

Living Stones 2009

Feedback from "Baptismal Ministry Experience & Reflection"

BME&R Summary and questions to Partners [our cluster group included the dioceses of Nebraska, Olympia & Ruperts Land (Canada), and Chicago as visitors]:

Summary: We are a 'traditionally' structured diocese, with staff related to program areas rather than geographic areas. This BME&R reflects on the role of 'traditional' staff as Ministry Developer.

Questions:

1. In what ways can the staff increase its encounters with congregations that are NOT experiencing transition or crisis?
2. How can we more broadly celebrate the baptismal ministry that is blooming in our congregations?
3. If words mean something (and therefore position names mean something), what terminology might best express the ministry of the staff? Ministry Developers? And might we encourage congregational clergy to have that perspective of their ministry as well?

Given that one of the examples used included the lack of trust in the diocesan system as part of the 'mix', initial feedback related to trust issues, and then moved on. A few of these points are items that arrived out of the discussion in my own head.

Points to ponder:

Trust

- Identify ways that reconciliation can happen and has happened.
- What is the level of trust between/among congregations?
- When do we confront trust issues?
- When do we just live into the Vision Statement?
- We are committed to our Baptismal Covenant.
- When folks say or imply "when you prove yourself trustworthy, I will trust," this is *not* trust. How do we get the Church out of this, and show signs of trust in God?
- We need to **point to God**, help people trust God.
- Seeing each other in social settings helps people grow in trust.

Baptismal Ministry

- How do we currently identify baptismal ministry in a local congregation?
- What is baptismal ministry? Living into the Baptismal Covenant, not merely being 'church rats.' How do we encourage this within congregations?
- Write notes affirming ministry: attitude of gratitude. "I was moved by this...What you do, you do on behalf of all."

- Share the stories, communicate the experiences.
- Ministry Sundays: Healers, educators, attorney, etc. 'Sundays'
- Increase celebration of all sorts of ministry, including baptismal ministry.

Ministry Development

- The Role of ministry developer is subversive. Called to move God's people to a place where they are not.
 - Will you trust me to lead you into no harm? I intend you no harm; will you follow me?
 - If I stay centered on Christ & you stay centered on Christ, we can move together.
 - How do we spread: We are the diocese?
 - Would it be appropriate for staff to engage at Deanery Meetings?
 - Use website to tell Trinity's story, including pictures
 - Use visitations as a way to begin the conversation about ministry development.
- Staff always pose the questions:
- What are your hopes for the future?
 - What do you want to have happen?
 - What do you need to make your dreams a reality?
 - What ministries are there to celebrate? Using the Diocesan Vision Statement as a reference point, talk about how the congregation is part of the wider picture.
- On behalf of all of the parishes in the diocese, I want to thank you for your ministry and mission in this place.
 - Training of Worship leaders through Oakerhater: Acolytes, Worship Leaders.

Diocese

- Collaborative ministry
- How does the diocese manifest the Body of Christ?
- How do we break down barriers between groups?
- How do we shape community?
- How do we form trust-filled relationships?
- New monasticism; rule of life – intentionally getting along, enjoy each other's company. Attitude change.
- Two-way street. What do we enjoy about being together?

Dance with those who want to dance & stop worrying about the people who are bitching about the band.

Shake the dust off of your shoes...

Complex (characteristic of networked communities)

Probe -> Sense -> Respond

How can we get lots of probing going on in ministry?

Let's try something, see how it works, try something else

Localized decisions – use caution – engage best practices

Reflect

Chaos (no discernable network)

Act -> Sense -> Respond/Reflect

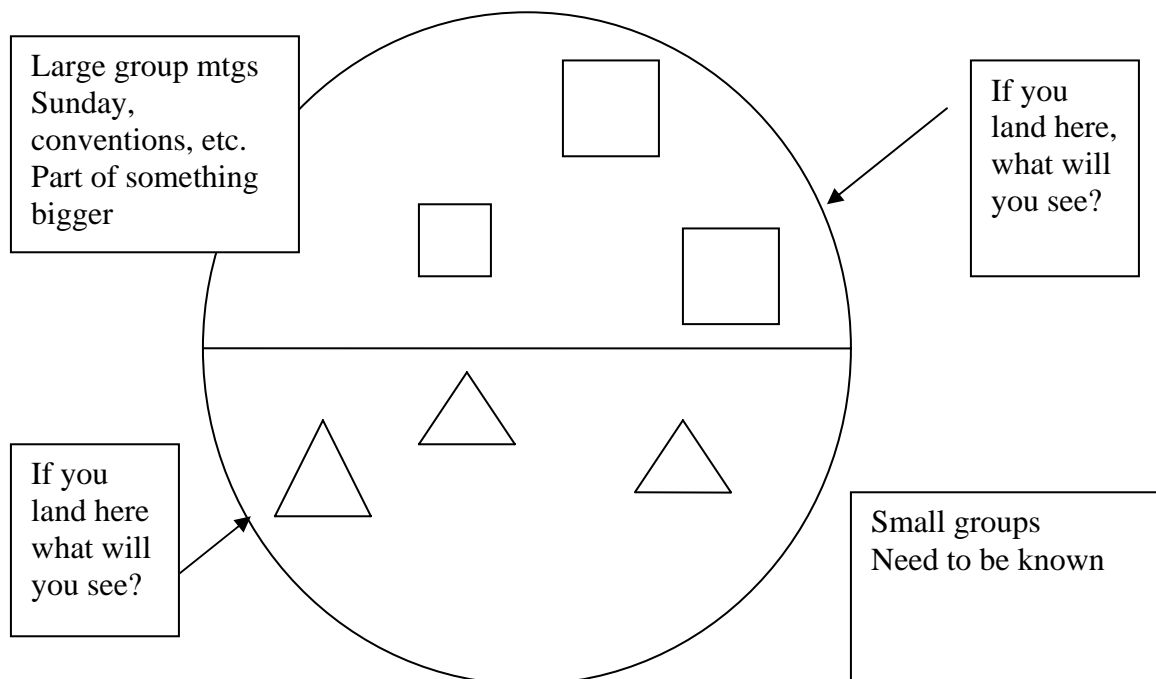
Role of leadership in these contexts:

-be a non-anxious presence;

-convene reflection opportunities;

-allow & celebrate failure;

-facilitate learning



Effective organizations have elements of both and help folks migrate between hemispheres.

Book suggestions

Back of the Napkin by Dan Roam; Solving Problems & selling ideas with pictures

The One Minute Manager by Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson;

Orbiting the Giant Hairball by Gordon McKenzie