

A. Exploring the common tension around growth that involves more children in the parish and at the Sunday Eucharist

We put more energy and time into attracting and offering activities for families with young children [in a manner that fits a small parish]

1	2	3	4	5

We are open to more families with young children while being careful about the feelings of members who may be uncomfortable with the impact of this.

B. Possible Futures for the parish

Discuss these “possible futures” in your small group. Which most appeals to you? Which would be “healthiest” for this parish to open itself to?

The choices are based on the parish’s stated desire for some membership growth.

There is not a “right” answer. You may find that the choices help you in creating an additional “future”.

A Possible Future

1. The parish stays largely as it is. Incremental change and improvements continue to take place. The parish attracts the percentage of people in the area who are easily drawn to the Episcopal Church. We lose the normal number of people that other parishes do over time. We slowly attract new members if the area's population increases. We advertise in the newspaper, in leaflets, by word of mouth, stressing the positive characteristics of a small parish and in particular, this parish (e.g., friendliness, music, opportunity to participate, caring, love of beauty, involvement with the community; intelligence.)

2. We maintain our existing characteristics of friendliness, music, opportunity to participate, caring, love of beauty, involvement with the community; intelligence. However, we focus our internal life and programs and our external advertising on the historical and traditional nature of the parish’s identity—the parish’s history, it’s historic building, the historic and beautiful setting of Castine. Taking pride in the number of bishops and clergy who have been part of the parish’s life. We approach adult education with an emphasis on traditional approaches to Bible study, lectures and presentations, etc. We emphasize traditional music within the liturgy. We market this and grow among those who find this approach appealing.

3. We maintain our existing characteristics of friendliness, music, opportunity to participate, caring, love of beauty, involvement with the community; intelligence. However, we focus our internal life and programs, and our external advertising on aspects of Episcopal spirituality – beauty, open-mindedness, embracing the world. We also support environmental, feminist and community-oriented values; attention to relationships and friendships; seeking a simpler life style; openness to mystery and wonder. We work at creating a climate that communicates this--possibly including traditional music along with jazz & Taize in the liturgy, etc. In adult education we emphasize themes such as spiritual development, using the Bible in prayer, the relationship between faith and life, etc. The approach is less presentation & lecture and more experiential and participatory. We market this and grow among those who find this approach appealing.

Indicate the degree to which you think this would be a satisfactory approach.

What do you like about it? What concerns you? How might you modify it?

Low					High
1	2	3	4	5	

Comments:

Low					High
1	2	3	4	5	

Comments:

Low					High
1	2	3	4	5	

Comments: