Saskatchewan Synod Dream Team

Dreaming On: Voices of the Saskatchewan Synod

*Boldly go where God is...*

*...already!*
Dreaming On: Voices of the Saskatchewan Synod

Report to Synod Council

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

God the still-point of the circle, ‘round whom all creation turns;
nothing lost but held forever, in God’s gracious arms.

Let our hearts touch far horizons, so encompass great and small;
let our loving know no bounds, faithful to God’s call.

Let the dreams we dream be larger, than we’ve ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us, open every door.¹

Gordon Light, 1944
Table of Contents

Abstract..............................................................................................................3
Background........................................................................................................4
Mechanisms for Collecting Information ......................................................5
Dream Team Assumptions............................................................................6
The Data............................................................................................................6
Dream Team Reflections .............................................................................6
Recommendations ........................................................................................9
Further Questions.........................................................................................11
Conclusion ....................................................................................................11
Thank Yous...................................................................................................12
Appendix A – Synod Wide Consultation Process Mandate ......................13
Appendix B – Questions ...............................................................................14
Appendix C - Plan of Action..........................................................................15
Appendix D – Data: Strengths.................................................................16
Appendix E Data: Weaknesses.................................................................20
Appendix F Data: Opportunities ...............................................................26
Appendix G Data: Threats .........................................................................38
Appendix H Data: Vision............................................................................39
Vision—Scrabble Tile Words & Vision Statements.................................40
Appendix I Data: Observations .................................................................42
Abstract

The Saskatchewan Synod Council appointed a task force to consult widely in the synod for the purpose of strategic planning. The group worked for 18 months planning and implementing a process to engage the Synod in a dreaming process. The following report compiles the data, makes observations and asks further questions to assist the Synod in its work.

Observations:

The Dream Team discovered that there is much for which to be hopeful. We currently have strength built upon a strong sense of hope for our future. Our weakness is that although we know we need to adapt, there is an underlying fear surrounding it. We discovered a strong sense of mission and purpose for the church that should help lead us out of that fear. However, our structure may limit us. Again there is hope as there is a call to be more flexible and open so that we may indeed follow Christ’s call.

Highlighted Themes:

1. Re-find our relevance/passion so that we can evolve, adapt and innovate.

2. Address our confining structure so that we have the resources and the agility to be relevant.

3. Develop our communications and our network of support in order to do ministry and mission effectively.

Conclusion:

The Dream Team’s mandate was to “consult widely in the synod in order to give shape to our vision for mission”, and we believe this has been completed within the scope of understanding of the process. While the recommendations include reference to ‘ongoing dreaming/visioning’ and ‘development of a package to go out to congregations to continue the conversation’, Synod Council will need to determine which and how these and other recommendations are implemented.
Background

In response to the changing realities of the church, specifically the proposed National restructuring recommendations which were not adopted, a stressed Synod, and a struggling conference structure, the delegates and visitors to the last Synod Convention had an opportunity to provide feedback on a series of questions. The message from the responses received was loud and clear. You, the people of the Saskatchewan Synod want to be part of thinking and dreaming about the future of the church.

In March 2013, the Synod Council discussed how to engage people in just such a process. After much thought and with input from the Canadian Missions committee, the Synod Council put this steering group, now called The Dream Team, into place.

The committee’s first meeting was May 1, 2013, in Regina at Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church and at the time, the Dream Team implemented their three stage plan which included the following phases: Planning; Consulting and Analysis.

Those Saskatchewan Synod members who have served on this task force are: Rev. Ali Tote and Rev. Sonje Finnestad (both who resigned during term of work) Rev. Linda Hall, Cheryl Bauer-Hyde, Daryl Nelson, Rev. Lori James and Rev. Murray Halvorson (joined during term of work).
Mechanisms for Collecting Information

The consulting phase was launched in 2013 at the Rostered Leadership Fall Study Conference. All rostered leaders in attendance were asked to encourage and/or lead members of the Saskatchewan Synod through a process of dreaming about the future of the church. Sample questions to assist in the process were developed, tested, evaluated and edited but everyone in attendance was encouraged to allow the conversation to have a life of its own.

The Dream Team attempted to answer questions and provide pertinent new information in each edition of the Saskatchewan Synod News. Members of the Dream Team were also in touch with the Deans who were consulted to help find ways to connect with as many people in the Synod as possible.

To date, information has been collected from the Rostered Leaders conference, Synod Council meetings, Conference Conventions, Dean’s meetings, Survey Monkey and through the Synod Convention. Other individuals and congregational groups have submitted responses as well.
Dream Team Assumptions

Recognizing that the members of the Dream Team came with their own assumptions, we felt it was important to identify them. The following assumptions may have influenced the process, and give a sense of the people who were around the table.

- Church should be mission oriented.
- Concern about the existing structure and holding on to the way it is.
- The belief that we must change from the concept of membership to understanding what we do as discipleship.
- Everyone is looking for a solution.
- There was some pushing us to a certain answer but we resisted anything that put boundaries around the conversation.
- The church is stuck/stopped.
- Having conversation would create some energy and excitement about moving forward.
- We aren’t looking for a quick fix.
- We recognized that we were living within a tension of wanting to have a good process yet understanding that we had a deadline to present information to the Synod Council.
- Greater number of people feeling need for change.
- We hoped to get some new ideas.

The Data

The committee gathered all of the data submitted and categorized it into several categories to give a sense of the information that was provided to our team. The categories are Strengths; Weaknesses; Opportunities; Threats; Vision and Observations. The raw data is included in the report in Appendix D through Appendix I.

Dream Team Reflections

As we led the conversation throughout the Saskatchewan Synod, what we experienced and the feedback and conversations that we heard shaped our reflections in the preparation of this report. We poured over the data, we entered in conversation with you and with each other, and we engaged in conversation around the Synod. The following comments reflect what we distilled from the entire process.
Participants

- Observations from conference conventions – demographics were mostly 50+ with Saskatoon being the exception with mainly 40+.
- The bulk of our data came from Synodical gatherings and conference conventions.

We have much to be grateful for

- Strengths seem to be localized to the congregations.
- Sense of celebrating the past and hoping for the future.
- We are strongly grounded in our faith which will keep us centred as we move forward.
- There is a sense of hope which can lead us into the future being bold leaders, together and strong.

We have areas of weakness

- One of our biggest weaknesses is our inability to be relevant. It seems as though we are only relevant to people who have been in the pews a long time.
- Our church worked so hard to set ourselves apart that we’ve created an island that doesn’t speak to people.
- There is a sense that we need a cultural change in our congregations, i.e. like the dinosaur, do we adapt or perish? Our tradition is full of examples of adapting like Luther and the printing press.
- People know that change has to happen but are scared to take the first leap.
Structure
- There seems to be a commitment to stay together but in a fluid structure.
- There is a strong theme that the structure is binding us as there is a perception out there that we need to follow the rules. It’s a feeling that while we want to be part of the ELCIC, we’re stuck with a rigid structure.
- Many are tired of going around the same things over and over again and not doing anything about it.
- Many comments urge us to recognize the reality that we are small and then live within that reality. Our models of ministry should then reflect that by asking the question, ‘what are we good at’ and then doing that.
- There is a wonder if focusing on structure is messy but in a way that we’re comfortable with, while being the church in the world is very uncomfortable and forces us to deep changes.

Mission
- People are looking to do mission and ecumenical partnerships but are not sure how to do it or whether they have permission to do it.
- People want to work together and perhaps what this is calling us to do is to move forward, BOLDLY GO. People seem to be looking for the movement of the church to go in a bold direction and we need bold leadership to help point us in that direction.
- Impression that the church is not dying but is rather evolving and there is a request for flexibility and agility to be able to respond.
- Sense that the church needs to be a place of challenge for itself and for others; a place of influence. We can have another voice than the current culture. We can be Christ cultural.
- From the scrabble tiles we noted that there seems to be a desire for change and that there is even a sense of asking for permission to be the church speaking into their community. There didn’t seem to be a strong sense of fear of new things.
- Ecumenical partnerships were greatly appreciated in the comments and also there seemed to be a call to support.
- The sense is that we can’t be afraid to be risk takers. Our faith grounds us in courage to move out. When we trust in the Holy Spirit’s leading and our baptismal vocation within our communities, we can take risks trusting in God to walk alongside of us.
Other

- We didn’t get many answers to the question: how can we support congregations at the local level. There is a sense that they don’t know what they need or aren’t at a place where they are even thinking about doing ministry together in the Synod. We wonder if this says something very important to the Synod. Does the Synod need to help the local congregations determine their own calling together as the body of Christ?

Recommendations

The Dream Team has the following recommendations for the Saskatchewan Synod:

- This report is to be disseminated widely throughout the Synod.
- That the dreaming processes not end with our report but that the Synod continually engages in the process of dreaming/visioning together.
- To conduct an extensive review of how the Synod operates on a day-to-day basis, i.e. services provided to local congregations, allocation of human and financial resources, etc.
To evolve the culture throughout the Synod to include this one of dreaming God’s dream, rather than having members / congregations fear dreaming and change.

Develop / provide material or resources to congregations so that various groups in the church (i.e. confirmation, women, youth bible studies, coffee times, prayer groups, etc.) can continue the “Dream” conversation.

Provide mechanisms / processes for feedback from individuals, congregations and groups on a continuous basis to Synod Council and leadership.

That the Saskatchewan Synod Council process includes dialogue with the national church and other synods.

That our vision be revisited and redefined as necessary as part of the strategic planning process.

That the Synod develop education and engage in a process of reshaping what we do by focusing on what it means to be the church, i.e. ‘reformat the hard drive and relearn what it means to be the church’.

That the Synod work on strengthening communications mechanisms and methods of support for individuals, congregations, clergy and leadership across the Synod.

In prayer, wrestle with the following questions as we individually and collectively do the work of the Synod.
Further Questions

- Are we so strongly entrenched in our structure that we are stifling the desire to follow God and to creatively engage the world in mission? If so, how will the Synod respond?
- Are our people waiting for permission to be the church? If so, how can the Synod invite people to move forward to be the church?
- Can we encourage and support clergy in giving permission to be the church? As clergy, stretched to the max it is easier to do what we’ve always done and not what we’re called to be and do. Is there a way to support clergy so they can be free to enact their callings?
- Is there a yearning for permission to be the church? If so, how can the Synod help create an environment that promotes innovation?
- How is being part of this group making the world a better place?
- How can the Synod help congregations dream and vision? How can the Synod help our members follow their passion and their calling? How can we empower them to do what makes their heart sing?
- How can the Synod encourage leaps of faith as we follow Christ?
- What other recent investigations might offer something to the dreaming/visioning/strategic planning process? (e.g. the Small Congregations task force identified similar things that shouldn’t be lost.)

Conclusion

The data that we received is but a snapshot in a moment in time of the Synod. It does not take into account all of the discussions that take place throughout the church as we are asking what it means to be the church today. This report highlights this time in the Saskatchewan Synod from the perspective of those who have entered this particular conversation.

Our reflections, recommendations and questions arise from one group of people who have gathered together and have been transformed as we have spoken, prayed, studied together to engage God. We hope that reading this will be only one step as we move forward into God’s dream together.

We invite you as you consider our reflections, recommendations and further questions, to go back to the data and continue to grapple with the input received. Furthermore, we believe that this process should not die with the completion of this particular task but that the Synod would do well to continue the conversation to discover anew what God is calling the church to be and do.
The Dream Team would like to take the time to thank all of those who were involved in the process.

First and foremost we would like to thank those who participated in the consultation process. Without those who participated in discussions at synodical events, those who took the time to email, participate in online surveys, pilot projects, etc. and those leaders who led discussions within their own congregations and communities, this report would not be possible.

Thank you to the Synod Council for daring to ask all members for their input and for being willing to listen to what they have to say, even when some of it is difficult to hear.

Thank you to Bishop Cindy Halmarson and Bishop Sid Haugen who have been supportive to us in our work.
Appendix A – Synod Wide Consultation Process Mandate

**Mandate:** Consult widely in the synod in order to give shape to our vision for mission.

**Outcomes:**
1. To empower and inspire synod members to engage in mission together
2. Develop strategic plan for synod 2015-2020
3. Facilitate the creation of ministry areas

**Core Values for the consultation process:**
- Listening, Affirming, Storytelling, Collaborating

**Key dates:**
- May 2013 – Deans re: Spring Conference/Regional meetings
- Fall Study conference – Consult with rostered leaders
- Individual/congregational feedback gathering process – ongoing through fall
- October Synod Council – updates
- November Special Convention (proposed for November 15-16 in Saskatoon) – consultation, celebration and 1st reading for some constitutional amendments *(note: this event did not take place)*
- Spring 2014 Conference/Regional meetings – gather response to initial plans
- March Synod Council – final preparation for convention
- May Synod Convention – 2nd reading and prioritizing of strategic goals
- October Synod Council – implement ministry areas and strategic plan

**Synod Council will provide:**
- Approval and commitment; Involvement of council members in facilitation process; Financial support to implement the consultation; Prayer

**Steering group make-up (5-7 people)**
- Council members
- Canadian mission committee members
- Communication experience
  - Someone with technical skills
  - Knowledge of leaders in the synod

**MSC** That the synod council approve in principle the Synod-Wide Consultation plan and invite the Canadian Mission Committee to work with Synod Council to implement the plan.

**Possible appointees:** Linda Hall (CM), Ali Tote (CM), Cheryl Bauer-Hyde (SC), Lori James (SC), Andrea Wagner (Communication), Daryl Nelson (Communication), Sonje Finnestad (technology), Roger Haugen (Knowledge of leaders)

**Next steps:** Bishop Cindy to communication with Ali and Linda, send the revised plan and ask for their affirmation for Canadian Mission involvement in the process. CC Lori and Cheryl
Appendix B – Questions (Consultation & Survey)

1. Share some stories of things we can celebrate as a church locally and beyond the local context.

2. To what is God calling us as the local church and the church as a whole?

3. What interests/excites you and what frustrates you about being part of the church?

4. What support/empowerment do you, your congregation, your community, need to be vibrant and vital in mission and ministry?

5. What is your vision of the future for the Lutheran church in Saskatchewan?

6. What would you be able and willing to do to be part of this future vision (related to question 5)?

7. What are your fears for our church? What are your hopes?

8. What do you feel you need or want for connections beyond your congregation/community? Is it important for Saskatchewan Lutherans to be connected (tell us why or why not)?

9. If you aren’t currently part of or active in a congregation, tell us why?

10. Do you have anything else you would like to share with us?
Appendix C - Plan of Action

A. Planning Phase
   • Meeting to decide what we’re consulting about and the consulting questions using:
     o Mission paper questions
     o Table Talk & Synod Council/Deans material
     o Small congregation taskforce
   • Communications Plan as well as a plan to report back
   • Fine tune process using pilot groups
     o Study conference
     o Deans
     o Selected congregations

B. Consulting Phase
   • Special Convention
   • Congregations, Youth, and other contact points identified by the committee.

C. Analysis
   • Insights (Convention, Synod Council)
   • Reporting to Constituencies
Appendix D – Data: Strengths

Describe the church
- Fellowship & relationships (2)
- People attending worship
- A safe place (2)
- A place that challenges us (2)
- A place to bring family together (2)
- A sacred place
- A place of influence to help our communities (service, etc.) (2)
- A place of comfort
- A place to bring children
- A learning place for all ages
- It’s an extension of home

Why does the church exist?
- Sunday worship renews & prepares us for the upcoming week
- It proclaims the Good News
- Place of prayer
- Provides leadership (pastors)
- Leaders with vision (including children’s ministry)
- Accessible worship that engages people
- Teaching the purpose of worship
- Strengthens our faith, so we can spread the good news (2)
- Encourages our personal faith
- Provides opportunities to share our faith (2)
- A place of support
- A place that proclaims the Gospel and administer the sacraments

What is your vision of the Sask Synod of the ELCIC?
- we are a remnant; we are different, and this gives us permission to embrace who we are. It is unique and appealing

Practical suggestions
- world-wide connectivity
- “Pay It Forward”
- Support the “D.A.R.E. Program, etc.

To what is God calling the local & synodical, and national church?
- Proclaim a counter-cultural message

What is happening now?
- Celebrating (50th, 100th, etc.) anniversaries of congregations
- Some Men’s Bible Study Groups
- Worshipping & working with local Anglican churches
- Some connection to local Food Banks
- Some “Mom & Tots” groups
- Open communion and welcoming atmosphere
- Working on a 6 month plan for new ideas
- Inter-generational activities

Hopes & Celebrations
- Thankful for pastors
- Thankful for church family
- Faith in God’s miracles today
- Unity among God’s people
- Hope the church will always have life

Interests / excites / frustrates
- Some sharing of church buildings & programs  
- Being in fellowship with others
- Church is like a breath of fresh air
- Older pastors preaching excites me
- Music, choir, etc.
- We are rich in (people) resources
- Committed, passionate, faithful parishioners
- Infrastructure in place & leadership for wider-church
- Seminary in Saskatoon
- We need more conversation about the need for meaningful change
- Word & Sacrament is happening & Christ-centered theology
- Good growth in ecumenical partnerships  
- Members get more involved in community ministry
- Positive co-operation is happening (it is exciting)
- “Who’d have thunk it!! (God is still working even in bad times)
- The grass roots have a say in our church (that is awesome)
- Some of our church buildings are being utilized by others groups
- Maybe we do ministry better when it is ecumenical
- We are supporting each other, because we have to (and that’s okay)
- Metochos Bible Camp and Messy Church  
- Love the liturgy – love “talk” relationships
- The church has a chance to share in love
- Bible Study & discussion  
- Grace: saved by faith, not works
- Following lectionary – empowers
- Seeing people be and work together
- Fellowship after worship is great
- Encouraging people to share their stories & listen to others
• Good chaplaincy
• Welcoming communities
• Possibility to be a diverse body of people
• A place where singing old songs, engaging in ancient rituals, and talking about God is normal
• Small home group meetings
• We need to ask people to share their gifts more
• Meals for seniors and oilfield workers
• Travelling coffee mug
• More special music
• Greeters at the door
• We are people with a mission – to show God’s love
• The church helps me feel closer to God
• I am in awe of God’s gift of eternal life
• The people show support & friendship (6)
• Excited about Shoebox Faith Library to engage families
• Community suppers are a good thing
• Never lose hope, God is in charge – keep praying

Stories about things we can celebrate
• Helping the pastor make our church welcoming & caring
• People volunteering their time
• A quilting group (127 quilts this year)
• Children & adults made 70 layettes
• Celebrate the Gospel message
• Many relationships are being built by getting involved (committees, conventions, etc)
• Working together during pastoral vacancies
• We have a strong & functional heritage as Lutherans
• Difficult times can lead to new life, through faith

Excites
• Fresh expressions; getting out of the building
• Gathering of the body in the eucharist
• Happy to be doing ministry; ecumenical partnerships, being mission minded
• Contemporary service
• Supportive of members who have initiatives
• Involved in missions
• Prayer walk (2)
• Kindness of members
• ELCIC is more open minded – means something to me
• I like that I can be quiet if I want
• Balance
• Willingness to help others
• Redeveloping women’s ministry in local church to respond to changing needs
• Meaningful activities together
• Meaningful service
Appendix E Data: Weaknesses

Rural
- Rural settings ignored by wider church.
- Keeping a pastor in rural communities (2)
- numbers – there are less people in most rural communities
- Aging congregation members retire to cities (2)

Buildings
- We are not called to worship and maintain building. There is so much waste in keeping all these buildings for so few people
- Afraid of tearing down the building
- people associate the church with a building
- we are lacking in our stewardship of resources (ie – keeping old building opened for 6 people)
- Closure (2)
- May close if membership drops
- Death or Loss: church building
- Entrenching ourselves in buildings and traditions

Club/Closed Group
- I'm afraid that the church will maintain its 'for members only' attitude.
- It emphasizes discipleship rather the seeming simple 'membership' that our churches seem to advocate. We are more of a 'club' than a 'church'
- Cliques in a congregation. (2)
- Too ‘clicky’; makes it hard for new people to join the ‘club’.
- a club mentality.
- Closed unit
- Turned in on ourselves
- Self-centred
- Racist barriers
- too inward focused
- We get stuck within ourselves – how to turn outwards – new ideas, be part of larger community
- how do we talk to people who have other ways of thinking?
- We are too comfortable inside the walls of our churches

Change averse or slow to change/inaction
- Biggest key is nobody wants to give up something
- I get frustrated with how long it takes to effect change, especially changes in governance.
- Lack of wanting to change.
• Unwillingness of members to try new forms of organization and/or governance, leading to further disenchantment and decline of the synod.
• We’ve been pretty good at being silent when we’ve been called to be bridge builders.
• Both sides, rural and urban are hesitant about partnerships – both sides
• I am terribly disturbed by how few things that I see the local church doing which I see to be worthy of celebration.
• I’m frustrated that the church is more concerned about where my money is going and more interested in judging those who want to be innovative and engaging to those who really need to hear the message. I'm frustrated that we tend to have fairly high incomes and are not interested in serving those who don't.
• I’m frustrated that people are apathetic in being part of the conversation about the future of the church.
• Apathy among members, until it’s too late to maintain an actual "synod" of some sort. Unable for members to align with each other across the province on key issues, such that the organization gets even weaker.
• Isolation and not wanting to share and work together.
• Too much talk; not enough action/decisions made.
• Trying to reconcile three generations secure in what we know – everyone still sits in same spots – nothing surprises, feel comfortable/secure
• Stop grieving for the past (hoarding it) – live forward
• Hesitant to see that w/ change comes opportunities
• instinctively we know that things won’t/can’t be the same but we invest so much energy in maintaining that we lose our opportunity to create something new
• We are hanging on to a structure that may not be able to be sustained?
• local congregations will not/cannot see themselves as more than an isolated group – will not see they can work cooperatively
• With regard to mission, it appears we are very focussed on preserving what we have and have become used to, rather than continuing to explore new ways to provide "mission", even in our own province.
• Grieving the loss of what was
• My fear for the church is that we won't heed the writing on the wall and that we will not follow our call. My fear is that we will gaze at our belly buttons so longingly that there will be no one who will listen to the gift of the message that we have to give.
• simply mourning the “way things were”
• Hard to get people excited beyond their own congregation
• Being blasé about faith and other members
• Resistance to change

Governance
• I get frustrated with how long it takes to effect change, especially changes in governance.
A tendency towards too much centralized control over congregations, rather than providing support and assistance in enabling congregations to provide worship and mission.

Unwillingness of members to try new forms of organization and/or governance, leading to further disenchantment and decline of the synod.

Four levels of governance is too much!

We are over-governed; fear of things getting out of hand.

Church is like a business. (2)

Over-governed; do we need all the levels; do conferences made sense?

We hold onto “good order” too tightly and so it can stand in the way of holding onto justification by faith

We are tied too much to the rules

We are structured for a large church but we are not. Far too much infrastructure.

Not a church of the people, but more top-down in our structures.

Congregation – Synod- National Church – all important functions – too much costly structure – could we fold Synod & National together with area Bishops – this is drastic, but?

“Grinding gears” - choking ourselves with “process”

Structure will inhibit what God is doing and that we focus on structure rather than on grass roots

Young People

I am concerned as not enough young people attend regularly and money is needed to keep the church healthy every Sunday not just funerals and weddings etc

Lack of opportunities for involvement of young people.

Lack of youth attending worship.

Younger people gravitate to challenge but want to see results – our Lutheran history keeps structure but is it fulfilling need? Some youth can’t see through the layers to see the good that is being done.

When youth offer suggestions for a change; often shut down. That is hurtful and most people are scared of change.

Lack of youth.

Many older members, no young people.

We always talk about us dying with too few young people

Younger people don’t share what we believe

Youth don’t know faith in what we believe

More non-denominational churches now that target youth and promote action/vision to serve.

Catholic abuse of youth stuck with youth being blemished by Christianity.

Our church is looking “old” (lack of youth).

Youth – who tend to move on for work and education

traditional ways of worship are outdated. Young people are not attracted to it

Sunday Schools getting smaller and fewer youth groups

societal pressures on the youth
• how are we going to reach our young people
• Lutheran Church sometimes invisible in communities – needs to be out; visible.
• Youth aren’t a priority - so much potential and many are losing their way
• No counter message to culture from parents/church

Vision
• We seem to have lost our way and are still looking for direction . . . instead of getting to work. It will take time.
• We are in for very difficult times until we find new direction. Faithfulness to Christ will have to become more important than ideology and political agendas
• Small national church – trying to do too much at once; need to narrow focus.
• To quit worrying about so called “sexual” morality and try to be an inclusive community of God’s people.
• Not mission oriented
• We seem to be in a constant struggle to be enthused about the latest great thing
• Have we defined what our Lutheran vision is in SK?
• Co-op – fixed budget, strong areas – can’t spread themselves out where they do no one good. We forget we have limits. The more we spread out the less we do things well. Rather do 5 things well than 50 things adequately.
• implode as a church – focus on dying rather than what we are doing that is good
• Serving others by what we think they need rather than understanding their needs.
• Lack of trust in the Spirit on a national church level (panic mode) – ie budget is deciding how we do ministry.
• Currently, the way we do church is more about us than it is about sharing the good news about what God is doing. We are too busy worried about what "I’m getting out of the service" and too little worried about our neighbour who is in need of hearing the message of Christ.
• Lack of vision – even a sense of being alive – just coming and going in a hour

Pastors/Worship
• Survival with ecumenical i.e. Sharing pastors
• 2 years without a pastor.
• Pulpit supply works okay, but not perfect. Can’t afford any more.
• Keeping a pastor in rural communities (2)
• Have sacraments (2)
• Long vacancies without pastors
• There was some frustration expressed about how slowly it takes for lay people to preside over the Eucharist
• Parish councils with little to no engagement of the lay
• Sunday school at the same time as church because teachers and kids are missing out

Competing Interests
• Scheduling that doesn’t accommodate current life styles: shift work, weekend work, sporting events.
• Competing Sunday sports
• Busyness
• Making time for faith
• Also competing with mega churches that can offer LOTS. Some people don’t care about theology; just want needs met.
• Lack of time to be community – young families are busy with work and activities
• Live in community but are competing as well. Limited $$ go to sports/arts/church/etc.; balance with time, dollars.
• Competing not only time but also money. Looking for new ways for fundraising challenge.
• Dealing with things competing for people’s time. Sundays are no longer HOLY (busyness, now – sports, shopping).
• Distraction by our material things.

Miscellaneous
• I think we do a poor job of keeping people engaged when they have given to the point of exhaustion and decide they need a break. Seems like we often lose them at this point.
• A negative and defeatist attitude could paralyse the church at many levels. Isolated pockets may feel abandoned and simply cease to exist as a church.
• Loss of /decrease in financial/human resources to lead /maintain our churches
• Lack of influence churches have with society
• Lack of relevance society places on the churches
• My fears are we have abandoned our people. Losing our identity, breaching their trust, and then demanding of them that they make things right.
• Lack of tolerance for baby/child disruptions.
• Lack of trust from people for higher levels of church leadership (people not feeling listened to – too much top down).
• Lack of financial resources.
• We tend to be judgmental
• Seminary population down
• We seem to be in a constant struggle to be enthused about the latest great thing
• Issues around sexuality
• Attendance
• Sporadic attendance
• People are reluctant to share their talents
• Apathy
• The leadership didn’t honor the people doing the work
• community – the people who move away to be closer to family; and
• Losing members (2)
• Keeping interest (2)
• Keeping congregations united (2)
• Supporting each other
• Money concerns (2)
• Faith begins at home (2)
• Crisis can be an opportunity (2)
• Be an example (2)
• The conference at Ottawa probably had about 500 delegates. Yet, when the delegates return back home, all enthused, they are given very little time or encouragement to report
• gatekeepers: educate them
• -world has changed so fast that we don’t know how to talk to them? Disconnect.
• -looking inward is a problem. Lack of energy. Hard to excite people.
• -being a Lutheran—so many different kinds—get lumped into one category
• -Problem: We say ‘what do we get from National Church’—We should say ‘how do we help the National Church work in the world.’
• -SK/National Synod has a very quiet story—what do they do for “us” (local level)
• -we need to fix the broken axel so someone needs to analyze why, people, congregation
• acting like Christ in mission—expecting them to come
• When we lose congregation we see it as a failure when we are the last to close the congregation?
• Universal- preference to be insular – helps as we talk to know we’re not alone
• Lots of good stuff but not going anywhere
• Cong not getting communication
• The church who preaches all about grace, sometimes has difficulty treating its own members & leaders with much grace
• Frustrated with apathy in the church
• Frustrated by declining attendance
• Lack of financial resources
• In many ways we are just “limping along”
• As I have listened to people’s faith stories, I hear a note of mourning for what is past and fear for what is to come: “Will their children/grandchildren/great grandchildren have faith? Will there still be a church in their community? What will happen to the church in this changing world? I have also seen many parishes that are not viable in their present state.
• That the church continues being a follower rather than a leader.
• Surveys done, lost generation, just about to lose second generation, what does that mean to the body of Christ.
• Paycheck
• Feeling alone because people don’t feel the same excitement and cannot see the wider church
• Not developed sense of ministry and congregation who live by the law
• Those who don’t attend and don’t like change
• So much focus on the budget in a negative way which means we don’t celebrate enough our accomplishments
Appendix F Data: Opportunities

Working together

- Discussion about what it means to partner – not necessarily amalgamation but about working together for a specific ministry purpose
- Share leadership, gifts & resources within the synod
- We need a list of pastors providing services – funerals, weddings etc.
- Letting go of what isn’t truly ancient and grabbing onto what is truly meaningful
- What about a situation where each congregation in the conference named their strengths and then we could go “grocery shopping” to work together in partnerships that made sense
- Ministries; not necessarily congregations.
- Need for resources to help congregations adjust to changes (ie. Two congregations joining together).
- Need for building relationships in ministry – different view of leadership.
- Having exchange of pastors from other places (ie Iris from Iceland).
- Fear of what is lost during these transitions; need preparation to enter as congregations into “exile” – it’s ok sometimes to “wander in the desert”.
- Most communities are capable of creatively looking for a way through that fits their community. They have done so many times in the past, they can do so again. I think struggling church communities need to hear that affirmation.
- I see a lot of emphasis on church growth in our church – lots of opportunities for continuing education in mission that is focused on growth, but few opportunities that are focused on mission as spiritual care and little to no opportunities for mission as palliative care.
- We need to continue to respect one another in spite of differences. The more remote congregations and those that struggle as well as those that seem to have their needs covered need to talk to each other with the hope that we can grow together with solutions for a stronger future.
- Worship and mission. The SK Synod appears to be doing reasonably well with worship in locations where we can attract/afford Pastors, but not particularly well in areas with a small committed population to try and support attracting/employing a minister.
- There are no easy answers. I hope that we can be creative and learn from each other about what works and what doesn't. What didn't work in one time and place might work in another situation. We need to hear each other's story and be inspired.
- New small congregations with no buildings
- More opportunities for diaconal ministers needed
- I hope we can all support new models for ministry that allow the church to have a presence and build community even where resources do not allow for a traditional expression of church.
- Share leadership, resources & gifts throughout the synod
- What are we good at? How can we share it?
• We’re really good at partnering with other congregations around the world – why wouldn’t we partner with other local congregations just because
• In the past there was partnering that was WIN WIN for everybody…can’t do that same partnering now but we should be looking for those kinds of partnering today
• Partner church in Argentina and learn from them (2)
• Wondering, are we better witnesses because we are working together?
• House gatherings???
• House church in Warman.
• Home church model
• House church – in many rural parishes it is a challenge to keep up a building and try to find a way to continue with worship and study and passing on the faith to the next generations. I think we could learn from our brothers and sisters who meet in small numbers: Society of Friends (Quakers), the denomination that has no name but are often called the two-by-two’s or Cooneyites, and by our elders who have been part of house church in their youth. Lois Knudson Munholland might also be a resource for this, since she has done a lot of work in learning about early worshiping communities in Saskatchewan. Can we empower lay people to be the embodiment of the church in their home communities? Can we teach pastors to be itinerant leaders who support this work with word and sacrament? Can we learn to be a church without a building?
• Be flexible, adaptable, changeable while keeping basic tenets of the faith
• Universal- preference to be insular – helps as we talk to know we’re not alone
• Rather than traditional worship/church a ministry to the elderly not nursing home ministry but a chaplaincy ministry.
• Questions about how the rural congregations that would be the most impacted were going to have their voices heard – suggestion that this is the responsibility of the conference to ensure that this happens
• Alignments with rural and urban congregations
• Learn to do urban ministry better
• Communication
• We must build bridges that connect ‘congregational islands.’
• In our conference we want some way to provide leadership to all congregations in our conference
• Palliative Care – This, I think, is the most important work that challenges us at this time. It seems to me that we, as a church, are so focused on growth in numbers that we create an atmosphere of shame for those churches that are shrinking. Largely they are shrinking through not great fault, it just happens. It makes me think of someone with a terminal illness and their family will not let them talk about dying … only about what new treatment they are going to get in order to get well. It can be a tragedy. When someone is going to die, and we all will die (Ash Wednesday reminds us of this) our hope shifts to having a “good” death. I’m sure you have all seen the difference between a “good” death and a death that leaves deep wounds behind. A good death is a gift to all those left behind. So how do we help church communities deal with death or loss in a way that it is a gift for those left behind?
Pulpit exchange
Talk to each other
Connections that let me know what I can do and can’t do
Cluster meetings
Education together – what would that look like?
Pool of resources to explore/gain/tap – inspired use – maybe people, readings (2)
Materials from the larger church
More doing together

Internal
Where are we putting our resources & how are we best serving?
What are we maintaining that we don’t need?
Listening – without bringing our own agenda to the conversation.
Grief work and counselling – both individual and group
Develop a sense of self-worth in a changing society
Listen to people and empower them
CLAY type of worship is where it’s at.
Visiting, encouraging
Use lay people’s strengths
Inclusive
“Pay It Forward” - the church fosters this.
Gatekeepers: educate them
Can seminary professors come out to speak?
Empower people and find their strengths
Supporting what is going on
Presentation - we don’t know how God will touch people
It is helpful when we have people come in with a different perspective. (Another comment similar: Need somebody who is expert in different areas)
Nurture home and family life
Develop leadership skills and avenues for sharing talents and creativity
Dream to have a Sunday School—hoping to have a teacher
Re-establish relations with those who have left (re-connect).
Worship
More involvement in justice work
Have to be adaptable; don’t stop if something fails, try again.
Create an atmosphere that is an alternative to the secular world
Less formal services occasionally (for younger people).
Less-formal worship services
Tithing (2)
Be an example (2)
Have sacraments (2)
Care for people (prevent burnout)
Place of challenge (2)
Time (Sunday worship) to renew and prepare for the following week
Don’t want to join long-term committees; want short-term projects.
• Home visitations by congregational members.
• Help people understand the traditions & rituals of the church.
• I have been learning some things from narrative therapy that I think would be helpful: listening to people’s stories, listening to community stories; acknowledging the stories and beliefs that hold people and communities back, gently challenging those stories; listening for the stories of strength that can be built on, the stories that help people see a way through, the stories that strengthen people in exile.
• Pastors
• Accessible worship that engages people
• Teaching the purpose of worship
• Our congregation needs someone from outside of the congregation (ie, not our pastor) to facilitate a visioning process that would include some teaching. Our congregation needs help to be a healthy congregation
• I would like to see far more active participation. I think we have to start, though, with teaching our members what is in the Bible. Most are very biblically illiterate.
• Communion – ways to do practice, how many formats can you do? Small church – whatever will be will be. Challenge to step outside. Churches who have gone through changes – easier to adapt.
• I am currently participating in a weekly d3 network group that seems to be offering some very exciting instruction.
  http://disciplemakingdisciples.com/2011/05/31/the-d3-network/
• “Welcome Back Sunday” / Back-to-church Sunday (2)
• Wheelchair and accessible for elderly
• Music room/instruments
• Travelling coffee mug
• More special music
• Greeters at the door
• More visiting / guest speakers (2)
• Radio broadcasts
• Bigger sanctuary
• A lot of drama
• Juke box – Christian rock music
• Couches instead of pews
• Shared example of having young kids @ Redeemer Church; tried something new which didn’t work but regrouped and tried something different and works very well (action song, simpler talk, longer children’s chat, etc.).
• Engagement – key; not needed to have 20 minutes sermon as that may be nap time. I.e. News used to be 5 minutes now presented in only 2 minutes. Recognize that is an issue as attention spans are short about the talking. Can easily sing 30 minutes but listening to someone speaking can be a time out.
• Engage in active ministry and not have a club mentality
• Value in having children there during service. Appreciate trying something new.
• Maybe an inclusive church should mean that everyone is ‘out of their comfort zone’
• Do the best we can with the willing helpers and keep praying for God’s part in all
• Convention/conference reports - Pastor delegates could use their reports in place of one of their sermons. For lay delegates, time could be provided by shortening the regular service.
• Relevant preaching that empowers us for today. How do we make decisions, how do we do fellowship and how we do church in order to connect.
• Need to meet people where they are – all different learners.
• Recruit more people to give people a chance for a break.
• Hoping revived – vibrant, living and inspiring people’s faith
• Visit from Bishop
• Spiritual discipline – prayer groups

Outreach

• How do we communicate about ourselves?
• Re-framing thinking to be more missional – cross-province; cross-country.
• Fearlessly expand our membership with active reaching out
• Attraction rather than promotion
• Make connections to the Aboriginal people in our areas, and hear their stories.
• Open to hear the community
• Visiting, encouraging, inviting
• Lutheran Church sometimes invisible in communities – needs to be out; visible.
• Congregations need to be more connected to their communities
• Keep inviting
• Mission
• As they say in London...”mind the gap”—each community will be unique in what is already operating, but find out what is needed, who’s falling through the cracks. Possibly work with other churches/organizations to help mid those gaps and/or could Synod generate a checklist of possibilities where help may be needed in a community ie. Youth, young families, single parents, newcomers to Canada, homeless, etc, so they have an idea how to reach out. Agencies already operating may be joyous if we show up and say, ‘How can we help?’
• Focus more on those people that aren’t in our churches
• At our church we’ve been looking at ways we can reflect on the needs in our community and not just inside of our church – need to get outside of church and do what God intends us to do
• If you want people to come, give them an opportunity to serve
• Need to see that we are involved in the community and the world.
• Finding non-traditional ways to invite and welcome new people
• Hope – congregations focusing on mission & important to share their stories
• Hope – beginning to see congregation as a mission – how do we change people’s attitudes?
• Why should they come?
• Welcoming the stranger
• Go out into the community, and offer an alternative to the world.
• Boom of economic brings people but won’t come and worship. How do you reach them?
• Outward focused
• We want to explore what makes people want to be part of the church but hesitate to participate.
• Helping and serving in times of crisis—funerals
• Be more intentional in being outward looking
• My hope is that I’m wrong (re members only attitude) and that the church can become something that outsiders will want to participate in.
• Opportunities for members to do community projects ie. Refugees, shelters, First Nations.
• Reach out by offering service to others
• Deliberately take part in community activities followed up by prayer
• Serving in kitchen, quilts, etc.
• Be responsive to community’s needs.
• We need programs, resources to take our church into the community. Starting points to get us out in our world.
• I believe that God is calling us to be who we need to be in the community, not just in our building
• Partnerships with organizations in the community that have other resources
• Making our worship services inviting to the community A project like “Sweaters for Syria”
• Mission: Good food box, Shoe boxes for Christmas, Kits (CLWR), Sponsor homeless shelter,
• Buying kids school supplies
• Give homes to hockey players
• Hire coaches for sports
• Coffee times for the community during the week.
• Offer VBS to the community.
• Community playground.
• Community youth group.
• Seeing ourselves as a wider community than just our congregation.
• Help protect animals
• Plant trees
• Ice cream truck
• Community involvement
• Serving in the community—community kitchen, etc.
• Pastor a part of the community
• To speak for the poor, vulnerable just as Jesus did
• More inclusiveness than exclusiveness
• Training lay people and clergy to mission
• Network of support for a community
• Get a group of people to go elsewhere ie. another country – it may enthuse people
Discipleship & Prayer

- It is most important to be connected to Christ and to the scriptures, and to people. The needs will become evident, the scriptures will become real.
- Need disciples to make a church “can have building with no one in it. Have to building discipleship in relationship with others – gift of worshipping together. To welcome & tell others of the Great God We have and to share our own life journey as a member of our church.
- Openness to the other is important. Truly welcoming the outsider, reaching out to people of other religions and races and sexual orientations is an important hallmark of our identity as a local church. Showing care for others needs to be an important part of all that we do.
- We are called to bring the Gospel to all people.
- Spread the Gospel. Bring others to church to hear the good news convince others to feel ownership of the church.
- Make disciples, baptize and teach.
- Need a deep love for people not to license what is happening in our world, but to bring new direction and what is redeeming to life.
- Be friendly and let Jesus shine through you so they can SEE Jesus is in your Heart.
- We can accept them where they are and offer our support for all people in need. Our strategy should not be to recruit members but to spread God’s love and invite others into that action.
- We have to start with being more willing to demonstrate our faith. People notice. Once those outside the church see us as people they would like to be associated with they become open to invitation.
- My hopes are that we can be the people Jesus asks us to be. I hope that when people hear of our church they do not think of a building, they think of works we have done!
- Try to be patient and in so doing to pray.
- Hopes - Keep praying.
- Pray, talk about things good, bad, and ugly in the church today. Seek faithfulness to God above all else. (His ways are not our ways . . . His thoughts not our thoughts . . . Isaiah 55:8) We could have a radical ministry that reaches the hearts of people not just external practices.
- Preach teach healing.
- Respond to what’s going on.
- personal (spirituality and growth, healing, preaching and teaching).
- locally (eg. Healthcare > healing; allocation of resources > preaching and teaching).
- globally - act on climate change within Christian community (car allowances or usage; physical plant; keeping a church building open rather than sharing space).
- We are not called to make members; we are called to make disciples.

News of what’s going on around the world – get it different ways.
Living church produces mission – you minister where your gifts are.
Inspiring people to get together and do something in a Christian centre.
More about mission – need someone else as there are too high of expectation of Bishop.
To think locally and globally
The model of Jesus was to teach, preach and heal. It is personal, local and global.
Try to be an inclusive community of God’s people.
To be people that ? the status quo of a ‘consumer” economy and work for a greater equity (starting with our individual silver).
To be a place where people can find refuge or strength in the love and grace of God
To realize we may not be big, but we’re small (or should be) leaven not the loaf, salt not the whole recipe.
To challenge the status quo of politics that tear down and not build up
We are called to proclaim freedom from fear of power.
We are called to proclaim a different vision of
• global relations (peace)
• human relations (broken down walls
• wholeness (covenant of forgiveness for all)
To imagine being the church in different ways – ie.not limited to Sunday am and “Bible Studies”.
To become disciples (followers) and apostles
Slow and steady knowledge growth in the passion of the study of the Word
Living the gospel; particular contexts
To risk being there for others in concrete ways
Praying & dreaming ought to be spontaneous.
Church needs to reclaim what it is called to offer the world.
Proclaim Good news
Prayer
Strengthens our faith so we can spread the good news (2)
Talk about personal faith—what does Jesus mean to me daily?
Opportunities to share our faith
Being Christ-like when we leave the church on Sunday
Support each other
Proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments
Express compassion based on faith
Let our actions speak louder than words
Making time for faith
We need to “stop” long enough to Dream.
Helping people where they are/loving people where they are
Calling people/ourselves to account, responsibility, direction, correction
Listen to the people
Excites – Open ourselves to good news in tradition/faith – this is a moment in time
We’re going to become a witnessing people
Be passionate and connect with people’s feelings
Far more important to show than to tell
We should be compassionate as churches.
Witnessing through daily life
• Question about the concept of grit (perseverance) – grit is important to getting something accomplished but to what end is congregational grit aimed at – is it aimed at maintaining status quo or is it aimed at making disciples
• To break out of our confined vision as an ethnic church and open up to being a discipling church.
• Hope that discipleship and mission workshops become part of many congregations – synod’s role to encourage and challenge congregations to be part of this
• Cursillo – disciple making program
• Discipling

Ecumenical
• Working with other denominations
• Cooperate with other churches
• Interdenominational choir.
• Survival with ecumenical ie. Sharing pastors.
• More ecumenical and co-operative.
• Why not work ecumenically?
• To work beyond denominational borders
• Christian communities need to do more together
• Ecumenism links churches and communities, and move from being distinct to being inclusive.
• Participate in inter-Lutheran and ecumenical relationships
• I’m convinced that God is calling us both locally and as a whole to connected with one another in ways that break down barriers of doctrine/dogma that keep us in our denomination ghettos at the expense of an expanded vision of where we are going. We need a bigger vision that will begin to deal with the huge issues we all face in the immediate future.
• To find a way to be more combining of resources in full communion.
• ELCIC would work more with ecumenical partners – more talks in a broader sense
• Reach out to do more ministry – to not separate
• See people supporting each other’s faith
• Anglican updates daily

Change
• Challenge – want to see and do new opportunities but the faithful people have to realize that new doesn’t mean terrible. Born in Lutheran Church, grown up in LC but need to “be open” to change. Challenge people to let go of fear. New things don’t always have to mean bad. “Try it” voice. Make commitment to try and to also admit if it doesn’t work. One person can be influential.
• Change must start with me !!!
• Differences can be strength (2)
• Are we open to change & willing to try new things?
• Be more open to change, and try new things
• Let’s be risk-takers
• We need to be honest about our prejudices & insecurities (2)
• Think outside the box
• Be risk takers. Be willing to really change.
• There was a sense from the delegates that there is a readiness for change
• The sense that the church changing is speeding up past the speed of a glacier – fear has caused us to ask questions and move ahead
• Daring to experiment and even fail
• Let us trust God with faithfulness—sometimes going out on a limb.
• Our church to be a leader; not a follower.
• That dying might take us out of the edifice complex
• Help discerning what God is calling church to
• Trying new things

Youth / Intergeneration
• More intergenerational opportunities
• Children/children’s leader with vision
• Confirmation program gets connected with “mentor”; faith walk together – need training and support for pay people with that (like Big Brother/Sister) or way to build discipleship.
• A little kids room for just the kids to learn
• Pastor (youth pastor)
• Developing youth orientated activities/events that will accommodate youth commitments to community events eg. sports.
• What are we hopeful for: creative ways to nurture and involve the youth in their spiritual journey identify and tap into the gifts we have as members of this congregation. Schedule a council retreat to focus on strategic planning re our vision for the future of our congregation and the church at large utilizing resources such as Appreciative Inquiry and Asset Mapping
• Dream—great way of reaching younger generations—baptism, but no connections after other than weddings and funerals
• We can rip our hair out trying to get the younger generation out. So what about doing things differently instead of having them fit into our way of doing things.
• We need to share our faith from generation to generation
• Also need to discuss family and people in 40’s/50’s who are not connected.
• Less formal services occasionally (youth focus) – also included in Internal
• Band continues to enjoy playing
• Messy Church

Technology
• World of social media impacted our lives tremendously but also has brought us closer (ie CLWF videos); balance media with some closeness (shoulder-shoulder, hand-hand).
• The church as a whole – stand fast to our Lutheran beliefs but spread the word more via technology- a well produced daily televised chapel.
Use of technology (Smart board, Projector from ceiling, Surround sound system
Use technology (webinars, video learning, etc.)
Need to key into electronic resources and ways of doing things
Use technology more to connect rural and urban missions (webinars, videos, etc.)
Hope – office will expand database & connect directly with people
A maintained website and working email links.
Visual advertising
Social media—why learning, stretching, support

Structure

- I believe that we need much more of a sense of community. An hour or two a week for a few people just won’t cut it. Because of human nature, it’s important that our whole synod as well as other denominations feel a sense of connectedness so that we can tap into the kind of energy, for instance, that many Rider fans enjoy.
- Celebrate the best parts that will carry forward as deeply meaningful
- Guidance and support when needing to call a minister. Assistance and direction with regard to worship materials and potential mission approaches. Support for the Pastors within the synod.
- Make clergy education more accessible (correspondence, cheaper, shorter length of time, etc.).
- Be willing to look at change at all levels of church—local, conference, synod
- Let us build structure with lycra and bungee cord
- Stay united as a synod.
- Rethinking the structure – synodically recognized ministry
- It goes way beyond structure...we have to change our ways of being
- Flatten structure: find new ways to do the work of the church.
- More joined in our churches with other ELCIC churches in our area.
- Consider “If our church building was to burn to the ground, would we rebuild it”? If so, why? What service does this building provide to the community?
- Need to be creative to transition to a time with less ordained clergy.
- Good to have conventions see what others are doing, share our concerns and stay connected to each other
- It is critical that we stay connected. No congregation is in this alone and our denomination is not based on every church for itself. We need to see this as a large collective venture. We are the Lutheran Church in Saskatchewan.
- Grassroots ministry is more able to adapt quickly to change. Local needs can change our priority or approach.
- Participate in planning efforts towards strengthening the synod and/or its member congregations.
- Connections between congregations is definitely important, as is support, probably coordinated by some form of central body. Need more focus on activities, issues and events within our synod rather than those at the national or international level.
I think it is very important for Saskatchewan Lutherans to be connected. I think it is easy to lose our grasp on the heart of the gospel message if we aren't connected to each other. But I don't think that those should be our only connections.

Yes, we all need to be connected if we want to achieve a common goal.

“Synodically recognized ministries”—local faith community with fewer constitutional requirements

Communion presided by lay people.

Develop models for smaller/house/community ministries.

Identify our strengths and weaknesses

Cooperate

My hopes are that God will raise up "life giving leadership"

Need order, not rules (e.g. lay leading communion)

We need a new structure because the one we have doesn't seem to work – we have only ordained pastors and nothing else – the medical profession for example has doctors, specialists, nurses, paramedics, etc.

We need to work something out as a conference to find what support is needed so that all the congregations can be empowered to do ministry—We need someone from outside the area to facilitate that conversation. Who initiates that? What about CECF? (There was a commitment by one pastor to do something about this.) Question was raised — do we do something with help or in spite of the structure?

Perhaps we need to have a different notion about what a congregation is

Need flexible leadership

Redirect our focus from ‘saving the church’ to ‘growing the church’

Focus on the positive, don’t give in to despair

Need to have one Seminary in Canada

More gifted, more intentional in ‘going out’ (note the diagram submitted only included the words UP IN OUT at the corners of the triangle. This diagram was obtained from the internet.)

“Think like a network”
Appendix G Data: Threats

- With regard to mission, it appears we are very focussed on preserving what we have and have become used to, rather than continuing to explore new ways to provide "mission", even in our own province.
- Currently, the way we do church is more about us than it is about sharing the good news about what God is doing. We are too busy worried about what "I'm getting out of the service" and too little worried about our neighbour who is in need of hearing the message of Christ.
- We are in for very difficult times until we find new direction. Faithfulness to Christ will have to become more important than ideology and political agendas
- May close if membership drops
- Dealing with things competing for people’s time. Sundays are no longer HOLY (busyness, now – sports, shopping).
- Also competing with mega churches that can offer LOTS. Some people don’t care about theology; just want needs met.
- Competing not only time but also money. Looking for new ways for fundraising challenge.
- Live in community but are competing as well. Limited $$ go to sports/arts/church/etc.; balance with time, dollars.
- More non-denominational churches now that target youth and promote action/vision to serve.
- Catholic abuse of youth stuck with youth being blemished by Christianity.
- As I have listened to people’s faith stories, I hear a note of mourning for what is past and fear for what is to come: “Will their children/grandchildren/great grandchildren have faith? Will there still be a church in their community? What will happen to the church in this changing world? I have also seen many parishes that are not viable in their present state.
- Lack of time to be community – young families are busy with work and activities
- Stop grieving for the past (hoarding it) – live forward
Appendix H Data: Vision

- Theology of the priesthood of all believers is what will move us forward in the future—it might mean giving up something we hold dear but the kernel is that God is still there.
- We can look to the past not necessarily elevating it but looking at how it asked some of the same questions, might we ask the question ‘has the dream changed?’
- Expanding vision—inclusive of others: denominations (Anglican), sexual orientation, race, people of wealth or poverty.
- Pray and focus on the Word.
- Future of our church, future of our children—to grow up and hear the Word of God.
- Toleration and kindness are necessary. We need to be voices of peace.
- God’s dream is all about LOVE.
- Connect with whatever God is working outside the church.
- Talk to them, live in faith, go where others are. Go & Be.
- We are a vibrant group of people committed to the gospel of love which brings inclusion, cooperation, outreach, compassion and hope.
- Community of believers, supporting each other in whatever ways are needed.
- I believe that our vision should be expansive in our world and community.
- Find out where God is working.
- Let God’s spirit lead us.
- Be a church of grace.
- Be a church empowering people to witness their faith and get over our fear.
- Ecumenical cooperation
- Get the passion like Paul and keep it.
- Grassroots mission centered on gospel.
- Being faithful in the wilderness
- Radical turn about from inward looking to outward looking not with the goal of filling the pews/the bank account but to proclaim the gospel in word and action in a way that speaks to needs of our neighbors/of others.
- Finding our passion and live it.
- Alienation—Christ calls us to die—our vocation is to embody the gospel.
- God’s grace can change things.
- Thinking ‘beyond our walls.’
- Alternate question—What does it mean to be faithful in the wilderness?
- Alternate question—What would we do tomorrow if there were not a single congregation in the Synod?
- Let’s see people of all ages supported and included.
Vision—Scrabble Tile Words & Vision Statements

| 1. | One
   | Passionate
   | Word
   | Prophetic
   | Hopeful
   | Sacrament
   | Caring
   | Grow
   | Equality
   | Amen
   | Zealous
   | Christlike
   | Dead
   | Death
   | Joyous
   | God
   | Voice
   | Being
   | Give
   | If
   | Life
   | 2. | Build
   | Belief
   | All
   | Love
   | Advocate
   | Teach
   | Accept
   | Engage
   | Invite
   | Sacrifice
   | Forgiveness
   | Guide
   | Dream

| 3. | If
   | Fab
   | Band
   | Go
   | Grace
   | Team
   | Meal
   | Table
   | Zeal
   | Extreme
   | World
   | Love
   | Together
   | Joy
   | Question
   | Kind
   | Fun
   | Equip
   | Song
   | now
   | whole
   | send
   | paid
   | hope
   | vine
   | via
   | assure

| 4. | Training
   | Inclusive
   | Empower
   | Eternal

| 5. | Commitment
   | Gospel
   | Waters
   | Text
   | Oxen
   | Pass on
   | Social
   | Zeal
   | Extreme
   | World
   | Love
   | Together
   | Joy
   | Question
   | Kind
   | Fun
   | Equip
   | Song
   | now
   | whole
   | send
   | paid
   | hope
   | vine
   | via
   | assure

| 6. | Life
   | Love
   | Saved
   | Death
   | Faith
   | Edge
   | Integrity
   | Yes
   | Truth
   | Unity
   | Inclusion
   | Solidarity
   | Peace
   | Joy
   | Know
   | Wow

| 7. | Families
   | Music
   | Celebrate
   | Party
   | Team
   | Create
   | Feast
   | Teaching
   | Welcoming
   | Integrity

| 8. | Broad
   | Dream
   | Tries
   | Mission
   | Feed
   | Pray
   | Gracious
   | Duty
   | Listen
   | Involve
   | Youth
   | Faith
   | Family
   | Joy
   | Outward
   | Welcome
   | Loving
   | Open
   | Need
   | New
   | Giving
   | Risk

| 9. | Babylonian
   | Justice
   | Joy
   | Unity
   | Tell
   | Unexpected
   | Open
   | Grace
   | Serve!
   | Care

| 10. | Universal
   | Unity
   | Inclusive
   | Vital
   | Longevity
   | Risk

| 11. | Flexible
   | Excited
   | Compassionate
   | Grow
   | Work
   | Grace
   | United
   | Share
   | Joyful
   | Inclusive
   | Nurture
   | Educate

| 12. | Joy
   | Follow
   | Witness
   | Grace
   | Freedom
   | Led
   | Word
   | Neighbour
   | Love
   | Victory
   | Your
   | Sacrament
   | Agapeo
   | Go
   | To
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision—Scrabble Tile Words &amp; Vision Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Shape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth-friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nabil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tithe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Move youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lookout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Bold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonjudgemental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Alabare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koinonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moxied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>youthful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quench</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Blend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Brave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unafraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk-takers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Abundance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I Data: Observations

- It always seems to be the same people doing everything
- Lay people who attend conventions (synod or national), need to be given more time to share their reports when they return
- Prayer helps in tough times, and focus on The Word  (2)
- We don’t fear that the church will die
- What will the church look like in the future
- Protests don’t work
- I hope racism ends one day
- What will the church look like in the future
- Too much emphasis now on social justice issues  (2)
- Lack of Liturgy
- Too much Liturgy
- Disrespectful services
- Lack of loyalty to a congregation these days
- Too much joking around
- People don’t go to church like they used to
- Membership doesn’t have as many requirements any more
- There is a lot of good ministry to celebrate
- Participation is as important as finances
- Conventions are exciting
- Frustrated with people who leave if they don’t agree
- Not all people use their voice
- Clergy salaries, benefits & housing is forced on congregations
- Culture of affluence is holding us back
In Argentina, the churches give funding to the National Church, which simply supplies congregations with pastors where needed.

- We sometimes choke ourselves with process
- Are we really “Evangelical”?
- We need more action
- We should focus on the will of the majority, not worry about the doubts of a few
- When we stop reaching out, we stop being the church
- God does not need to follow our rules
- People who have been hurt need to let it go
- We have to be spiritual people
- Need to move on and move forward
- Thrive & grow
- A compassionate church wouldn’t be accused of hypocrisy
- The church is the congregation, not synod or national
- Called to act on our faith not just sing hymns
- Difficulty taking people away for week – but do need to go away
- “I wish I knew”

---


2 The following information contained below provided by Daryl Nelson (including yellow highlighting); the input merely listed the statement (think like a network).

Dave Gray on Work Like a Network and the Role of Hierarchies

By Siobhan Fagan | Aug 26, 2014

It's been two years since Dave Gray published "The Connected Company" with Thomas Vander Wal. Since then, the disruptions to the marketplace noted in the book have only accelerated. But companies are still struggling to keep pace.

At the time of the book's release, Gray noted a lesson from evolution — organisms must evolve with their surroundings or risk extinction. It's a lesson many businesses have learned the hard way.

How to Work Like a Network

We reached out to Gray to find out what it looks like to "work like a network." Gray, former senior vice president of strategy at Dachis Group (since acquired by Sprinklr), now acts as founder of the business design consultancy XPLANE, where he focuses on the challenges of driving innovation and change in large organizations.
Fagan: How would you define “working like a network”?

Gray: Most organizations are formally organized as a hierarchy. The org chart is a kind of tree, where branches represent different functions. The formal org chart is an idealized picture of the way work is organized. But in reality, people don’t like to be controlled, and every formal hierarchy is resisted by a kind of shadow organization that resists and subverts it.

In addition, a formal hierarchy is optimized for internal efficiency, which is not the same as efficient for customers. This is why we wait on hold when calling customer support, even though the recorded message says “your call is important to us” (of course we know that’s a lie. If the call was important they would answer it, right?).

Instead of being organized for its own internal efficiency, a connected company is organized to be efficient for customers. This kind of organization requires a different approach, something that I call podular design.

A connected company is designed around three main principles:

1. Workers are organized in pods, or small teams, that can operate independently without a lot of need for formal approval or permissions from higher-ups.

2. This relative autonomy is made possible by platforms — support systems and structures that allow teams to self-organize, giving them access to the tools, expertise and information they need to do their work. Platforms also include the policies and boundaries that people in the company must adhere to.
3. The work is coordinated by a strong sense of common purpose. People in connected companies understand who they are working for, and why the work is important.

When combined strategically, pods, platforms and purpose create a powerful form of organization that is fast, flexible and adaptive, by which I mean it can learn quickly and adapt to new market situations faster than a traditional hierarchy.

**Fagan:** Your work often focuses on cultural change. Can you explain where culture fits in change initiatives?

**Gray:** Culture is like the operating system on a computer. It is the hidden software that is embedded in the daily routines, habits, and behaviors of a group. It’s “how things work around here” and much of the cultural dynamics are not written down in the rule book. They have to be learned on the job, by watching others and copying their behavior. Culture manifests itself in who gets hired, who gets rewarded, who gets punished and who gets fired.

Like an operating system, culture makes some things possible and others impossible. Since culture is the behaviors and habits of a group, any change that requires behaviors to change will require the culture to change as well, even if only in a small way. The larger the change, the more important it is to examine the culture which will be the operating system the change depends upon.

For the last few years I have been working on a design tool, called the Culture Map, which helps people have better conversations about their culture and shines a light on their cultural strengths and weaknesses (and every culture has both).

The question “what is the right culture for our company” depends on many factors. A good culture is a good fit for the company’s competitive environment. Since environments change, what may have been a great culture a few years ago may need to change in order to be relevant in the future.

**Fagan:** What can companies do to build agility and/or resiliency into their business models?
Gray: Companies should consider the rate of change in their marketplace, as well as the degree of customer-centricity that is needed. The more customer-centric they need to be, and the faster their markets are changing, the more they should consider a more podular design.

Fagan: Do you see any place for hierarchies in modern businesses?

Gray: Absolutely. I do not now and I never have advocated the abolition of hierarchies. It is just as important for organizations to have managers and leaders today as it has ever been. Most connected companies have managers and leaders, and a formal chain of command. But they operate differently. A connected company’s leaders focus on communicating purpose with clarity and passion, and they focus on creating platforms and work environments that allow people to self-organize and do their best possible work.

Most organizations have policies, processes, procedures and policing that are designed to reduce their liability risk and increase their internal efficiency. This way of running a company is like the old Soviet Union, where strategies are determined at the top, five-year plans are made, and the jobs roll down to individuals who don’t have a lot of choice in the matter.

A connected company is more like a city. There is a hierarchy, a mayor, departments who keep the streets clean, the lights on and what have you. There are police to maintain order when necessary. But for the most part, the city runs itself, and the city government focuses on making it attractive and possible for citizens to self-organize and create wealth for everyone.