

## MAP Stage 3: Storytelling Event

# Parish History Night

## About the workshop

### Set up

Tape papers to wall; write on top "parish" and on bottom "community"  
Tables are optional if scribes use clipboards.

### Food

This works best if there is lots of good food and a generally relaxed and social feel.

### Supplies

Two long sheets of paper  
Painter's tape  
Digital camera  
Coloured markers

### Follow up

Within a few days of this event, the MAP Leadership Team, clergy and mentor should meet. Questions to focus this discussion include:

- What did you hear?
- What didn't you hear?
- In light of what we did and didn't hear, what do we do next?

**Total time: 2 hours**

## Advance preparation

The MAP Leadership team should guide the small group discussions and take notes (see Exercise 3). They need to know in advance that they have this responsibility, and come prepared to listen and take notes rather than contribute their own thoughts (they'll have a chance later).

The questions that guide the small group discussions are:

- a. What stood out for you? Why?
- b. How did the parish respond to the biggest challenges?
- c. How did the parish respond to the greatest gifts?
- d. How did the parish respond to the biggest changes?
- e. What values do you see expressed here?

It is important that MAP team members listen carefully to the discussion on several levels: They must listen to what is being said, listen beneath what is being said, and listen for what is not said. It might be helpful for team members to write down their insights after the session, for discussion at the follow up meeting.

## Agenda

**1. Gathering worship/prayers** (5 mins)  
See attached.

**2. Introduction** (10 mins)

The facilitator gives a brief overview of the parish's mandate, including why they are doing MAP and the mandate questions. Explains that in MAP storytelling is a way of discovering the parish's values and hopes for the future. (See sample introduction.)

**3. Exercise 1. Interview** (20 mins)

Facilitator explains: "Each of us has a sacred story, personally and in community. Our faith is not private, it is corporate: we are the body of Christ. We each have a part of that story; now is the chance to share it."

Facilitator instructs participants to:

- find someone they don't know and/or who is different from them (older/younger, male/female, &c).
- take about 15 minutes to interview each other (7 minutes each)
- as the interviewer, ask only one question then really listen (facilitator needs to stress this point: it is not a conversation)
- the question: "Tell me about your best experience with St. X's. When did you feel most alive, spiritually touched, most excited about your involvement? Think of details: what made it exciting? Who was involved? Describe how you felt."

Bring people back into whole with two questions: "How do you feel now? Did anything about this surprise you?"

## Contact information

M.A.P. Resource Associate  
604-684-6306 ext 227 or 1-800-665-1105  
tcarrothers@vancouver.anglican.ca  
© 2009 Diocese of New Westminster



Diocese of New Westminster

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA  
#580 - 401 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5A1

# Agenda, con't

## 4. Exercise #2. Memory wall (30 mins)

The next part of this session involves creating a "memory wall". The facilitator explains to the participants:

- remember what you can of your history, both the parish history and the community history.
- it can be organized however the participants like, by date, by rector, or by decade.
- This is more about what people remember, not about finding a "correct" history. An important element is to let historical accuracy take second place to memory.

Facilitator can ask people to start with the stories they just shared.

Possible trigger questions about the parish:

- Tell me about when you first came to this church. Who was there to greet you? Who do you remember with fondness and gratitude?
- How has this church, supported you, taught you, touched you?
- What are some groups that have been significant over the years?
- Tell me about some good times, some difficult times
- Tell me about some things the parish did to reach out to others
- Tell me about worship at St. X's
- Tell me about the building; what does it mean to you?

Possible trigger questions about the community:

- What were some significant events in the neighbourhood?
- Tell me about the local community organizations, in the past and currently. Sports teams? Neighbourhood house? Fraternal organizations?
- Tell me about changes in neighbourhood: housing prices, social housing, schools, businesses
- Were there significant elections, MPs, MLAs, community leaders
- How has immigration changed the neighbourhood?

## 5. Exercise #3. Discussion (25 mins)

The facilitator explains

- The task is to think about these stories in small groups.
- Participants can choose who they sit with.
- A member of the MAP team will guide the discussion.
- The purpose is to look for common themes. These stories point to the values that people in this community once held. Do you still? What has changed?

## 6. Closing exercise (15 mins)

Facilitator asks each table to share their observations. A few minutes each. Probably no conversation.

## 7. Closing prayers (5 mins)

See order of service.

# Sample introduction

"Why are we here today? A few months ago St. X began the Ministry Assessment Process. MAP is a framework that helps parishes figure out what they want their future to look like and how they are going to get there. It is one way for communities to answer the question: what is God calling us to do and be?"

You identified three reasons to look closely at what you do now and what you will do in the future: [from preamble]

- You are having money troubles and are running on reserve funds.
- The neighbourhood has changed a lot; there are fewer Anglicans.
- The building needs a lot of expensive work.

But you know that despite these challenges, you want to continue to provide an Anglican presence in X community. So you are taking some time through the Ministry Assessment Process to think about four things: [from mandate questions]

- What is the mission of the church?
- Do we really want to grow the church?
- What money and people do we need to be the church we want?
- What about the building?

These are four main questions that your committee figured would help sort out your solutions to the challenge of buildings, finances and changing neighbourhood. But before you can answer these, you need to think a bit more about who you are and what you care about.

So now we come to today. In order to figure out where God is calling you, you need to know who you are, what you care about and how you treat each other in good times and rough. One way to get at this is to tell stories. As the prayers just now reminded us, we are a people whose faith is grounded in stories. Christian author Daniel Taylor has written: "We tell stories because we hope to find or create significant connections between things. Stories link past, present and future in a way that tells us where we have been, where we are, and where we could be going." So we are here today to tell stories and to listen. When we are done, there is still more work for your committee, but they and you will understand better what you care about."

# Closing worship

Great Listener,

Holy Centre of all our stories,  
We give thanks for the gift of remembering.  
We give thanks for our founders  
and we offer our stories of joy and burden to You.

We are blessed and shaped by our stories,  
**We are grounded in our history.**  
We are graced by God's presence and resurrection.  
**We are called to new life.**  
From our stories told and shared,  
We find the seeds of new beginnings.  
**Today we commit to being founders of a future story.**  
**In our new story, we are your people, O God.**

**Reshape us, O Holy God,  
until in generosity, in faith,  
and in expectation  
that the best is yet to come,  
we are rendered truly Christ-like.**

**Make us passionate followers of Jesus  
rather than passive supporters.**

**Make our hearts as well as our churches  
places of radical discipleship  
and signposts to Heaven,  
Then, in us, through us,  
And—if need be—despite us,  
Let your dream for earth come quickly. Amen.**

*The Paschal Candle is extinguished.*

The light of Christ is in our midst.  
**We go carrying the light of Christ in our hearts and lives.**  
Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

# Opening Worship

*Lighting the Paschal Candle*

The light of Christ is in our midst.  
**Thanks be to God.**  
Out of darkness comes the light.  
**Shine upon us, let us see this new dawn.**  
Out of this darkness comes new life.  
**Let our hearts and lives shine with your love and  
compassion.**  
The light of Christ is in our midst.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*The Bible is brought forward.*

We bring forward holy stories, many and varied,  
that tell of our human experience,  
stories giving life and breath to the wondrous  
presence of God.  
**We give thanks for the sacred story of God  
centering and grounding our human lives.**

*Silence*

Through our faith stories we live into the presence of God.

*Silence*



Holy Creator,

In stories we hear about the beginning of creation.  
Your breath sweeps over the face of the waters,  
You give life to all creation.

You surround us with possibilities beyond belief,  
And even in our nakedness you clothe us  
and prepare us for the wider world.

**We are your people, in your story, O God.**

In stories we hear about a great flood.

You saved Noah, his family,  
and a multitude of animals.

We hear how new life emerges from the watery disaster,  
then in the splendour of a rainbow,

You promise to endure with us forever.

**We are your people, in your story, O God.**

When you called Israel out of slavery,  
You brought them through the wilderness  
into the promised land.

When your people were taken into exile,  
You wept with them by the river of Babylon  
and carried them home.

**We are your people, in your story, O God.**



Through stories of a wonderful light in the night skies

You sent your Son Jesus Christ  
to share our human nature,  
to live and die as one of us.

In parables Jesus tells stories that lead us  
into a new vision of your kingdom here on earth.

**We are your people, in your story, O God.**

Through the story of death and the wonder of Easter day,  
we hear a story that refuses to let us go,  
refuses to let grief overwhelm us.

We hear a story that longs to hold us  
and allows possibility to grow in our own hearts.

**In the holiness of story we find you, O God.**

**In the holiness of story you find us, O Searching One.**

*Starting our story telling*

Great Listener,  
Holy Centre of all our stories,

Guide us and enliven us

As we bring to life the stories of our community.

**In our telling we will seek your transforming hand  
because we are your people, in your story, O God. Amen.**