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United Methodist School of Congregational Development

Friday August 18, 2017

2:00 – 3:15 pm

Casting Vision and Gathering New People

1. Casting Vision

Why do you want to gather people? Why should anyone care to join you in this new ministry? Before you can reasonably begin gathering, you must be able to answer these questions in a way that is inspiring and compelling to you and to others. This is a vision for ministry that is powerful enough for people to give their times and lives to see it come true. It's simple and profound, easy to remember and challenging enough to cause people to reorder their personal priorities.

Begin by answering these questions:

1. Describe the new ministry, new faith community, or new church that you're feeling called to start.
2. Why would someone want to invest their evenings, weekends, and money in this new ministry or community?
3. Write a sentence that describes your God-given, life-changing, world-altering vision for this new ministry or community.
4. Write a sentence that describes the simple, organic, mission by which this vision will come to be realized.
5. Write 3-5 phrases from your previous four answers that you might incorporate in a brief response to a stranger asking you the question, "So, what do you do?"

2. Gathering People

Going to Where the People Are

Your new ministry or community will be made up of people, and lots of them. You will need to meet hundreds of people throughout your community. Most of these people will not just show up at a bible study or worship service. Instead, you will have to go to where they are already gathering, get invited to parties that they are already throwing, and be welcome around tables where they are already seated.

1. Think about where people in your community gather, which 2-3 places where people in your target demographics already gather seem like good places for you to go to and meet new people?
2. Which 2-3 events, groups, or activities where people in your target demographics already participate seem like a good place for you to go and meet new people?

3. What do you enjoy doing that you would feel great inviting a new person to do with you?
4. Where are people already exhibiting values and beliefs consistent with your vision and mission?
5. Where can you see a need in your community that you believe you can positively impact and to which you can invite others to join your effort?

Understanding Relationship Orbits

Key to successfully building a system of relationships for your new ministry, new church, or new faith community will be understanding how people are connected to you and your new project. Just because you have someone's contact information doesn't make them a core leader. That is a journey of deepening relationship and connection. Sometimes this journey can be helpfully understood in terms of different orbits.

Imagine that your new project is a planet with gravity that attracts people into closer and closer orbit. The closer a person is to the project, the more they are impacted by its gravity and influence. Part of helping build a community is thinking through the different orbits and how to help people draw into a closer orbit.

In many growing ministries, churches, and faith communities, they will have relative engagement orbits that correspond to categories similar to these:

1. Core

- committed co-leaders on launch team
- practice growing in personal discipleship and coach others
- regularly invite others into community

2. Committed

- committed participants who come to most early events
- growing in discipleship
- occasionally provide leadership or invite other new people

3. Participants

- had 1-on-1 meeting with you or with a core team member
- participate in some early events
- interested in growing in discipleship, but might not have begun
- might have brought a friend along to an event or activity

4. Interested

- people you or your team have contacted, but haven't yet participated in community event or activity
- have expressed interest in your new ministry, church, or faith community
- might have had 1-on-1 meeting with you or a team member

5. Prospects

- people from whom you've received contact information, haven't yet had conversation or determined their interest level
- might be referrals from other people