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## *Getting to the 'Why' 1*

BY MIGUEL ANGEL ESCOBAR

It's no secret. The Episcopal Church runs on the extraordinary commitment (and real sacrifice) of its lay and clergy leaders. Consider, for instance, the Senior Warden who must lead her congregation through a difficult clergy transition, or the supply clergy who faithfully serves two churches after a stressful week at the office, or your everyday person in the pew who gives sacrificially of their time, talent, and resources. Such stories of faithful commitment are by no means rare. Indeed, they are part what it means to be Church. And yet, all too often, even extraordinary commitment can wither away when it becomes disconnected from any sense of larger purpose.

Over the past few years, questions of purpose and commitment have come to the fore for many congregations in our Church. More and more, we are realizing that our leadership and financial

structures presume a world that no longer exists, one in which church attendance is normative and mainline Protestantism holds pride of place in the U.S. religious landscape. In the midst of these changes, we at the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) are advocating for a different model of leadership, one that starts with the questions of *Why? What does any of this have to do with Jesus? And how is all this effort helping us to grow as followers of Christ?*

This style of leadership, called Transformational Leadership, argues that we cultivate and sustain strong commitment when we 1) build a shared sense of purpose and 2) engage in individual and group leadership development.

**“Why? What does any of this have to do with Jesus?”**

A few weeks ago, I attended my

congregation's

annual parish meeting. On one level, it was very much what one might expect from annual parish meetings in The Episcopal Church. We elected new vestry members, reviewed the parish budget, and we were urged to make significant financial gifts for the building up of the community. Just beneath the surface, however, I sensed that there was real anxiety about the future of our congregation. This is because in late December an arsonist set fire to the narthex of the building, possibly in anger over the congregation's recent neighborhood initiatives and volunteer efforts.

After we heard various reports about the fire – what was damaged, what the insurance would cover, how much we will need to raise – the rector decided to tell a story. His story was about a parent explaining to a four year old how Jesus, who told people to love their neighbor as themselves, ended up being crucified. The four year old then guessed – accurately – that the same thing must have happened to Martin Luther King Jr., for he also asked us to love our neighbors as ourselves. And then came the bold comparison. Our rector argued that our little Episcopal parish had the exact same message and mission in the world, and that despite our fears,

we should commit to an even bolder vision for loving our neighbors as ourselves.

We returned to our plodding review of parish finances shortly after, but by then the atmosphere in the room had changed dramatically. Every agenda item from then on out resonated with purpose.

As basic as this example might seem, the reality is that it's extraordinarily difficult to imbue the everyday leadership of our congregations – the vestry meetings, stewardship campaigns, outreach initiatives – with a strong sense of shared purpose. Thankfully, there are learnable skills and practices for doing so. Here are two examples of Episcopal congregations turning everyday challenges into opportunities to discern a shared sense of purpose:

- In "Cultivating a Culture of Discernment," Blaire Pogue discusses how their vestry understands their primary purpose as that of discerning where God is calling their community.
- In "Lessons from an Annual Giving Campaign," David Posterero shares how an annual stewardship campaign became about more than just money, but about the shared

ministry of all the baptized.

### **"Why? How is this helping us to grow as followers of Christ?"**

I'd had it. Two and a half years into my three-year term on a development committee, I once again found myself alone on a conference call, listening to muzak, waiting for the other committee members to arrive. I had stayed late at work to make the call and began to feel frustrated when no one had shown up five minutes past the start time. This had happened before, but we'd all just committed ourselves to significant fundraising goals. But then ten minutes passed. Then fifteen...

Finally, I'd had enough. I hung up and fired off an email venting my frustration. And, of course, I immediately regretted it. I was miserable, exhausted, and worst of all, now deeply embarrassed by how I'd reacted. On the subway ride home, I found myself wondering how this endless spinning of the wheels was connected to following Christ.

When I got home, I called the chair of the organization to tell her I had decided to quit. She wasn't supposed to have been on the call and was disappointed to hear what had happened. But then she asked me to reconsider

the experience. She told me how her husband, who'd been a priest, talked about the 'crucifixion' of volunteer committee work. Sure this work can break us, she noted, but can it break us open to new possibility? In the end, she said that I had a choice to make, and that either one was perfectly respectable: to quit what was clearly a dysfunctional group, or to dive in more deeply. Diving in meant (gulp) apologizing for my email and using the little time I had left on that committee to challenge the patterns that had set in deep. I chose the latter.

While Episcopal congregations face many challenges, leadership of these organizations often comes down to the efforts and commitment of a handful of individuals and small groups. Among the many other priorities that churches face, I believe that it behooves us to place the leadership development of individuals and small groups at the top of the list. Practically, this means learning to skillfully identify and recruit individuals with leadership potential to our core leadership teams; it means learning how to give these individuals and groups creative challenges, as opposed to just tasks; it means learning how to give great feedback as they encounter setbacks and make mistakes along the way. Finally, it means learning how to

be present during those difficult meetings and phone calls, listening and connecting experiences and challenges back to the congregation's shared purpose.

### **Inspiring Commitment**

Confront gently but surely then get rid of the phrase that "church is a business..." It is not. We are a household of faith, and every household needs to tend to its "house" and its finances, and at the heart of the household are the relationships to God and each other.

**Miguel Angel Escobar** serves as Program Director of Leadership Resources at the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF). ). There, he works with Nancy Davidge, editor of ECF Vital Practices, and Brendon Hunter, Assistant Program Director, to coordinate the Fellowship Partners Program, ECF Vital Practices, ECF's many workshops and web conferences, and ECF Fresh Start. Miguel is a lay member of The Episcopal Church, a M.Div. graduate of Union Theological Seminary, and an amateur bread maker. Write Miguel at [mescobar@episcopalfoundation.org](mailto:mescobar@episcopalfoundation.org) or follow him on Facebook and Twitter.

### **Resources**

■ "Build a Healthy Vestry" by

Janie Kirt Morris <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/vital-vestries/build-a-healthy-vestry/>

- "Creating Strong Teams" webinar recording led by Ella Auchincloss <http://www.ecfvp.org/tools/web-conference-creating-strong-teams/>
- Cultivating a Culture of Discernment by Blaire Pogue <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/discernment/cultivating-a-culture-of-discernment/>
- Lessons from an Annual Giving Campaign by David Posterero <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/pledging/lessons-from-an-annual-giving-campaign/>
- Vestry Discernment: A Prayerful Process <http://www.ecfvp.org/tools/vestry-discernment-process/>
- Structuring Leadership Teams by Devon Anderson Available in Spanish and English <http://www.ecfvp.org/tools/structuring-leadership-teams/>

Part 2 of this article begins on page 20 of this document.

## Editor's Letter

The Pope's resignation, followed by the conclave of Roman Catholic cardinals at the Vatican, has the world focused on leadership. When asked about the type of leader the Roman Catholic Church should choose, the best answer I've heard is "Jesus Christ with an MBA." [[http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202\\_162-57572583/new-pope-needs-to-be-jesus-christ-with-an-mba/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-202_162-57572583/new-pope-needs-to-be-jesus-christ-with-an-mba/)]

How do we define leadership at *ECF Vital Practices*? Just as our understanding of church needs to change with changing times and circumstances, so do our models of leadership. Faithful commitment in service to our congregations can become tested without a strong sense of purpose. For communities of faith, this transformational style of leadership starts with asking why and what does any of this have to do with Jesus? And how is all this effort helping us to grow as followers of Christ?

In our March and April *Vestry Papers*, we share stories illustrating transformational leadership. Across our church, in congregations, organizations, and dioceses, leaders are putting transformational leadership principles into

practice and encouraging people to step out of their comfort zone and open themselves up to different ways of understanding their faith and what God is calling them to do.

Our articles this month touch on:

### ■ Transformational

**Leadership:** In "Getting to the Why," Miguel Angel Escobar shares stories from his own ministry as a way of introducing a leadership model built around a shared sense of purpose and group leadership development.

### ■ Connecting with Community:

What happens when your church is no longer relevant to its neighborhood? In "Reclaiming Relevance," Lori Mills-Curran shares what can happen when a small group commits itself to a 'boot camp' leadership experience.

■ **Young Adults:** While many congregations say they want to attract young adults, sometimes they are uncertain about what they have to offer. Mary Cat Young's "Valuing Young Adults" offers congregations a

different approach.

■ **Moving from Maintenance to Mission:** As church planters, Mike Michie and Clay Lein understand the connection between committed, empowered leaders and the success of a new church. Behind this success is the belief that congregations continue to grow because they are communities of transformation. In "Transformational Churches," Mike and Clay share the three tenets they follow in their congregations.

■ **Pushing Past Fear** by Karen Hunter shares what can happen when a congregation commits itself to being church in the world. The growth - and success - of Grace Episcopal's mission church La Gracia Farmland is largely due to being comfortable reaching sideways, especially when very few people in the congregation speak Spanish.

■ Margaret Babcock's **Time to Bloom** invites congregations to consider a model of ministry and leadership that has taken root across our Church. Called baptismal, total, shared, or mutual ministry, this model recognizes the shared responsibility of all of the faithful for leadership.

■ **Getting to the Why 2** continues Miguel Angel Escobar's exploration transformational leadership, offering some of the key practices used by transformational leaders to both build a shared sense of purpose and strengthen leadership capacity.

■ Bill Kondrath's **Facing Differences** demonstrates what can happen when, instead of dismissing our differences, vestries and other groups pay attention to their racial and cultural assumptions and behaviors. By changing their frame of reference, groups can begin to develop new ways of interaction that are more inclusive and egalitarian, opening up new ave-

nues for leadership.

Following each article is a list of resources offering additional information and/or practical tools.

If someone shared this copy of *Vestry Papers* with you I invite you to consider subscribing to *ECF Vital Practices* and *Vestry Papers*. Visit [www.ecfvp.org](http://www.ecfvp.org) and click on Register, located on the upper right corner of the page. Complete the registration form to have *Vestry Papers* and *ECF Vital Practices* content delivered twice a month to your email inbox.

Faithfully,

*Nancy*

Nancy Davidge

PS: To make it easier for congregational leaders to find the resources offered through *ECF Vital Practices*, please consider adding a link to ECF Vital Practices to your website. Here's how: Using your websites 'add a link' tool, insert our full URL – <http://www.ecfvp.org/>.

PPS: Do you live in an area with limited Internet access? If you have a smart phone, consider browsing ECF Vital Practices from your mobile device; the site has been optimized for smart phones which makes it easier to search for content.

# Reclaiming Relevance

BY LORI MILLS-CURRAN

Wealthy 19th century mill owners founded St. Andrew's Church in Framingham, Massachusetts: for their workers. Desiring to worship apart, the owners built them their own church. The new parish matured to have a glorious history. One parishioner was a famous Black sculptress of the 1920's. Another was a nationally-known champion of women's prison reform. Parishioners marched for civil rights in Selma. A 1963 roster lists 568 children, and the parish boomed into well the 1980's.

But when I arrived in 2007, this success was long past. I run St. Andrew's church school. For two years I tried every trick in my bag, but could not grow it. Half our eighteen grubby basement classrooms were closed off, and the fifteen kids we had left were afraid to enter the unused wing. Upstairs was more discouragement. Our 30-something rector worried that she was trained to lead a church that didn't exist anymore.

Framingham has changed, and there is no consensus that it's for the better. The north side is a pretty bedroom suburb of Boston. On the south side, near down-

town, the General Motors plant and Dennison label factory stood empty for many years. Today, one third of Framingham's population is Brazilian immigrants and ethnic tensions have surfaced. Some dislike the many Portuguese shop signs, or the excited crowds that ran through downtown when Brazil won the World Cup. The Southern Poverty Law Center investigated a group airing "Brazilian weather reports" on local cable TV, with a "reporter" dressed as an ape.

St. Andrew's straddles the Route 9 barrier between north and south. What did we have to offer this newly complex community?

In 2009, we heard about the new diocesan Leadership Development Initiative or LDI, which teaches faith-based community organizing. We sent a team to investigate, but the concepts of this new way of being church were so unfamiliar we could not understand them.

Nothing changed. In the fall of 2010, we tried LDI again. This time, we learned a new definition of leadership. It wasn't a talent individuals had. *Leadership was*

*a decision to take responsibility to enable others to achieve purpose in the face of uncertainty.* There was set of skills that could help you lead in uncertainty, and they could be taught.

At first, community organizing seemed pretty fuzzy. Our initial organizing goal was laughably simple: give a party for our Brazilian neighbors. LDI was rigorous, with a two-day boot camp, monthly coaching, and bi-weekly team meetings. We learned new skills, such as public narrative, group norm-setting, and house meetings. Could reserved New Englanders ever get comfortable presenting a personal story about our faith? Was it really necessary to formulate such disciplined team norms? Could community organizing really transform our faithful remnant into a thriving body rooted in a fresh reality? We felt by turns dazed and defiant.

But we learned the skills and planned a festival for *Dia Das Crianças*, Brazilian Children's Day. Over five months, we recruited fifty parishioners and helpers from Brazilian organizations and

businesses, Scouts, Masons, an athletic club, and the local university, library, and hospital. We all learned enough Portuguese to direct people to the restrooms. We flew in a Brazilian priest from California, and threw open the doors of the church.

Rio chorus girls opened our party with a *samba* parade. Our teens re-enacted Jesus' hometown, herding farm animals through *Nazaré*. Workshops about workers' rights, green cleaning, and immigrant mental health vied for attention with bands, *capoeira* demos, and soccer clinics. We tested for osteoporosis, cholesterol, and blood pressure.

The power of God is a terrible thing. On a brilliant October day, 600 Brazilians came to our party. We were stunned.

Suddenly, we were all over the Brazilian papers and radio. We discovered that if you act like a friend, people treat you as one. Brazilian community members approached us for help providing Portuguese literacy for their children. Our vestry approved hosting a parent cooperative and we soon registered 123 students in our *Núcleo Educacionista*. Our halls again rang with the shouts of children.

By late 2011, we had many new

friends. Our run-down basement, home to both the *Núcleo* and church school, still needed refurbishing. We returned to LDI to field a team of parish and *Núcleo* parents, gathered to help professionals paint the basement for free. Brazilian and Anglo parents worked side by side for a cause that benefitted both.

The community organizing tools we learned in LDI have transformed our leadership, and our parish. Several LDI folks are now on vestry. Even our Property Committee used LDI tools to recruit twelve members! A spirit of possibility pervades our church. It's common to hear people discussing parish problems say, "We should field an LDI team for that."

People often ask me, "How many Brazilians worship at St. Andrew's?" The answer is: none yet. Best practices say such efforts should be Brazilian-initiated, anyway. Our goal was not evangelism per se. It was making St. Andrew's count for Christ again in our local setting.

But for us, growth has been the natural consequence of well-discerned and executed local mission. We baptized 17 children in 2012. Our classrooms are all open now. Bright yellow paint covers the walls. A mural depicting *Cristo Redentor*, the statue

on the mountain above Rio de Janeiro, graces the hallway. And this month, we're ordering six more chairs for the church school. We didn't have enough.

**Deacon Lori Mills-Curran** coaches parish teams involved in the Leadership Development Initiative, a hands-on training program in the Diocese of Massachusetts designed to develop spiritual leaders empowered for social action. A Christian educator for 30 years, she coordinates Episcopal efforts for Brazilian outreach in the Metro west area of Massachusetts. She is the incoming Executive Director of the Association for Episcopal Deacons.

## Resources

- The Leadership Development Initiative: <http://diomassleads.org>
- Knocking on Doors: A toolkit for building relationships by going door-to-door <http://organizinggame.org/toolkitE/Framework.swf>
- The New Organizing Institute: <http://neworganizing.com>
- Public Narrative <http://diomassleads.org/resource/ldi-public-narratives/>

- Immigrants Get Help Becoming Citizens in Framingham Church  
[http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/top\\_stories/x777657301/Immigrants-get-help-becoming-citizens-in-Framingham-church](http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/top_stories/x777657301/Immigrants-get-help-becoming-citizens-in-Framingham-church)
- St. Andrews Church Hosts Brazilian Festival <http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/news/x843641100/St-Andrews-Church-hosts-Brazilian-festival?img=1>

# Building Young Adult Networks

BY MARY CAT YOUNG

At 18 I left home, embarking on the adventure of my life as a new adult. Over the next 10 years, I lived in five states, finished degrees at three different institutions of higher education, moved to a different dorm room or apartment every one to two years, dated a few different people, held at least five jobs, met and married my husband, and became a responsible pet owner. Like many young adults, my path has been filled with departures, transitions, new beginnings, and uncertainty about where I would land next.

The Episcopal Church was a grounding place for me before I went off into the world and at each stop along the way. Before heading off to seminary, I tried to find an Episcopal Church home to companion with me on the journey. Sadly, what I experienced repeatedly was momentary surprise at my presence, welcome, and a guilty admission of lacking anything in particular to meet the needs of someone “my age.” Exasperated by this experience, and still claiming the Episcopal Church, I committed myself to help congregations recognize what they do have to

offer young adults, and how they might become a church where all feel welcome, regardless of age or stage of life.

Every day young adults walk into Episcopal churches. Some, coming from a strong Episcopal tradition, know this is where they come from, and where they belong. Others, raised in different faith traditions, find themselves in Episcopal settings by accident or on purpose – wandering into a nearby church, seeking a common-ground place with a prospective partner/spouse, or choosing a church that seems to stand up for things they care about. Whatever the reason, the person walking in the door is seeking something they hope you may have for them: a place to connect with the Holy, and a place to connect with others.

While a young adult’s consistency of attendance may vary and the level of commitment may be a challenge, the act of arriving has value.

In the New York Metro area, an informal, lay-led initiative had been tracking young adult engage-

ment with our churches: Some attend weekday services, seeking a moment of quiet. Some attend parish-organized gatherings for groups of young adults, such as Sunday brunches, movie nights, and service projects. A few area churches offer weekly Bible study where Episcopalians in their 20s and 30s can carve out a commitment to be in community with one another, in conversation about God’s presence to them in scripture and in their daily lives.

Following a St. Nicholas Party organized by young adult leaders from Episcopal churches around the city, one of the participants wondered, “If 75 young adults from 12 congregations showed up for an evening of fun and fundraising, what would happen if they showed up with a commitment to serve, shoulder to shoulder? What might Episcopal young adults accomplish when taking on a real problem in the world?”

From that question, and the informal network that already existed, a new conversation began.

In April 2012, 50 mission-minded young adults from congregations

around the cure, but with the help of a nearby diocese gathered with the idea of improving networking and creating more opportunities to do things together. They started by asking two questions: What is something you deeply care about? Where do you seek and see God's presence in your life and in the world around you?

Breaking into small conversation groups, a variety of passions for the needs in the world were revealed. Coming back together, the many different ideas were grouped into four larger conversation groups: respond to hunger and homelessness, care for children and youth, engage in spiritual life and the arts, and build the network of communication. The think tank format allowed a new peer community to see what they had in common, and imagine what they could be capable of together.

The Episcopal Diocese of New York Young Adult Network was born.

Since that first conversation, the Network has been busy: compiling both a comprehensive list of young adults and participating congregations as well as sharing information about prayer practice and servant ministry offerings, and the launch of a new way of doing service together: a month-long Epiphany season of service,

held in January 2013.

How might New York's experience with young adult ministry inform others in our church?

Rather than starting with the question of where are young adults, consider the young adults who are showing up – even if it is only occasionally. How can you introduce these people to one another? And how might you work with other churches in your area to create opportunities for young adults from neighboring congregations to meet each other? Here are the five steps I recommend for building a young adult network in your area:

Start with relationships – where are there already leaders engaging with one another and interested in building on those relationships and partnership opportunities?

- **Create a gathering point** – provide an opportunity for young adults to gather for a conversation about what they care about, what they would like to do or see changed in the world, where are their hearts and minds and time already invested? Where would they like to invest it with companions?

- **Map resources** – what gifts and skills are already in the

room that can contribute to building an avenue of communication, organizing events people are passionate about, providing needed spiritual resources to accompany work, and social projects?

- **Cut out competitiveness** – a multi-parish peer group is not a threat to the church home where an individual worships.

- **Commit resources** – networking, communication and volunteer organizing takes time and energy. A side project it is easy to be set aside. If this is a valued community, a valued commitment, then resource it appropriately. The harvest is plentiful, the workers are few, but the number is growing, and there are companions in different parts of the field.

*The Rev. Mary Catherine Young has served as the Episcopal Chaplain at NYU since 2011 and is the Diocesan Liaison for Young Adults in the Diocese of New York.*

## Resources

- The Episcopal Diocese of New York Young Adult Network Facebook page [www.facebook.com/EDNYANetwork](http://www.facebook.com/EDNYANetwork)

- The Episcopal Diocese of New York Young Adult Network  
Meetup page <http://www.meetup.com/EDNY-YANetwork/>
- The Church Club of New York: Young Adults <http://church-clubny.org/young-adults/>
- Month of Mission blog <http://edny20s30s.wordpress.com/>

# Transformational Churches

BY MIKE MICHIE AND CLAY LEIN

God has blessed us with the opportunity to plant two successful churches in north Dallas. Many times, we've heard the question, "How did you do it?" The answer, of course, is more than a single model or program. To put it in the simplest terms, our congregations continue to grow because they are communities of transformation. We are convinced that God can and will change lives. We believe that God loves using churches to do this work of transformation. So much, in fact, that it is hard to keep up!

We have found that it is easier (and more fun) to start a church from scratch than to turn around one that is stagnant or in decline. However, any church can become a community of transformation. Here are three simple suggestions that might help you in your context.

## **First, choose to exist for your mission field, not for yourself.**

In *Reclaiming the Great Commission*, Bishop Claude Payne calls this moving "from maintenance to mission." This is a major shift, but any church can do it! So many churches spend all of their energy internally – every resource

is used to keep things going. In these churches, major decisions are about the color of the carpet and the blend of coffee brewed after church! In transformational churches, the energy flows toward mission. Who is God calling us to serve? What can we do to make an impact on the community? Who can we reach? Internal squabbles change to vision sessions; instead of feeling stuck, you start moving forward.

Before St. Andrew's held its first worship service, the launch team did outreach projects in the community. We took out a booth at the "Dickens of a Christmas" festival in our downtown and did free Christmas portraits for any family who wanted them. One group took pictures, another burned CDs, and others just chatted with the folks who came into our booth. These simple outreach projects bonded our team and focused our hearts on community transformation.

This commitment to transformation extends outside the walls of the church. Just a few weeks ago, we had the opportunity along with another priest from our diocese to speak to the clergy of the Anglican

Diocese of Belize. We got to thinking: What would it mean to coordinate and organize our church's mission trips around transformation? Rather than doing isolated trips that served our needs and impacted a small area, we will now work together with the aim of leadership development and nation building. Our teams will minister in Belize as partners with the clergy and people that live there. What a powerful change!

## **Second, focus on letting God transform lives.**

Our Catechism gives us the mission of the church: "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ" (BCP, p. 855). Our churches are organized around the expectation that the Holy Spirit will work in the lives of everyone we touch. This is true for both our long-time members and our first-time visitors. It is true of the children we encounter at the schools we have adopted and the people we help on our foreign mission trips.

One of our key mission trip leaders used to just sit in the pews. One day he was personally invited to go on a mission trip and said "yes." His

experience of working on the front lines of mission transformed him. He described it like this, "Mission multiplied my faith by like a million times." Today he leads at least one trip a year. Our world is looking for more than just a place to belong or a place to find peace.

People are looking for changed lives. All of St. Philip's ministries exist to help people be transformed. While our mission trips began as ways to help others, we soon discovered that we were affected at least as much as anyone we went to serve. We were changed. In the words of one participant "mission became our faith multiplier." With this focus, our members feel like they are a part of something really important. They connect, worship, give, and serve knowing that, in the words of St. Philip's mission statement, they are "impacting the world for Christ".

### **Third, identify and raise up leaders that keep the movement going.**

Too many times, the leadership communities in our churches become closed off. If the leadership team were a hotel, the sign would read "no vacancy"! Talented people sense this in our churches, understand that they are not needed, and move on. Leaders in transforma-

tional churches are permanently on the lookout for their replacement! They celebrate and empower new leaders, equipping them for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12). Transformational churches have leadership communities that are open, creative, growing and dynamic.

Any church can choose to be transformational. Like church planting, it doesn't mean that it will be easy! Let us know how we can support you in your leadership and share with us your own thoughts and ideas. In February 2014, we'll be hosting a "Communities of Transformation" gathering at St. Philip's in Frisco, Texas. There, we'll invite people who are doing it to talk more about what they've learned. We'll look to encourage and support one another in our own transformation as leaders and disciples of Christ. Until then, why not put these three points into practice at your church? What might some of your first steps be?

*Mike Michie is the founding rector of St. Andrew's, McKinney, Texas. He planted St. Andrew's in 2005 with about twenty people. Today, the church is in its own building and has achieved Parish status. He is also a deputy to General Convention and has a heart for helping other churches grow. He is a husband and father of three daughters.*

*Clay Lein is a husband, father and priest living in Frisco, Texas. He brings his engineering background and MBA experience to the challenge of mission and church growth. He founded St. Philip's Episcopal Church in 2002 and has helped birth other churches and ministries in the north Dallas area. His passion is to see lives changed by the Gospel.*

### **Resources**

- *Reclaiming the Great Commission* by Claude Payne  
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0787952680.html>
- Reflection Questions for *Reclaiming the Great Commission* by Claude Payne  
<http://www.ewaidssynod.org/images/>
- Study Guide for *Reclaiming the Great Commission* by Claude Payne  
<http://www.ewaidssynod.org/images/GreatCommissionOutline.pdf>

## Pushing Past Fear

BY KAREN HUNTER

My heart sank when I heard the news.

*"Candy needs you to come quickly!" It was Maria, one of the ministry coordinators at our congregation's Latino/a mission, La Gracia. "Ivan has been arrested by immigration."*

Ivan is Candy's husband and the father of their three small children. He is an amazing father, husband, employee, and church member. He has lived in the US since he was five. None of that matters now. Short of a miracle, his wife and daughters as well as his autistic son will soon be without him.

On Sunday, when I share this story with members of Grace Episcopal Church, it is not only painful but personal. Many at Grace know Ivan. He retiled our kitchen counters last year. Some have seen him at the bilingual Christmas service, met his children at the Pancake Supper. The pain is not abstract. The injustice is not theoretical. Those who get involved in trying to advocate for him must deal with the frustration of a complicated and arbitrary system. It is difficult work, and now it is ours.

**So, how did Ivan's story become our own?**

Our ministry is rather unique. We are a small congregation, Grace Episcopal Church, in southwestern Idaho in the town of Nampa. La Gracia, our mission congregation is 15 miles away in a migrant worker camp and low income housing authority.

Our Latino ministry began at Grace Episcopal almost as soon as I came to the congregation. Since Spanish is the first language of many people in the area, this seemed to me an obvious evangelism opportunity.

Early on we invited the Rev. Roberto Arciniega, the provincial missionary, to meet with a group of parishioners. He spoke candidly about the challenges and possibilities. As the meeting went on, resistance and anxiety dissipated.

Our first plan was to offer a Spanish language service at Grace. Since I do not speak Spanish, we asked the Rev. Ray Oropeza, a retired priest, to officiate in exchange for use of Grace's vicarage. This was never successful:

Many of the interested families lived outside of the city of Nampa and the bus service they used on Sundays was discontinued.

**La Capilla de la Gracia is born.**

The experience led us to an isolated community of predominately low income Latino families. We decided it only made sense to take worship to them rather than trying to get them to us. We handed out fliers and obtained use of their community center on Sundays. Our first service was Palm Sunday, 2008.

Then Rev. Oropeza died unexpectedly. The grief expressed at his passing made it clear the ministry needed to continue. We were glad when the Rev. Debbie Graham offered her services for a time. When she left, I began doing the liturgy in Spanish. The children's message is in English and we rely on translators for the sermon, announcements, and pastoral care. Once a month, the Rev. Blake Coates, whose Spanish is better than mine, comes from a nearby town to celebrate. My constant prayer is, please God send us a priest who speaks Spanish!

A number of members from both congregations now volunteer in various roles. Besides worship in Spanish, La Gracia serves as a resource center. Maria Arana and Ofelia Dominguez, part-time ministry coordinators, connect people almost daily with the resources they need. They also organize education events and opportunities at the site utilizing a network of providers. Afterschool tutoring is available three days a week, a free kindergarten readiness program is offered in the summer and there is a community garden. We began our fifth year on Palm Sunday.

### **The mission grew slowly in the first two years.**

Members of Grace Church supported the work mainly by allowing it. There had been some resistance to having a Spanish sign at Grace, so when worship moved offsite, it gave those struggling with a change of heart some breathing room. We kept reporting the work and telling stories. We also had bilingual services for special occasions such as baptisms or first communions. Some took pride in this brave new thing. Others weren't so sure. Those who were struggling often talked with one another. This gave more positive members an opportunity to be reassuring. As the priest I

often heard about these concerns when it was, blessedly, too late! My personal challenge was to be objective and nonreactive.

### **Changing hearts and minds is a slow process.**

People's goodness must be constantly reaffirmed. When you connect a challenging idea with that vulnerable place of generosity that resides in each soul, transformation blooms. A significant turning point was Christmas Eve, 2011. The church was packed. When it was time to read the Gospel, thirty beautiful Latino children joined those gathered around the altar for the Christmas story. The half-full glass of bilingual celebration (none of us understand half the liturgy!) suddenly overflowed with the joy of Christmas. A profound connection was made through our common love of children.

**Everyone hasn't continued with us**, but others have joined, drawn to our heart for mission. In 2012 we partnered with the Farmway Housing Authority to remodel a storage building that was transformed into an onsite facility that allows us to do weekday programming, giving volunteers more opportunity.

Grace Church now has a dedicated

office and nursery area and use of a common room. This makes ministry programs possible and much more practical, so we are in the beginning stages of developing new programs in partnership with Farmway residents. We assist two churches in the diocese with a kindergarten readiness program we developed and offer at La Gracia. Children from both congregations explore together in our hiking group, Adventure Club, and take part in a bilingual, multi-generational summer camp, Camp Oropeza.

**It isn't easy.** We struggle with finances every day. We constantly stand with one foot beyond our comfort zone, trusting the Spirit to put firm ground beneath us. We are learning to rejoice in small victories, to give up, again and again, our preconceptions and unconscious disapproval of ways that aren't ours and people who aren't us.

### **The short answer to how we got here is, "one step at a time."**

We simply made one decision to be faithful and then another. We didn't wait for everyone to get on board, develop a five year plan, or get all our ducks in a row. We kept it simple and expanded as there was need and capacity.

In the end, I suppose, we trusted God and we trusted one another.

As I come to know the people we serve, I think it is doubtful that they would ever ask for someone to bring them a church. At the beginning all we knew was that in this community, all the reasons former Catholics leave and come to the Episcopal Church applied. Before La Gracia was established, an Episcopal Church nearer to the housing authority had done some outreach there, supplying food baskets, computers, etc., but never made any relational contact or considered worship. I think we were all scared off by not speaking Spanish. We had an opportunity to meet that challenge with Rev. Oropeza and we took it. Once we were in over our heads, we decided we better learn to swim!

### Are we glad we came?

As I said, it hasn't been easy. Here at Grace Church we had no idea that in changing our hearts God would break them. Jesus was right. The path is narrow. It's amazing the baggage that has to go! But, we have certainly come to a deeper place. We have a rootedness and a peace and maybe even an excitement that we didn't have four years ago. We have more skills, more friends, more

knowledge, more humility and lots more patience! We're beginning to see beyond race, language, and class. We're more comfortable being uncomfortable for the sake of another.

***Karen Hunter** has been a priest in Idaho since her ordination in 1998. She served both the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches in the small mountain community of Salmon, Idaho before coming to Nampa and Grace Church in 2007. She was also the part time Canon for Education and Formation and the editor of the diocesan newsletter several years. She is a native of Montana where she began her professional ministry as a campus chaplain at the University of Montana in Missoula. She served as a lay vicar at St. Mark's, Anaconda, Montana and Church of the Redeemer before her ordination. She and her husband Randy have two sons and five grandchildren. She does not speak Spanish, but has learned to read well enough to preside at Eucharist.*

### Resources

- Grace Episcopal and La Capilla de la Gracia's Adventure Club Recognized by Diocese: [http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc\\_attachments/public/documents/3173542/Idaho\\_Episcopal\\_](http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc_attachments/public/documents/3173542/Idaho_Episcopal_)

Winter\_2013FINAL.pdf (Story begins on page 6)

- Grace at Farmway <http://grace-nampa.episcopalidaho.org/Outreach/grace-at-farmway.html>
- Finding the Courage to Molt out of our Old Shells: a brief video by missionary Tom Brackett <http://player.vimeo.com/video/62933507>
- Latino/Hispanic Ministries in the Episcopal Church <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/latino>
- The Episcopal Church's Strategic Vision for Reaching Latinos/Hispanics [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/strategic\\_vision\\_7-09.pdf](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/strategic_vision_7-09.pdf)

# Time to Bloom

BY MARGARET BABCOCK

## **Baptismal/Total/Shared/Mutual Ministry: A Rose by Any Other Name....**

“What’s in a name?” love-struck Juliet asked when barred from her beloved by his family moniker. “That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet!” Of course, Juliet was right.

Whatever we call it, the concept of mutual ministry (I’ll use this, as it’s my favorite among the many) is not hard to grasp and has the potential of sending out the fragrance of the Gospel with great potency. The challenge is that nurturing this flower means rethinking many customs we now take for granted while cultivating the discipline and leadership of all our members.

### **What does Mutual Ministry look like?**

I often explain mutual ministry using my bicycle wheel as a prop. I lean it against the altar rail and we contemplate it as a metaphor of the congregation that challenges the traditional pyramid of church hierarchy.

The hub (that small center in the middle of the wheel) represents

God/Christ and the spokes (those flimsy wires hooked into it) are all the members of the church. As we, the wires, connect into God we come closer to each other, a tight community strong at its center. This action of coming together in God requires us all to claim our responsibility and leadership, sharing together in Christ’s priesthood. We connect, remember, forgive, and offer thanksgiving for God’s love.

The center, however, is not the only place where we hook into ministry. At the other end all those flimsy wires connect to the rim, where the rubber hits the road. In our metaphor, the rim is where we meet the world: translating the needs of all to the Church and the love of God to creation. This is our shared diaconal ministry.

When Tristan English first heard this simplistic explanation, a light bulb went off for him. “That was the first time I realized that priestly and diaconal ministry belong to everyone.” English joined a team in his small church that studied for a year in preparation for embracing a culture of shared leadership. He now serves as one of two local

priests within a circle of ministers, as well as working for his diocese encouraging other congregations.

Brian Thom engaged the concept of mutual ministry as an overworked rector in a growing congregation. “Finding a way to be truly collaborative in ministry freed me to focus on my strengths and made room for my parishioners to find theirs.” Now bishop of Idaho, Thom strives to hold up the vision of including all members in leadership, on both diocesan and congregational levels.

### **Cultivating Mutual Ministry Congregations**

Mutual ministry springs up in many different settings. Still, there are constants we learn from the gardening theme. Cultivation involves digging deep, turning soil and pulling out weeds, as well as planting seeds and nurturing sprouts.

In congregations, a similar plan of action is necessary. Old paradigms, expectations, and habits (especially of basic concepts like power and leadership) are examined and often uprooted. Then, members initiate and practice new patterns of living together in a culture of

collaboration, a rare experience in both church and society.

While programs are available to help this process of ministry development, they depend on the ability of the members to converse (not debate) and a commitment to learning together (everyone: lay and ordained, paid staff, and volunteers). An outside consultant in the form of a ministry developer is helpful in guiding the process. Living Stones, a consortium of dioceses committed to developing mutual ministry, meets annually to help members progress and break new ground. The Ministry Developer's Collaborative, (the action arm of Living Stones) offers workshops and other programs supporting this work.

### How do you know it's a rose, not a weed?

Is shared leadership good for a congregation? Here are four benchmarks to consider in critiquing the health of Mutual Ministry congregations:

- **Transformation of Community:** When members ask, "What is God calling our congregation to be and do?" and take time to create a vision of partnership with God from communal discernment, it heightens their commitment and the responsibility they take

for ministry.

- **Empowerment:** More than a program that targets the abilities of members to plug into existing tasks, true empowerment is about growing the work of the church out of the gifts God has planted in that community. It requires an ongoing commitment of the congregation to training and supporting all its members in their various callings.
- **Sustainability:** A healthy mutual ministry congregation knows it doesn't have to be all things for all people. People sharing a vision springing from communal discernment, prune those branches of their common life, which no longer bear blossoms. Eventually, the freedom of using resources at hand trumps dependence on outside sources and agendas.
- **Mission Orientation:** An amazing thing happens when a congregation becomes clear about its partnership with God, leaving everything else behind... they find there is so much left to share! Released from worry about simply surviving, an abundance of energy and resources surface that can be applied to serving Christ in all persons.

***Margaret Babcock** is an Episcopal priest with 20 years' experience in congregational ministry in Arizona and 10 years' at the diocesan level as Canon for Congregational Development in the dioceses of Idaho and Wyoming. She now directs Companion Way Consulting Services, which supports both congregational and judicatory development in a Mutual Ministry style. She is author of "Rooted in God", and "New Growth in God's Garden" both published by LeaderResources (www.LeaderResources.org).*

### Resources

- "Born of Water, Born of Spirit" by Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook and Fredrica Harris Thompsett, The Alban Institute 2010 <http://www.alban.org/bookdetails.aspx?id=8544>
- Companion Way Consulting Services [www.companionway.org](http://www.companionway.org)
- Living Into our Ministries: The Mutual Ministry Cycle, A Resource Guide [http://library.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/CDO\\_Living\\_Into\\_Our\\_Ministries\(1\).pdf](http://library.episcopalchurch.org/sites/default/files/CDO_Living_Into_Our_Ministries(1).pdf)
- Living Stones and the Ministry Developers' Collaborative [www.livingstonespartnership.net](http://www.livingstonespartnership.net)

- “New Growth in God’s Garden: Transforming Congregations through Mutual Ministry” by Margaret A. Babcock, LeaderResources 2012 [www.LeaderResources.org](http://www.LeaderResources.org)
  
- **Mutual Ministry: Resources from the Diocese of Northern Michigan**
  
- About Mutual Ministry: <http://www.dioup.org/Mutual%20Ministry/about.html>
  
- A collection of documents accumulated over two decades of Mutual Ministry in the Diocese of Northern Michigan <http://www.dioup.org/Mutual%20Ministry/mutual-ministry-documents.html>
  
- Mutual Ministry Diagram <http://www.dioup.org/Mutual%20Ministry/mutual-ministry-diagram.html>

# Getting to the 'Why' 2

BY MIGUEL ANGEL ESCOBAR

The day-to-day vitality of our congregations relies on the ongoing commitment - and sacrifice - of its lay and clergy leaders. We are blessed by the gifts of those who serve on vestries, in soup kitchens, and who stay up late putting the finishing touches on the parish newsletter or sermon.

Believing that most Episcopalians want to be transformed by being a part of Christ's bold mission and vision, becoming a more faithful disciple in the process, the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF) often advocates for transformational leadership, a model that focuses on the 'why' of all that we do.

In Part 1 of this article (*see page 1*), I shared stories of transformational leadership at work. Part 2 offers some of the key practices used by transformational leaders to both build a shared sense of purpose and strengthen leadership capacity.

## **A Shared Purpose: *What is God calling you to do?***

For many nonprofits, mission statements are simple, operational descriptions of what an organization does on a day-to-day basis. In

the Church, we believe that God is doing the calling but the premise remains the same. A congregation's "mission" describes what God is calling it to do.

The vestry at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church (<http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/discernment/cultivating-a-culture-of-discernment/>) in St. Paul, Minnesota, asked itself this question five years ago. At first, they struggled, caught between their experience overseeing temporal matters and this new call to consider what God was asking them to do. The vestry learned how to have ongoing, mission-focused conversations. They transformed their vestry meetings into opportunities to listen for God's call. Through Bible Study and a congregation-wide discernment process, they continuously explore what God is calling them to do in the world.

When we become clearer about what it is that God is calling us to do, we can also start to name what it is that we can let go of. Many of us have served on committees and in organizations that have tried to do too much at one time. Having a mission means keeping resources

- time, talent, and treasure - focused on the main thing.

## **A Hopeful Vision for the Future**

As lay and clergy leaders, we need to envision a hopeful future and describe it often. Stepping out and proclaiming the Gospel was Grace Episcopal's hopeful vision for the future and one of Karen Hunter's first tasks as their new minister was to help identify how they might do this. (article title and link) The congregation found an opportunity and through trial and error, worked towards their vision of building relationships and community, as well as extending the invitation for shared worship opportunities with people living in an area with limited services.

Working to name a hopeful vision of the future can bring new life to a struggling faith community. Vision statements (<http://www.ecfvp.org/posts/the-difference-between-mission-and-vision/>) describe the impact you are seeking to make; they describe what the world will look like as a result of faithfully carrying out one's mission over the long-term.

Conversely, everything from membership to finances is hurt when we forget about the future. In his book *Remember the Future*, Gerald Keucher points out that “many [Episcopal congregations] have been managing decline for so long that they’ve forgotten the future. They view present needs only through the lens of past glories.” Keucher notes that the financial result of forgetting the future is overdrawing endowments to plug budget deficits and the selling of property to spend on current needs.

### **Who will help us get there?**

As a congregation becomes clearer about what God is calling them to do and where God is calling them to go, leaders will want to keep an eye out for people who are drawn to this emerging mission and vision. Undoubtedly, some of these individuals will already be in the congregation. But we should also be attuned to the leadership potential of first-time visitors who show up at events and on Sunday services because they’ve heard that something interesting is going on. If invited, they have the potential to be the church’s next generation of leadership.

Recognizing that sometimes vestries and congregations have difficulty recruiting new

leaders, Janie Kirt Morris, rector of Emmanuel Episcopal in Houston developed a prayerful process for raising up healthy, faithful leaders for vestry election. (<http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/vital-vestries/build-a-healthy-vestry/>) Central to this process are identifying the leadership qualities to look for and the importance of personal invitation: “Certainly vestry members should initiate conversations with potential candidates. I always make personal invitations by writing letters or emails to a list of those we agree are healthy, mature possible candidates, and I follow up with a phone call.” She contrasts this with our tendency to elect on-the-fly those with a lot of free time, those who are the biggest givers, or those who have already served on the vestry many times over.

A vital congregation needs leaders who are excited about the community’s emerging mission and vision. These may be the long-time pillars of the community whose faith in the future of the congregation has been renewed. Or, these may be first-time visitors who bring outside perspective and sorely needed gifts. Whoever it is, however, we need to become more skilled at identifying and inviting those individuals into leadership.

### **Taking a Chance on an Emerging Leader**

For congregations to begin a new chapter, they need to reconsider their attitudes about newcomers and decision-making power. Once again, Gerald Keucher’s book (<https://www.churchpublishing.org/products/index.cfm?fuseaction=productDetail&productID=433>) neatly summarizes the lived reality of many Episcopal congregations: “Parishes in survival mode centralize power in the hands of the few. Because they’re trying to maintain the past, it’s difficult for them to welcome newcomers. New members have to pay their dues, so to speak, before they can be trusted.”

Transformational leadership encourages doing the exact opposite and taking a chance on an emerging leader. Transformational lay and clergy leaders entrust emerging leaders with significant responsibility – i.e., decision-making power – before they have proven themselves on the gauntlet of menial tasks. Which isn’t to say they are left to sink or swim. Instead, the established leader’s role changes to mentor and coach. Here are a few techniques for doing this well:

■ **Prioritize being present for emerging leaders:** While there are many different people and groups who need a leader's time and attention, being present for these emerging leaders will ultimately increase a congregation's overall capacity to pursue its mission. This isn't always easy to remember when the to-do lists become overwhelming, but prioritizing the newer leader's emails, phone calls, and meeting requests helps build a strong cadre of leaders for mission in the long run.

■ **Learn to say "Yes and...":** Tina Fey has got it right. When an emerging leader brings their idea to the table, we need practices saying "Yes and..." Practice saying "yes" to the general principle of the idea, "and" then make your own strong contribution to the idea.

■ **Teach emerging leaders to love their stakeholders:** Episcopal congregations are made up of many stakeholders: clergy, vestry members, long-time pillars of the community, major donors, and more. Learn the four kinds of stakeholders and help the emerging leader to appreciate the importance of engaging these groups.

■ **Give the gift of strong feedback:** Strong feedback is rooted in love. Strong feedback is 1) ongoing 2) balances the positive and negative, and 3) focuses on performance rather than personality.

Make no mistake about it. Transformational leadership views the laity as wanting to be engaged in a mission-focused community, working toward a hopeful vision and purpose. This model also suggests that many of the people who are already in our pews, as well as those who are visiting for the first time, may have enormous leadership potential. It will take all of us, however, making a renewed commitment to skillfully identifying, discerning and fostering that potential to build vital communities of faith for today.

*Miguel Angel Escobar serves as Program Director of Leadership Resources at the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF). There, he works with Nancy Davidge, editor of ECF Vital Practices, and Brendon Hunter, Assistant Program Director, to coordinate the Fellowship Partners Program, ECF Vital Practices, ECF's many workshops and web conferences, and ECF Fresh Start. Miguel is a lay member of The Episcopal Church, a M.Div. graduate of Union*

*Theological Seminary, and an amateur bread maker. Write Miguel at [mescobar@episcopalfoundation.org](mailto:mescobar@episcopalfoundation.org) or follow him on Facebook and Twitter.*

## Resources

- "A Question of Vision" by Miguel Escobar <http://www.ecfvp.org/posts/a-question-of-vision/>
- Assessing Your Leadership Style <http://www.ecfvp.org/tools/assessing-your-leadership-styles-who-am-i-as-a-leader-tool/>
- Beyond the Baptismal Covenant: Transformational Lay Leadership for the Episcopal Church in the 21st Century by Donald V. Romanik <http://www.episcopalfoundation.org/tools-and-programs/leadership-tools/transformational-lay-leadership>
- Getting to the 'Why' 1 <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/cultivating-leaders/getting-to-the-why/> and Spanish <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/cultivating-leaders/determinar-el-por-qu/>

- “Lessons from Bossypants: Saying YES AND” by Miguel Escobar <http://www.ecfvp.org/posts/lessons-from-bossypants-saying-yes-and/>
  
- Remember the Future, Gerald Keucher <https://www.church-publishing.org/products/index.cfm?fuseaction=productDetail&productID=433>
  
- “The Difference between Mission and Vision” by Linda Buskirk <http://www.ecfvp.org/posts/the-difference-between-mission-and-vision/>
  
- “Who Should be at the Table” by Miguel Escobar <http://www.ecfvp.org/posts/who-should-be-at-the-table-2/>

## Facing Differences

BY WILLIAM M. KONDRATH

How often do we ignore differences, thinking that if we treat everyone the same and focus on what we have in common, then our differences won't matter. But does this really work? Or, as a participant in a recent vestry retreat noted, "Does that attitude set some of us up to be second-class citizens who have to adapt and fit into a monocultural, dominant way of doing things?"

This observation strikes at the heart of a challenge faced by the leadership of an urban, multicultural, and mostly working class parish, established over 150 years ago and with a long history of leadership on social justice issues. Recently, the rector and vestry recognized that by ignoring difference, problems were created leading to a hostile environment where the priest often served as referee. To address this, they planned a vestry retreat designed to develop understanding and skills that will deepen relationships across cultures.

As he planned the retreat, Chris, the facilitator invited a seminarian doing her field seminary studies, Marta Lopez\* works as a clinical social worker focusing on at-risk teenagers in an urban housing proj-

ect. As one of her professors, Chris is aware of Marta's knowledge and skills as a leader.

Marta accepts. Her presentation of material is crisp, clear, and invites vestry participants to notice their racial and cultural assumptions, and behaviors that display we/they and "better than"/"less than" attitudes and behaviors—as well as alternatives to those behaviors. In debriefing the retreat, participants point to their own learning about power dynamics among themselves and in the congregation. They also express hope that they will be able to engage in alternative, more egalitarian interactions across racial and cultural differences.

In addition, Ted, a long-time lay leader states, "I am now seeing lay and clergy leadership differently. We are not simply about conducting services, even bilingual services, or balancing the budget. As leaders we need to model talking about our racial-cultural differences in deep and meaningful ways. Before I thought it was best to ignore our differences and focus on what we have in common. Now I realize that attitude set some of us up to be second-class citizens who

had to adapt and fit into a monocultural, dominant way of doing things. I am more excited about who we are as a congregation than I have ever been."

Educator Susan Imel says that transformational *learning* is about a change in one's entire perspective which results "when individuals change their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs and consciously making and implementing plans that bring about new ways of defining their worlds." (1) Building on this, transformational *leadership* is about modeling and helping others live out new ways of interacting that are more inclusive and egalitarian. It doesn't mean simply fitting new people into the prevailing perspective, but creating a new perspective that may challenge pre-existing assumptions. Theologically, this is what Paul had in mind when he talked about the many members of the one body (Romans 12:4-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-21). As a lay person and student, Marta modeled co-leadership with her priest professor in a way that led Ted to imagine leadership in new ways that did not fit his old model.

Transformational leadership also has the quality that relational theorist and researcher Joyce Fletcher calls *fluid expertise*, which means that “power and expertise shift from one party to the other, not only over time but in the course of one interaction.”

(2) Thus transformational leadership requires the skills of empowering others and being able to be empowered—the ability to learn from and be influenced by those above you, beside you, and below in status or seniority. Fluid expertise and mutual empowerment took place as Marta and Chris took turns describing oppressive and ineffective behaviors (rooted in attitudes that some people were superior and others were inferior)—and alternatives to those behaviors (rooted in a belief and commitment to equality).

Finally, transformational leadership includes attention to cognitive, behavioral, and affective dimensions of change. Chris and Marta spoke about their own assumptions, theories, behaviors, and feelings and invited the vestry members to share not only what they thought, but to reflect on specific ways they behaved toward one another and how they felt about who they were and how they were being treated by others in leadership and in the congregation. (3)

In summary, I understand transformational leadership as: noticing, understanding, and celebrating differences; sharing leadership in a collaborative and fluid way; and engaging our feelings as well as our ideas and behaviors. For many of us moving to this style of leadership involves what Susan Imel refers to as a complete change of perspective. We are not simply adding new skills to our tool bag, we are adopting a wholly new framework in which all our previous ideas about leadership and ways of behaving undergo a transformation.

#### Notes:

\* Not her real name.

(1) Susan Imel, “Transformative Learning in Adulthood” *Digest No. 200 Center on Education and Training for Employment: College of Education, The Ohio State University*, 1998. See also: Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey, Bass, 1991).

(2) Joyce K. Fletcher, *Disappearing Acts: Gender, Power, and Relational Practice at Work* (Cambridge: the MIT Press, 1999), 64. Also William M. Kondrath, *God’s Tapestry*, Chapter 5.

(3) See William M. Kondrath, *Facing Feelings in Faith Communities*—forthcoming from

Alban Institute in 2013.

**The Rev. Dr. William M. Kondrath** is the William Lawrence Professor of Pastoral Theology and Director of Theological Field Education at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is the author of *God’s Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences*. Bill has worked with congregations, judicatories, and theological schools in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and Mauritius on leadership development, creativity, affective competency, change and conflict, and understanding and valuing differences. He is also a program consultant for VISIONS, Inc., providing multicultural training and consultation to corporate, educational, nonprofit, and ecclesial organizations.

#### Resources

■ *Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence: Exploring the Cross-cultural Dynamics within Organizations*, by Michael A. Moodian, Sage Publications, 2008. <http://www.sagepub.com/books/Book231703>

- *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation: Theory, Research, and Application in International Education*, edited by Victor Savicki, Stylus Publishing, 2008, [http://isbndb.com/d/book/developing\\_intercultural\\_competence\\_and\\_transformation.html](http://isbndb.com/d/book/developing_intercultural_competence_and_transformation.html)
- *God's Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences*, by William M. Kondrath, Alban Institute, 2008. <http://www.alban.org/bookdetails.aspx?id=6124>
- *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading*, Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, Harvard Business School Press, 2002. <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/archive/2952.html>
- "Our Call to Leadership," ECF Vital Practices, by Lelanda Lee <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/governance/our-call-to-leadership/>
- *Reflecting with God: Connecting Faith and Daily Life in Small Groups*, by Abigail Johnson, Alban Institute, 2004. <http://www.alban.org/bookdetails.aspx?id=1008>
- *Shaping Spiritual Leaders: Supervision and Formation in Congregations*, by Abigail Johnson, Alban Institute, 2007. <http://www.alban.org/bookdetails.aspx?id=4032>