

OPEN DOORS NEW FUTURES

INTERIM CLERGY HANDBOOK



What does God want to do here?

INTRODUCTION

May your kingdom come. May your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:10

At the heart of the practical and spiritual work of the Interim period is managing change and building discernment skills for the future of the congregation. Moving congregations from reaction to response is to enter into discerning and embracing change as they move forward into God's vision for them, in both the Clergy Search and the Mission Search sections of the Open Doors New Futures process. Encouraging a disposition of spiritual learning and introducing and practicing the skills of discernment is at the heart of spiritual formation for the congregation in the Interim period.

We pray weekly, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven." Open Doors New Futures Clergy search intentionally turns our attention toward asking the question, "What does God want to have happen here?" and applying it to all our important decisions. Using scripture, silence, prayer, and conversation to enliven the Interim experience helps bring the Holy Spirit's wisdom into the room, giving light for ways forward. Focus on discernment prepares the vestry and congregation both in discerning the Clergy Search and in discerning their Mission Search, differentiating what their future is from past standard practices that may no longer work well. We pray, "Thy will be done," discernment leads us to discover the will of God for churches leadership and their mission.

The art and skills of discernment are used in forming and debriefing the experiments the congregation undertakes in the Interim period, are used in the call, and prepare them for the work with their new clergy partner in discerning their mission and possible new ministries. Discernment facilitates managed change and is an intentional transformational search for pertinent data, applying prayer and insight, leading to new understandings of where God is leading. We will not end where we began, but in a new and life-giving place with a future and a hope.

The spiritual framework of the process is drawn from Susan Beaumont's book, *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You are Going: Leading in a Liminal Season*. 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 today. 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 (mining) 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 Open Doors New Futures process allows the congregation to let go of whatever is no longer life-giving and discover what is emerging that will pull them through the liminal present into their future. You will experience these four actions throughout the 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. Prepare for joy!

KEY INFORMATION

Where have we been and what affects where we are going?

The church that followed World War II had a clear and widely shared mission within the community: to restore an entire generation from wartime to peacetime and provide places of healing and reconciliation. The church helped people to carry the personal costs of war, a place to give back the stories of war to the community that sent them, easing the individual cost by taking on the burdens of memory. The church developed many strategies to help the young men and women and the families they built, to carry these burdens providing support, healing, community and a solid sense of a good future.

The vast network of Sunday schools, Christian education professionals, youth groups, men and women's groups, adult education all flourished in support of the mission of restoring people from war. Churches undertook religious education that emphasized peace and understanding. The rebuilding of the world was taken on with the same community fervor and bonding with which they went to war. Ecumenism and interfaith dialogues began, and young Americans fanned out across the globe in service to the "least of these" to rebuild the world. The hope of a world where the horror of WWII would never happen again united the land. It was a mighty, life-giving mission. It ended in the early 1980s, when the last of the boomers graduated from High School, and deep community connections began to fray.

We no longer share a universally understood mission in our communities with inter-dependencies that cross ages, class, race and geography. However, we continue to use the post WWII mission strategies of Sunday school, youth groups, and adult education, all mostly pinned to Sunday morning. Strategies and models are not a mission in themselves. Without a mission focus, that develops strategies to further the mission and mutually build up church and community, churches lose community connection and relevance. The internally focused, maintenance based church develops in this lost community relationship gap. A transactional service provision model with fundraising and a "butts in the pews" focus develops that is not life giving, internally or externally. Maintenance is not mission.

Some churches started to recognize loss of momentum in the 1990s and 2000s and developed internally focused mission statements without community engagement. Full of good words but without the external relationships necessary to bring them to life, many of those mission statements are gathering dust. The church is the institution that exists not for itself alone, but to serve the world God loves. The church loses transformational or redemptive potential when we abandon community mission focus. We are blessed to be a blessing, not to be blessing hoarders. It may mean letting go, or putting aside some "traditional ministries" as we've "always done them" since WWII, and opening up to adaptation, fresh expressions, and new life. Discernment of God's vision tuned to today's community mission needs, brings clarity and joy. We know why we do what we do, and are active and willing partners with God.

The community distance and church isolation is what gave rise to the development of Open Doors New Futures. The church is not the only institution that is struggling. There's an acronym for the state of struggle: **VUCA**. See the explanation on the next page, and see if it describes your experience in the last several years.

VUCA

<u>V</u> olatile	<u>U</u> ncertain	<u>C</u> omplex	<u>A</u> mbiguous
The environment demands you react quickly to ongoing changes that are unpredictable and out of your control	The environment requires you to take action without certainty	The environment is dynamic, with many interdependencies	The environment is unfamiliar, outside of your expertise

There is a corresponding use of the acronym VUCA that opens ways forward.

<u>V</u> olatile	→	<u>V</u> ision
<u>U</u> ncertain	→	<u>U</u> nderstanding
<u>C</u> omplex	→	<u>C</u> larity
<u>A</u> mbiguous	→	<u>A</u> gility

To have purposeful movement in a **volatile** setting, **vision** is needed. In the ocean amid big waves (volatility) if you can see land, you have your direction. Vision provides the “land,” or future you are headed towards and determines your path.

Uncertainty arises in the **understanding** gap and occurs when the people inside the church do not understand the experience of the community outside and around the church. Speaking with neighbors and partners in the community surrounding the church builds understanding and reduces uncertainty. We aren’t guessing or assuming; we have direct information.

Clarity helps reduce **complexity**. The glut of information, overscheduled people, and a 24-hour news cycle that rarely has a break in bad news increases our sense of complexity and overwhelm. Past solutions frequently don’t work today, and yet we still do them with fewer people and without the results we desire. As we gain knowledge about our actual neighbors, clarity of direction and decisions increase, and what to do in ministry based in relationships becomes easier.

Ambiguity is the experience of knowing what we once did no longer speaks in powerful ways to our neighbors, and we do not yet know what will. God is generous and there are many ways to serve our neighbors. **Agility** is the ability to meet needs in a variety of ways and embrace experimentation with new ideas. Developing agility in responding to change will help the church community stay connected to their neighbors’ needs and God’s presence in real and transformative ways.

We all have recent experience of the church’s ability to pivot and respond with agility during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Open Doors New Futures process helps build thoughtful agility without crisis.

The spiritual journey of Open Doors New Futures helps congregations address the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity present in the world, their church, and the lives of your neighbors. Through parishes exploring their neighborhoods, churches build love, understanding, and connection with their neighbors, seeing their lives with fresh eyes. When the church invites the neighborhood into discernment, people experience the church hearing and responding to the real issues impacting their lives. The parish gains new insight, connections, and inspiration, and new vision emerges. Engaging the emerging vision builds discernment and clarity of God’s leading.

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Preparing congregations for Open Doors New Futures

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

TASK ONE: Do the work of teaching, preaching, liturgy, pastoring, and vestry leadership development. Do them well.

No one, after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:15-16

Teaching Goal:

- To build discernment and vision capacity for the future of the congregation

Teaching Objectives:

- Apply the Phases of Change (Appendix A) whenever applicable.
- Begin the study of discernment with a 2.5 hour retreat for the vestry and congregation (Appendix B).
- Read *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberation* with the vestry and extend the study of it to the larger congregation.
- Teach the Holy Currencies (Appendix C) for use in Stewardship. Evaluate Stewardship effectiveness and introduce alternatives for stewardship and mission/ministry support and funding in preparation for the Open Doors New Futures process.

TASK ONE (continued):

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.

Ephesians 3:16-17

Pastoring Goals:

- To determine the emotional and spiritual health of the congregation, addressing personal and corporate pastoring issues as they arise
- To identify areas needing healing, discernment, change, attention to loss and grief, and discuss them in appropriate settings

Pastoring Objectives:

- Determine the level of unity and cohesion of the congregation. If there is division in the congregation, determine if it is circumstantial or systemic.
- Educate leadership on the Conflict Cycle (Appendix D) and Non-Violent Communication. (Appendix E)
- Visit those who are sick, homebound, or hospitalized. Care for those who are grieving or rejoicing.
- Resist calls to reincorporate those who left in prior years. Remind leadership that they will bring their grievances with them. Let people find their way back under the new leadership if and when they choose to do so.

TASK ONE (continued):

He himself granted that some are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Ephesian 4:11-16

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

Isaiah 6:8

Vestry Leadership Development Goal:

- To build practical leadership and spiritual capacity

Vestry Leadership Development Objectives:

- Run vestry meetings monthly, and meet with wardens weekly or biweekly.
- If not already in use, introduce RESPECT communication norms and a Conversation Covenant to vestry meetings. (Appendix F)
- Evaluate and develop, if necessary, efficient vestry meeting practices, such as: adhering to beginning and conclusion times, using a consent agenda, preparing the meeting agenda with the wardens, clarifying roles and procedures for meetings and vestry decisions, and using action items to build accountability.
- Teach the use of consensus, and practice it in meetings. (see *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberation* Chapter. 9, Appendices 2, 5 and 7)
- Promote a spiritual development component to the vestry meetings by leading a chapter by chapter reading and discussion of *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberation*. (See Appendix G for suggested discussion questions for each chapter)
- Model the three capacities of great leader:
 1. **Define roles and elevate expectations.** Make sure everyone knows their role, task, and deadline. Using spiritual encouragement and practical supports, help vestry and parish move into "my utmost for God's highest."
 2. **Set boundaries and accountabilities.** Tighten and clarify boundaries between people, roles, and organization using Canons, Bylaws, and approved business methods. Ensure roles, times, dates, and tasks agreed to are accomplished. If not, use the AID method to Manage Conflict (Appendix C) and if necessary, Bylaws.
 3. **Cultivate vision and bond the community to its future.** Encourage prayer, scripture study, and imagination in opening hearts and minds to God's preferred future. Utilize conversations and practices that build up love and loving-kindness in the parish.

TASK TWO: Conduct a Congregational Assessment.

Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.

Psalm 143:10

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Romans: 5:1-5

Goals:

- To develop an accurate view of the congregation's vitality and viability
- To gauge the congregation's level of accuracy of their self-perception and surrounding reality

Objectives:

- Lead the vestry in a discussion of the Vitality/Viability Grid and their position. Share with Consultant. (Appendix H)
- Conduct a SWOT assessment on your own (a traditional business-based assessment of Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats). (Appendix I) This assessment can produce a feeling of siege and/or overwhelm. Discussion of Threats and Weaknesses can be discouraging to a vestry and congregation. Please share only with Transition Team, Interims, and Consultant.
- Lead the vestry/leadership team in a SOAR analysis (an Appreciative Inquiry process to assist the vestry and congregation in assessing their Strengths/Opportunities/Aspirations/Results). (Appendix J)
- Use the assessments to gauge loss and unresolved conflict that may need action, attention, or healing. Assess movement towards health and readiness for a new call. Consult with the Transition Team or Consultant as necessary. Leave a copy for the new clergy partner.
- Lead the vestry/leadership team in the Invite Welcome Connect checklists for congregations in preparation for hosting tours for new clergy.
- Identify the congregation's current position in the lifecycle of congregations. (Appendix P)

TASK THREE: Help the congregation understand the “seismic shifts” in American culture: “Why do we do what worked before and experience diminishing results?”

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28

Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43: 18 - 19

Goals:

- To assist the congregation in their perception, practice and understanding of what is canonical, tradition, or received practice. Define what they mean, how they are used, and where they are present in the congregation. (Appendix K)
- To reconnect the congregation to their core values: Christian behavioral expectations (see Appendix L for St. Paul’s list of distinguishing life-giving and loving behaviors from a spirit that tears down and does not build up), Episcopal spirituality/ Baptismal Covenant, etc., discipleship, Diocesan programs, and service to others
- To build optimism for a renewed vision and hope

Objectives:

- Educate the congregation about our current VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) world context. (Page 4)
- Build capacity for a positive spirit of adventure, risk, and change, through experimentation and feedback.
- Facilitate study and prayer for renewed mission, vision and hope.
- Facilitate discussion on spiritual practices and pursuits of non-religious people today and build empathy for and understanding of their spiritual longings.

TASK FOUR: Review and update parish records and business practices.

Keep alert, stand strong in your faith, be courageous, be strong, let everything you do be done in love.

1 Corinthians 16:13

Goals:

- To share published church documents for assisting congregations in business and personnel management (Appendix M)
- To create a factual database of church membership, documents, records, and location
- To ensure there is a personnel file for each employee
- To evaluate the effectiveness of hired personnel (full and part-time): Administrators, Sextons, Organists, Youth workers, Accountants, etc.
- To take on termination of underperforming personnel prior to the call of the next rector/PIC
- To review the parish Bylaws

Objectives:

- Review membership rolls and make sure all records are accurate.
- Submit all official reports on time. (parochial report and audit)
- Make sure all personnel have personnel files.
- Hire and/or fire when necessary.
- Identify and record lay personnel assigned to various tasks.
- Identify normal and abnormal church member conflicts. Evaluate behavior and set boundaries with antagonists. Leave a confidential file with details for new clergy partner.
- Identify historical roots of any anxiety in the system and work with the Consultant and Transition Team to surface it and pursue resolution. (Appendix N)
- Identify any over-functioning individual whose loss would leave the congregation destabilized. Redistribute tasks amongst the larger congregation.
- Set open and honest communication norms with the congregation.
- Ensure the annual meeting takes place on its appointed date.
- Review Bylaws for adherence and make recommendations for revision, if necessary.
- Lean into the ministry of the Azazel (scapegoat), knowing that disclosures made, actions taken, and difficult decisions made, though necessary, are not always welcome. Interim clergy take some of the pain of disclosure with them when they leave. Take the necessary risks and steps to restore order, and take the reminder of difficult congregational responses with you.

TASK FIVE: Practice the gift of St. Barnabas, “Son of Encouragement”.

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24

Goals:

- To provide steady, realistic encouragement and teaching
- To renew the congregation’s confidence in the church’s role and message

Objectives:

- Encourage Bible study of Paul’s Letters to the Ephesians and Philippians.
- Study the basic documents of the Episcopal Church: Baptismal Covenant and Catechism.
- Encourage discussion on what the congregation appreciates and enjoys about the Episcopal expression of the Christian faith.
- Encourage public recognition of tasks accomplished and benchmarks passed in the Clergy Search and tasks accomplished in the life of the congregation.
- Encourage the congregation in the enjoyment of one another and enjoyment of the gifts of faith.
- Encourage sharing individual stories of faith encounters.
- Raise awareness that “God is doing a new thing, it is springing forth, do you not perceive it?” and that it will expand in the Open Doors New Future Mission Search process.

TASK SIX: Address spiritual formation needs, especially when church business is conducted as if God is not present.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

Goals:

- To build up or reconnect the congregation and leadership to being in purposeful, steady contact with God
- To build capacity for openness, discernment, and responsiveness to the Holy Spirit in deliberation and planning
- To recognize and build upon delight and gratitude in God's provision

Objectives:

- Educate the leadership on the practice of discernment in the congregation by reading and facilitating discussions of *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberation* by Suzanne Farnham et al. (See Appendix G for suggested discussion questions for each chapter)
- Encourage the practical application of the discernment listening guidelines (last page) in vestry meetings.
- Post and refer to the Signs of the Holy Spirit. (Appendix O)
- Encourage expression of gratitude in vestry meetings and the prayers of the people.
- Encourage the vestry and congregation to take the Spiritual Gift inventory and read the introductory essay: <https://spiritualgiftquiz.org>. Use the Power Point available below to lead a discussion on Spiritual Gifts. Reflect with parishioners on their spiritual gifts as tasks and actions are apportioned, and the experience of goodness and generosity of God building up the body of Christ.
- Encourage the identification of God's gifts and provision to individuals and the congregation.
- Encourage the practice of tithing as a means to grow the capacity to take a holy risk to follow God and experience abundance.

Scan to take
the Spiritual
Gift Power
Point or see
Additional
Resources.

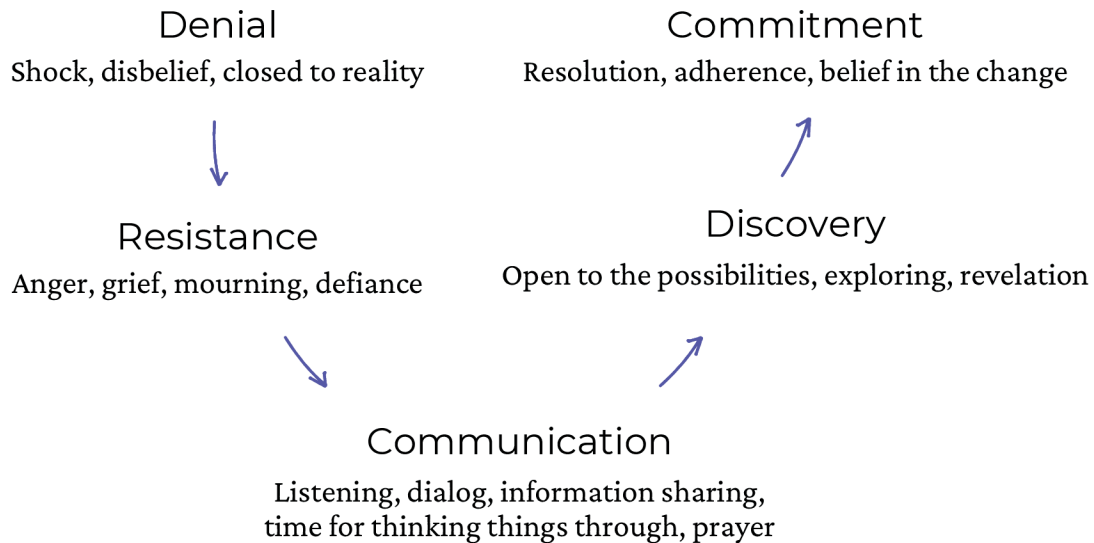


Scan to take
the Spiritual
Gift Inventory
or see
Additional
Resources.



APPENDIX A

Phases of Change



Scott, Jaffee, Mary MacGregor

People can be deeply threatened by change. They don't know if there will be a place for them in the future. 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 conversations, conversion, and commitment to the future and assure accountability of leadership to meet goals, and facilitate 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 in multiple contexts allows the vision for the future to be seen and for conversion to the future to happen.

APPENDIX B

Discernment Retreat

Morning Prayer for Discernment (15 minutes)

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

Opening

Leader: Alleluia! O God, we seek your face

People: fill our hearts with faith. Alleluia!

Prayers

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.**

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. **Amen.**

"The Merton Prayer" from Thoughts

Scripture

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.

Ephesians 3: 14 - 21

Meditation

The desert is always the same, the sky is always beautiful, the road deserted....

The only thing that is always new is God.

Carlo Carretto

Silent reflection: *How will we ask for new eyes to see God and to discern God's leading and the needs of God's world?*

APPENDIX B (CONTINUED)

Morning Prayer for Discernment (continued)

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.

Prayers

Leader: In the work we do this day,

People: May the risen Christ teach us.

Leader: In the challenges we face this day,

People: May the risen Christ guide us.

Leader: Through the people we meet this day,

People: May the risen Christ renew us.

(Here, the people may add particular intercessions or thanksgivings.)

Leader: 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 (1982 Hymnal #711)

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.**

Leader: Alleluia! May God lead us and guide us!

People: fill our hearts with faith. Alleluia!

APPENDIX B (CONTINUED)

Bible Study (35-40 minutes)

Romans 12: 1 – 8 The New Life in Christ

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

- Read through silently. A word or phrase that stood out for you?
- Read again aloud. Ask what is God speaking to that needs renewing in your mind?
- Read again aloud. What is God asking you to do to discern the will of God?

At the completion of the discussion ask someone in the group to close in prayer

Break (15 minutes)

Decision Types and Discernment (15 minutes)

Give a brief didactic explanation on the 3 types of decisions, making use of either newsprint or projector. Different circumstances call for different decision types. Have handouts ready.

1. Tactical
2. Strategic
3. Transformational

Characteristics of the 3 Types of Decisions

	Tactical	Strategic	Transformational
Leader role:	Expert	Synthesizer	Facilitator
Tone:	Confident	Vision casting	Non-anxious
Key questions:	What's wrong?	What is our objective?	What question do we need to be asking?
Problems:	Solved	Plan to answer	Managed
Interactions:	Directive	Inspiring	Multi-level engagement

APPENDIX B (CONTINUED)

- What in our common life right now calls for tactical decisions? (what contractor is needed, what brand of wafers to use in communion, what copier contract is best, etc)
- What in our common life right now calls for strategic decisions? (a congregation-wide educational or spiritual experience, annual stewardship planning, capital campaign, etc)
- What in our common life right now calls for transformational decision making? (call of a new clergy partner, new outreach ministry, long range discernment, etc)

Interim PIC closes the conversation on decision types saying:

Transformational decision making occurs in liminal times, when what has functioned well in the past is not answering the needs of today, and a way forward is not clear. It requires prayer, scripture, conversations, and discernment of God's leadership. It is a period of letting go and letting God.

Interim PIC opens the conversation on discernment saying:

When you hear the word "discernment" what does that bring to mind? (record answers on newsprint)

If the following thoughts are not mentioned in the brainstorm, make sure you add in:

- Discernment is the process of hearing and following God's desire as best we can.
- Discernment requires both listening and conversations, within and outside of the congregation. It uses prayer, silence, scripture, observation and listening for God's voice in all of these things.
- Discernment requires us to listen to our history, to the facts of our present common life, to the current situation of our neighbors, and to community leaders also serving the community.
- The primary question is not, "What do we want to do" but rather "What does God want us to do here?"

Ways of Hearing God Inventory (25-30 minutes)

Interim PIC shares this short statement before the group begins the inventory: (found on the next page)

It is important to ponder the ways that God has been present to you, how you hear and see God. We all hear God speaking to us in different ways. Creation is said to be panentheistic, that God is everywhere and can be experienced anywhere at any time. How and where do you hear and experience God?

Distribute the Hearing God Inventory. Ask the group to take a minute of silence before filling out the sheet.

When they have finished (~ 5 minutes), ask people to divide into groups of three to share their results and describe their experiences to one another.

Bring group back to together to debrief.

Discussion questions:

- What stood out for them?
- Did they notice any similarities in their stories? If so, what were they?
- Is there anything else people would like to share about this experience?

APPENDIX B (CONTINUED)

Ways of Hearing God Inventory

When do you hear/experience God? Circle all the answers that resonate:

Silence	Your senses
Art	Your dreams
Scripture	Your pain
Literature	People
Dance	Events
Imagination	Communion
Nature	Community
Pleasure	Specific spaces
Music	Scholarly work
Liturgy	Scientific discovery

Are there other ways God speaks to you?

Discuss the following questions in small groups. Select a volunteer to report the group insights, learnings, and leadings.

- Describe your experience of God reaching out to you.
- Have you ever made a conscious effort to discern God's voice in your life? How have you gone about it? How did it work for you? Did it affect your relationship with God?
- Have you ever resisted listening to God's call?
- When God asks you to do something, have you found that God gives you what you need to carry it out? How did it feel to receive grace and strength?

APPENDIX B (CONTINUED)

Signs of the Holy Spirit (15-20 minutes)

Post the Signs of the Holy Spirit poster (Appendix O). (A larger size may be obtained from a copy shop.) Hand out individual copies or refer to the Clergy Search handbook. Going around the room, ask people to read one of the signs until all seven signs have been read.

Discussion questions:

- Do you recall a time when you worked as a group when energy was high, ideas flowed, connections were made, and direction was clear?
- Do you recognize any of these signs from the discussion of how you each have heard God?
- Do you recall any times in the life of the parish where one or more of the signs was present and empowering?

Retreat Debrief (20 minutes)

Let's take some time to reflect on our retreat experience.

- What words, images, thoughts still linger in your mind? What conversations or information stood out for you?
- What surprised you? What were some of the feelings you experienced or connections/associations in your life as we worked together on discernment?
- What are some key insights from today? What new vantage point has this retreat given us?
- What do we want to do with what we have learned about discernment? What do we want to bring forward in our life together?

Close in prayer by having the group form a circle, each person praying for the person to their left until the circle is completed.

APPENDIX C

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 holistic 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

Conflict Cycle

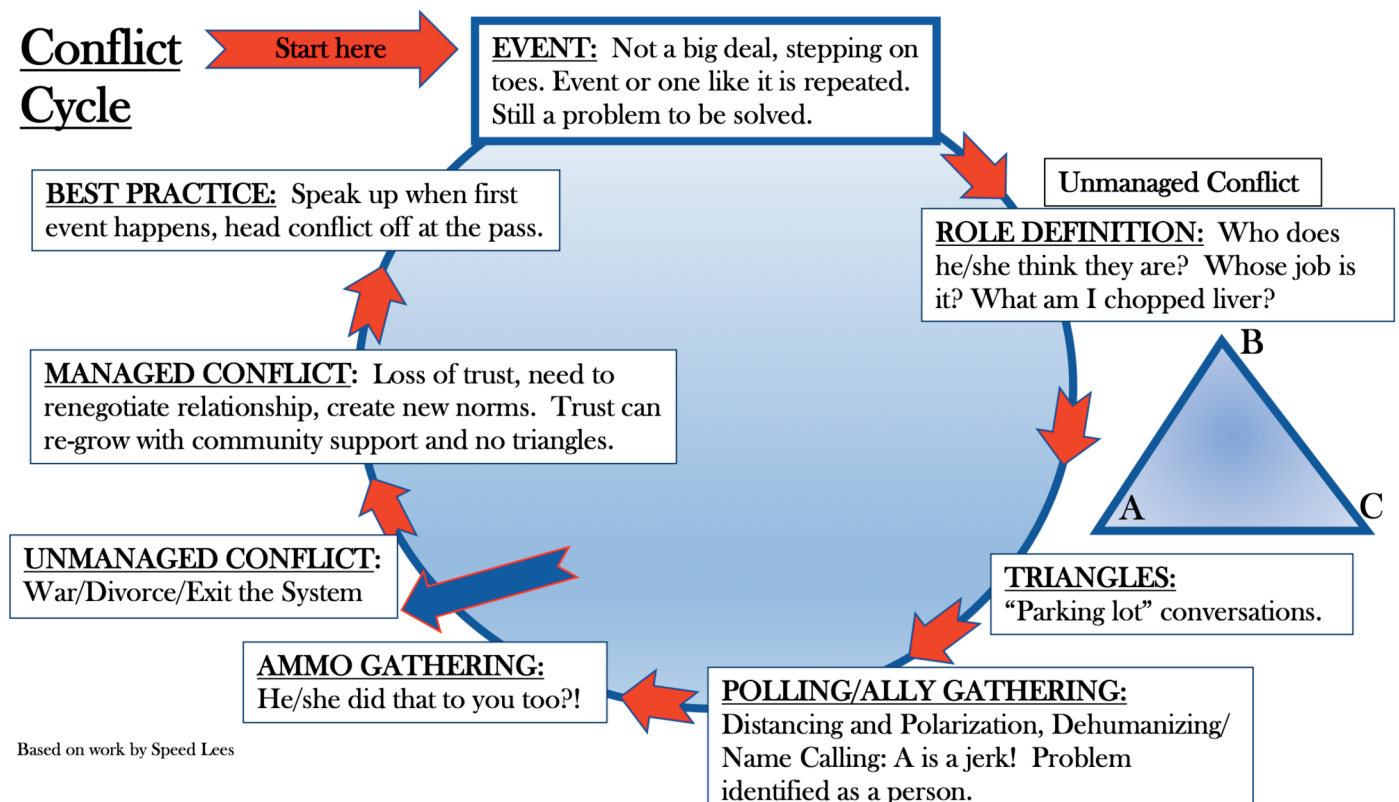
AID to Manage Conflict

A: Raise directly to person involved in the Action /problem
I: Say what it's **Impact** is on you.
D: Do. Say what can be done to change the situation or solve the problem. Would you be willing to...?

Guiding Scripture

Responsibility to confront conflict: *Matthew 5:23*
How to be angry and speak the truth in love: *Ephesian's 4:25-32*
What love looks like: *1Corinthians 13:1-13*
Enemies: *Romans 12:9-21*

Conflict Cycle



Based on work by Speed Lees

Normal Group Development Phases

Form: Making Nice
Norm: Making Standards
Storm: Chaos, Loss, Emptiness
Perform: Making Community

APPENDIX E

Crucial Conversations: Tools for talking when the stakes are high

STEP 1 Start with the Heart

- What do I really want?
 - For myself
 - For the other person (vestry, congregation)
 - For the relationship
- What do I want for myself, the other person, AND the relationship?
- What I really DON'T want!
 - Such as a useless heated discussion that goes nowhere
- How can I have a candid conversation about X AND avoid creating bad feelings or wasting our time?

STEP 2 Keeping the Conversation Safe (Safety is up to me and all group members)

Learn to notice the behaviors of others that signal safety is at risk

- Silence
 - Masking: understating or being selective about what we really think; sarcasm, sugarcoating
 - Avoiding: steering completely away from sensitive subjects and never getting to the real issues
 - Withdrawing: pulling out of the conversation altogether
- Violence: Verbal strategy that attempts to convince, control, compel others to your point of view. Behaviors include: name-calling, monologuing, and making threats.
 - Controlling: coercing others to your way of thinking by cutting others off, overstating your facts, speaking in absolutes, changing subjects, and using directive questions to control the conversation
 - Labeling: putting a label on a person or idea so we can generalize and dismiss them
 - Attacking: moving from trying to win the point to making the person suffer. Using belittling and threatening behaviors.

APPENDIX E (CONTINUED)

STEP 3 What to do if Safety is at Risk

- Step out of the conversation
 - Take a breath
 - Ask for silence
 - Read a passage from scripture
- Notice what is at risk (Mutual Respect or Mutual Purpose)
 - Mutual Respect: If it is on your part, APOLOGIZE! If you suspect others are feeling disrespected, ASK! If you are feeling disrespected, check-in and discover if that is the other's intention or you are misinterpreting their meaning. State what you do not intend or mean, then state what you do mean.
 - Mutual Purpose: Start with the Heart and agree to agree. Compromise.
 - Commit to seek mutual purpose and commit to stay in the conversation until together you can invent a mutual purpose.
 - Recognize the purpose behind the strategy. Let go of strategies to obtain what you want and discover options and alternatives.
 - Invent a mutual purpose: Find an objective that is more meaningful or more rewarding than the one that is dividing you.
 - Brainstorm strategies that meet everyone's needs.

STEP 4 Master Your Stories

- It is not the situation that is the problem, it is our belief about the situation that is the problem. (Epictetus)
- We have core beliefs and expectations about the world around us and the meaning of the behavior of others. These beliefs underlie stories we tell ourselves about ourselves and the world, how we are perceived, respected, accepted or not. The stories we are telling ourselves in the secret of our hearts create feelings and emotions that manifest in our behavior.
- Notice the story you are telling yourself when the conversation turns challenging. Notice your behavior. Are you responding to feelings related to a story you are telling yourself that is unrelated to what is actually happening in the room? Where is the evidence in the room for what you are feeling, thinking, believing and behaving? If there isn't any, then take a breath and return to the conversation with fresh eyes. Listen in the Present Moment.
- When you notice these things you have an opportunity now to master your stories rather than allow your stories to master you. You are free to be at peace with yourself and one another!

APPENDIX F

RESPECT Communication Norms

R

take Responsibility for what you say and feel without blaming others

E

use Empathetic listening

S

be Sensitive to differences in communication/cultural styles

P

Ponder what you hear and feel before you speak

E

Examine your own assumptions and perceptions

C

maintain Confidentiality

T

Tolerate ambiguity because we are not here to debate. There are no “winners” or “losers.”

The Rev. Eric Law. The Kaleidoscope Institute, 2021

APPENDIX F (CONTINUED)

Conversation Covenant

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.

College for Congregational Development

APPENDIX G

Grounded in God Discussion Questions

Chapter 1

1. What about discernment has stayed with you since the retreat?
2. How do you take time to get settled in God's presence?
3. Where might we need the mind of Christ in our deliberations tonight?

Chapter 2

1. How do you feel about silence?
2. What does it mean to listen with our whole self? Who do you do that with?
3. How might silence be useful in our work today?

Chapter 3

1. In a new experience, what questions do you ask to help your understanding?
2. What gets lost when we interrupt others?
3. Where in our work today might we need to listen deeply to each other today?

Chapter 4

1. Describe times when you have had an image, Bible verse, dream, or intuition suddenly arise that changed your direction? Pause between stories to absorb what you hear.
2. Were you able to use the pause to absorb the story or did you formulate your response?

Chapter 5

1. Describe times in your vestry work where joy, energy surges, persistence in message, convergence, and/or fruitfulness have been present?
2. What was your response? Did you identify it as the Holy Spirit?

Chapter 6

1. How does speaking for yourself only, expressing your own thoughts and feelings, referring to your own experiences, avoiding the hypothetical, and keeping away from generalizations, build trust, openness, and mutual respect?
2. What actions might you take to encourage trust, openness, listening, and mutual respect that facilitates building consensus?

Chapter 7

1. How can a group conducting business as God's people resist conforming to the dominant culture of the secular world in decision making?
2. How do we experience being the Body of Christ with God as a living presence in our decision making?

Chapter 8

1. How might we shape our agendas that prepare a way to find the Holy Spirit in our meetings?
2. How might we experiment using music, scripture, silence, and prayer in our meetings?

Chapter 9

1. How might we build up reflective sharing, reverent listening, creative exploration of scripture, and other aspects of discernment in the life of the wider congregation?
2. How might we model holding our desires and opinions, even our convictions, lightly so that we might hear God?

APPENDIX H

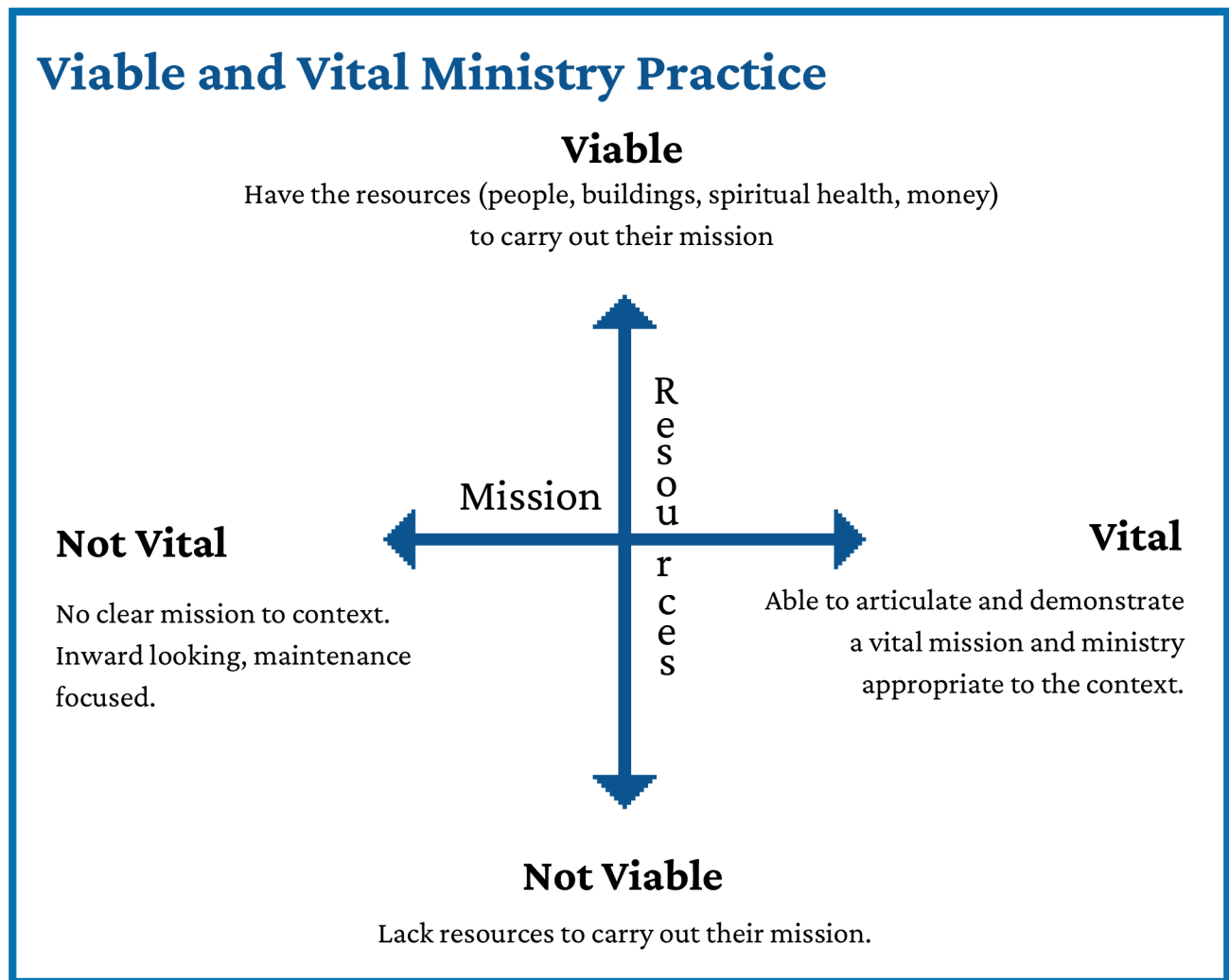
Vitality and Viability Grid

Viable: capable of working successfully; feasible

Vital: existing as a manifestation of life; concerned with or necessary to the maintenance of life

Vitality: the state of being strong and active; energy

The chart below is a tool to help think through the current status of your congregation.



All churches encounter some form of static or unsustainable common life or find themselves ready to prune old growth and build a new cycle of growth in life together. Take a moment to think about where your congregation might be in relation to the above graph. It can help open imagination, ignite longing and prayer, and lead to new life for your congregation moving you toward a vital and viable ministry. **The Vitality and Viability of a congregation increases proportionately with its interaction with the surrounding community.**

APPENDIX I

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What would the community say are the strengths of our ministry?• What assets do we possess? (financial, property, key relationships, or maybe just awesome people)• What needs are we meeting in the community?• We are incredible at ...
WEAKNESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What would the community say are some weaknesses that are present?• Do we have any liabilities?• Are there some needs that are obvious that we are not meeting?• How do we deal with conflict?• We are pretty much bad at...
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there trends in the community that we can support, be a part of, or contribute to?• Are there needs in the community that we can meet that no one else is?• What opportunities are there in the community that align with our strengths?• We could really do...
THREATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there any community trends that could hinder our impact?• Do we have long-term plans?• What is the plan after this leadership is gone?• We could do this, but...

This is a basic SWOT. But it's a great place to start the process and gives you some nice ideas with where to go from where you are now.

APPENDIX J

SOAR Model Analysis for Churches (Appreciative Inquiry)

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

APPENDIX K

Vestry 101

Vestry Roles and Responsibilities 101

<u>Vestry Responsibilities: Temporal</u>	<u>Vestry Responsibilities: Spiritual</u>
<p>“In their leadership role with the vestry, wardens operate as system managers, keeping a long-range overview of the entire congregation’s life and work. <u>They don’t do everything, but make sure that everything agreed to happens.</u>” (Hansel+ Vestries in the Church p.18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance and upkeep of the parish property• Raising, management, investment, spending of parish money (accurate reporting according to Guidelines)• Responsible for the election (with the bishop’s approval) of the Rector of the parish• Committees of the vestry are related to these areas.• Each vestry member ought to undertake the chairmanship of at least one committee: i.e. Finance, Buildings and Grounds, Stewardship, Fund-raising• The Vicar/PIC/Rector is ex-officio member of all committees and should be invited to all committee meetings	<p>Defining mission (purpose), vision, and goals and objectives</p> <p>Statement of Parish Purpose (mission) – what inspires parish life at Trinity?</p> <p>Vision: Where we want to be (future vision)</p> <p>Goals: How were are going to get there (present reality)</p> <p>Objectives: Each ministry and aspect of parish creates objectives for itself – what they are going to do in relation to the Purpose (mission)</p> <p>Wardens to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• there is regular Sunday Worship• Sufficient bread and wine• Money collected for poor and needy

APPENDIX K (CONTINUED)

Vestry 101

Title III: Ministry Duties and Responsibilities of Priest In Charge According to the Canons and Constitutions of the Episcopal Church

Canon 9.3	After consultation with the vestry the Bishop may appoint a Priest in Charge of any congregation. A Priest in Charge (PIC) exercises the duties of a Rector as outlined in III.9.5
9.5a 1.	Full authority and responsibility in the conduct of worship subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rubrics of the BCP • Constitutions and Canons of the Episcopal Church • Pastoral Direction of the Bishop
9.5 a 2.	For the purposes of the office and full free discharge of all functions the Rector (R)/PIC at all times are entitled to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and control of the church and parish building(s) • Access to all records and registers maintained on behalf of the congregation
9.5 b 1.	The Duty of the R/PIC is to ensure that all persons receive instructions in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Scripture • Catechism • Doctrine and Disciple worship • and in the exercise their ministry as baptized persons
9.5. b 2	Duty of the R/PIC to instruct all persons in their charge on the stewardship of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Time, Talent, Treasure • Biblical Tithe • The writing of their will
9.5.b 3	Duty of R/PIC to provide baptismal preparation (to all involved)
9.5 b 4	Duty of R/PIC to prepare and present to the bishop at visitation those ready for confirmation, reception and reaffirmation
9.5. b 5	Duty of R/PIC to announce date of Episcopal Visitation, to make the register available to the bishop and report on the state of the congregation both spiritual and temporal.
9.5. b 6	Ensure the offering for the poor is collected and distributed.
9.5. b 7	Duty of R/PIC to read a pastoral letter from the House of Bishops at a public worship service on the Lord's day or to ensure copies of letter are distributed
9.5. b 8	If House of Bishops adopt a position paper and require its communication it is the Duty of R/PIC to communicate the paper in a manner set forth above 9.5.b.7
9.5. c	Duty of the R/PIC to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record all baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials • Ensure the register is signed by officiant (if not the R/PIC) • Record all who have been baptized, number of communicants or removed by transfer
9.6 a	No priest shall preach, minister the Sacraments, or hold any public services within the limits of a diocese other than the one in which the priest is canonically resident for more than 2 months without a license from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the diocese in which the Priest desires to so officiate.
9.6.c	No R/PIC Warden, Vestry person, trustee shall permit any person to officiate in the congregation without sufficient evidence that such a person is duly licensed and ordained and in good standing with the church.
9.6.d	Any member of clergy or PIC as a result of impairment or any cause <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shall neglect to perform regular services • And refuse without good cause, to consent to any other duly qualified minister to perform such services, the Wardens, Vestry, Trustees of the congregation shall, upon providing evidence to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of such neglect or refusal and with the written consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, have the authority to permit any duly qualified Member of the Clergy to officiate.

APPENDIX L

St. Paul's Letters

Life-giving and loving behavior

Galatians 5:13, 21-25

You my friends were called to be free. Do not turn your freedom into license for your flesh, but be servants to one another in love...But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Ephesians 4:25-27, 4:32-5:2

So then, putting away falsehood, let each of you speak the truth with your neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

1 Corinthians 13:4a, 7-8a

Love is patient, love is kind. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

A spirit that tears down and does not build up

Galatians 5: 19-21

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 4:28-31

Those who steal must give up stealing; rather, let them labor, doing good work with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths but only what is good for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice.

1 Corinthians 13:4b-6

(Love) does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

APPENDIX M

Resources for Church Governance and Business Practices

Manual of Business Methods for the Episcopal Church

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/finance-office/manual-of-business-methods/>

Episcopal Church Constitutions and Canons:

<https://generalconvention.org/constitution-and-canons/>

Diocesan Canons, New York Religious Corporations Law, Parish Governance, Administration and Finance: <https://www.dioceseli.org/congregation-resources/parish-governance-and-administration>

APPENDIX N

13 Triggers for Anxiety for Congregations

1. **Money:** Follow the money trail - how to raise it, how to distribute it, how to manage it when there isn't enough.
2. **Sex, Sexuality:** As sources of identity and self-expression, questions and differences pertaining to sex set off survival reactions.
3. **Pastor's Leadership Style:** Sometimes this is a euphemism for not liking the pastor. Sometimes it's a genuine concern that the needed leadership is not happening. Sometimes clergy and other leaders fail to determine what kind of leadership is needed.
4. **Lay Leadership Style:** Lay leaders can run the spectrum from hands off to hands on, from enabling to threatening, from expressing a failure of nerve to demonstrating strength of conviction and courage.
5. **Growth, Survival:** Congregations may be anxious because growth is slow or worship attendance declines.
6. **Boundaries:** Boundary problems could include how much of a congregation's resources are given away and how much retained locally; people overstepping their authority; misuse of finances.
7. **Trauma, Transition:** A key or nodal event happens with significant emotional impact, such as storm damage to the church structure or the retirement of a pastor after a long tenure.
8. **Staff Conflict, Resignation:** When the church staff is at odds or a staff member departs under a cloud of suspicion or for unexpected reasons, people become upset.
9. **Harm Done to a Child, Death of a Child:** Congregations are children sensitive. If a child is hurt or if one dies, there is a sense of helplessness: we cannot even protect or defend those in our care.
10. **Old and New:** Tension brews when considering a new hymnal to replace an old hymnal, to change the old time of worship, or to modify the receiving of a sacrament.
11. **Contemporary and Traditional Worship:** This is a special case of old and new. Immense emotionality is connected to styles of worship. The first murder in sacred history, the story of Cain and Abel, involved worship.
12. **Gap between the Ideal and the Real:** When high and lofty ideas are betrayed by reality or when a focus on mission degenerates into a focus on self-concerns, people become disturbed.
13. **Building, Construction, Space, and Territory:** Add or tear down a building; modify existing space; move offices into a new area; sell land or parsonage; relocate. Anxiety will rise.

Peter Steinke. *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times*, 2006.

APPENDIX O

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

APPENDIX P

Congregational Life Cycle

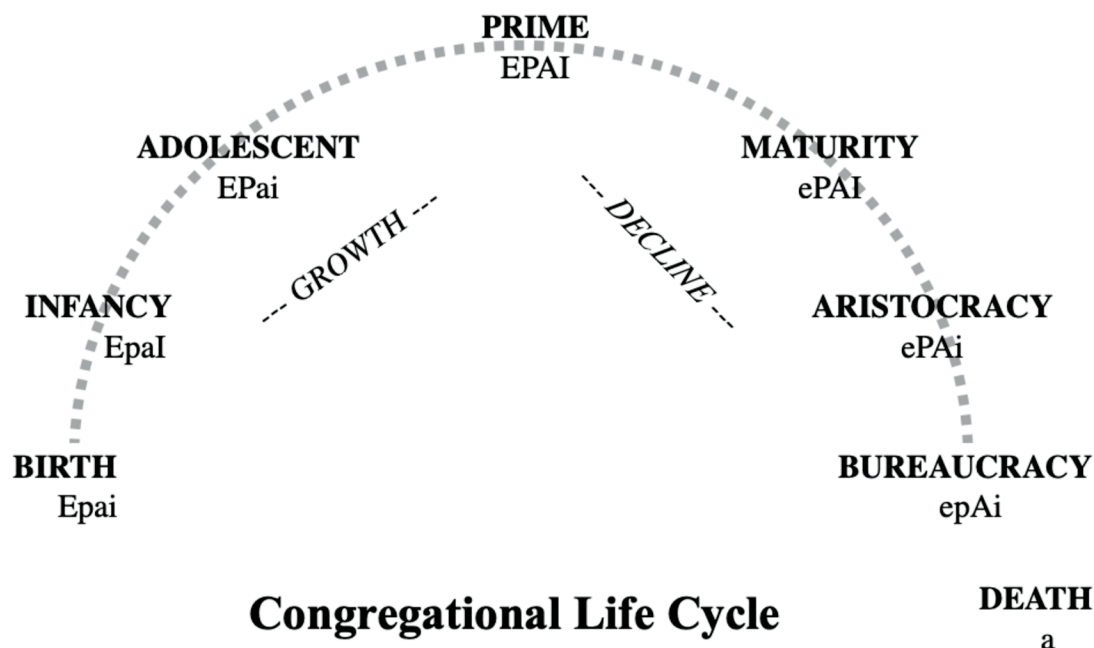
EPaI: The Gene Structure of a Congregation

The “E” factor represents energy. It predominates in the early development of a congregation. It is made of vision and hope and is the source of enthusiasm and excitement. It also has an undifferentiated quality about it and can flail about in all directions.

The “P” factor stands for those specific programs and services that the congregation undertakes to build up those who are part of the congregation. It includes all it does to tend its environment and its mandate to support the larger church. These programs go by names like church school, finance committee, Episcopal Church Women, Lenten programs, and more. Perhaps in proleptic anticipation of the full onset of post-Christendom, he also noted that this must include the faith community’s orientation toward service in the world by feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. He noted that there must be a connection between the internal and the external concerns of the church.

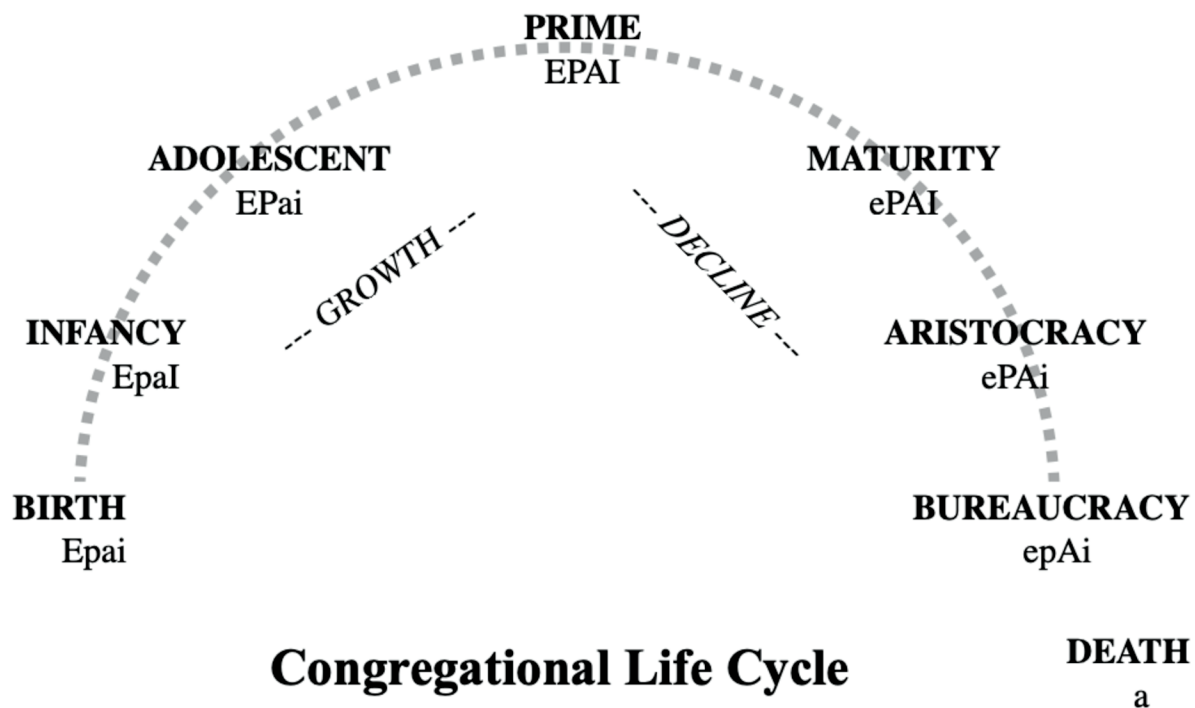
The “A” factor is the church as a corporate organism and is seen in mission statements, goals, budgets, and planning. It is the place of organization and coordination for the various components of church life to serve a common purpose. Administration is the place where concern is focused on the stuff and staff of a congregation.

The “I” factor stand for inclusion. How the people are drawn to the church and how they are assimilated is the focus. Are they given opportunities to discover their gifts and use them in service to God and the church? How is conflict handled? Is the congregation focused on its own life or does it have an outward orientation?



APPENDIX P (CONTINUED)

Congregational Life Cycle



From Infancy to Prime the congregation is in a growth phase; from Prime to Bureaucracy and Death there is decline. Natural law is in effect. There is birth, life and death. This movement can, however, be arrested. Loss of energy will affect the growth phase and a re-energizing intervention will affect the decline phase. Every stage has its own set of tasks for implementing, evaluating and envisioning. How the congregation performs its tasks contributes to either growth or decline, momentum or inertia.

In the life cycle represented above, an upper case “gene” indicates high or positive function. A lower case “gene” represents diminished or lowered function. Use this chart with your leadership team. Ask each person to put their initials on the place on the line where they believe your congregation is living. A positive discussion will ensue that gives a diagnostic take on where your church is today.

With permission from Cultivating the Missional Church Online Resources
Adapted from the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Saarinen

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations* by Suzanne G. Farnham, Stephanie A. Hull, R. Taylor McLean: dioceseli.org/groundedingod
2. Creating Year-round Stewardship with Holy Currencies
3. The Episcopal Network for Stewardship: TENS.org
4. Cycle of Unmanaged Conflict: dioceseli.org/cycle-unmanaged-conflict
5. Viability and Vitality: dioceseli.org/what-we-do/resources/viable-and-vital-ministry-practice
6. *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season* by Susan Beaumont: dioceseli.org/leading
7. Spiritual Gifts Quiz: spiritualgiftquiz.org
8. Family Systems Theory: The Congregation as a System: dioceseli.org/family-systems
9. Bowen Family Systems Therapy: dioceseli.org/bowen
10. Antagonists in the Church
11. Spiritual Gifts Powerpoint
12. *How to Try* by Lorenzo Lebrija

Access these
resources on our
website



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.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 sets of three horizontal dotted lines.

OPEN DOORS NEW FUTURES: WHAT DOES GOD WANT TO DO HERE?



OPEN DOORS NEW FUTURES, has been developed from the strong work of the Transition Consultants and Interim Clergy of the Diocese of Long Island, who have shaped this process over a three-year period, and we are deeply indebted to them, extending thanks especially to The Rev. Canon Cecily Broderick Guerra and Ms. Diane Gaidon. The work and thought of Susan Beaumont in *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Time*, the work of The Rev. Eric Law in *Holy Currencies* and Ms. Suzanne G. Farnham et al in *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations* have been foundational to the shape and philosophy of Open Doors New Futures.

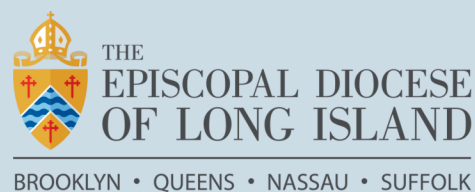
Created by: The Rev. Canon Claire Woodley, Consultant for Open Doors New Futures

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 Guerra,
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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