

Re-Rooting: Step by Step

Step by Step: Congregational Dream Team

Church Council: Identify & Commission creative leaders to lead the congregation through the Re-rooting process.

Step # 1: Learning to listen (Allow about 3-4hours)

- A. Individual Life Chart: On a piece of paper ask every Dream Team member to draw five things that say something about themselves. Use simple images to reflect the things that you value such as sports, family, traditions, etc. Share Life Charts with each other to get a picture of your common life together. (You may even want to put these around the room.)
- B. Congregational Life Chart: On large sheet of paper, draw five things that tell the story of the congregation. You may want individuals to make a personal list first, then work towards a shared list of five things that tell the congregation's story.
- C. Community Life Chart: Fill a large sheet of paper with small dots, each representing an individual in the community. Draw circles around groups of dots that represent the places the community gather. For example, where is the school? Play grounds? Bars? Ethnic associations? Restaurants? These are the places where we can begin to listen to our community.
- D. Listening to the Bible: Read one of the following scriptures in groups of 3 or 4. What element(s) of discipleship does this passage lift up? What do you think is personally challenging or difficult?

Nehemiah 2:17-20, 4:1-6, Luke 4:14-21, Acts 4:32-37, Acts 8, Acts 10,
Acts 16:11-15, Galatians 6:1-10

Step # 2: Congregational Listening (Allow 2 hours of planning)

- A. Make a plan for congregational listening to get to know the hopes and dreams of the members of the congregation and to invest each person into the re-rooting process.
- B. Get to know what people hope for and dream about by inviting them into small groups to share their visions. See "Small group Meeting Outline" for details on leading this meeting. People who do not attend the small group meetings should be interviewed one-on-one in person or on the phone. It is important to listen to every member of the congregation, including high school students.
- C. It is helpful to distinguish between problems (distant, overwhelming) and issues (concrete, specific, immediate and winable.)
- D. Record information gathered at small group listening sessions and report back to the congregation all you have learned.

Step # 3: Congregational Listening (Allow 1 hour sessions, 1 month of collecting information)

- A. Invite the whole congregation into one-on-one listening or small group meetings. Provide the congregation with no more than five focus questions. Questions might be:
 - What are some of the most important things in your life?
 - When was the church “there: for you?
 - What are you most proud of about your church?
 - Talk about our community—what are the greatest challenges?
 - How do you think the church could respond to these challenges?
- B. Record answers to each question.
- C. Gather data on the congregational members regarding age, gender, ethnicity, average income, occupational profile, educational level, distance members live from church.
- D. Gather data on the congregation regarding primary ministries in the community, finances, budget, property, synod activities, past and future historical events of significant, mission goals for the next three years.
- E. Organize answers to questions and report back to the congregation.

Step # 4: Community Listening (Allow 1 hour sessions, 1 month of listening)

- A. Gather demographic information about the community. Analyze demographics from the ELCA Department of Research and Evaluation, community planning boards and other sources.
- B. Gather psycho-graphic information through one-on-one listening, community surveys or Town Meetings. Begin listening with groups already meeting at the church such as AA or pre-school parents, AARP or civic groups.
- C. Identify critical conversations to have in the community including local people, high profile people, local merchants, realtors, police, school officials and counselors, politicians, social service institutions, other religious leaders, etc.
- D. Identify questions, location, schedule and who should make the contact. Train members in the congregation to help with one-on-one listening. Questions may include:
 - How has the community changed while you have been living here?
 - What are some of the communities issues? What are some of the unmet needs?
 - What are the strengths of the community?
 - What is one good idea for the church to serve the community better?
- E. Study scripture. Read Mark 2:10-11, Luke 10:38-42, Matthew 14:28-29, John 13:34-35
- F. Organize information and report back to the congregation.

Step # 5: Roundtable Dream Team (Allow 2—3hour sessions)

- A. Bring the congregational information to the Roundtable.
 - Share congregational demographics and listening data
 - Share community demographics and listening data
- B. Look for places where congregational information aligns around strengths, congregational dreams, community needs and Biblical discernment.
- C. Collate information with Roundtable to develop Area Mission Strategy.
- D. Work in partnership with synod leadership to create a plan for mission.

Step # 6: Putting it all Together (Allow 1 hour sessions, 1 month of listening)

- A. Congregational mission plan and Roundtable mission plan can be launched at the same time or separately. There is no need for a congregation to delay mission plan if some Roundtable partners are not ready with their plan. Congregations will move through this process at differing paces. The goal is to be in partnership with each other, offering support, accountability and prayer.
- B. Translating vision into action is the most challenging part of this process. Consider the following:
 - What are the overall changes that might result in your vision in the areas of Worship, Spiritual Growth, Evangelism, Stewardship, Property, Small Groups, Pastoral Care and Inner-generational Ministry?
 - How will current leadership be impacted by this vision? How will current leaders be coached into the vision?
 - What has to stop happening in the congregation to make room for new goals?
 - Roundtable Mission Strategies and Congregational Mission Strategies should be voted on by the congregational council.
 - Are there governance implications with the Roundtable or Congregational Mission Strategies and new goals?
 - How will the Vision, Mission Strategies and Goals be communicated over and over in the congregation?
 - What is the sequence and timeline for carrying out the strategies?
 - How will gifts and passions in many congregational members be tapped?
 - What leadership training, formation or coaching is needed to carry out the vision and mission strategies in the congregation and through the Roundtable?
 - How will the strategies be altered as new ideas emerge and learning happens?

Re-Rooting: at a Glance

