

Mission Conference 2015  
May 17, 2015  
St. Mark's Church, Erie, PA

### Small Group Discussion Questions Summary

1. After Hearing this morning's presentations, what is your understanding of 'one church'? What does the idea of 'One Church' look like in your context?
  - Collaboration (x3)
  - Sharing strengths and resources (x4)
  - Getting to know each other (x2)
  - Willing to accept other's gifts
  - Successes and failures as work of the whole
  - Common bonds of faith, love of Christ
  - Universal Church
  - Welcoming/ loving others
  - Collaborating with other denominations
  - Financial sharing
  - Fluid instead of boundaries
  - All in it together, Care about what happens in other parishes
  - One Anchor
  - Prison Ministry
  - Extinguish the moniker "Diocese"
  - Rotating programs that maintain interest and vitality
  - Knowledge of Diversity and Individuality (what makes us unique and the same)
  - Evangelize – how do we get the message out
  - Small church work together with larger ones to get critical mass for activities and celebrations
  - All churches work together on one idea but in own individual way
  
2. As we move toward a deeper level of collaboration, what gifts or ministries does your congregation have to share in common?
  - People are hospitable (x4)
  - Facility is Accessible and hospitable (x5)
  - Skills to build, renovate and maintain (The Diocesan Guild of Handy-Folks, Carpenters)
  - Food outreach (x5)
  - Evangelism (x2)
  - Music (x6)
  - Building / physical space (x3)
  - Organ and Organist

- Prime real estate
- Outreach mentality (x3)
- Parties – Social organization
- Nursery/Pre- School (x2)
- Calling and Caring Ministry
- Diaper Bank
- Habitat for Humanity
- Family Friendly Focus (inclusion of youth in service, soft space, Vacation Bible School)
- Stewardship Campaign (x2)
- Strong Teachers/ Leaders (x3)
- Community Visitation
- Visibility
- Prayers of the People
- Building Spirituality (prayer, Taize, Discipline) (x2)
- New Comers Lay Leadership/ engagement (x2)
- Daughters of the King
- Coffee Hour/Brunch
- New Comers dinner
- Engaged Bible Study
- See needs others don't
- Inspirational and creative worship (x3)
- Children's Choir
- Openness to change
- Safe place for groups to meet
- Endurance and perseverance
- Financial stability
- Central Location
- Great Preaching
- Home Communion
- Youth Ministry
- Fellowship (x2)
- Willingness to work together
- Shared Worship
- Pastoral Needs and Care
- Community Collaboration

3. What needs to be set aside in your congregation in order for this collaboration to go beyond the surface?

- Staying close to home
- The unhappy May leave
- Changing the lens through which we see things
- Ownership of our space (x2)

- Give up some internal leadership/Control (x2)
- Some resources (Physical and financial) (x2)
- Budgetary inflexibility (We pay more so we want more)
- Liturgical privileging of the Eucharist (disparaging what is not the norm)
- Fear of loss of identity (x3)
- Holding on to the past (x2)
- Letting go of internal divisions (old guard/new guard)
- Personal/Spiritual Boundaries
- Let go of the comfortable/ fear of change (x3)
- Independence (x2)
- Lack of Imagination
- Real estate
- Waiting to die (survival mode) (x2)
- Elevator to building
- Time and Commitments
- Distrust (x2)
- Somebody else will do it
- Willingness to set aside primary motivations
- Territory
- Magical thinking
- Thinking we know what young adults want
- Where and when things happen
- Sense that 'Diocese' means a periodic visit from one person (Bishop)
- Priest has to lead... (Bible study etc.)/Clericalism (x2)
- Making a member for the Episcopal Church/ Parish
- Ego
- Insularity
- Insecurity
- Competition
- Pre-conceived notions of Collaboration
- Respecting faith journeys of other people
- Focus on lack of resources
- Unwillingness to travel for spiritual opportunities
- Hanging on to Independence
- Distrust of Diocesan control and stewardship of Assessment
- Church organization structures and transitions inhibit looking outward

4. In what ways can con conversations between/among the congregations be facilitated by the diocesan staff?

- Maintain a database of resources using a match.com method of linking congregations with resources of other congregations/ master list of skills and gifts (x2)

- Bringing us together – mixing up congregation representatives to assist with cross-pollination (x2)
- Better details of diocesan events with as much advance notification as possible
- Coordinate conversations
- 7x7 – Facilitate
- Reports
- News
- Sponsor get togethers and focus meetings
- Congregational Liaison (communication)
- Diocesan webinars of mission conference type events
- Use social media/ assist with technology gap
- Follow up with congregations / a planning mode
- Diocese to stand behind big decisions – offer support
- If you start a fire you have to tend it
- Help identify need areas
- Assist with grant writing
- Meet with select communities as a group and be informative