



Rediscovering Your Congregation's Vision & Mission, Purpose & Calling

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SPIRE Center Learning Opportunities

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About the SPIRE Center

Our Purpose

The **purpose** of the SPIRE Center is to provide resources, inspiration and training to church leaders, members, pastors, faith explorers, and all those hearing the call to be part of the creative labor and the new birth the Church is experiencing in our evolving world.

Our Aspiration

The **aspiration** of the SPIRE Center is to stretch our thinking, and question our assumptions in a church in continued movement. Pastors, leaders, lay church members, staff, members in discernment, anyone seeking spiritual growth and nurture will benefit.





VISION – Defining and Planning for Success

- **Aspirational** - Centered in God's vision for our world
- **Grounded** - Based on our theological (what we know from the teachings and traditions of the faith) and ecclesiastical (the traditions and practices of the Church) understandings
- **Covenantal** – Acknowledging our dependence on and relationship with God and each other
- **Impactful** – Not about what we DO, but what we ACHIEVE



Why Now?

- The changed and changing **landscape**
- **Disruption** presents opportunities
- The heightened need for missional and organizational **sustainability**



Opportunities During Disruption

Smart Survival – Leanness can be our friend! Encourages focus and prioritization (hopefully missional).

Strategic Investment – A disrupted environment is a good place to innovate; people are more open to new approaches.

Leveraging Assets – What can we do now that we couldn't do two years ago? What mistakes did we make, and what did we learn?



Vision Planning Phases and Activities

Phase One: A Common Understanding of the Territory

Conduct informational interviews with clergy and congregational leaders to agree on essential elements of the church's culture and to discuss the strategic planning process, how it relates to other efforts, and desired outcomes.

Conduct an environmental scan – conversations with important strategic partners in the community.



Leadership Interview Sample Questions

- What specifically do you hope the priorities of xxx Church should be?
- What brought you to xxx Church, and why do you stay?
- Do you believe that the members of xxx Church are ready for big change, or is process about tweaking around the edges?
- What do you believe it will take to build support in the congregation for an eventual mission / strategic plan?
- Do you see any “sticking points” in the consideration of any of the priorities to be explored?
- Would you describe xxx Church as mission driven?



Environmental Interview Sample Questions

- How would you describe the impact that xxx Church has on your community?
- In what ways and on which issues is xxx Church a strategic partner for you?
- Is xxx Church recognized as a leader in the work that you share?
- Are xxx Church clergy members known and trusted members of the community? Are other Church leaders known and trusted?
- What is your vision for the work that you share with xxx Church?
- What are the ways that you believe xxx Church could have greater impact in the community?



Vision Planning Phases and Activities

Phase Two: The “Why” – Moving Beyond Habit to Intentionality

Create a consensus about the agreed upon areas of planning focus. Commission and discuss a theological reflection on each area.

Worship? Social Justice? Anti-Racism? Youth Development? Hunger?



Vision Planning Phases and Activities

Phase Three: The “What” – Defining Success

Craft ambitious, overarching missional and organizational goals.

“There will not be hungry children in our city”

“Everyone will know us as the most welcoming church in our area”



Vision Planning Phases and Activities

Phase Four: The “How” – The Plan for Getting to Success

Leadership drafts strategies (“commitments”) and tactics for approval.

“We will more effectively use social media and other technology to reach out to those in our community”

“We will innovate worship so that it becomes a tool for evangelism”



Vision Planning Phases and Activities

Phase Five: Commitment and Alignment – Ensuring that Leadership is Mission Focused

Develop and implement a plan for how the governance structure can best support achieving the plan

“Is our current committee structure going to get us where we need to be?”

“How do we balance the needs of now with dreaming for the future?”



Getting Started – Values Underlying a Successful Process

- Transparency and Clarity
- Honesty
- Trust
- Focus
- Ambition



Getting Started – Roles and Responsibilities

- Clergy
- Governance Bodies
- Special Committees and Task Forces
- The Congregation



Getting Started – First Steps

- Agreeing on the Opportunity and the Scope
- Identifying Leadership
- Allocating Resources (Human and Financial)



QUESTIONS and DISCUSSION

