

Vestries As Strong Leadership Teams

*Presented by
The Rev. Ronald C. Byrd, Sr.
May 9, 2017*



What is the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF)?



Independent, lay led organization, founded in 1949

Empowers congregations through visioning and planning, leadership development, and raising financial resources for ministry

Through our programs, ECF is building a Church...

- Lay and clergy leaders work together to transform the Church
- Healthy, vital, vibrant Episcopal communities of faith
- Meaningful opportunities for Christian stewardship and effective fundraising
- Innovative, mission-based ways to be the Church of the future



Welcome to Vital Teams!

- The Episcopal Church Foundation
- Vital Teams is a pilot initiative of ECF focusing on:
 - Training for lay and clergy leadership teams
 - Partnering with seminaries and leadership institutions
 - Creating tools for identifying new leaders



Collaborative Leadership

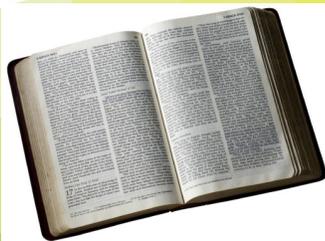
Lay+Clergy Leadership Teams

Where clergy & laity have shared responsibility, authority and accountability and are guided by best practices and policies that work together to accomplish a shared purpose.

Why Collaborative Leadership?

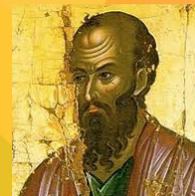


Why Collaborative Leadership? ...Biblically Mandated?



Old Testament

Jesus



The New Testament





Why Collaborative Leadership? ...Laity?

- Ministry of ALL the Baptized
- Financially Sustainable Clergy
- Leadership Formation
- Father/Mother Know Best
- Healthy Congregations



Why Collaborative Leadership? ...Clergy?

- Leadership Style
- Leadership Formation
- Jack-of-All Trades
- Wellness - Burnout
- Part-time or No-time Rectors

Curriculum Outline



- I. Vestries as vital teams
- II. Three essential ingredients for vital teams:
 - Strong relationships
 - Clear processes
 - Focus on results
- III. Identifying next steps
- IV. Additional resources

Part I: Vestries as Vital Teams

Vestries as vital teams

Overview:

- The role of the vestry
- Key vestry responsibilities
- Tools and resources for vestry leaders
- Discussion on next steps



The role of the vestry

Ongoing Discernment/Formation

- Discerns where God is calling the congregation in your location, at this particular point in time

Mission and Vision

- Helps articulate the mission and vision of the congregation

New Leaders

- Identifies new leaders for the congregation and wider Church

Stewards resources

- Manages resources and finances of congregation

Establishing norms for your team

- What are group norms?
- What is the benefit of establishing group norms for a vestry?
- What are some norms that you'd suggest for your vestry?



Vestries' role changes depending on church size

The Family Church:	0 – 75	ASA
The Pastoral Church:	76 - 140	ASA
The Transitional Church	141 - 224	ASA
The Program Church:	225 - 800	ASA
The Resource Church:	800+	ASA

[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/CDR_series1\(1\).pdf](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/CDR_series1(1).pdf)

Holding a vestry orientation retreat

From “Create a holy time away from your vestry”

- Will it be more than 24 hours?
- What should the focus be?
- How will you name your values
- Conflict in the vestry?



Holding a vestry orientation retreat

- “Bootstrap Your Vestry Retreat”
by Loren Meade
- Anna Olson’s “Snapshot of an
Urban Neighborhood”





Questions?

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Part II: Three Essential
Ingredients for Vital Teams

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Three essential ingredients for Vital Teams

- Strong relationships
- Clear processes
- Focus on results



Three essential ingredients for Vital Teams

- How are the teams' **relationships**?
- Are there **clear processes** for meeting effectively?
- Is the team focused on **results**?



Three essential ingredients for Vital Teams

- **Strong relationships**
- Clear processes
- Focus on results



Discussion on building strong relationships

- How do vestry members get to know one another?
- How are new vestry members oriented to their roles?
- Does your vestry hold regular retreats?



The four phases of team development



Ideas for building strong relationships

- Vestry orientation retreat
- Start meetings with relationship building
- Communications styles



Beginning meetings with relationship building

- Conducting a short check in and Bible study at the beginning of each vestry meeting
- Periodically use an ice-breaker exercise to start the meeting



Learning and managing different communications styles:

- Collaborator, Contributor, Director, Inquisitor
- The Controller, The Analyzer, Promoter, Supporter
- Assertive, Aggressive, (Passive-aggressive) Submissive, Manipulative



Questions? Comments?

Three essential ingredients for Vital Teams

- Strong relationships
- **Clear processes**
- Focus on results



Discussion on clear processes

- How does your vestry meet? (Frequency, location, length of time)
- What are the best, most life-giving parts of vestry meetings?
- What are the parts of vestry meetings that need a little work?

Overview of clear processes

- Running an effective meeting
- Consensus decision making
- Facilitating conversations



Running an effective meeting

“Whether we like it or not, meetings are the backbone of our congregational life. They link ideas, people, and action. Nevertheless, approximately 1/3 of meetings are considered unnecessary by people who attend them...”

– from “Backbreaking meetings” by Anne Ditzler



Build a better meeting agenda

A general order for meetings:

- Purpose of meeting
- Formation (Bible study, sharing, skill building)
- Strategic items that need discussion
- Items that require a decision
- Information updates



Build a better meeting agenda

Two additional considerations:

- Using consent agendas for typical business
- Keeping unfinished business on the agenda month-to-month until completed



Pros and cons of consensus decision making

Pros

- Everyone participates
- Requires majority to educate minority & minority positions to clearly state rationales
- Results in decisions that everyone can support
- Works well in healthy teams, where disagreement seen as part of the process

Cons

- *Everyone* participates
- Requires more discussion and time
- **Does not work well in time-pressured or conflict-avoidant teams**

Pros and cons of majority rule decision making

Pros

- People can opt out
- Functions whether the team culture is healthy or not
- Is much faster

Cons

- People can opt out
- Doesn't require education of whole group around issue
- Minority opinions do not need to be incorporated, can result in marginalization of individuals/groups

Questions? Comments?

Three essential ingredients for Vital Teams

- Strong relationships
- Clear processes
- **Focus on results**



Discussion on results

- How does your vestry identify its annual goals?
- Does your vestry check in regularly on the progress made toward these goals?
- Does your vestry reflect periodically on how you're doing as a team?

Overview of focus on results

Two main areas:

- Setting goals
- Establishing feedback loops at individual and group level



Focus on results

Setting goals:

- Identify only 2-3 S.M.A.R.T. goals per year
- Are aligned with mission/vision of congregation?
- Revisit progress on goals at each meeting
- Management by objective method



Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals

Use the S.M.A.R.T. to name goals

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ssigned to
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime specific



MUSIC: A filter for evaluating goals

- **M**ission and vision
- **U**niqueness
- **S**ustainability
- **I**dentify
- **C**apacity



*Ministry by objective method

- Greater efficiency – through systematic procedures
- Greater motivation – through participation & planning process
- Planning for results – not work

*MBO or MBR – Management by results

MBO – 5 Criteria

- Prioritize objectives
- Quantify – Must be measurable
- Realistic
- Consistent – Policies and mission
- Compatible



Discussing goals regularly at meetings

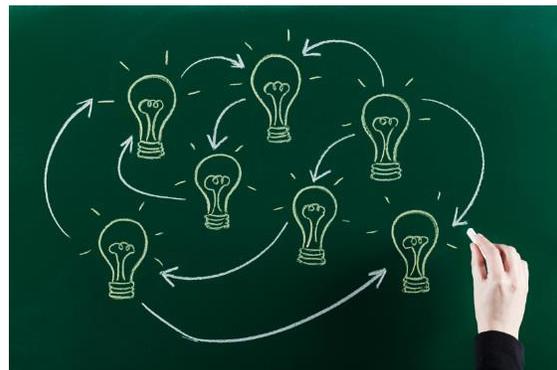
- Add 2-3 goals to the vestry norms sheet
- Have norm sheet at all meetings
- Add the goals to the monthly agenda
- Discuss the goals at meetings



Focus on results

Establishing regular, informal feedback loops

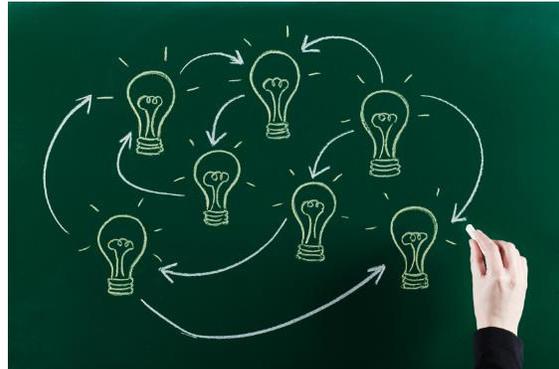
- At group level
- One-on-one



Focus on results

Suggested questions for both group/individual feedback sessions:

- How are we doing as a team?
- How are we doing on our norms?
- What has gone really well? What hasn't?
- What would make things go better?



Interactive exercise

- Identify one goal that your congregation has for this year
- Develop this goal until it's S.M.A.R.T.
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Assigned to an individual/committee
 - Realistic
 - Time-specific



Interactive exercise

- Then, on a 1-10 scale, each individual should rate the identified goal for each of the following areas:
 - How connected is it to your mission/vision? 1-10
 - Does it enhance your congregation's uniqueness? 1-10
 - Does it increase the financial sustainability of your congregation? 1-10
 - Is this in keeping with the identity of your congregation? 1-10
 - Does your congregation have the internal capacity to realize this goal? 1-10
- Compare results and discuss areas of difference

Part III: Identifying Next Steps

Identifying next steps

Over next six months...

- **Strong relationships:** Knowing the four phases of group development; beginning meetings with relationship building; holding regular team retreats; recognizing different communication styles
- **Clear processes:** Running effective meetings; consensus decision making; facilitating conversations; building better meeting agendas
- **Focus on results:** Use S.M.A.R.T. method to create annual goals; establish feedback loops at group and individual level

Part IV: Additional Resources

Thank You!

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Please Visit ECF Website at
www.episcopalchurchfoundation.org



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Boot Camp: Vital Teams Basics of Collaborative Leadership

Presented by
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October __, 2016

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