations. Clergy and Champion demonstrate the example introduction below during announcements and distribute the script. Give the example introduction below during announcements. Include the date of the Debrief Potluck or Brunch. Encourage people to participate and learn more about your neighborhood.

### Sample self-introduction for neighborhood conversations:

Hello, do you live locally in \_\_\_\_\_? (If yes continue, if no, explain you are looking for neighborhood information and thank them anyway.) My name is (first name) \_\_\_\_\_. I'm doing research on the neighborhood and wondering if you would be willing to talk for a few minutes and answer three questions. The questions are: What are the assets of living here? What are the difficulties living here? If there is a spiritual place for you in (name of your neighborhood/town) where is it?

If they agree to the conversation, proceed. If not, thank them for their time. If they ask where you are from, tell them you are also in the neighborhood/town and from (your church name) and we are exploring how best to love our neighbors, so we are talking to our neighbors to get information to help us be better neighbors.

See Appendix D for detailed directions for Neighborhood Prayer Walks.

See Appendix E for detailed directions for Neighborhood Conversations.

## Part Three: Neighborhood Exploration Debrief Meeting

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (2 hours)

*Clergy, Consultant, Vestry, MAP team, and Congregation*

*Usually held on a weekday evening potluck supper or following church with a light lunch. The whole parish is invited to share photos, insights, and conversations. The session will end with a summary of the important things you have learned that need to be carried forward in your discernment.*

As you work together on your debrief, take time to listen and discern. If you have difficulty in listening to a new inspiration or direction, slow down and use the Discernment Listening Guidelines. (Appendix F)

**Event Agenda:** Consultant facilitates the debrief.

- **Prayer Choir:** Open in prayer.
- **Clergy:** Welcome everyone and ask for someone to open our hearts to hear the Holy Spirit by reading the scripture for this event. Offer a short five-minute reflection on scripture verse for this event. (See Congregational Handbook)
- **Scribe:** Remind everyone of prior insight, learnings and inspiration.
- **Administrator:** Display slideshow of photos.
- **Consultant:** Invite participants to share why they chose the slide and facilitate discussion on Prayer Walks.
- **Scribe** or other designated person: Share aggregation of Neighborhood Conversations data.
- **Consultant:** Facilitate conversation on Neighborhood Conversations.
- **Prayer Choir:** Close in prayer.

## EVENT THREE: Community Panel

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (1 hour plus 30 minute debrief)

*Vestry, MAP team, Clergy, Consultant, Congregation, and Community Leaders*

### **Description:**

An online Zoom or in-person meeting of local community leaders to hear what their work is, who they serve, what their challenges are, what they see as life giving and what they are building on.

### **Goals:**

- To introduce the new parish leadership to community leaders and the community leadership to the new cleric
- To listen for places of alignment, potential partnerships, and hear where God is at work in the neighborhood

### **Pre-work for the Clergy:**

- Check in with the Team 1-2 weeks prior for questions and clarity.
- Brainstorm with Vestry and Parish leadership to create a list of four to five community leaders to invite to the Community Panel. These leaders may be people that the parish already has a relationship with and/or those you wish to cultivate new relationships with. In general, people seem reluctant to accept this type of invitation from the church, so if possible, build relationships with the invitees before inviting. Another option is to utilize parishioner contacts for invitations if available. Elected officials are not necessarily the best guests as they may use the time to campaign.
- Call/email community leaders, extend the invitation, and review what the invitation is for and the rest of the information in the letter. Send the email letter after you have spoken with the community leader directly.

## Pre-work for the Clergy: (continued)

- Review Grounded in God. Chapter 4: Engaging the Imagination, and Chapter 5: Catching the Signals (Signs of the Holy Spirit.)
- Acknowledge the RSVPs with the Zoom meeting link or the address of the in-person meeting place. Call anyone with a non-response. If they are unable to make the event, ask if there is someone else in their organization who would be an appropriate panelist. Resend meeting information the week of the event. If necessary, follow up with second phone calls.

## Sample Invitation:

Dear {Invitee Name},

*The Episcopal Church of {Parish Name} has recently called the Rev. {Priest Name}. We are engaged in a mission and vision process and would like to invite you to join us as a community leader to share your work. We would like ask you to participate in an in person (or zoom) panel presentation and discussion with other community leaders on {Date} at {Time} on the work you do in our community. We expect the meeting to last an hour to an hour and a half.*

*We will be asking the same three questions of all of our panelists:*

- *Your name, your organization and who is your constituency?*
- *What are your challenges?*
- *Where do you see life and what are you building on?*

*We want to respect your time and the other participants. We also adhere to the RESPECT community conversation norms, (attached.) You will have ten minutes to share and we will have time for questions at the end each section. We hope you will join us and help us hear where God is calling \_ (church name)\_\_\_ in our future work.*

*Sincerely,*

*{Priest} and Wardens of {Parish}*

## Event Agenda:

Zoom: Clergy is the moderator/timekeeper. Appoint someone to moderate the chat. If recording, let all participants know ahead of time. Encourage people to take notes.

In-person: Clergy is the moderator/timekeeper. Have a greeter at the door to show guests where to go. Set up refreshments ahead of time. Remind Scribes to take notes for the congregation.

- **Clergy:** As people assemble ask them to review the Signs of the Holy Spirit on the inside cover of their Handbooks. Post Signs of the Holy Spirit poster for guests.
- **Champion:** Welcome everyone either in-person or in the chat as they join the Zoom meeting.
- **Clergy:**
  - Welcome people, thank them for joining the people of \_\_\_\_\_ to listen to the voices and partners in our community. Outline the evening agenda.
  - Read the purpose of the Community Panel:
    - To hear from the leadership in the communities surrounding the parish, what their work is, who they serve, what their challenges are, what they see as life giving and what they are building on.
    - To listen for places of alignment, potential partnerships, and hear where God is at work in the neighborhood.
    - To introduce the new parish leadership to community leaders and the community leadership to the new clergy person.

## Event Agenda: (continued)

- Read the posted RESPECT community conversation guidelines.
- Remind congregation of what we are listening for:
  - Inspiration, being deeply touched where God is at work, and sudden ideas
  - Potential partnerships
  - Alignment with ministry already in existence or to new ministry that may be emerging
  - Connections to previous MAP events and learnings
- **Prayer Choir:** Open in Prayer.
- **Clergy:**
  - Ask for someone to invite the Holy spirit into the room by reading the scripture for this event from the Congregation Handbook. Offer a short under five-minute reflection.
  - Introduce all the guests and call on each one in turn to present their responses to the three questions. Each Panel Member has ten minutes to speak. (Adjust the time in accordance to number of guests, keep the panel to an hour if on zoom.)
  - Invite the panelists to the Discovery Café event. Have invitations ready and ask the panelists for others they might recommend to join in the Discovery Café event. Provide panelists with Discovery Café date and invitations.
  - After you have heard from all the panelists, thank them for their contribution and give them the opportunity to leave the meeting.
  - Close the Community Panel with this or similar blessing: “Life is short. We don't have much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk this way with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind and the blessing of God, creating, liberating, and drawing us ever closer be with you now and always.”
- **Consultant** facilitates Community Panel Debrief immediately following the Panel.
- **Clergy/Champion** send thank you notes after the event. Identify places where your congregation noted places of alignment or curiosity with the panelist. If desired, set a follow-up meeting to share information, resources, connections, and spaces. Invite the panelists to the Discovery Café event. Ask the panelists for recommendations of others to join in the Discovery Café event. Provide the panelists with Discovery Café Invitations.



# EVENT FOUR: Discovery Café

## Part One: Question Development & Planning

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (1 hour) Scheduled for a convenient time shortly after the Community Panel. Can be done in-person or on Zoom

Clergy, Vestry, MAP team, and Consultant

### Description:

The Discovery Café question development process uses the information, inspiration, and understanding generated in the previous events. The questions are constructed to ask how ministry in the congregation can connect to the surrounding neighborhood/community in mutual blessing and support. The Discovery Café experience requires one or two well-crafted questions that will engage your community with curiosity and investment in the work and vision of the congregation. The questions need to have a doable scope and result in new understandings and creative responses.

As you work together on your question take time to listen and discern. If you come to an impasse or difficulty, slow down and use the Discernment Listening Guidelines. (Appendix F)

### Goals:

- To create a stimulating outwardly facing question that will engage the whole community (parishioners, neighbors, stakeholders, and community leaders) in reciprocal wellness and flourishing
- To develop an invitation list and review needs for event

### Pre-work for the Clergy:

- Check in with the Team 1-2 weeks prior for questions and clarity.
- Read and share Café to Go and The Art of Creating Powerful Questions with the Team. (See Additional Resources)

**Question Development:** The Consultant facilitates the Question Development.

### Planning:

Once the question is created, the group brainstorms for a list of people to invite to the Discovery Cafe. Drawing on established relationships noted in the Holy Currency Assessment and the Community Panel, the group is encouraged to consider community leaders, church ministry volunteers, neighbors impacted by this topic, clients, people present in the community but not present at church, local people with an invested perspective on this topic, and people from varying age/gender/ethnic demographics to invite to have a deeper conversation. Modify the Sample Invitation template below for your question and context, then create an action plan that includes who will be responsible for the invitations and a timeline for extending them.

### Sample Invitation:

*St. Swithun's is going to be hosting a Discovery Café, an opportunity for the community to explore a question that affects the community. We will be discussing this question, "St. Swithun's medical ministry is growing; how do we extend this blessing, and how can the community come alongside St. Swithun's to increase community health?" We're especially asking neighbors and community members from outside of St. Swithun's to come help us think this through and draw on the creativity of the community. We'd love to have you come join us for this two-hour morning/afternoon event. Here's an invitation card. Please RSVP so we know how many doughnuts/pierogis/empanadas to have on hand!*

## Part Two: The Discovery Café Event

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (2 hours, often scheduled on a Saturday)

*Vestry, MAP team, Clergy, Consultant, Parishioners, Community Panel members and others from their organizations, church ministry volunteers, clients, neighbors, people present in the community but not present at church are invited to come together for a two-hour community conversation.*

### **Description:**

The congregation and community members are invited to join in exploring question(s), created by the leadership team, that attract energy and focus attention on what really matters in the neighborhood. The conversations depend on dialogue and engagement and will provide opportunities to discover potential ways forward in service and growth in the community.

The Café culminates in each table's sharing of their insights and discoveries. Important discoveries harvested in the Café will be documented and posted for consideration and inspiration in the next steps of discernment.

### **Goal:**

- To invite neighbors and community members and leaders to join the congregation in exploring questions that strengthen relationships, reveal resources, and inspire and encourage the congregation and community in mutual blessing

### **Pre-work for the Clergy:**

- Check in with the Team 1-2 weeks prior for questions and clarity.
- **Clergy and Champion** encourage congregation in the weeks prior to event to be hospitable and present to Discovery Café attendees who do not attend church and to show love and respect to guests.

**Event Agenda:** The Consultant facilitates this event and the debrief.

- **Clergy and Champion:** Welcome people and direct them to sit together filling in the tables.
- **Clergy:** Welcome everyone and ask for someone to invite the Holy spirit into the room by reading the scripture for this event. Offer a short five-minute reflection on the scripture verse for this event.
- **Prayer Choir:** Open the meeting with prayer.
- **Clergy:** Introduce the Consultant.
- **Consultant** provides introduction and instructions to the Discovery Cafe.
- **Consultant** leads group discussion and “harvest” of experience, ideas and inspiration.
- **Clergy:** Thank all participants and bless the gathering.

# EVENT FIVE: The Parish Planning Summit

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (3 hours, usually scheduled for a Sunday after worship)

Clergy, Vestry, MAP Team, Consultant, and Parishioners: all work together to create a celebratory ending to the MAP process on this day.

## Description:

Using the accumulated learning, insight, discernment, deep listening, and inspiration in the MAP process events, the congregation creates a vision of their congregation's call to mission over the next five years. Using "reverse engineering", the congregation creates a working draft plan of the goals and objectives for a five-year long-range plan.

Over the course of the next months the leadership refines the plan and this becomes the template for mission, growth and deepening in discipleship for the coming five years, refining as the Spirit leads.

## Goals:

- To reach consensus on long-range commitments after combining the insights, inspiration, connections, learnings, and discernment of the Holy Spirit that emerged during the MAP process
- To create a basic five-year plan with yearly targets to achieve the goals specified by each of the commitment working groups

## Pre-work for the Clergy:

- Check in with the team 1-2 weeks prior for questions and clarity.
- Invite and lead exploration of the the [Evangelism](#) page of The Episcopal Church website and the Experiment page at [TryTank](#).

[TEC Evangelism](#)



[TryTank](#)



**Event Agenda:** The Consultant facilitates this event using Technology of Participation (creators of the Focused Conversation) designed to help a group create an actionable plan quickly.

## Clergy and Champion:

Thank everyone for going on this spiritual journey. Name the Team members and Consultant, thank them. This is a good time for flowers/books to say thank you.

## Clergy:

- Welcome everyone and ask for someone to invite the Holy spirit into the room by reading the scripture for this event. Offer a short five-minute reflection on the scripture verse for this event. (See Congregational Handbook)
- As small groups take on specific commitments and "reverse engineer" them, eg: this is our preferred future, what must happen to get us there?, it will be useful for Clergy to float between groups, asking and answering questions. As you move in and between groups stay alert to leadings from the Holy Spirit and share them as you go along. Review the Five-Year Plan worksheet in the Congregation Handbook. As the planning groups work, encourage taking time to listen and discern. If there is an impasse or difficulty, slow down, and use the Discernment Listening Guidelines. (Appendix F)

## Prayer Choir:

Close with thanksgivings and supplications inspired by the emerging plan, making their petitions known to God.

## Clergy:

Close with blessings.

# The Parish Planning Summit Follow-up

Following the main planning event the goals and plans to achieve them will need to be refined. The Clergy, Vestry and Team will work on refining the 5-year plan, scheduling the events on the calendar as required, and recruiting people to undertake/lead ministries as needed. (The Five Year MAP Plan can be part of every Annual Meeting to celebrate achievements and keep momentum going.)

The Clergy sends refined draft of MAP Five-Year Plan to the Canon for Congregational Support, copying the Bishop and the EMLI Director for potential mission funding and the ERELI Director for potential building and property projects.

The Clergy, Vestry, and Team meet with the Canon for Congregational Support to talk about possible Deanery/Diocesan/TEC support for the work ahead.

The MAP Plan should provide the foundation for annual Mutual Ministry Valuation (MMV) the annual retreat/review to discuss how you are working together and set goals for the next five years, focusing, expanding, trimming, or releasing as necessary. An MMV is separate from the MAP events and is scheduled separately with the consultant.

# APPENDIX A: MAP TEAM ROLES

Administrator	Champion
<p><i>For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints... All things should be done decently and in order.</i></p> <p><i>First Corinthians 14:33,40</i></p> <p>This person is responsible for logistics: making sure that rooms are reserved, refreshments are present, supplies are there, and necessary copies are made and ready for the event. This person works with church staff and recruits help as necessary. The Administrator works with the Consultant and new Clergy Partner to make sure all is in readiness. This is an ideal role for your most dedicated list maker and task executor.</p>	<p><i>So, let's encourage each other. Let's motivate one another. Let's stir one another up to love and good works. Let's meet together!</i></p> <p><i>Hebrews 10:24-25 (MSG Bible)</i></p> <p>This person makes sure everyone knows about and is involved in the process and encourages them to participate. They ensure that personal invitations, bulletin announcements, and e-blasts reach the congregation. The Champion shows appreciation for the congregation's input in weekly congregational reports and personally encourages members and your Clergy Partner to attend all events. They help write thank-you notes and give public thanks for the ongoing work. This is an ideal role for your most enthusiastic cheerleader.</p>
Scribe	Prayer Choir
<p><i>This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given trust must prove faithful.</i></p> <p><i>1 Corinthians 4:1-2</i></p> <p>This person is responsible for taking notes and managing all the newsprint and notes generated during the process. The Scribe may be asked to take notes on a newsprint pad and needs to be able to write clearly and quickly. The Scribe pays special attention to writing down the important learnings from each event, and communicating what has been learned at the previous meeting at the beginning of subsequent meeting to help build cumulative learning. (They are not asked to transcribe all newsprint but to keep it all together in case a reference is needed.) This is an ideal role for your most perceptive observer and reporter. It is good scribing practice to alternate colors of markers between different speakers or sections. Make sure your markers or pens are fresh and have ink in them. Keep blank copy paper available in case needed by members during events.</p>	<p><i>Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.</i></p> <p><i>Philippians 4:6-7</i></p> <p>Prayer is essential for discerning God's direction. The Prayer Choir prays for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and for God's leading in the MAP process for the parish. They attend events, write prayers, and intercede for the congregation and neighbors. Topics include understanding, love for neighbors, God's will, vision, agility, and strength. This role suits intercessory prayer groups and those with a deep love for God's work and church ministry. Use event intentions as prayer prompts. The group can be established or assembled for this purpose, but more than one person is preferred. Designate a liaison to coordinate with clergy and produce the parish bulletin for sharing prayers. Pre-MAP work involves gathering, identifying a liaison, praying for the congregation and Holy Spirit's guidance, and praying together. Set meeting times and places.</p>

# APPENDIX B

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## Conversation Covenant from College for Congregational Development

1. **Try on:** An invitation to be creative and open to suspend judgment for a moment and look at something from a different perspective.
2. **It's okay to disagree. It's not okay to shame, blame, or attack oneself or others:** Disagreement is okay – it honors individuals and their differences and is an act of faith that the community is mature enough to understand and embrace significant differences.
3. **Practice self-focus:** Requires the use of “I” statements; speaking in the first person about what one feels or believes.
4. **Practice “both/and” thinking:** Opens oneself up to hearing that a number of opinions and beliefs can coexist without canceling one another out
5. **Be aware of intent and impact:** Intent is my intention or motive in doing or saying something. Impact is the effect or consequence my speech or action has on another person or persons.
6. **Maintain confidentiality:** We agree not to tell each other's stories with people outside the group, unless given express permission to do so.
7. **It's okay to be messy:** No one is perfect, it is okay to make mistakes.
8. **Say ouch:** Permission to literally say ouch as a way to alert the group that the impact of some words or actions are having.

# APPENDIX C

## Leadership in Transition Retreat Resources

### Morning Prayer for Discernment

*As we begin the day, we focus on our calling to live faithfully, for who knows what today holds?*

#### Opening

Alleluia! O God, may the empty tomb  
**fill our hearts with faith. Alleluia!**

#### Prayer

Jesus, our way, our truth, and our life: As the gift of this new day unfolds, open our hearts and minds to you, that we may see you clearly and follow where you lead; to you, risen Savior, we offer praise, now and always. **Amen.**

#### Praise

*A Song of Our Adoption (Ephesians 1:3-10)*

Blessed are you, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, \*

for you have blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Before the world was made, you chose us to be yours in Christ, \*

that we should be holy and blameless before you. You destined us for adoption as your children through Jesus Christ, \*

according to the good pleasure of your will, To the praise of your glorious grace, \*

that you have freely given us in the Beloved. In you, we have redemption through the blood of Christ, \*

the forgiveness of our sins, According to the riches of your grace\*

which you have lavished upon us. You have made known to us, in all wisdom and insight,\*

the mystery of your will, According to your good pleasure which you set forth in Christ,\*

as a plan for the fullness of time, To gather together all things in Christ,\* things in heaven and things on earth.

# Morning Prayer for Discernment (continued)

## Scripture

The angel said to the women at the tomb, "I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said."

*Matthew 28:6*

## Meditation

*The Trouble with Easter*

But ... I want the tomb full, like temple or tent —  
with the Holy enshrouded in fabric un-rent.

Yes, I want death preserved in sweet-smelling spice;  
not my neighbor perspiring the aroma of Christ.

*Julia McCray-Goldsmith*

*How will we together embrace the gift of life in all its fullness today?*

## Affirmation of Faith

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

**People: I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

**People: I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

**People: I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

**People: I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

**People: I will, with God's help.**



## Morning Prayer for Discernment (continued)

**Christ Jesus, though in the form of God,  
did not exploit equality with God  
but emptied himself,  
in the form of a slave,  
born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death —  
even death on a cross.  
Therefore, God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.**

*Philippians 2:5-11*

### **Prayers**

In the work we do this day,  
**May the risen Christ teach us.**  
In the challenges we face this day,  
**May the risen Christ guide us.**  
Through the people we meet this day,  
**May the risen Christ renew us.**

*Here, the people may add particular intercessions or thanksgivings.*

As we respond to the hungers and hurts of this world,  
**May the Spirit of the risen Christ strengthen us.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

#### **Song: Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God**

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.

Allelu-alleluia.

Knock and it shall be opened up to you, seek and you will find, ask and it will be added unto you.

Allelu-alleluia.

Chorus: Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, allelu-alleluia!

### **Prayer**

Jesus, our friend and savior: Guide us in this new day, that we may know God's desire for us and gain strength and courage to live as beloved children of God. **Amen.**

### **Going Out**

Alleluia! O God, may the empty tomb  
fill our hearts with faith. **Alleluia!**

# Dwelling in the Word Bible Study

*Ephesians 3: 14 – 21* Paul's Prayer for the Readers

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

- Read through silently. A word or phrase that stood out for you?
- Read again aloud. Ask what is God speaking to you about in your ministry?
- Read again aloud. What is God asking you to do?

# Appreciative Inquiry: God's Power in our Church Life

Divide the group into groups of two. Ask each pair to interview one another and to listen closely as they will report out their partner's answer. They will each have 5 minutes to tell their story. The Consultant keeps track of time and at 5 minutes asks partners to switch.

The appreciative question is:

"Recall a time that was truly life-giving at {Parish Name}, when you felt most alive, most connected to God. Where were you, what were you doing, who was with you, what did you feel, did anything happen as a result of the experience?"

At conclusion of sharing time, ask for a group of two to volunteer to share each other's story. As they speak, the consultant scribes brief descriptions of the life-giving event ie:

"Child's baptism, whole family present, when congregation laid hands on child and family in prayer felt held by God." Always check with the person whose story has been told if this captures the essence of the story. Ask the first group to invite a second group and so on until everyone has shared.

Switch color markers between stories to help group differentiate stories.

Post newsprint and ask the group what stands out in the stories. Can they identify any patterns or threads that connect the stories. Scribe the connections and post them. At the conclusion introduce the group to the debrief questions used after each MAP event:

- What have we learned about our community at {Parish Name}?
- How might you describe God connecting to people here?
- Is there new information? Inspiration?
- What do we need to carry forward in our discernment of what God desires to have happen here.

Scribe the responses.

## Webinar on Faithful Innovation



Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to watch webinar on Faithful Innovation (Start at 3:45 and end at 5:35).



# Holy Currencies Inventory

Read *Holy Currencies* by the Rev. Eric Law and absorb the key concepts of flow of currencies/resources within and among systems, common contribution by all parties, and reciprocity as the key to sustainability.

The intangible currencies: relationship, wellness, truth telling, and gracious leadership are as important as tangible currencies: space and time, money.

Consider each of the currencies below and make as clear an assessment as possible.

**Time:** Make a list of paid staff and volunteers who are in ministry in your congregation and the amount of time they give. What is focused internally and what is focused externally?

**Place:** Attach a floor plan of your church facilities and any other properties that can be accessed for ministry. What spaces are used by whom and when? Where and when are there open spaces and times?

**Gracious Leadership:** List the skills, tools, models, processes and presence offered within and outside the church to create gracious environments {Grace Margins} wherein space is created for mutually respectful relationships to be formed, truth told, and work accomplished together.

**Relationship:** List the internal and external networks of mutually respectful connections leaders and members have with members and non-members: Congregational, Denominational, Diocesan, Community, Cultural, Civic, Ethnic, Business, Governmental, Educational, Inter-faith and Ecumenical. Please list as many connections as you are aware of.

**Truth:** List the ways your congregation, as individuals and corporately, have articulated with members and non-members a wholistic truth that empowers people to action in their neighborhoods, community, nation, and planet.

**Wellness:** List how your church has participated in building up physical, social, economic, ecological and spiritual health in your ministry, neighborhood, town, nation, and earth that has a sustainable, regenerative and circulatory flow of resources, human, financial, and natural resources.

**Money:** What financial resources does your parish currently list? What sources and amounts are internal: pledges, endowments, and investments? What sources and amounts are external: grants, programs, gifts, and fundraising?

**Overview:** With a group from your parish analyze the lists for connections and relationships. What is the flow between the six currencies and between each of the currencies internally and externally? Is their reciprocity in both tangible and intangible resources, is everyone contributing to wellness?

Mark the areas where there is flow between internal and external currencies. Ask how to express gratitude and build upon the grace that is there. Mark each area where there is no internal or external flow between currencies. These are your areas of greatest potential growth and grace.

# APPENDIX D

## Neighborhood Prayer Walk Directions

### **What Is a Neighborhood Prayer Walk?**

It's not just walking around. It's not just praying. It's walking through your neighborhood or "parish", praying with your eyes and your heart wide open. Notice signs of hope and need, and how God calls you to both. Reimagine how your ministry could join God and your neighbors.

### **Guidelines for Prayer-Walking**

- Whether you're near your church or in another neighborhood, plan your route ahead of time. Walk on a variety of days and times, not just Sunday morning. What's happening Tuesdays at 5pm?
- Meet at church and pray with the Prayer Choir before you leave.
- Form pairs of people, ideally covering different areas.
- If your area isn't very walk-friendly, head to common gathering places: shopping centers, groceries, dog parks, town squares, community gardens, the church's five-block radius, and more.
- As you walk, look with care and pray either in silence or aloud softly. Limit chatting or focusing on each other. Focus on the neighborhood.
- Take your camera with you and take photographs of things that strike you.
- Though it's not primary, be open to interaction with people on the way.
- If anyone asks what you are doing, be prepared to respond: "We're from (Name of Your Church), and we are praying and getting to know our neighborhood better." Offer to pray, if it feels appropriate.

### **How Should We Pray?**

- *Discernment*: Ask God to show how you can pray with greater insight for the people, events, and places in the community.
- *Blessing*: Pray for the person, home, school, business, situations you see.
- *Empathy*: See and feel what your neighbors live with every day. Pray for brokenness and for blessings and gifts in the community.
- *Scripture*: Prayer based directly on scriptures like Jeremiah 29:5-7; Luke 10:1-2; Mark 12:30-31; or Revelation 21:3-5a.
- *Silence*: Allow silence for God's spirit to speak to you, or through you.

**Concluding the Neighborhood Prayer Walk** — perhaps over a meal — gather to share your prayers and observations:

- What did you learn about the neighborhood?
- Where was God's presence especially apparent?
- What surprised you?
- What was hard? What was engaging?

Bring any notes with you to the debrief meeting. Be ready to share briefly why the photo is important! Send any photographs to your photo point person.

# APPENDIX E

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## Neighborhood Conversations Directions

The sensory questions that begin the Neighborhood Conversations packet found in the Congregation Handbook are designed to help participants elevate a sense of new eyes and ears to experience your neighborhood as a new person and to open your mind and heart. Pray before you start your exploration.

Going out two by two, you can start a conversation with a stranger by asking if someone is local to the neighborhood. If they are, introduce yourself by first name and tell them you are gathering information on what life is like in the neighborhood. Let them know you are in the neighborhood, too, and are part of your church. Tell them that you want to ask three questions. Are they comfortable with a brief discussion? If yes, proceed, if no, thank them and seek out the next person. (If someone says no, do not be discouraged! We don't know their story, and today may just not be the day for them.)

**In three separate conversations, ask these three questions:**

- What are the assets of living in our neighborhood/town?
- What are the challenges of living in our neighborhood/town?
- If there is a spiritual place for you in our neighborhood/town, where is it?

Bring any notes with you to the debrief meeting. Send your notes to the point person who will aggregate the answers.

# DISCERNMENT LISTENING GUIDELINES

*You are encouraged to use these guidelines for parish mission, community ministry, and personal life decisions.*

1

Take time to become settled in God's presence.

---

2

Listen to others with your entire self (senses, feelings, intuition, imagination, and rational faculties).

---

3

Do not interrupt.

---

4

Pause between speakers to absorb what has been said.

---

5

Do not formulate what you want to say while someone else is speaking.

---

6

Speak for yourself only, expressing your own thoughts and feelings, referring to your own experiences. Avoid being hypothetical. Steer away from broad generalizations.

---

7

Do not challenge what others say.

---

8

Listen to the group as a whole — to those who have not spoken aloud as well as to those who have.

---

9

Generally, leave space for anyone who may want to speak a first time before speaking a second time yourself.

---

10

Hold your desires and opinions — even your convictions — lightly.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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1. *The Art of Powerful Questions: Catalyzing Insight, Innovation, and Action* by Eric E. Vogt, Juanita Brown, and David Isaacs: [dioceseli.org/powerfulquestions](https://dioceseli.org/powerfulquestions)
2. Discovery Café Guidelines: [dioceseli.org/discoverycafe](https://dioceseli.org/discoverycafe)
3. A Recipe for Collect Writing from *Earth & Altar*: [dioceseli.org/collectwriting](https://dioceseli.org/collectwriting)
4. *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations* by Suzanne G. Farnham, Stephanie A. Hull, R. Taylor McLean: [dioceseli.org/groundedingod](https://dioceseli.org/groundedingod)
5. *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season* by Susan Beaumont: [dioceseli.org/leading](https://dioceseli.org/leading)
6. Spiritual Gifts Quiz: [spiritualgiftquiz.org](https://spiritualgiftquiz.org)
7. Webinar on Leading Faithful Innovation: [dioceseli.org/faithfulinnovation](https://dioceseli.org/faithfulinnovation)
8. Cafe to Go: [dioceseli.org/cafe-go](https://dioceseli.org/cafe-go)
9. Cycle of Unmanaged Conflict: [dioceseli.org/cycle-unmanaged-conflict](https://dioceseli.org/cycle-unmanaged-conflict)
10. Viability and Vitality: [dioceseli.org/what-we-do/resources/viable-and-vital-ministry-practice](https://dioceseli.org/what-we-do/resources/viable-and-vital-ministry-practice)
11. Family Systems Theory: The Congregation as a System: [dioceseli.org/family-systems](https://dioceseli.org/family-systems)
12. Bowen Family Systems Therapy: [dioceseli.org/bowen](https://dioceseli.org/bowen)
13. RootedGood Neighborhood Conversations Tool: [dioceseli.org/rooted-good](https://dioceseli.org/rooted-good)
14. Missional Bible Study Series: [dioceseli.org/missional](https://dioceseli.org/missional)
15. Invite Welcome Connect: [invitewelcomeconnect.com/checklists-tool-kits](https://invitewelcomeconnect.com/checklists-tool-kits)





# The MAP Process:

WHAT DOES GOD WANT TO DO HERE?



*The MAP process, Mission Action Plan, has been developed out of strong work done by of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, extending thanks especially to Canon Janet Marshall, Director of Congregational Development. We have modified the process and added new tools. The Consultant team of the Diocese of Long Island has shaped this process over a three-year period, and we are deeply indebted to them.*

**Created by:** *The Rev. Canon Claire Woodley, Canon for Congregational Support*

**Edited by:** *Diane Gaidon*

**Designed by:** *Mary Grace Puszka*

**Consultant Team of the Diocese of Long Island:**

*The Rev. Maxine Barnett, The Rev. Cn. Cecily Broderick,*

*The Very Rev. Steve Foster, Ms. Diane Gaidon,*

*The Rev. Cn. Joanne Izzo, The Very Rev. Paul Lai,*

*Dr. Lena Mullings, Ms. Anne Su,*

*and The Rev. Christina Van Liew.*



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