

Water in the Desert of Transition

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Transitions can be:

- Hard
 - Filled with anxiety
 - Filled with uncertainty
 - Filled with grief
 - Sometimes filled with anger

- Exciting
 - Filled with energy
 - Filled with intelligence
 - Filled with love
 - Filled with imagination
 - Filled with possibilities

- Informative
 - Introspective
 - Discerning
 - Truth revealing
 - God inspired

What is your role in the transition?

Key people to be in connection with:

- Executive Presbyter or Presbyter over church relations/connections
- Committee/Commission on Ministry (COM) – Chair or liaison
- Church Leadership Connection

Identity

Who are we? Who do we want to be? How do we get there?

Who are we?

- Right now! Not who we used to be in the “good old days.”
 - ◆ Look at who you have been
 - There is a difference between our perception of who we are vs. the reality of how we have lived out who we are.
 - In order to understand who you currently are you have to look at who you have been up to this point.
 - What are the ministries you as a congregation have participated in – in your congregation and in the wider community?
 - Who are you to the surrounding community?
 - Who are you to each other?
 - Are there ministries that have defined your identity as a congregation that you actually no longer do, but you cling to that understanding of who you are?

Who do we want to be?

- There is a correlation between who a congregation wants to be and who God is calling them to be.
 - We would not typically say this in our personal lives as we often get that wrong. We need others to affirm what we believe God is calling us to do and be. But... as a community of faith, communal affirmation of identity is typically trustworthy because there is consensus, and if there is not you know it because the congregation is in turmoil or people leave.
- Has the context in which you do ministry changed?
- Are there needs in the congregation or surrounding community that previously haven't been met but ought to be?
- Is there a new way of doing ministry that could better serve your congregation and the surrounding community

How do we get there?

- Lots and lots of work!

5 Focus Points

Heritage:

- Who are we?
- Where did we come from?
- How did we get to this point?
- Telling and retelling our story successes and struggles
 - How do you tell your story? Is it true?
- Patterns of behavior

Mission:

- Core Vision and Values
- Where do we place our focus?
- Who and what are we called to be?
- What does our future hold?
- Goals and direction
- “We’ve always done it this way” vs. new ideas

Connections:

- Who do we relate to outside of ourselves?
- Who do we have relationships with?
- Our denomination and beyond
- Who is our neighbor?

Leadership:

- Organizing for effective leadership
- What kinds of leaders do we need?
- What kind of structure do we need to accomplish our ministry and goals?
- Honor outgoing leaders, equip new leaders
- Pays attention to people’s passions and abilities

Future:

- How do our core values take shape in the future?
- How do we move forward? What are some “next steps?”
- How do we achieve our goals and dreams?