Christ Church,
Frederica

Annual Leadership Retreat

2014

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Note: We are not assuming that all the material in this packet will be used. It is here so we have it available if our conversation moves in a related direction. It may also be used by the parish at a later time.

Purposes & Schedule

Overall Purposes of Leadership and Vestry Retreats

A yearly leadership conference that is a mix of:

1. Developing strategies and plans for the improvement of parish life & ministry. This would be based on a process of reflecting on and learning about, the whole, or some area of parish life
2. Community building among parish leaders
3. Spiritual development
4. Increasing the common competencies of parish leaders for the above. Part of our purpose is for the vestry and other leaders to increase their skills and knowledge for congregational development and leadership.

Specific areas of interest for this year:

1. Clarity concerning the primary task of the parish church
2. Anglican spiritual life and practice, including the role of service (outreach)
3. Membership growth in context of Anglican culture and spiritual practice
4. Leadership clarity about Christ Church priorities

Note: Elements may be changed as needed to work with issues that emerge in the course of the work.

Friday Evening

5:00 Arrival & Social Time
6:00 Supper
7:00 Work Session: 1) Overview 2) Connecting 3) Getting started
9:00 Compline – beginning with intro to doing the Office in a group (Michelle); then Compline
9:30 Social time

Saturday

8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Morning Prayer (led by Bob & Michelle)
9:20 Work Session
10:30 Break
10:45 Work Session
12:00 Lunch
1:00 Work Session
4:00 End afternoon session – a group of vestry members will leave for the evening
6:00 Supper
7:00 Work Session – remaining group focuses on priorities that emerged earlier in the day
9:00 Compline
9:20 Social Time

Sunday …. Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

8:00 Breakfast
8:45 Holy Eucharist
9:30 Work Session – 1) Wrap up as needed – next steps, 2) Evaluation
12:00 Lunch

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Spiritual Maps: So we may become stronger in love and faith

A map offers a system of spiritual life rather than a list of assorted practices. A useful system will provide a balance of nurture and stretching. It will include our inner life and our outer life. In such a system our inclinations and gifts are supported and allowed to flourish and the less developed parts of us are drawn out and developed. All so we may become stronger in love and faith;; more resilient, with a broader mind and an enlarged heart.

Maps are useful things.

1. They are based on the experience of many others. This is how others have made the journey.

2. They help you get somewhere .If you want to grow in the spiritual life it may help to have a guide.

3. They change as the circumstances of life change. In a world of rapid change and loose ties among people we have an increased need for a sense of perspective, being in community, and engaging daily routines that give us ground to stand upon.

4. They are only useful if people find them useful. People vary in temperament and spiritual inclination. Maps can provide too much or too little detail for different groups of people. The old maps, whether of 1932 or of 1976, continue to serve those able to embrace them. Our hope is that the map we offer here will serve many people seeking ancient practices to help them effectively and faithfully engage contemporary life.

From *In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practice*, Robert A. Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2011

William James said that religious belief is "the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto." James was speaking of much more than something like a spiritual map. His concern may have been more akin to the writer of Hebrews, "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." But at the boundaries of that unseen order exist all the practices that bring us into unity, give us hope and faith, and help us abide in love. These are the ancient ways of the spiritual life that maps of spiritual make more visible and accessible.

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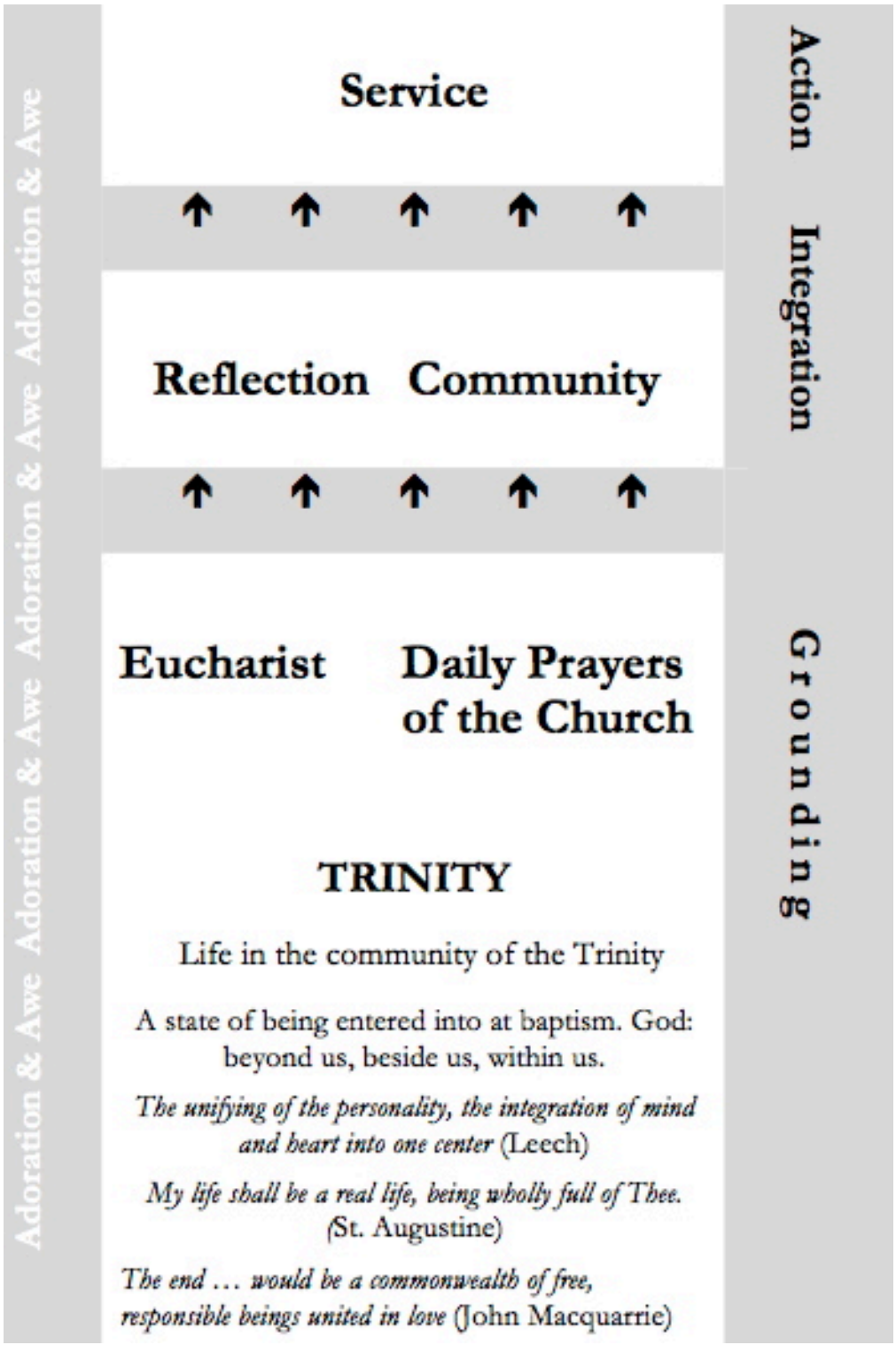
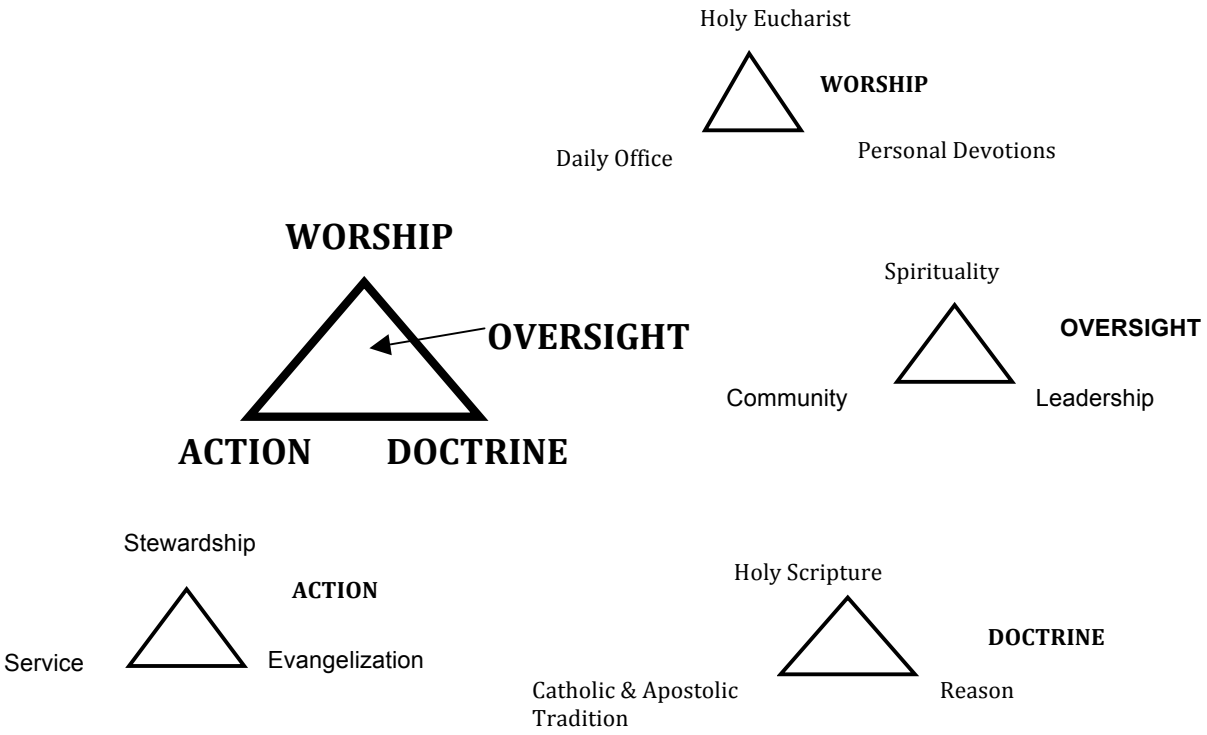


A Map of Spiritual Practices. © 2011, Michelle Heyne & Robert Gallagher. From the companion books, *In Your Holy Spirit: Traditional Spiritual Practices in Today's Christian Life* and *In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practice*. Published by Ascension Press of the Order of the Ascension.

The Christian Life Model

In a world where carpenters get resurrected, everything is possible.
Eleanor in *The Lion in Winter*



- Each element is a way in which Christ comes to us and in which we seek Christ. Each is an entry into, and participation in, the unity to which we are called. In them we are called into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ - the heart of Christ, the mind of Christ, the work of Christ.

- The model can be used by parishes for self assessment, as a framework for planning, as a way to focus the parish on the essentials of the Christian life, and as a resource to individuals in shaping a Rule of Life. Each triangle is a system of mutual influence in which the elements strengthen and impact the other elements.

Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1982, 1985, 2006, 2008
For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church, 2008* and *Power from on High: A Model for Parish Life and Development*, 1982

Interview Process

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Interviews are not only a data gathering process but are also system interventions. They are not neutral; they affect the people being interviewed and those doing the interviewing. This process is designed to be used as a means to help participants explore both the interviewing process and the issues raised in the interviews.

The same basic tool may be used as a congregational development intervention, in an expanded process, involving a significant portion of a congregation's members. Such a process might open up issues regarding a congregation's living of the Renewal-Apostolate Cycle -- helping a community both come to appreciate what is done well and to improve.

Interview Questions

1. What are the major sources of pressures, demands and expectations in your life? How do you see them as helpful or stressful, etc?

2. How do you work at "balancing" these expectations, demands and pressures?

3. How do you renew yourself emotionally and physically?

4. How do you renew yourself spiritually?

5. How does your practice of Christian faith and/or the congregation's life help or hinder each of the areas noted above?

    a. Expectations/demands/pressures

    b. Emotional/physical renewal

    c. Spiritual renewal

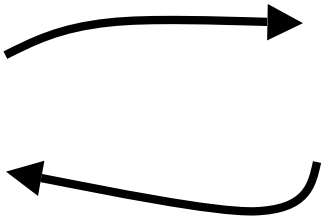
6. How does your practice of Christian faith and/or the congregation's life relate to your work, family and civic life?

The Renewal – Apostolate Cycle

The Renewal - Apostolate Cycle is a way of describing a central dynamic of Christian life. The Cycle focuses our attention on the Christian's movement between being renewed in baptismal identity and purpose and living as instruments of God's love and grace in daily life. The Cycle is interested in both the individual's movement and in the ways in which the parish church supports and facilitates that movement.

RENEWAL

Renewal in baptismal identity and purpose in worship, study and being equipped , for Christian action



APOSTOLATE

Participation in the work of Christ in service, evangelization and stewardship
In areas of:

- Workplace
- Family & Friends
- Civic Life
- Church

A Cycle

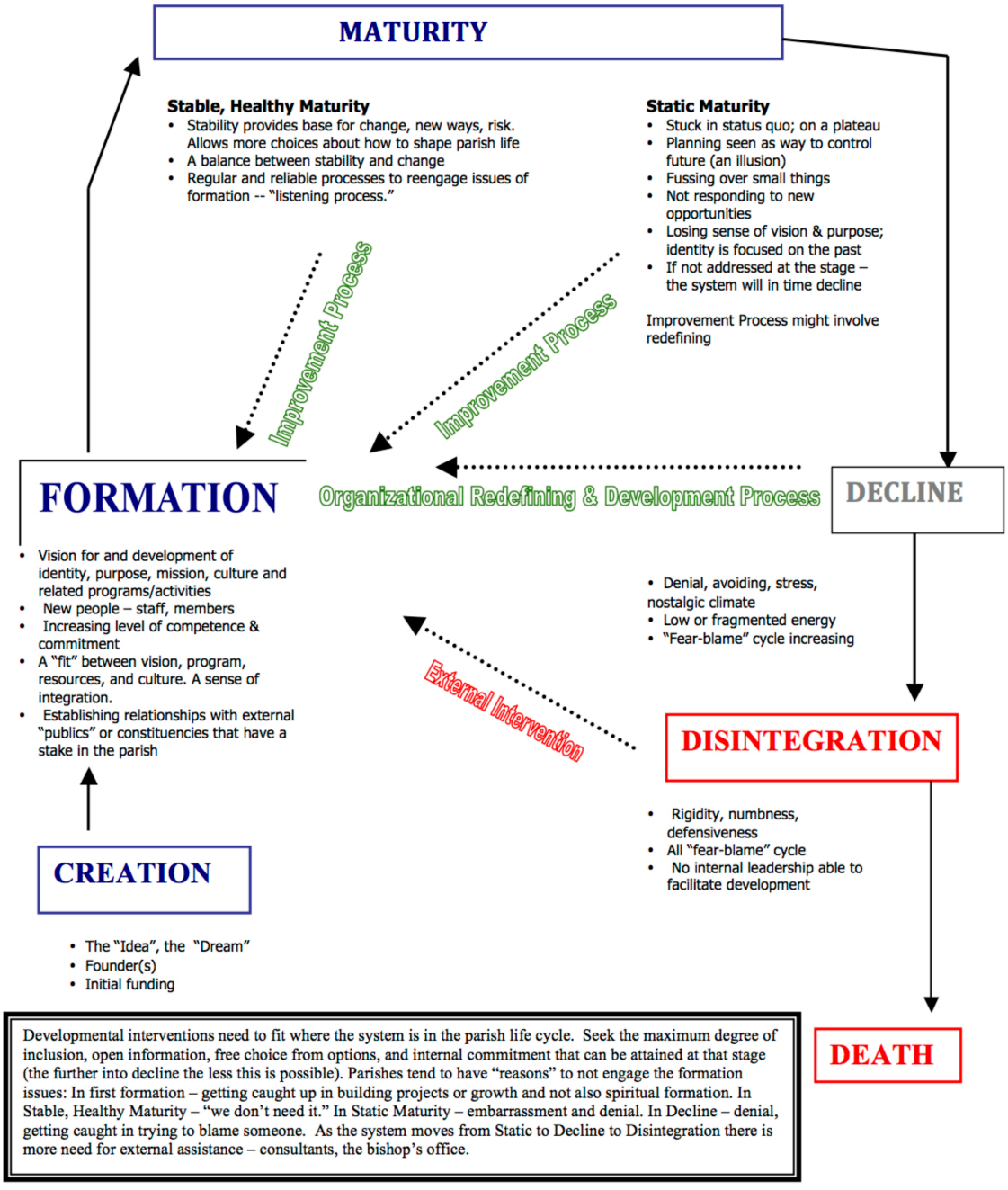
The cycle is between a conscious and intentional attention to God, prayer life, our relationships, Christian formation **and** a subconscious reliance upon God as members of the Body of Christ, in the workplace, family, civic life and congregational life.

In that Cycle:

We need:	**Which is helped by:**	**Which the parish helps by:**
To accept our dependence on God	Openness to spiritual guidance	An emphasis in its life on worship; nothing comes before the Eucharist and Daily Office. Also, more attention to formation and spiritual growth than other programs or ministries.
To accept responsibility for ordering our spiritual life	Establishing a rule of life	Offering programs and guidance in creating, experimenting with, and revising a spiritual discipline.
To accept our interdependence with others in the Church	Life in Christian community, a parish church	Being a healthy and faithful parish church and by helping people relate to the parish community in ways appropriate to their personality and the parish's capacities.

© Robert A. Gallagher, 1985, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006.
For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, Ascension Press

PARISH LIFE CYCLE



Developmental interventions need to fit where the system is in the parish life cycle. Seek the maximum degree of inclusion, open information, free choice from options, and internal commitment that can be attained at that stage (the further into decline the less this is possible). Parishes tend to have "reasons" to not engage the formation issues: In first formation – getting caught up in building projects or growth and not also spiritual formation. In Stable, Healthy Maturity – "we don't need it." In Static Maturity – embarrassment and denial. In Decline – denial, getting caught in trying to blame someone. As the system moves from Static to Decline to Disintegration there is more need for external assistance – consultants, the bishop's office.

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Doug Walrath's Version of Size Categorizing

	Very Small	Small	Middle-Sized	Moderately Large	Very Large
Average Sunday Adult Attendance	Under 50	40 - 100	75 - 200	150 - 400	Over 350
Key Characteristics	Tight-knit group; regular interaction	Familiar faces; Dominant core group	Full time priest; "full program"	Diverse community & program	Comprehensive program; specialized staff
Typical Interaction Pattern	Know one another & regular interaction	Majority have regular interaction	Clergy & some lay have current information on members; most interact regularly, some only within sub-groups	Same as for middle size. But only a core interact regularly; majority interact in sub-groups	No one has current information about all members. Regular interaction is all in sub-groups
Typical Planning Pattern	Spontaneous, informal. Based on member experience	Usually spontaneous, informal. . Based on member experience	Usually formal; by vestry & rector. Based on group data and at times research	Formal. By vestry, rector & sub-groups. Often a lot of research	Formal. Vestry or planning group coordinates sub-groups. Usually uses a consultant. Formal research.

Size and Dynamics

As mentioned before, as the parish grows there will be a tendency to increase coordination, routines and standard practices, formal communication and decision-making processes. For example:

TRUST DEVELOPMENT

Smaller sized parishes tend to rely more on interpersonal relations. Larger parishes more on the system's processes and structures. Trust involves the experience of behavior that shows reliability, responsiveness and congruence. In smaller parishes it is more in the relationships among people, and between leaders and the group. It is very "personal", i.e., "I trust Mary". In larger parishes the reliability needs to be seen in the decision-making processes; the congruence in the alignment between stated core values and organizational practices.

COMMUNICATION

In smaller parishes communication is more word of mouth. Word of mouth continues to be a factor in all size parishes. It's one that larger parishes sometimes overlook or attempt to shut down. As size increases additional methods are used. Communication "out" by a quarterly newsletter; announcements in the Sunday bulletin; an e-mail announcement system. As size increases the reliance on a web site or printed materials usually increases. It's simply no longer possible for most people in the system to get accurate information by a "word of mouth" system. There is more bringing information "in" from the members by survey and testing processes or group discussions. Large parishes may make special efforts at getting all leaders "on the same page". Even offering "talking points" about how to explain some issue the parish faces.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

In a smaller parishes the effectiveness of communication (in all directions) and the level of trust can be increased by having leaders with competencies in interpersonal communications, human interaction and group dynamics. In a larger parish those skills are still important but need to be added onto with skills in large group gatherings, design skills, organizational dynamics, etc.

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Size and the Parish's Primary Task

My assumption is that most Episcopal churches see the primary task of the parish to be the formation of members - growth into the maturity of Christ. As a denomination it is one of our strengths. We know something about spiritual life and development. In another place I use a model to diagram the way in which the primary task is engaged. In the *Renewal-Apostolate Cycle* the task is pictured as a movement between those things that *renew* a person in baptismal identity and purpose and an *apostolate* in their daily life. In *renewal* we are made "light"; in *apostolate* the light shines in our families, workplaces and civic involvement. To use Evelyn Underhill's images, in *renewal* we are "given…to God, laid on His altar as a sacrifice of love, and consecrated, transformed by His inpouring life" and in *apostolate* we are "to be used to give life and food to other souls".

There are three assumptions I make between the ministry of formation and parish size:

1. People can grow in Christ in any size parish. That's based on the assumption that any size parish can live a complete Christian life. All parishes are engaged in "restoring people to unity with God and each other in Christ." All parishes are places of worship-doctrine-action.
2. Some sized parishes may serve some people better than others. Some will grow best in a small parish, others in a larger parish. Some people work out their baptismal life best in a small community in which they know and are known. Others find more formal educational and training programs useful.
3. It may be that the Episcopal Church's culture and approach to spiritual formation is more effective in some sizes than in others. The images many Episcopalians carry of the parish church is of a parish in which you know, and are known, by many other people, including the priest. Formation is largely by participation in the Sunday Eucharist and in the exchanges of the community that gathers for that Eucharist.

In general, you interfere with effective attention to the primary task when you live out-of-alignment. Insisting on a series of standing committees and programs in a small parish is a way of draining energy into administration. Managing that structure, and coping with the resistance that is likely to emerge, is where the energy goes. The need remains to work at the primary task in a manner that fits a small church. The same problem occurs in a large parish when the rector spends a lot of time visiting people or the vestry insists that it must be involved in everything. It focuses the leadership's attention on making something work that is out-of-alignment. It creates unproductive stress in parish life. More importantly it establishes a "demand system" that draws the attention of leaders away from the primary task.

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The Organizational Culture of Anglicanism

Anglicanism has a culture, an ethos. The interest of congregational development is:
1. How that culture shows itself in parish churches
2. How that culture is responsive to the influence of the social culture in which it exists.

What follows is a taste of the organizational culture of Anglicanism. Please understand that these are shortened statements of the writers more complete view. Participants may benefit from reading the full text.

From *The Anglican Way*, James Fenhagen, Forward Movement
1. **Comprehensiveness** -- "rather than doctrinal uniformity ...being able to hold together seeming opposites"
2. **Personal Holiness** -- "emerging from the inter-relationship between liturgical participation, solitude and compassion ... weaves together a concern for personal freedom with an emphasis on beauty and joyfulness and awe"
3. **Holy Worldliness** -- "life affirming rather than pleasure denying...; calls people to faith not out of guilt or fear, but of a vision of God.."

From *A People Called Episcopalians*, John Westerhoff, St. Luke's, Atlanta.
Describes Anglican Spirituality as having these characteristics:
1. **Liturgical/Biblical** -- "rooted in communal daily prayer ... intended to shape our relationship to God"
2. **Communal** -- "communal prayer always comes before personal prayer, which is to be shaped by communal prayer ... before decisions are made ..the community gathers in the context of communal prayer and meditation on the Scriptures so that the Holy Spirit might inform and influence our decisions"
3. **Sacramental** -- "outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace ...informs our conviction that just as Christ was the sacrament of God, the church is called to be the sacrament of Christ in the world ...implies that our spirituality is political, combining both the contemplative and the active"
4. **Pastoral** -- "our relationship to God is measured by our relationship to out true self, all people, and the natural world"
5. **Incarnational** -- "emphasis on God's entry into human life .. has resulted in an earthy spirituality ... affirm life in this world and believe that the body, pleasure, and material reality are fundamentally good"
6. **Mystical** -- "emphasizes a long slow journey into union with God"

Describes Anglican temperament with these characteristics:
7. **Comprehensive** -- "truth is known and guarded by maintaining the tension between counter-opposite statements concerning truth ...personal freedom and communal responsibility, ...sacred and secular"
8. **Ambiguous** -- "living with what may appear to be irreconcilable differences ... tolerate theological and ethical messiness ... wait patiently ... pray with a discerning heart, and to listen with an open mind"
9. **Open-minded** -- "encourage a searching, questioning, reasonable mind always open to new insights and change"
10. **Intuitive** -- "prefer art to philosophy and are more at home in the world of symbol, myth and ritual than systematic theology"
11. **Aesthetic** -- "Truth, goodness, and beauty are related to each other in that the presence of one is judged by the presence of the other two"
12. **Moderate** -- "model a temperate, balanced, reasonable approach to life. It is a life in which prayer, work, study and play have a rhythm"

13. **Naturalistic** -- "reverence for and take delight in the natural earthy rhythm of life ... contributions of natural sciences... using live flowers, real candles"
14. **Historical** -- "learn from a careful reflection on the past ... strive to maintain our roots"
15. **Political** -- "affirm free, peaceful, public debate as a basis for political unity ... church should influence social, political, and economic life"

From *What is Anglicanism?*, Urban Holmes, Morehouse Publ.
Holmes sees Anglicanism as "a unique way of looking, making sense and acting in the experience of God .. At its best in liturgy, poetry, music and its life" not in writing great theology. Note characteristics such as:
Sensibility -- taking into account the whole of experience, ambiguity and all
Mystery of the ordinary -- in that the extraordinary shines through in the ordinary
Feminine -- comprehensiveness, darkness and light

In *The Anglican Vision*, James Griffiss, Cowley
He speaks of -

- **Tension of continuity and change**
- **Incarnational**
- **Roomiest church** -- tolerant of doctrinal differences and a diversity of practice

In *The Future of Anglicanism*, Robert Hannaford, ed., Gracewing, Leominster, Herefordshire
Paul Avis notes -

- **Affirmation (of central truths) and restraint**
- **Practical not speculative faith**
- **Liturgical rehearsing of faith**

In *The Renewal of Anglicanism*, Alister McGrath, Morehouse He notes -

- **Live with differences**
- **Dynamics among:**
    - **Mainline: Apologetics** -- to make Christianity credible and relevant
    - **Evangelical: Evangelism** -- vitality of the Gospel
    - **Catholic: Spirituality** -- resources needed to grow in faith

Robert A. Gallagher, 1999

Episcopal Spirituality

The Episcopal Church has developed a particular form of Christian spirituality that has emerged from its roots in Anglicanism and in the American experience. That spirit can be found in most parishes and dioceses of the church (but not all). What follows is just one attempt to describe that spirituality.

A Christian Spirituality

Grounded in the love of God for humanity as seen in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Christian Life is life lived in Christ: "Christ in us and we in him." Worship, doctrine and action are the means by which we participate in the life of Christ's Body, the Church; in her unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. They are the means by which we participate in the Church's mission, "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." We are restored to unity as we are drawn into the prayer of Christ, the mind of Christ, and the work of Christ. In prayer, study, and work we become instruments of God's holy mission.

A Spirituality of Beauty

We tend to take delight in the natural rhythm of life. We rejoice in the beauty of creation and have a strong commitment to environmental protection. Our worship strives for good music, a sense of flow and grace, and poetry and drama. We seek beauty in our worship space using artists, live flowers, and real candles in creating an appropriate climate.

A World-Embracing Spirituality

- Our tendency is to **affirm life and this world**. Those things in life that give us pleasure are understood as being fundamentally good. Fun, our bodies, material things, good food are all accepted as part of living a full life. Our call to faith is linked to hope and love rather than fear and guilt.
- For most of us the **Christian life is lived in the context of our family, work and civic life**. Those are the places in which the love of Christ may flow through us to offer light and hope in the world. We generally see that process as organic rather than planned. To the extent we have been touched by the love of God we will show that love in our daily life.
- We see Christian faith as **having political implications**. Episcopalians have a long history of involvement in the civic life of communities and the nation. The individual Christian is called to both inform and act on their conscience. The church doesn't usually ask its members to accept particular political views but it does ask members to consider in their thinking process what might be understood from the Scriptures, what the church has learned over the centuries (as seen in the Tradition and the contemporary councils of the church) and in their own Reason. As a church we take positions on public issues. Those positions are usually on the liberal side of the political spectrum.

An Adult Spirituality

We value **personal responsibility and freedom** in the process of shaping and living life as a Christian. Adults are invited to **explore and experiment with** the resources of Christian and Anglican spirituality to discover ways that best nurture them in the Christian life. We understand that what feeds one person may not feed another. We each work out our relationship with God, each other, creation and self in unique ways. The adult Christian shapes a spiritual life that fits his or her own personality and circumstances. Please note -- this isn't about whether children are included (they are) but about what kind of adults we hope children will become.

A Balanced-Holistic Spirituality

We are moderate, seeking a balanced, reasonable approach to life. It is a life in which prayer, work, study and play have a rhythm, taking into account the whole of experience, ambiguity and all.

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An Organic Spirituality

We understand individual spiritual development to be rooted in communal daily prayer that shapes our relationship to God. Decisions are made in the context of communal prayer so the Holy Spirit fills and enfolds us. We are sacramental - "outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace;" as Christ was the sacrament of God, the church is the sacrament of Christ in the world.

An Open–Minded Spirituality

- Our way has stressed **an open-minded, searching approach** to faith. Engagement with God and the church is intended to open us to the mystery that is God. So doubt, questioning, exploration and openness to new insights is a path to God and wholeness of life. This involves being open to what may be learned: from studying and praying the Scriptures, from the wisdom gained as the church has struggled with life's issues in the past, from the councils of the church today, from the insights and views of other people, and from the application of our own reason and what we have learned from our experience.
- We see value in **comprehensiveness and ambiguity**. Our way includes holding opposites in tension, appreciating paradoxical thinking, assuming that what appears to be irreconcilable differences may contain a balanced truth, allowing a certain messiness and grayness in our theological and ethical thinking. Living in this way means developing a tolerance of differences in thinking and practice. It also calls for a capacity to listen deeply and respectfully, to have courage in expressing one's own understanding, to wait on God in silence and with patience. Our unity is not the unity of sameness of thought but a unity of trust in God and God's wisdom. This makes for a roomy church with space for many (as long as they will accept allowing space for others).

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Core Communication and Feedback Skills

Communication Skills

Paraphrase - saying back to the speaker what you heard them say. The goal is to accurately grasp the content of their idea. You may either repeat exactly what was said or you may summarize, restate the essence of what the speaker said.

- A useful method is to begin your response with ***"I hear you saying …"***

Itemized Response - this involves giving a full response to a person's idea by telling them what you like/appreciate/can use in their idea *and* what concerns you about the idea. The assumption here is that it helps the group's work when we enable participation and seek what may be of value in each idea. For groups that have a hard time saying negative things, creating a formal structure where a complete response—including more negative responses—is the norm, can help groups learn to deal with differences productively.

Itemized Response helps:

- Keep unformed but possibly useful ideas alive, establish a supportive group climate, and helps us see the fullness of an idea.
- Avoid the common trap of either flat agreement or flat disagreement, which is important since our actual responses to most ideas are usually more complex than that.

In many cases, by identifying what, specifically, you like about an idea and what, specifically, concerns you, more useful information is made available to the group and to the individual. For example, the group is working on budget for adult formation and there's a proposal to add $2,000. Instead of indicating agreement or disagreement, participants make statements like this: "I am eager to commit more resources to adult formation but I am concerned about providing more in-depth and experiential offerings, rather than just bringing in forum speakers. I'd like to talk about the content and structure of adult formation, not just the money we spend."

- A useful method is to frame your responses using the following:

"What I like about it is …." ***"What concerns me is …"***

Active Listening - trying to state the feelings and underlying message that the speaker is communicating. It is helpful to state this as something you are "testing" rather than as a "truth." Allow yourself to be corrected as the person restates their message.

Making Statements Rather than Asking Questions or Sharing Opinions - this is to enable the group to stay with the issue being worked on. Frequently questions are really hidden statements, e.g., "don't you think it would be better if …". Similarly, abstract opinions without thoughtful consideration of impact, or where the speaker doesn't have a stake in the issue, can derail the group and prevent progress on the real issues in front of it.

Statements ("I think X has the best chance of success and I'd like us to make plans for presenting that at the next parish meeting") can enhance clarity and build trust to the extent they help identify realistic options as well as what group participants are actually thinking and feeling. Opinion sharing may better fit after work with beer or coffee.

The use of core communication skills:

• Tends to help focus the group's discussion. It reduces repetition and explaining "what I really meant to say ..."
• Important in de-escalating conflict; also in preventing misunderstandings. It provides everyone with a way to build agreements, clarify misunderstandings, and negotiate.
• Helps the group build on each other's ideas. Builds trust and strengthens relationships.
• Requires "group discipline" - using the skill even when it feels awkward; giving energy to it; putting aside your own judgments for the moment; being congruent in body language and tone of voice.
• You are working to respect others and yourself in a manner that is responsive and assertive rather than evasive, passive or aggressive. The skills assume that you are ready to give positive attention to the other person rather than only appearing to be engaged and listening.

Feedback Skills

Feedback may have several purposes – it may be information that expands a person's information about themselves and the effect they have on others; it may expand the person's range of choices; and it may be intended to support or discourage certain behavior.

Feedback is likely to be more effective if:

- The person receiving it acknowledges the need for it; especially if the person requests it
- It is timely; given near the time the behavior has occurred
- It is skillful

Skillful Feedback

- Be descriptive, provide information that describes the behavior and its impact on you; restrict the feedback to what you know (e.g., behavior you have seen and how it has impacted you).
- It is about the giver of the feedback, not the person receiving the feedback. It is an exploration of the effect the person's behavior has had on you. (Note – the same behavior may not have that effect on others.)
- Avoid exaggeration ("you always get this wrong"), labeling ("you are stupid"), and judgment
- Speak for yourself ("what I feel/experience when you ….") not for others ("Everyone gets upset when you ….")
- Don't press the person for any immediate response
- Face to face – not by e-mail

Skillfully Receiving Feedback

- Listen – if something helps you to listen do that, e.g., take notes, ask someone else to make notes on the feedback so you can focus on the speaker
- Ask questions to clarify – "could you give an example of that?", "when did that happen?", "who else was there?
- If others where present during the behavior the feedback is about, ask them to offer feedback about what the effect was on them
- Acknowledge valid points
- Open yourself. Do not get defensive (you may feel it, but don't act it). Stay focused on hearing what is being said.
- Take time to think about what has been said; if a response is necessary tell those offering the feedback that you will think about it and offer some response on a specific date.

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A formula for giving feedback

1. "When you ……"	Note the behavior; describe it as specifically as possible.
2. "I felt …."	Tell how the behavior affects you. This is just one or two words – frustrated, angry, pleased, etc.
3. "Because I …"	Share why you are affected that way. Note: This is an optional element and not recommended in most cases. Often ends up distracting from the impact statement. Those new to feedback may focus on the "because" as a way of minimizing or justifying the feedback and as an ineffective means (given the context) of lessening their own anxiety.

From Feedback to Negotiation of the Relationship

In lab settings, we generally give and receive feedback as a learning method, and so we stop with the formula shown above ("When you [*behavior*], I felt [*feeling*]"). In everyday life, we are more likely to give feedback in the context of negotiating some element of the relationship. Something is working well and we want it to continue; something isn't working or could be made even better. We give feedback to clarify what we're experiencing and to set the stage for next steps.

4. "I would like …"	What would you like the person to consider doing. As above, keep this focused on *behavior*.
5. "Because …"	Why you believe it will help.
6. "What do you think?"	Invite and hear the response; explore options.

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Feelings Sheet

Sad

Bleak
Blue
Crestfallen
Depressed
Devastated
Disconsolate
Empty
Grieving
Grim
Helpless
Hopeless
Melancholy
Mournful
Sorrowful
Woebegone
Woeful
Dejected
Discouraged
Dismal
Dispirited
Down
Downcast
Heavy
Lonely
Morose
Moved
Shame
Solemn
Sullen
Unhappy
Ashamed
Bored
Cheerless
Disappointed
Embarrassed
Hurt
Pained
Somber
Uninterested

Afraid

Alarmed
Distressed
Fearful
Frightened
Ghastly
Panic-stricken
Petrified
Scared
Shocked
Terrified
Agitated
Anxious
Apprehensive
Fainthearted
Insecure
Jittery
Nervous
Perturbed
Pessimistic
Shaky
Startled
Tense
Troubled
Uptight
Worried
Concerned
Coy
Diffident
Doubtful
Dubious
Edgy
Fidgety
Restless
Timid
Timorous
Uneasy
Unsettled
Unsure
Vulnerable

Mad

Angry
Boiling
Enraged
Fuming
Furious
Hateful
Hostile
Infuriated
Aggravated
Exasperated
Frustrated
Incensed
Indignant
Inflamed
Vengeful
Worked-up
Animosity
Enmity
Ireful
Irked
Miffed
Peeved
Sore
"Teed off"
Uneasy
Unhappy
Unsettled
Vexed

Glad

Alive
Cheerful
Delighted
Ecstatic
Elated
Energetic
Excited
Exuberant
Happy
Jubilant
Comfortable
Content
Enchanted
Exalted
Exquisite
Gay
Gleeful
Hilarious
Jolly
Jovial
Lighthearted
Peaceful
Pleased
Rapturous
Serene
Spirited
Vibrant
Warm
Zestful
Blithe
Blithesome
Tranquil

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Focusing on Strategic Issues

> *Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord.* A Collect for Guidance, *The Book of Common Prayer*

The prayer rightly assumes that we lose track of what's most important. We get caught up in all the "cares and occupations of our life." We just do, and we will.
For a parish, or any organization, to develop, it needs to give attention to strategic issues, including building its capacity through the development of its members and staff, capital improvements, and attending to long- range or systemic concerns. The chart below draws on the thinking of Stephen Covey. In Organization Development terms it explores the way the demand system works.

What the chart shows is how some things have urgency because the system is arranged in a manner that draws our attention. The parish has certain routine activities and existing groups that "demand" our energy and time. Because we expect coffee hour on Sunday some members do the shopping and setting up. Many participate because it's there to participate in. Because there is a financial committee meeting very third Wednesday people commit the evening and some do the needed advance work. Because June is agitated about the selection of hymns two members listen to her for 20 minutes after Mass. The parish's routine business, and even the interruptions, have a built in urgency that call on us to pay attention to them.

Other things can wait. They don't press themselves upon us. They are not urgent matters; even if they are important; even if we acknowledge their importance when asked. Few people notice if we don't do them. Creating and conducting an adult formation program, increasing Eucharistic competence, coaching people in prayer life, may all be seen as worthy activities. But if they aren't done few object.

In understanding how this works we can confuse ourselves by using the word "should." As in - "people 'should' feel an urgency about developmental matters." Maybe we "should" but we rarely do. Developmental work doesn't get experienced as pressing.

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Focusing on Strategic Issues

	URGENT	*NOT URGENT*
IMPORTANT	**I. Normal Parish Business** • The regular flow of work that the parish exists to do and does in support of that (such as the Eucharist and the choir rehearsal) • Crises • Pressing problems	**II. Parish Development** • Building parish capacity for health and the primary task • People development, an increase in competence for managing their spiritual life or doing the institutional work of the parish • Relationship building and trust development • Establishing a direction to move in (planning, visioning, identifying the three things that would most improve parish life) • Engaging new opportunities
NOT IMPORTANT	**III. Interruptions** • Some mail, phone, meetings, reports. • Other people's inconsequential issues.	**IV. Trivia** • Busy work • Some mail, phone calls, meetings • Time wasters

How to Improve the Parish's Health

	URGENT	*NOT URGENT*
IMPORTANT	**I. Normal Parish Business** **MANAGE**	**II. Parish Development** **FOCUS ON**
NOT IMPORTANT	**III. Interruptions** **AVOID**	**IV. Trivia** **AVOID**

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Ways to Focus the Parish on Strategic Issues

Manage the parish's routine life and business in a competent, thorough and efficient manner. Take care of what must be taken care of and do that well.

In order to get at the developmental issues work at establishing structures and processes (i.e., organizational behaviors) that focus on quadrant II. Examples include:

- A yearly leadership retreat focused on strategic issues, with at least the vestry and rector and perhaps with other key leaders.
- Use of a congregational development consultant.
- Placing on the parish schedule things like: Adult Foundation Courses sessions in the winter, spring and fall, annual quite days and spiritual retreats,
- Establishing a pattern of only dealing with strategic matters during every other vestry meeting or creating a strategic management group to focus on those matters while the vestry attends to more routine issues related to property and finances.
- Form and train a parish development team. If your diocese has a Shaping the Parish program or a Church Development Institute use the program to support and equip the team.

What you're doing when you do these things is creating a new "demand system." A yearly leadership retreat will usually generate energy among those attending. People will want to follow through on the ideas and decisions of the retreat. Things will be accomplished in the following months. And after several months the momentum created by the retreat will lessen. But for a few months it will have served as a demand system for important issues.

Giving adequate time to strategic issues is likely to result in an organization that has a sense of vision, balance, discipline, and fewer crises. Again, one of Covey's central propositions is that a key is learning to schedule your priorities rather than trying to prioritize your schedule. Organizational leaders need to strive for about 25% of their working time in Quadrant II.

As Stephen Covey said, "The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities."

We need to add activities and resources into parish life—literally put them on the calendar—that keep the important, transformative matters in front of us. In congregational development it means things like a yearly leadership retreat that works only on strategic matters; having a skilled external consultant; leaders receiving in-depth leadership training for congregational development, and developing a richer parish life of prayer through the Daily Office, and increasing the ability of members for participation in the Eucharist and their own personal devotions.

In relationship to spiritual practices it may mean taking actions such as:

- Scheduling Evening Prayer Monday through Friday and recruiting teams of two or more people to cover each evening.
- Parish clergy changing their schedule so they can be at Evening Prayer most days.
- Creating and scheduling a Foundations Course, with at least three units of three sessions each per year.

Assessing Your Spiritual Practices

SUNDAY EUCHARIST

1. Attendance (circle one)

Almost Never	About ¼ of the Time	Half the Time	¾ of the Time	Almost every Sunday

2. My ability to participate (Circle the number that is closest to your experience)

I am frequently confused and uncertain about how to participate				I can "flow" with it. I mostly don't need a Prayer Book or leaflet.
1	2	3	4	5

PARTICIPATING IN THE DAILY PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

3. **Saying the Office.** I say the Office in some form on my own or with others.

Never	Only when offered at a meeting or retreat	Sporadically or during some season(s) of the church year	Most days

4. **Knowing how** to do the Daily Office.

I have no idea.			I understand how to use it in the Prayer Book and ways to innovate the use
1	2	3	4	5

DISCIPLINED WAYS OF REFLECTING ["Listen to your life"]

Grounding/centering yourself so you can reflect. The spiritual practice of "pondering" and seeking God's presence in the people, circumstances and things of life. Practices that connect daily life to God.

5. Ways that work for me

I don't have ways that work for me			I have ways that are effective for me
1	2	3	4	5

PARTICIPATING IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY

6. The community I seek is one in which people are free to be themselves; to speak and listen fully and authentically. In which differences are accepted (we can fight with those we love). In which we can make decisions and solve the problems we face.

I don't want church to be that way			It is what I seek and more
1	2	3	4	5

7. Connection with people

I don't know anyone well			I know a number of people and have a few friends in the parish
1	2	3	4	5

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8. Participation in parish social life

Not at all				I participate regularly and frequently
1	2	3	4	5

SERVICE

9. In Daily Life—with family & friends, at work, in civic life, and at church.

I don't have a clear understanding of how I serve in my daily life				I am very clear about serving in daily life
1	2	3	4	5

THE PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

10. Foundations

I have a poor foundation in the spiritual practices of the church				I have a strong foundation in the spiritual practices of the church
1	2	3	4	5

11. Experiment

I don't know how or don't feel confident enough to experiment with spiritual practices				I have a sense of how to innovate and experiment with spiritual practices.
1	2	3	4	5

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Incorporation Process Assessment

This assessment looks at the incorporation process as three phases: welcoming, orienting, and integrating. They are distinct phases as well as ongoing, overlapping processes.

The bias of this assessment is that parishes need a way that incorporates people that increases the likelihood that people will become mature, adult Christians in this tradition of the Church.

Welcoming & First Contact

These very initial encounters provide the visitor with an opportunity to experience what being part of this community will be like.

1. The parish has a **defined parish culture**. We know who we are as a community; we have ways of being and doing that are widely "owned" in the parish. We have a sense of identity and integrity. [Note: Without the boundaries of a defined parish culture we have nothing to welcome people into]

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

2. Visitors are **invited to find a space** in which they make themselves at home. The tone is receptive and open rather than impatient, intrusive or passive. It is an invitation to join a community with worthy way of life; a life in which the person may be changed.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. The visitors' first impression is usually of **a grounded, calm community** rather than of busyness and rush. The **focus is around the Eucharist and coffee hour**. There are usually no meetings or adult education activities competing for attention.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

4. On entering there is **just enough information** handed a visitor to allow making sense of how things are about to be done (information on the parish is available but not pushed upon people). An example of "just enough information" is the Sunday bulletin and a sheet saying:

– Participating in the Worship: You are welcome to enter into the Liturgy or if you prefer to allow the congregation to carry you as you become familiar with the flow and pattern.
– *Children:* Children may stay with their family during the Eucharist or participate in the child care (located at ___) or church school (located at ___)
– *Communion:* If you would like to receive communion .....
– *Coffee hour* - There is a time of community and social contact just after the Eucharist. Please join us. (Give directions to the location)

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

5. **The liturgy is usually well done.** It has the structure, climate and rhythm of Apostolic faith. It requires some competence. It has the potential to catch people up in something beyond themselves; to feed wonder and awe. The congregation knows how to participate without prompting.

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

6. The **preaching** usually has a good pace, style, sense of ease, and length. It connects the tradition with life. There is an authenticity about the preacher and what is said.

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

7. The **Liturgical Space** is graceful, not cluttered; is beautiful; fits the congregation's size and style of worship. Those serving at the altar can move about without awkwardness.

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

8. We have a way of **getting visitor contact information** that is easy for the visitor to respond to (for example, asking for the minimal amount of information needed for a next step – name, e-mail, phone). The process is quick and easy, for example – we don't bother to ask for information that fits a later stage - about participation in parish groups. [Note: If the person gives you basic contact information they know you'll be in contact]

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

9. We are good at **getting visitors to come to coffee hour**.

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

10. The **coffee hour** is well attended, lively; people appear to be glad to be together. The beverages and food served is at least as good as what people would receive in a successful coffee shop.

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

11. We provide **attention to visitors**, and newer attendees, by making sure that they are not abandoned. We have lots of nametags available for members and visitors to put on. There's a person or two who accept responsibility for this (they have the gift and some training in hospitality and listening). [Note: A coffee hour is primarily about the community's need for connection. It's a mostly informal time allowing people to wander the room and talk with a variety of people. That needs to be protected while visitors are paid attention to]

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

12. The **priest makes contact** with visitors at coffee hour and follows up with the person within the week.

Not at all **Very much so**

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

13. Other:

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

14. Other:

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Orienting

An opportunity, in a very basic and initial manner, to become familiar with and connected to the people and ways of this parish. The person is trying to get a sense of whether he or she will fit in here. Early on they begin to explore a place within the community and to develop the core competencies needed to live in the community. This is the beginning of the parish's effort to orient people for a fuller relationship with Christ and his Church. As known and lived in the Episcopal Church.

1. **Information on parish life is available**. This may be a packet or a handbook with information on parish guilds and organizations, educational & spiritual formation opportunities, sacramental standards, and so on. The information is also on the web site.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

2. There is an **orientation to participation in the Eucharist** available on a regular basis (might be an occasional session of 40 minutes just after the Eucharist and/or booklets that describe the ways in which members of the congregation can participate) [Note: This is not an "instructed Eucharist" that cuts across the community's usual worship and is theoretical in tone. It is about how people in the congregation can participate – in the spoken parts, in silence, in the use of the body]

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. **A gathering** that is partly social and partly educational; done as needed, at least once every 3 – 4 months. It may be a social event at the rectory – with priest and 2 – 3 parish leaders who are good at such events. Or it could be a newcomers class in the parish hall.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

4. Other:

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

5. Other:

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Integrating

This is about integrating a person into a healthy and faithful community. It assumes there is ongoing attention to the formation of the parish community and that people may be integrated into that process. The parish needs an ability to help people enter more deeply into the Christian life; to assist them in forming a spiritual discipline (rule of life;) and in developing increasingly mature habits for Christian living. A very useful resource in doing this is a foundation course for adults. A foundations course is a substantial educational and training program that is repeated over the years and is used to incorporate people into the parish and the spirituality of the Episcopal Church.

1. New people and long-term members have regular opportunities to **develop a spiritual discipline** and a rationale for it.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

2. New people and long-term members have regular opportunities to build **relationships and friendships** with others.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. New people and long-term members have regular opportunities to **learn the tradition, especially the daily and weekly rituals** -- Holy Eucharist, praying the daily prayers of the church with the church (Office), and forms of personal devotions that fit the person's personality and provide ways of reflecting that allowing us to see our experience in relationship to who we are as baptized members of the Body

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

4. New people and long-term members develop an awareness that we are **representatives of Christ and his Church wherever we may be**; seeing that most people's ministry is in their family, with friends, and work and as citizens.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

5. New people and long-term members are helped to **establish a responsible form of participation in parish life**. For some that will be focused on the basics of Sunday Eucharist, pledging and attending a few parish meetings; for others it will involve accepting a leadership role.

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

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6. Other:

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

7. Other:

Not at all				**Very much so**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

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Like—Concerns—Wishes: Assessment Worksheet

1. What is your overall satisfaction with the life and work of the organization?

Very low satisfaction					**Very High Satisfaction**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

2. Offer your thoughts about the organization's functioning using the categories below.

LIKES What you like/affirm about the organization's work and life.	**CONCERNS** Your concerns about the organization's life and work.	**WISHES** Your wishes about what the organization might do to improve its work and life.

3. Circle the items, in each category, that you see as most important to the long term health of the organization.
4. Put a check mark next to the items that could be most easily addressed.

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Worksheet: Where I'd like the parish to be three years from now

1. On this sheet make notes for yourself of where you would like the parish to be three years from now.

2. Circle the ones that are most important to you and that you think could realistically be done.

3. After doing #1 and 2 -- what would you like to see the parish focus on in the coming year?

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Reality Check (to be used on or more items that have the most vestry commitment)
Priority #1:

Readiness is the parish's ability and willingness to change from a current way of doing things to a different way.

1. Overall – enough dissatisfaction with the current way of things or excitement about proposed way; someone with lots of energy for this; it fits the parish's way of doing things; we have enough energy for it now; we have enough people, money, and resources to do it.

We are not ready for this					We are very ready for this
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Dissatisfaction with the current way of doing things

No dissatisfaction about the way we do it now					There's a lot of dissatisfaction
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. Excitement for this

There's no excitement for this; unlikely to change				There's a lot of excitement for this or a lot of excitement can be developed	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Someone with a lot of energy for this? A person who will work hard to make it happen.

Circle one: Can't think of anyone Not sure Yes

5. Fit with this parish's way of doing things

Not at all					Very much
1	2	3	4	5	6

6. Parish energy

We don't have the energy for this now					We do have the energy for this
1	2	3	4	5	6

7. Resources to do it: money, space, people

We don't have the resources to do this					We do have the resources to do this
1	2	3	4	5	6

8. The skills and knowledge to do it

We don't have the skills and knowledge to do it					We do have the skills and knowledge to do it
1	2	3	4	5	6

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Priority #2:

Readiness is the parish's ability and willingness to change from some current way of doing things to a different way.

1. Overall - enough dissatisfaction with the current way of things or excitement about proposed way; someone with lots of energy for this; it fits the parish's way of doing things; we have enough energy for it now; we have enough people, money, and resources to do it.

We are not ready for this					We are very ready for this
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Dissatisfaction with the current way of doing things

No dissatisfaction about the way we do it now					There's a lot of dissatisfaction
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. Excitement for this

There's no excitement for this; unlikely to change				There's a lot of excitement for this or a lot of excitement can be developed	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Someone with a lot of energy for this? A person who will work hard to make it happen.
Circle one: Can't think of anyone Not sure Yes

5. Fit with this parish's way of doing things

Not at all					Very much
1	2	3	4	5	6

6. Parish energy

We don't have the energy for this now					We do have the energy for this
1	2	3	4	5	6

7. Resources to do it: money, space, people

We don't have the resources to do this					We do have the resources to do this
1	2	3	4	5	6

8. The skills and knowledge to do it

We don't have the skills and knowledge to do it					We do have the skills and knowledge to do it
1	2	3	4	5	6

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Priority #3:

Readiness is the parish's ability and willingness to change from some current way of doing things to a different way.

1. Overall - enough dissatisfaction with the current way of things or excitement about proposed way; someone with lots of energy for this; it fits the parish's way of doing things; we have enough energy for it now; we have enough people, money, and resources to do it.

We are not ready for this					We are very ready for this
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. Dissatisfaction with the current way of doing things

No dissatisfaction about the way we do it now					There's a lot of dissatisfaction
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. Excitement for this

There's no excitement for this; unlikely to change				There's a lot of excitement for this or a lot of excitement can be developed	
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Someone with a lot of energy for this? A person who will work hard to make it happen.

Circle one: Can't think of anyone Not sure Yes

5. Fit with this parish's way of doing things

Not at all					Very much
1	2	3	4	5	6

6. Parish energy

We don't have the energy for this now					We do have the energy for this
1	2	3	4	5	6

7. Resources to do it: money, space, people

We don't have the resources to do this					We do have the resources to do this
1	2	3	4	5	6

8. The skills and knowledge to do it

We don't have the skills and knowledge to do it					We do have the skills and knowledge to do it
1	2	3	4	5	6

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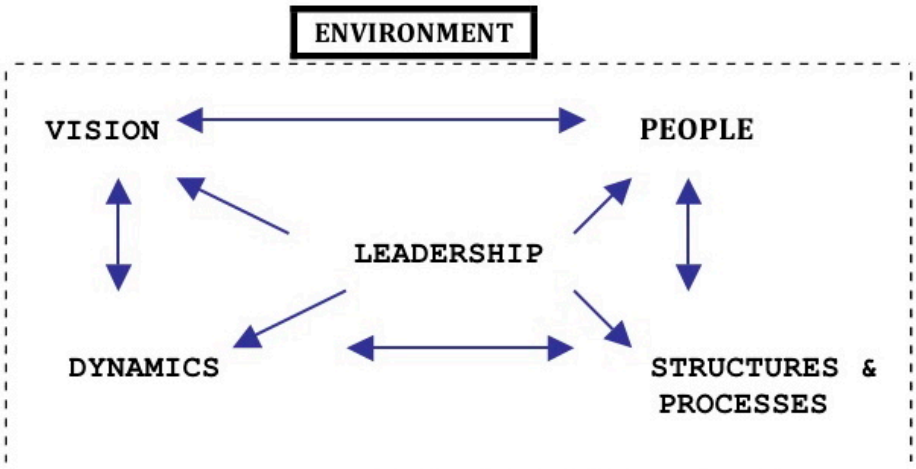
Organizational Diagnosis:
Six Primary Elements of the System

A. VISION
1. The vision, goals, primary task, core values
2. How widely and deeply "owned"

B. PEOPLE
1. Competence and commitment for the job and teamwork
2. Personality Type
3. Satisfaction with the job and the organization



C. DYNAMICS
1. Managing change & stability
2. Trust
3. Climate

D. STRUCTURES & PROCESSES
1. Adequate and appropriate resources for the task, e.g., technology, architecture, & space, etc.
2. Processes for effective information flow, problem solving, planning, conflict
3. Teams to carry out needed tasks
4. Effective linkages and cooperation between subsystems

E. LEADERSHIP
1. Ability to think and manage strategically
2. Ability to stay in touch with the system
3. Ability to set direction and enable movement

F. ENVIRONMENT
Forces and trends external to the organization that impact the organization, e.g., social, political, economic

"FIT" – Not a system element in itself but the core issue to look at in relationship to the elements. To what extent do they fit together? The task is to identify areas of strong and poor alignment in the system.

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Bonding: Priest and Community

The chart explores the movement in the early years of the relationship between priest and the parish community. The movement parallels what we see in basic group and system dynamics but focused in this case on the relationship between the primary priest of a parish church (rector, vicar, priest-in-charge, etc.) and the community that makes up the parish. In each phase those involved are working out how to accept and engage one another as symbols and as persons. The priest is both symbol (presider, sacramental person, Father/Mother) and person; the community is both symbol (e.g., Body of Christ, People of God) and persons. The temptation is to escape the paradox by fleeing into either the personal or into the symbolic.

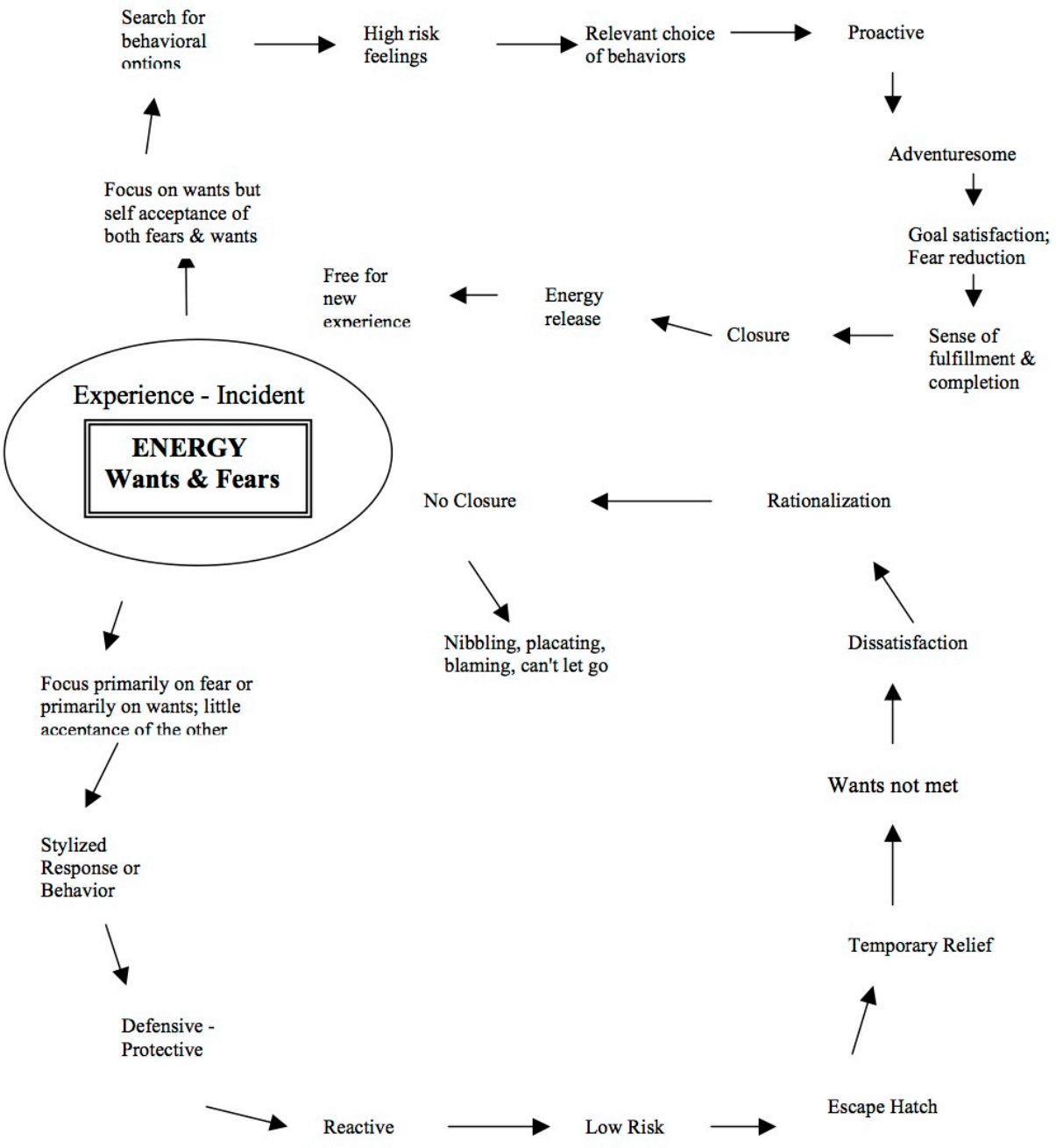
Phase	Typical Characteristic, Dynamics, Issues	Group Development Theory: Leadership Issues
Inflated Hopes	Common in years 1-2 A kind of adoration; much like infatuation. The priest may trigger fears, hopes and longings about which we are only vaguely aware. There may be illusionary thinking that assumes the priest will always be available, compassionate, competent, trustworthy; able to solve your problems. It's a fantasy that the priest will be the best of the past without the pain of the past. The priest may have comparable illusions about the parish. If challenged the initial response is likely to be denial that that is what is being expressed. In this phase – the priest and the community do not know each other as persons.	**Dependence** – The group and leader come together; gather initial impressions of each other, make initial judgments. A new group is being formed. There is usually a time of tentativeness and uncertainty. The leader and members of the group are concerned about being accepted by the other and what the cost of that acceptance will be. The relationship is superficial. Anxiety increases as different styles of working and making decisions begin to become evident. The leader is expected to deal with the group's anxiety and the ambiguity of the situation. This stage will be managed more or less smoothly depending on 1). The degree of working style similarity between the leader and key group members; 2). Their tolerance for ambiguity and 3). The leader's ability to stay present as a person and at the same time as the leader.
Disappointment	Common in years 3-4 This is a time of disillusionment. The priest is not all we hoped for; the congregation is not all the priest hoped for. The priest and the community may both find themselves wanting to escape the frustration and disappointment that comes now. They may back away from each other; develop a kind of resignation to the situation. Or they may have very powerful negative emotions, e.g., despising, disgust, anger. In this phase – the community experiences more of the role the priest is in; the priest is doing many things in a way that fits his/her own personality and hopefully, in ways that bring the ways of the wider church to this local expression of the church. The priest may also be disillusioned with the parish, e.g., "This isn't what the parish profile said."	**Counter-dependence** – The group and leader experience a time of tension over influence and control. There are more disagreements (some real, some manufactured). People may get more aggressive in attempts to gain influence; others may withdraw. People may begin to focus on differences in order to reestablish their individuality. There is a negative reaction to the feelings of earlier dependency that emerges. There may be a lot of "testing" the leader (or the leader testing the group); initiatives by the leader are commonly resisted. This process continues until the leader and key group members begin to act in more independent and interdependent ways. Beginning to listen carefully, and to offer reasonable suggestions to resolve issues, are critical factors in the group's ability to move beyond this stage. The degree of struggle and conflict involved usually needs to be contained if the group is to be productive. But this phase is both inevitable and necessary if the leader and the group are to negotiate ways of dealing with power and decision making. Attempts to escape this stage will cause a cycle of moving between the two stages of dependency and counter-dependency.
Realistic Expectations & Relationship	Common in years 4 – 6 and after This is a period of mature community acceptance of the priest and of the community by the priest. If they manage to stay together and to work out ways of communicating, making decisions, expressing acceptance of their differences, and focusing on common goals – they may experience a sense of mutual respect and mature stability. A feeling of affectation may emerge in time; a kind of realistic love. In this phase the priest as symbol is still there but the community comes to know the person. For the priest the community is still the Body of Christ, a glorious mystery; while also being individuals with their own stories.	**Interdependence** – Leader and group sort out roles and processes for communicating and deciding. Norms emerge for how we will treat each other and work together. There is more collaboration and a focus on the work to be accomplished. There is a lot of functional behavior that contributes to the task and maintaining good working relationships. A sense of belonging emerges; an acceptance of each other with strengths and weaknesses. Trust is stronger. At higher levels of functioning there is a strong sense of interdependence; of the value of the leader and the member's differences in temperament and skills; of deep appreciation and even affection; and of high productivity.

The dynamics involved: There is no avoiding the phases. The priest and parish may move through the phases more or less quickly; may get stuck at a phase, e.g. disappointment that never gets worked through. They may cycle back to earlier stages -- there may be times of regression when the parish and/or key leaders are experiencing a period of high anxiety, threat or helplessness; the recycling may bring deeper insight, increased spiritual and emotional maturity, and closer bonds.

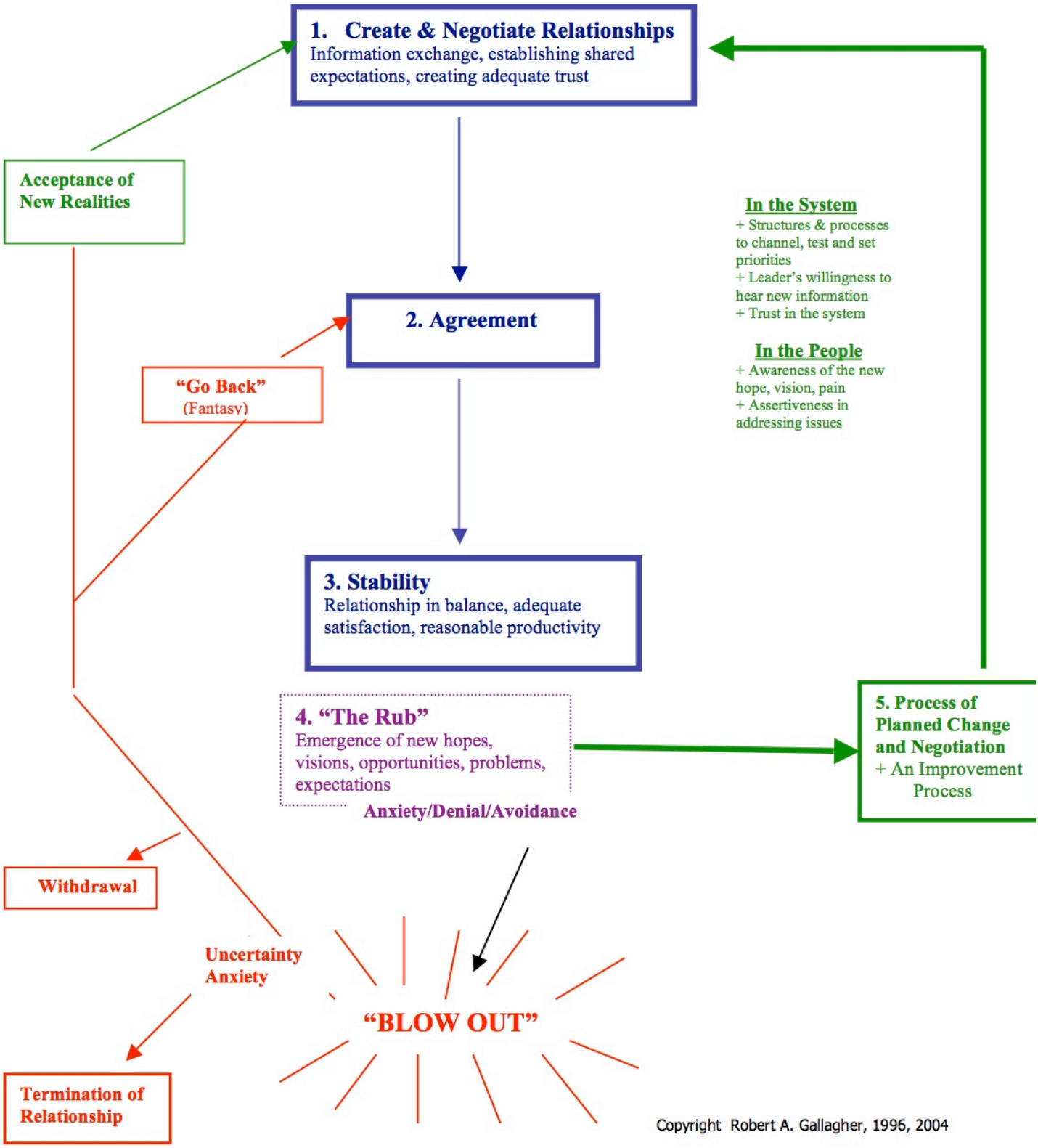
Draws on the work of Richard Weber, B. W. Tuckman and William Schultz in group development theory; also of Warner White in early Alban Institute material, E.M Pattison in *Pastor and Parish – A Systems Approach* Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1986, 2004

The Awareness/Behavior Cycle

Newt Fink & Cecil Benoit, 1975



RELATIONSHIP CYCLE IN ORGANIZATIONS



For additional parish resources, visit:
www.CongregationalDevelopment.com

For information specific to the Christ Church 2014 retreat, visit:
www.CongregationalDevelopment.com/christ-church-frederica/