

July 25, 2010, Meeting Notes

Group One

1. Reflect on or talk about an experience when you, or someone you know, “rose to the occasion” or “answered” life’s changes and challenges with courage and grace.

Write poetry to work through grief/physical challenges

Persevere against medical problems

Working with special needs children

Use 12 steps to acknowledge “powerlessness” and turn fears to higher power

Actively proceed with “living”

Dad raising two boys along – amazing grace and courage

6. Why do we love our church?

Music

Freedom of beliefs

Sermons

Community Activities – outreach

Group Two

2. Of the four “stuck conversations,” which one have you heard in our congregation most often? Is there another stuck conversation that you think is important to name and discuss?

Blame Game

Facebook

199 channels on TV

Soccer, sports, society

Speculative blaming for loss of members

Members bond to certain staff/programs – then leave when they do

Silver Bullet

Larger financial resources

More members (tithing)

We’re not like Them

Not like evangelicals

Not going to proselytize

Not life conservatives

We are democratic – not hierarchical/staff driven

BUT – all churches are losing members and struggles to keep them

We're open-minded

If only.....

No sports on Sunday

Large youth group

Consequences

No aging

Younger families

Improve Sunday school and youth groups

Programs for couples

6. Why do you love our church?

Long term small groups e.g. Breakfast Group, Sewing Circle, Theology Book

Club, Dinners for 8/9, the choir

Sense of family – watching kids grow

Teaching parish

Effective Lay leadership

People at OCC multi-talented, intensely interested

Music

Radical hospitality

Inclusivity

Green church

Recognition of personal stories of members

Hospitality to wider community

Leadership in wider community

Balance of head/heart, youth/old, learning new/respecting old

Good administration

Great physical plant/campus/sanctuary

And something is always going on here – a vital part of the community

Doug Adams Art Wall

Group Three

3. Identify a technical problem facing our congregation, and identify an adaptive challenge facing our congregation.

Technical Challenge

1. Loss of technical personnel members
2. Loss of energy among members
3. Not all members are on e-mail
4. Transmission of “Institutional knowledge” (i.e. B & G, fellowship, stewardship, art gallery, parish callers).

Adaptive Challenge

1. People see the problem, but are not willing or able to step up and participate
2. Not always able to reach members and describe the needs for their help
 - Use Internet, etc. to publicize needs?
 - Use a visible “Need Tree” in the Narthex
3. Lack of young families and singles
4. We do not present ourselves as a place of “Total Community”
5. “Busyness” of people’s lives

6 Why do we love our church?

People doing good work
 Quiet
 Lack of “snobbery”

Group Four

5. What are some indications, where you live or work, that the predominance of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants is a thing of the past? What feelings do you experience about these changes?

It’s a good thing – let’s not go back.
 Formerly White Dominated culture
 New towns – what church are you in?
 Persons of color – servant class
 Most segregated hour – Sunday morning

Sunday a.m. sports – no time of reflection
 Neighbors in Orinda – white/Asian – no African American
 Sunday blue laws

Sunday School drop-offs don’t come back
 We always create other – now – class, money, language, immigration, sexual orientation
 Are we Orinda Community Church? Or broader reach? (Re-envisioning committee has only one member from Orinda)
 Family – diverse
 Orinda – formerly WASP – now money/education
 Do we welcome people without kids?
 Some single people feel excluded.
 Many programs Family/couple oriented
 But Dinners for 8/9
 Change-diversity
 Easy to start
 Hard to maintain

Group Five

5. Of these six ideas for developing a sense of urgency, which seems most urgent to you?

1. Describing our situation.
2. Letting people feel the pinch of reality.
3. Empowering leadership from below or outside.
4. Appreciative inquiry. (received four votes)
5. Changing the story we tell about ourselves. (One vote)
6. The Gospel, belief in our message and community.