



Resource Centre

# From our Churches

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## Vision Focus Team

Retreat Notes

*Meeting based on the book Holy Conversations - [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1880](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1880).*

### Introduction

- We tend to know more about who we were than who we are.
- Systems tend to always do what they know. If they are successful in getting something done, however, they have to move on to what they do not know, which is difficult work.
- Change happens through conversation....any major change begins with a conversation. The task of the leaders is to shape and change the conversation.
- Leadership - issues of future and change. Leadership asks the question: "Are we doing the right thing?"
- Management - present moment and stability. Management asks the question: "Are we doing things right?"
- Leadership questions disturb people, and you want the congregation to be appropriately uncomfortable. But to have authority to ask the leadership question, you must be doing the management pieces well.

Making space for anxiety

Proactive vs. Reactive

How many Triangles Exercise? (Sometimes the quantitative answer is not the important one)

Convergent Environment – (Yesterday) Same questions, answers are the same

Divergent Environment – (Today) Same questions, answers are different

Building community in divergent environment is a challenge. The assumption is that community means agreement, but "harmony" is *not* all singing the same note.

## Finding Our Biblical Story

- Narrative self-identification (What is our story?)
  - Sower sowing the seed
  - Wise man asked to judge
  - Children of Israel
  - Joshua finding rocks to assemble as a symbol of where we came from and move on to look at where we are going
- Wandering and dealing with our collective past
- Discipleship: gathering of people we would not choose to spend spare time with.....  
They also feel that way about me.

## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths:

- deeply rooted in faith
- Good mix of backgrounds
- Openness to experiment/risk
- Good generational mix
- Positive community profile-lots of visibility
- Have space...even with bike racks
- Willingness to talk with newcomers

### Weaknesses:

- overdone welcoming
- Mortgage
- Then what.....
- Family circles
- Shortage of landing places
- Too many analytical questions and not enough relational

### Opportunities:

- Change
- People are looking for –connection
- Passion and energy
- New friends
- Change the “us vs them” language
- Global Church

### Threats:

- Fragmentation
- Disconnect
- Welcoming leads to changes
- Fear of loss
- Mortgage/current economic climate
- - Threats vs. Conditions
- - Real threats vs. Perceived threats

What will be different in 1-3 years?

- New Public School next door
- More housing in surrounding communities
- Government change in Canada and US
- Economic changes
- Baby boomers moving into senior years
- Shift in political power
- Pandemic???

What do we want to be different in 1-3 years?

- Be a Counterculture, set an example
- Be able to model change and deal with fragmentation
- Model living with less
- Build community
- Be leaders in chaos, pluralism
- Grow leaders
- Be open to what God would have us do
- Nurturing of people < baby boomers, transfer of power
- Decrease the “Us vs Them” talk/culture
- Pluralism (diversity) vs. Fragmentation (disconnection)
- Our church as a model
- Commitment outside of comfort
- Want church to be more than just worship
- Develop skill of listening and debating

- “People fear loss more than change”

- Don't force an issue or program in order to fulfill a need unless God has given us the gifts to do it