

Minutes of the Meeting

Opening - Audrey Elling - Facilitator

Following soup, salad and dessert at 6:00 PM, Audrey welcomed those attending and opened the meeting.

Rev, Janet Forbes introduced the Table to those attending for the first time, saying that: the Common Table is a "leadership conversation"

"We are implementing "a big vision" at St. Like's, and looking at our internal communication; we need to identify the resources to support the vision as we move into the future."

• Stories of Transformation and Generosity of Spirit

Rev. Janet:

We will hear transforming stories and then think about the following;

1. How we can multiply the results obtained from these transforming stories?
2. How do we deal and use with risk taking in mission?
2. How do we connect to the passion experienced?

Jim and Leigh Ramsey: The Band

They had gone on the most recent mission trip to John Wesley School in Guatemala. While there, Jim learned that they had a band and he asked about it. He was told that he would see it at the school presentation with a final act by the band.

The band was amazing! Instruments were of a wide variety, ranging from horns to cheese graters! The band members marched with enthusiasm! There was a spirit and excitement in the kids that touched Jim.

They met with Ervin, the band leader and one of school teachers. "How could St. Luke's help the band? they asked. The reply was, "The players would love to have their own instruments, but musical instruments are very expensive! As you saw, some of the players use cheese graters for make rhythmic sounds. They love to play!"

Ervin was self taught to play the trumpet and he would teach the kids to play by rote. "We could use training," he said.

"What could this grow to be?" asked Jim.

Jim and Leigh were told that marching bands are very popular in Guatemala. One Guatemalan band had been able to march in the Pasadena Rose Bowl Parade in U.S. in the past.

Training was a key so Jim taught Ervin how to play the trombone; he knew that this would be passed along to the children.

And instruments were another key factor.

Trumpets cost about \$105 new, but it's difficult to find them in Guatemala.

Jim realized that the school needed to create a pool of instruments that the school owned and could loan them to students to play. Funds were available from a memorial gift to the school so they chose to use this gift for musical instruments. Available instruments began to appear in the most unlikely places, like barns. Funds were available to buy 19 instruments. The collection, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, and several drums, was put together and presented to school.

"Where do you see this going?" asked Jim. "What should be done to grow what has been started?"

"Once the kids learn to play the new Instruments," they were told, "there are opportunities for fund raising concerts!"

Jim concluded the story with the comment, "This was so rich, so simple, an unforgettable experience! This was not just about a school band, but about how a child learns!"

Jim convinced the school staff that they needed a band room to store instruments and a secure shed was located for that purpose. Plans were started for concerts and other fund raising activities that would grow and improve the program.

Sallie Suby-Long commented that when the kids came out to play, she saw in Jim's face that something big was beginning. Simply but powerfully, everything came together with no one really knowing how it might come out!

Rev. Janet then asked the groups at each table to discuss and offer ideas on the following -

- How do we implement things started in these stories?
- What are the factors of risk taking in Mission?
- * How do we connecting to passion?
 - There is a need to be able to tell these stories in a manner that teaches people about the feelings those on mission trips experience,
 - Need to feel safe outside their comfort zone.
 - We need idea people and people who can do something about the ideas.
 - Need to see and utilizing existing talents wherever they are found.
 - Need to indentify leadership on site.
 - Making some identity with local politicians helpful for long-term growth.
 - Find other organizations that could assist you.
 - Integrate opportunities here with the connections made there.
 - Getting outside your comfort zone can be as simple as providing gloves for the sign carrier at County Line and Broadway.

- Connecting doesn't have to be complicated; everyone can be part of the vision. A simple plan can become clear on what to do next. There's a feeling or "rightness" about it.
- However, somebody has to make the first move.
- There are significant differences between International and local mission activities. By not having telephone or other means of calling for assistance, you get to the core of the need and realize the simplicity of life. That's when things begin to happen! Reflect on who you are and through the simplicity you actually see, find that it can be transforming!

Rev. Brad Laurvick:

While he was participating in a Disciple II class several years ago, he asked the question, "What's the difference between being a good person, and being a Christian?"

This led to an hour-long conversation with questions being answered with other questions, and these being followed by even more questions! Finally, the only answer Brad had left, was "thy kingdom come, thy will be done" "That's it! was the response, "That's the difference!"

It was a kingdom moment for Brad and he carries that memory now.

As Christians we are invited to see God in that which is happening around us and respond in such a way that honors God.

The question was then asked of the groups, "How we make this a kingdom moment?"

Seeing the kingdom of God as residing in the hearts and minds of the people,

We are missional, we are the eyes and hands and feet of Christ here in this church

All gifts are given to honor the kingdom; no gift is wasted

It's a part of our nature

Eyes to see, ears to hear, the question, "where did you see God today?"

See people where they are, provide a safe environment and affirm the existence of the moment.

Rev. Janet:

What are the resources for transforming moments?

How do we talk about what it is to be authentic?

How do we maintain congruence with our identity and core values?

She told those present of her experience not long after being appointed to St. Luke's. The time had come for the annual stewardship campaign and she started asking how fundraising campaigns had been done before.

The response was a bit surprising.

"We don't talk about money"

"We don't teach our families about being generous"

"Do we teach the 80-10-10 rule? No

"Whatever we do, we have to be congruent with what St. Luke's is."

The participants at each table were then asked for ideas that will help Stewardship talk about resources in the context of who we are.

1. Talk about time and talent: "what we have, what we do and even more, who we are." Focus on the offering prayer we repeat each Sunday. Reflect the teaching from Micah: Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly....
2. The presentation is key, how we say it is as important as what we say.
3. Don't talk about it as an "attack."
4. Provide a look at the total package, help them find their passion;
5. Incorporate the philosophy of the Seasoned Voyagers; "when time and talents are given, money things will follow."
6. Do not put a lot of pressure for money.

Comment from a participant at one table: "So much has been offered tonight; this is the most open Christian thing that I've ever encountered! St. Luke's is so open accepting and loving, keep it up!"

Rev. Janet then shared some thoughts from "Not Your Parents' Offering Plate," a book that maintains that the reasons people give are driven by what they believe in. Givers give when they trust the church Leadership. They will work for the financial viability of the institution so long as they see their support making a difference.

Comment from Kimberly Blum: "When people get their own financial house in order, they can work to keep the church financially healthy."

• **Calendar Updates**

Trying not to over-program the congregation.

Brenda is the keeper of the calendar.

• **Leadership/Team Updates**

Bruce Kirchhoff, SPR

Annual performance reviews for clergy are in process.

SPR is continuing the search of Chris Wilterdink's replacement and are looking at 10 or so candidates; "We're optimistic."

Trustees:

Flicker holes in the outside walls of the church lead to problems, and efforts have started to discourage the Flickers from landing on the building.

Trustees most recently installed a "noisy birds" sound system and have found it to be something less than effective, pest control people have suggested that a realistic looking, animated owl and putting the noisy birds

on a random on and off schedule could help. The animated owl was displayed.

• **Sending and Evaluations**

The next common table, "Foundations for the Future," will convene on September 19, 2011

Participants were asked to fill out evaluation forms on the table and turn them in.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Les Ludlam, secretary