

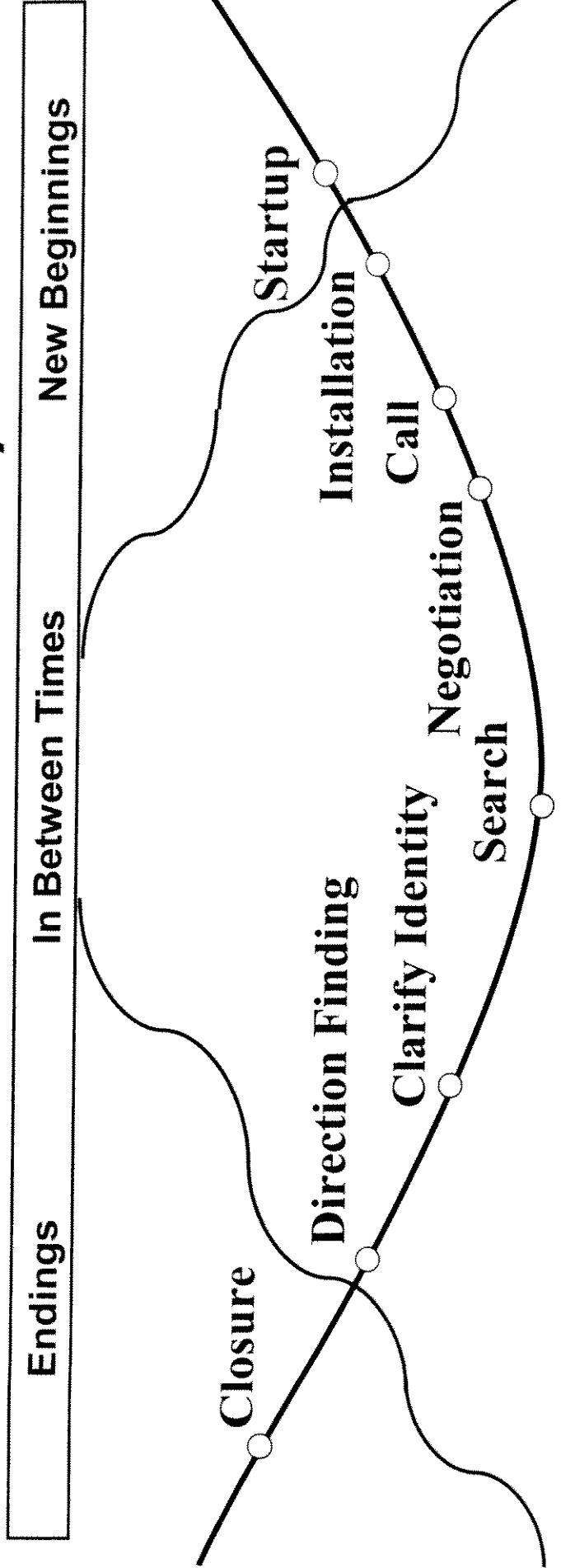
New Language, New Applications
Baptist General Convention of Texas
IIM Update
September 2008
LISTENING GUIDE

LISTENING GUIDE

Background

1. 2006 IMN workshop on Developmental Tasks: Advance paper from Terry Foland
2. What does the Center think?
3. Advisory Team: Composite Ministry Profile
 - Age range: 40 something's to 70 something's
 - Years of ordained ministry: 192
 - Denominations served/represented: 9 (ABC, CBF, SBC, DC Baptist, National Baptist Convention, Lutheran, Episcopalian, United Church of Christ, and Moravian)
 - Congregations served as installed minister: 28
 - Background
 - Size of congregations served (average worship attendance): 12 – 1600
 - Center Faculty members: 4
 - Served in Denominational/Judicatory roles (currently and/or previously): 4
 - All Trained Intentional Interim Ministers (1993-2004):
 - Trained by the Center: 5
 - Trained by the Interim Ministry Network: 1
 - States served as Interim Minister: 8 (AR, AL, GA, FL, KY, NC, TX, VA) and the District of Columbia
 - Interim congregations served: 33
4. Stages - Team agreed:
 - There are still 8 relevant stages
 - They are sequential:
 - Handling one stage well will lead to handling the next one well
 - Each stage does build on the previous stage
 - First stage is “Termination”
 - Negative connotation
 - Changed to “closure”
 - Third stage is “Self-Study”
 - In-depth, introspective and reflective look at itself
 - Purpose: become clear about the church's identity
 - “Who are we and who do we believe God wants us to be”
 - Team agreed: “Clarify Identity,” more descriptive of what the congregation is attempting to accomplish

The Stages of Interim Ministry



Additional Seven Tasks

Interim Ministry Network workshop (Foland's paper): seven additional developmental tasks:

- Rebuild the Congregational Infrastructure (organize to make the best use of gifts, skills and abilities of people to do the ministry and mission)
- Evaluation and Removal of Staff Members (as necessary)
- Financial/Stewardship Issues
- Conflicts over Issues or Congregational Agenda
- Interpersonal or Inter-group Conflicts
- Getting Closure with the Previous Pastor (redefining the relationship)
- Communication Improvement

Even More Tasks?

1. Maintenance versus intentional interim ministers
2. Dynamics of long-term pastorate (5 plus years) and agenda for interim after that
3. Supporting staff in redefining their roles
4. Power structures – open and underground
5. Establishing pastoral protocols
6. Cultural understandings in multi-cultural settings
7. Assessing the environment
8. Congregational decision making
9. Post-modern understandings of church
10. Understanding boundary issues
11. “Change” agenda in its complexities
12. Evaluating the relative health of a church
13. Finding hope – naming the positive functions of conflict or symptoms
14. Review and renew “practices of faith”
15. What the culture says today about truth and values
16. Worship

5. Developmental Tasks

- Relevance of original five developmental tasks
- IMN breakout session – attendees affirmed
- Advisory Team - still foundational
- Everything can fit one of five main tasks
- Expanding list - confusion
- Imagine telling congregation Intentional Interim Ministry process requires a study of 28 areas of congregational life
- Flexibility is key
- Everything not always neatly labeled, listed, categorized
- Affirms tasks are systemic and dynamic

6. “Developmental” Language

- Comes from the disciplines of organizational development and educational psychology
- 1950’s: Erick Erikson - stages of psychosocial development
 - Eight developmental stages
 - Healthily developing human should pass from infancy to late adulthood
 - Each stage builds on the successful completion of earlier stages
- 1970’s: Robert J. Havighurst wrote,
“The process of living, from birth to death, consists of people working their way through from one stage of development to another”
 - Identified six sequential stages in human life
 - Defined six to ten developmental tasks for each of those stages
- Clear and appropriate in continuous change environment (expected, anticipated, managed)
- Interim ministry increasingly blurry because:
 - Discontinuous change environment (unanticipated, challenges our assumptions)
 - Tasks are systemic, interactive, dynamic vs. sequential
 - Sense in which the tasks never “finished,” but should be continually addressed, adapted, revised, challenged
- Team determined:
 - Still five major areas of congregational life to explore during interim time
 - Interactive and dynamic
 - BUT, must concentrate on one area at a time
 - “Focus Points” vs. “Developmental Tasks,” more accurate description
 - Simplifying language to one word would enhance communication

Old Term**New Term**

Developmental Task

Focus Point

Coming to Terms with History

Heritage

Examining Leadership and Decision-Making Concerns

Leadership

Looking at Denominational and External Relationships

Connections

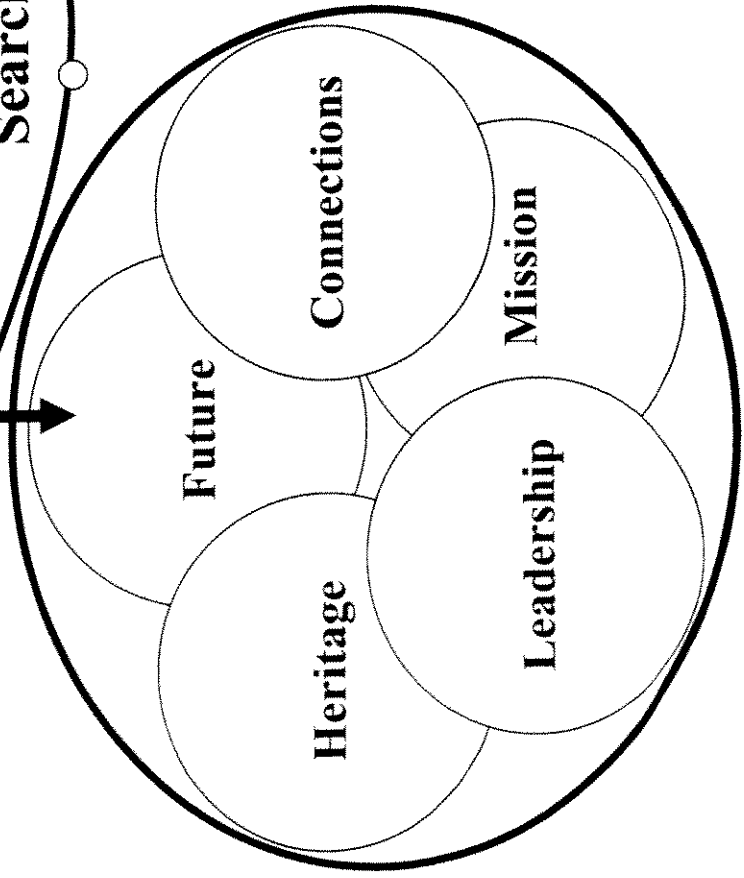
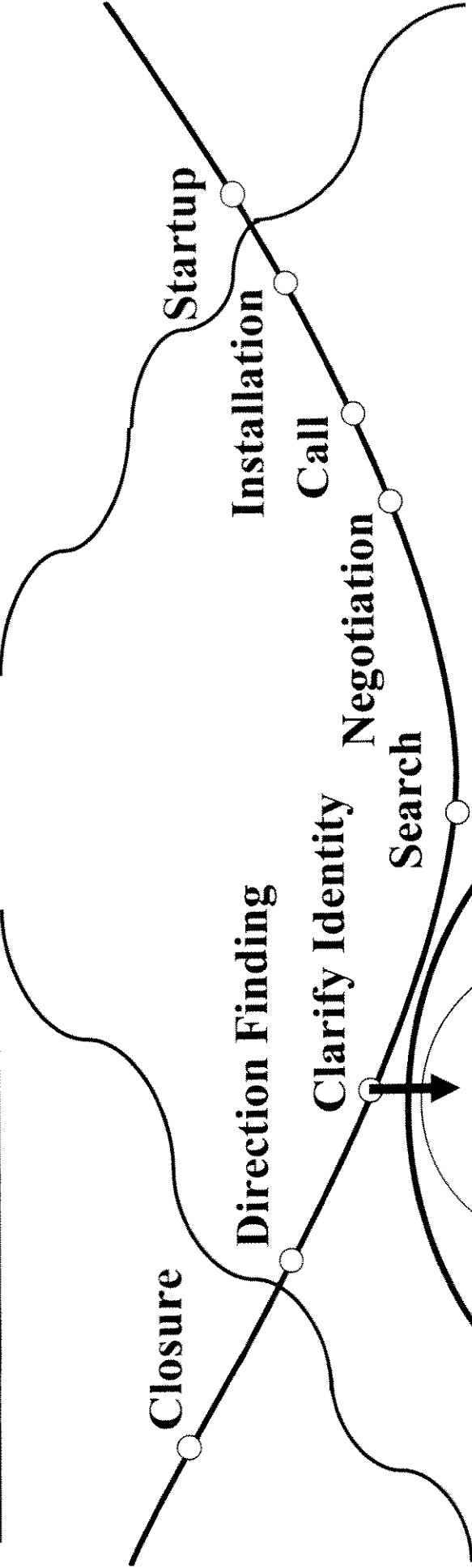
Clarifying the Congregation's Identity

Mission

Committing to New Clergy and the Future

Future

The Stages and Focus Points of Intentional Interim Ministry



Visual Image of Intentional Interim Ministry

7. Other Considerations

- Is the intentional interim ministry process intended to be a comprehensive process or a cafeteria approach to the interim time? Are the focus points a specific process to be encountered, or a menu from which to select
- Consensus:
 - Interim Minister obligated not to skip focus point to avoid uncomfortable or controversial issues
 - If congregation has dealt with the major factors related to the various focus points in other venues - incorporate into the overall process

8. Suggested Order:

- Heritage
- Mission
- Leadership
- Connections
- Future

THINKING ABOUT THE FOCUS POINTS

"Mission"

B. Leslie Robinson, Jr.

Definition

In Wonderland, Alice said to the Cheshire Cat, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where..." said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, p. 82

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18). Over time, congregations tend to develop a self-image that is based on something other than current reality. A congregation, therefore, must periodically redefine its sense of purpose and direction, and determine what distinguishes it from other churches and organizations in the community.

The words "mission," "purpose," "vision," "values," "strategy," "objectives," and "goals" can hold very different meanings to different people. The main concern is to have agreement among the people involved, as opposed to having "the right definition." The following terms find common use in church life.

Core Values are the **boundaries** within which the church will operate. Core values are those values which the church will never compromise and is willing to pay a price to uphold. To be meaningful, core values must be described in clear behavioral terms.

A **Mission Statement** is a statement of **why** the church exists and grows out of the core values. It is the broad, overarching purpose for the church's existence. The Mission Statement establishes why the work is done, but not how that work is done. In the truest sense, the Mission of the church is always just beyond our grasp.

A **Vision Statement** is a clear, specific picture of **what** the church will look like at a particular time in the future, usually one to three years. It defines the key results to be achieved, and describes the kind of behaviors that the church must display to be successful.

A **Ministry Plan** is a clear plan that describes the path by which the church intends to reach its vision. Ministry plans determine **how** things will be accomplished and includes resource priorities, organization structure, and what issues get daily organizational attention.

So, when the congregation focuses on Mission, they define the boundaries within which they will operate (core values), why the church exists (mission statement), what the church aims to accomplish (vision statement), and the specific practical steps it will take to achieve its mission/vision (ministry plans). Often, the IIM's work stops before

developing actual ministry plans because the congregation wants to wait to involve the new pastor in that process. In some cases it is appropriate (even desirable) to develop a one-year tactical plan to be implemented by the lay leadership when the new pastor arrives. This gives the new pastor time to become acclimated to the congregation and community before engaging in a more in-depth strategic plan with the church.

Sometimes congregations hesitate to work on mission and vision, believing that it is the pastor's responsibility to "cast the vision." Unfortunately, this seldom works well because the new pastor does not know the community or the people. Consequently, this individual cannot bring the mission/vision; they can only bring their own education, background, and experience into the new community and the new group of people.

Major Issues to Consider

- Determining whether or not the congregation's image of itself is realistic
- Developing a new vision for the congregation
- Seeing the interim period as an opportunity for renewal and growth
- Helping the congregation see itself as an entity without a pastor, thus separating the church's identity from the former pastor's personality and style

Various Methods of Engaging the Congregation

- Survey member and neighborhood ministry needs
- Interview non-members for their perspective of our church
- Interview new members about what attracted them to this church?
- Conduct a demographic analysis
- Hold cottage meetings for members to talk about "what we are like and what we want to become"
- Encourage program and resource assessments
- Establish or reaffirm the congregation's core values
- Write or reaffirm a Mission Statement
- Write or reaffirm a Vision Statement
- Develop a one-year tactical plan to be implemented by the lay leadership when the new pastor arrives
- Introduce dynamics related to church size
- Offer seminar/workshop on the "Impact of Worldview"

Healthy Signs

- Focus is on the present and future
- Willingness to do self-assessment
- Congregation faces reality and affirms its true identity
- Growing excitement about the congregation's envisioned future
- Asking the process questions: "What happens next?" "How can we help?"
- Spirit of inclusiveness and outreach

- Rising trust level, humor, and patience with the pastoral search process

Caution Signs

- Focus continues to be on the past
- Resistance to developing a new mission/vision
- Emphasis on blaming or on what is wrong – negative criticizing
- Low trust level; lack of authentic sharing
- Asking: “Who are we?”
- Leaders and others continue to consult the previous pastor
- Maintain same old programs, even when they no longer fit present needs
- Desire to rush through the interim

Things to Keep In Mind

- Change is constantly taking place in the everyday lives of the members. Consequently, when they come to church many are simply looking for stability. For these folks the church is their “beacon in the night,” and they want it to remain constant. As a result, they may be blind to what is happening within the church constituency and immediately outside of the church buildings.
- The Team should use multiple methods of involving the congregation
- Let the Transition Team do the work – the intentional interim minister should be pastor to the people and process consultant to the Team

References: Portions of this material are adapted from Mead, Loren B. *A Change of Pastors...And How it Affects Change in the Congregation*. Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 2005; and Nicholson, Roger S, editor. *Temporary Shepherds: A Congregational Handbook for Interim Ministry*. Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1998.

“The real key to a healthy, vital church is clarity and ownership of shared values, beliefs, vision, and mission. It’s not just a matter of memorizing a mission statement, but of embedding a certain lifestyle in the behavior of church members. When congregations have clarity about their unique identity as a church... a true foundation for real trust exists.”

Tom Bandy (Easum, Bandy & Associates)

PERSONAL ASSET STARTER

Physical Assets

- What are some physical things that you value?

Individual Assets

- What are you good at?
- What do you know something about?

Associational Assets

- Who are the people you know or care about?
- What groups of people do you belong to?

Institutional Assets

- Where do you work or volunteer?
- What institutions make decisions that affect you?

Economic Assets

- What do you do to make money?
- What do you spend money on?

From *The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Gifts* by Luther K. Snow.
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The Quick and Simple Congregational Asset-Mapping Experience

The Personal Asset Starter gives you a taste of asset mapping at an individual level. The power of asset mapping builds as we relate to each other in small groups and in a larger community. What does doing asset mapping with other people look and feel like?

With the help of other asset-building leaders, I have developed a sample asset-building process that enables groups of people to experience asset mapping together. The process evolved out of many consultations with congregations and other groups. It is fast and easy. It is also the single most inspiring group process I have ever witnessed.

The Quick and Simple Congregational Asset-Mapping Experience is something you can try with a group of people in about an hour. You can facilitate this process yourself, using the following instructions as a guide.

Read through the next few pages to get a picture of *what* asset mapping is like with other people.

Even better, use this guide right away to try out the Quick and Simple Experience with a group in your congregation or community. It is actually easier and more powerful to experience asset mapping than to talk about it! Then come back to the rest of this book with your own ideas and questions. Learning by doing is part of what asset mapping is all about.

An Overview

How Long Will This Take?

As little as an hour. If you have more time, you can use that too.

Who Can Do This?

Any group in your congregation, from 6 people to 600 (or more).

What groups will you try asset mapping with?

- The whole congregation
- Men's group
- Church board
- Bible study group
- Planning committee
- Ecumenical project
- Youth group
- Stewardship team
- Women's group
- Bowling team

It could be you will start with one and end up involving many groups as asset mapping catches on.

What Will We Do Exactly?

Basically you'll do three things:

1. *Recognize Your Assets.* Look at your half-full cup to identify many of your congregation's assets and strengths.
2. *Connect the Dots.* Link some of these assets together to brainstorm *actions* that you can take to get things done.
3. *Vote with Your Feet.* Make an instant work plan by allowing participants to choose the action they would most like to take part in.

Not Just an Exercise. More Like Learning by Doing.

You'll learn asset mapping by trying this. But the Quick and Simple Experience is not just a learning exercise. It's real and productive work for you and your congregation. You will end up with specific, tangible actions that you can take to get things done. You will have people with the energy to act on those ideas!

What Will You Need?

- Paper (15-20 half-sheets per person)
- Thin markers
- Tape
- Clear wall space

1. Recognize Your Assets

Spend up to 20 minutes on this.

God has given us all gifts, that we can call strengths or assets. We start by recognizing and listing these assets.

Look at your half-full cup. The easiest, simplest, and fastest way to do this is to use the Reminder List of Basic Assets. Think about the five types of assets that you have:

- Physical assets
- Individual assets
- Associations
- Institutions
- Economic assets

Remember, too, that the church is the people, and the people are the church. Your congregation has assets. As an individual, you have assets. Your individual assets are part of the mix. In asset mapping, we talk about both congregational and individual assets, equally and together.

Each person writes down assets they think of:

- Sit in small groups of four to eight people. Hand out the half-sheets of paper and the markers.
- Each person will generate a stack of assets by writing on these papers. Write each asset on a new sheet of paper. (Do not write a list of assets on one sheet.) Write in **LARGE BLOCK LETTERS** that everyone else can read from a distance.
- Write down specific assets in three of the four categories from the reminder list.
- Read your assets out loud to everyone in the group you are in.
- Tape the papers on the wall, in any order.

You are not trying to summarize the assets of your congregation. Nor can you expect to catalog all of your assets. The idea is to recognize and list assets that might be useful. You will want to dig deeper to remind yourself of assets you may have overlooked. Take two or three rounds, listing several assets in each category.

Thought Provokers

Use thought-provoking questions like these to jog your thinking about your assets. If time is limited, you do not need to cover all of the five types of Basic Assets. Try to recognize specific assets of a few types.

Choose three or more types of assets to work on.

Physical assets

- What are two or three physical assets of your congregation?
- What are other physical assets of your congregation that you would not have thought of at first? Think creatively! Be specific.

Individual assets

- What are one or two things you can do with your hands?
- What is something no one in church knows you care about?
- Name a few talents and skills of other people at your table.

Associations

- What groups of people do you connect with in your community? They can be inside or outside of the congregation.

Institutions

- What institutions have something in common with your congregation?

Economic assets

- What does your congregation spend money on?

Dig deeper

- What signs have you seen lately of God's grace in the world?

BE SPECIFIC

Not "the building" but "100 seats in the sanctuary."

BE CREATIVE

The most useful assets are often the weirdest or funniest ones.

2. Connect the Dots

Spend up to 20 minutes on this.

Development is creating a new link between two or more existing assets.

Forming Action Ideas from Assets

- Gather with your group by the wall and look over your assets.
- Think about God's will for your congregation, the gifts God has given you, and the actions you can take by using these gifts.
- As a group, brainstorm actions that connect two or more of these assets to accomplish God's will.

Contributing to Your Team

- Cluster the sheets of paper with the assets you have connected.
- Tell the others in your group what action you are thinking of.
- Other people can add assets to your cluster or start a new cluster. As you are clustering assets, talk to each other about the actions you might develop.

Naming Actions

- You want to end up with a few (two to six) clusters of assets representing particular actions you've discovered through brainstorming. Give each action a short name. Write that name down on another sheet and post it with the asset cluster.

**Action 1—
cluster of assets**

**Action 2—
cluster of assets**

**Action 3—
cluster of assets**

DO NOT put assets into categories based on similarity.

It is a common instinct to find likeness, but it can stop you from acting.

DO connect diverse assets to brainstorm ACTIONS.

Think about actions like:

- Project
- Event
- Performance
- Campaign
- Protest
- Celebration
- Demonstration
- Making, growing, or fixing things

As you work together, feel free to write down more assets. The same asset can be used more than once. Just write it down again on another sheet of paper.

3. Vote with Your Feet

This should take less than 10 minutes.

Follow Your Heart

- Listen to each group report on the actions they have discovered through brainstorming.
- Decide which of these actions you would most like to take part in yourself.
- Go stand next to that action.

You get an instant work plan

- The job before you
- The people with you, who have an interest in the same idea
- The assets you can connect to get things done

Now look around. What do you notice?

Learning by Doing

Questions to Consider and Discuss

Spend about 10 minutes on this.

Impressions

- Looking around the room at people standing by the assets clustered into actions on the wall, what do you observe?
- Did anything surprise you in the experience?

Sensing the power of faith in community

- How did it feel to write down your assets?
- How did it feel to connect the dots?
- How did it feel when you voted with your feet?

Recognizing results

- When you connected the dots, what kinds of actions emerged?
- Taken together, what would these actions accomplish?
- What have you accomplished already?

Thinking about open-sum dynamics

- How much faith is there in the world? If I get more faith, does it come out of your supply? Or does your faith strengthen mine, and my faith increase yours, and our faith grow on others?
- How many assets are there in our community? If we connect the dots, do we use up our assets? Do we create new assets to use more and more?

Using and sharing asset mapping

- Can you apply what you did to your daily life or to congregational life?
- Could you facilitate the Quick and Simple Congregational Asset-Mapping Experience with others?

Abundance

Affinity

Release

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