

Considering Communitas

Originally done at UU University 2008 June 25, Wednesday
Morning 8:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

10:45 – 11:30 a.m. Congregational Inventory

15 minutes with individuals to complete the inventory

<p align="center">Re-imagine your congregation as a “redeemed” institution. How would you answer these questions as a member of a redeemed congregation?</p>	
<p>Intentional about its identity and culture,</p>	<p>For what is the congregation known in the community? What are the expectations of membership? How does your congregation nurture the virtues of: modesty, maturity, hospitality, and empathy?</p>
<p>Struggles to name assumptions early and clearly,</p>	<p>Who is not welcome? How do you know? Why would anyone be unwelcome? What is expected? What “labels a person” as new? How many guests do you speak to each week?</p>
<p>Seeks to fulfill its vision by living its mission,</p>	<p>Do you know the vision of your congregation? Do you know the mission of the congregation? When did you first hear about vision and mission? How often is the congregation’s vision of a healed world mentioned on Sunday?</p>
<p>Develops authentic and abiding relationships with other institutions,</p>	<p>With which interfaith, inter-religious or community organization is your congregation in relationship? What borderland activities does your congregation support? With what groups are you in solidarity? On what issues have you born witness personally? On what issues has the congregation born witness?</p>

What are the assets of your congregation as a gathered people of faith?	
What assets do we “own” ?	Resources, habits, people and congregational stories that could build communitas.
What resources are available outside our box?	What practices and disciplines would help us identify our box? What other institutions/congregations/non-profits could you build bridges with?
In what ways to does your congregation consistently resist change?	
What are the stories you tell that make change difficult?	What have you always done this way and cannot imagine changing? What are your sacred cows? What are the values that sustain these “unchangeable practices”?
What new practices can you imagine to sustain change?	
What congregational stories would sustain us during change?	When has the congregation integrated change smoothly and creatively? Identify 3 occasions. What did these situations have in common? How were they different? What can we learn from our success?

Dreaming	Imagine your congregation has no programs at all. In what new and creative ways might you accomplish your mission?
What could you do personally?	In your family, With friends, In your community, In your congregation?
What could you influence in your congregation?	With other leaders, In your structure, With the minister?

Summary:

As you reflect on our conversation and our time together yesterday when we got to know one another on a deeper level what information or ideas:

Surprised you? A few responses

Saddened you? A few responses

Confounded you? A few responses

1. What new ideas or learnings will you share with other leaders in your congregation?

2. Who will you talk to first about this experience and when?

3. What will you say?

4. What will you do to encourage more ministry in the Borderlands?

5. What kind of support do you need to sustain change?

6. How will you get this support?