

Session 9B: Using What We Have Learned to Plan for Change

Learning Objective:

- To use the information from the previous sessions to devise a plan of action for deepening the call of being a Welcoming Congregation

Session Summary:

This session will review briefly what has been discussed, move toward a decision of action for the group, and then strategize about implementation of this action.

Background:

The group must have completed all the previous sessions to continue with this session.

(Note: This session may not last the full time.)

Materials:

1. Newsprint
2. Markers
3. Paper
4. Writing utensils
5. Newsprint from previous sessions

Preparation:

- Arrange to have the timeline from #6B, the Areas of Priority Newsprint from #7B, and the Change Model from #8B up in places where they can be seen and discussed.
- Have newsprint available for further notes.

Workshop Plan

Opening Reading/Hymn (5 Minutes)

(You are invited to pick a reading and/or an opening hymn. Singing The Living Tradition is an excellent resource. Other options are a moment of silence, a prayer, or a brief check-in. You are encouraged to also begin with a chalice lighting. Please submit any readings and/or hymn choices that you have used successfully to the OBGLTC as feedback for possible inclusion in future editions of LWC.)

Activities:

Review (20 minutes)

Allow time for participants to reflect on the last three sessions (6B, 7B, & 8B). Review the timeline, priorities sheet, and model of change information briefly. Ask participants what new insights and thoughts they have had after these sessions. How might this information affect their thinking about what to do?

Selecting Priorities (20 - 40 minutes)

Take a look at the priorities created from the list from the last 2 sessions. Ask if anyone has any new ideas that were not listed, or wishes to make a case for shifting any of these priorities. If there is contention, you may need to vote again as in session #7B. Otherwise, you may be able to keep or modify your lists by mutual agreement.

The next decision is determining how many priorities to work on. Engage the group in a conversation about how many of these priorities can realistically be done well and what sort of time frames and additional pieces/information are needed. Encourage the group to do a few things well in order to lay the groundwork for successful work in the future. It may be clear at this point what the priorities are and how many to do. If so, move on to the Planning activity.

If it is not clear which or how many priorities to choose, begin by voting (or discussing) on 3 priorities for each (things to improve & things already being done well), and then move to vote (or discuss) how many are reasonable for this group to do. If an impasse is reached, then work on one thing that needs improving, and two things that are already done well.

Planning (20-45 minutes)

On fresh newsprint, write one of the chosen priorities. Take three minutes to brainstorm: 1) what needs to happen; 2) how it will happen; and 3) what needs to be known and remembered in order to make it happen. Remind the group that brainstorming is unedited and is meant to generate a lot of ideas.

Repeat this process for the remaining priorities.

When all the priorities have been completed, divide into teams of two to four to take these brainstorms and to create plans for these priorities.

The plans need to include:

- What needs to be done and in what order
- Who needs to do it or parts of it,
- By when things need to be done
- Who needs to be consulted with in order to make it happen
- What, if any, money needs to be acquired to make it happen
- (And where the money will be found).

Allow the smaller groups to meet and devise this plan.

Sharing Plans (15-30 minutes)

Reconvene the groups and have each group share their plans. Allow for questions, critiques and modifications, if necessary. Implementation of this plan may account for Session #10B. If there is a need for significant collaboration with another group in the congregation, then use

Session #10B to strategize and prepare for the collaboration, and *then* implement the plan. Implementation may be a one-time job/event or a process that takes time to happen. The plan of action also may need to be incorporated into another particular group within the congregation.

After all groups have presented and plans reviewed, shared, and modified, decide as a group what the next session will encompass: implementation, preparing for collaboration (#10B), or some other need not outlined here. Use the elements of session #10B in whole or in part, depending on the needs of the group. Make sure the group is clear on the steps of implementation and on how the group will proceed to the completion of the curriculum.

This will probably be the time to determine the schedule beyond the next session. If the implementation of the plan of action will take some time and the group wants to continue to meet regularly, or if they would like to do further work, you can use the optional sessions #11 and #12 (up to 4 extra sessions).

[Sessions 11 and 12 are valuable and will probably help with the Implementation in several ways. They are good opportunities for the group to practice and incorporate what they've been learning and doing. Plus, they can be a great way to keep the group cohesive and energy high during the implementation phase. (Remember the Change Model – energize the change agents!).]

The final session, after the plan has been implemented and the group is “done” for now, is Session #13. Session #13 must be done in order for the curriculum to be considered complete.

Closing Reading/Hymn (5 minutes)

(You are encouraged to find a suitable one. The difference between the Opening and Closing is that we suggest that one reading and/or one hymn is selected to be used as the closing for all sessions. The Opening may vary from session to session.)

Suggested Hymns

Suggested Readings

Add Your Suggestion

Ask participants to hold hands as they are willing, able, and comfortable.