

# Introduction: A Path to Reimagine Church



# A Prayer for Discernment



*O Holy One, thank you for coming to us anew this day. Prepare our hearts and reawaken our love for you as we discern your call within us. May we join with you in making level the path for all people. Amen.*

*Daily Prayer for All Seasons*

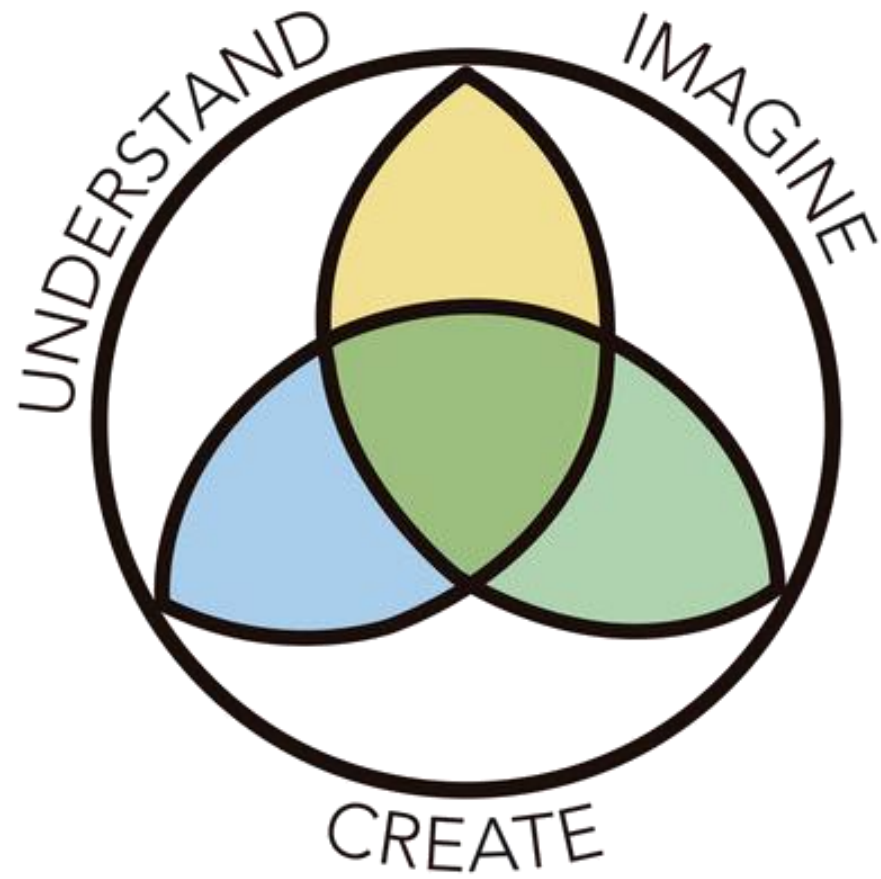
## Mission Amplification Team

### Missioner for Congregational Vitality: Missional Reimagining

- Whether very large or small, congregational vitality is measured by a church's pursuit of God's mission and vision for it.
- Missional Reimagining is a new tool to help congregations discern God's mission and vision.
- St. George's, Texas City is the first congregation in the diocese to engage this discernment process.
- In addition to bringing all the resources of the Mission Amplification Team you will provide important information as we take this journey together for the first time.









# DISCERNMENT IN LEADERSHIP

*Leading Where the Spirit is Moving*

# A Path to Reimagine Church

## An Overview of the Process

- ❖ Strengths-based
- ❖ Positive approach
  - ❖ Shared vision
  - ❖ Best of what is
- ❖ Undergirded by prayer
- ❖ Reinforces relationships
- ❖ Promotes learning and innovation



The PROCESS →

# Goal of the Day

To gain an understanding of the process to reimagine church





# Key Question



What are the steps in the path to discerning where God is leading you to reimagine your future?

# Lectio Divina from the Sunday Lectionary

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## What is Lectio Divina?



- Contemplative way to read the Bible
  - Praying the scriptures
- Ancient practice from the 6<sup>th</sup> century
  - Receptive way of praying
  - Encourages listening
- In group lectio we listen to what is shared in the belief that God communicates with us through what others might say

# Group Lectio Divina

## Listening for what God might be saying to St. George's

### Three Questions

We will read the passage three times



First reading of the passage:

**Listen**-As you hear the passage think about how the reading might be speaking to St. George's. As you listen discover a word or phrase from the passage that attracts you.

Second reading of the passage:

**Ponder**-As you hear the passage again ask how the word or phrase you chose speaks to and connects to life here at St. George's.





Third reading of the passage:

**Pray-**As the passage is read a third time ask what is God calling from St. George's in relationship to the reading. What is it that St. George's needs to do or relinquish as a result of what God is saying to you in this word or phrase?



## Luke 9: 28-36 (NRSV)

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah’—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, ‘This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him! When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

# The Five Step Process to Reimagine Church

## Step 1: *Define your situation*



- Who are you?
  - What is important to you?
- What are the economic realities both in the congregation and the town?
- What changes are you experiencing, again, both as a congregation and a town?

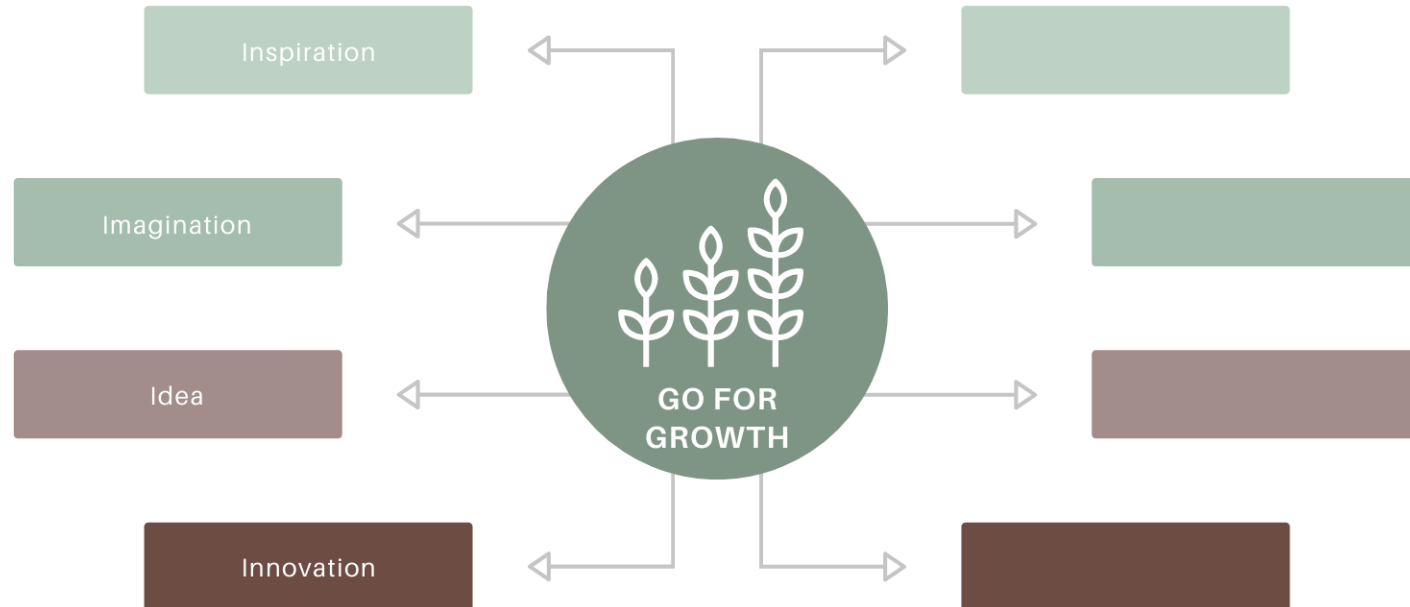


### Seed & Sign

What signs of life & vitality do we see in our church?

### Prune or Fallow

What do we want or need to do less of?



## Step 2: Discover your strengths

- ❑ Share stories of the most positive attributes of your congregation.
- ❑ Where do you see God working in your congregation and in your town?
- ❑ What resources and gifts do you possess both in the congregation and in the town?



## Step 3: Dream your possibilities



- Dream what can be.
- Imagine your life together beyond your present circumstances.
- Describe what the future will look like.
- What are some stories from the Bible that serve as examples of new life emerging from the old?

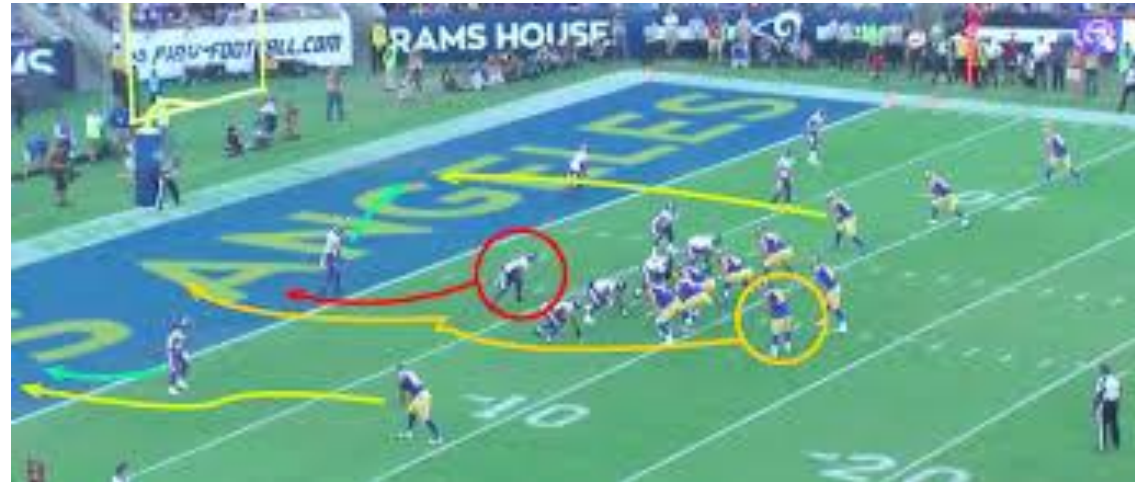
## Step 4: Design your future

- ✓ Begin to be more specific.
- ✓ Focus on actions and commit to that which will have the greatest impact on your congregation and the town.
- ✓ Make sure you use your strengths to stretch beyond your present reality.



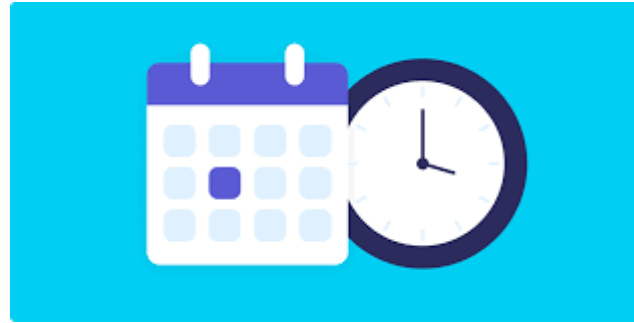


## Step 5: Deploy your plan



- ❖ Identify the resources and support you will need to sustain your action steps.
  - ❖ Develop the top three priorities of the plan.
  - ❖ Create a way to know when your changes are working.

# The Timetable



- We will meet the Fourth Sunday of the month for six months
  - Following lunch, we will meet for no more than 2 hours
- At the end of each meeting, you will be given homework to help prepare for the next meeting
- Given we are seeking to follow the Holy Spirit we will remain flexible and acknowledge we may continue meeting beyond the six-month timeline

# Creating a Covenant

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What are the ground rules we agree to live by as we engage this discernment process?

A Place to Begin:

- ✓ Recognize all ideas as valid
- ✓ Avoid cross talk
- ✓ Capture everything: notes and flip charts
- ✓ Listen to each other
- ✓ Observe time frames
- ✓ Seek common ground and action
- ✓ Acknowledge differences and problems—do not try to solve now
- ✓ Discuss discernment process in meetings—not the parking lot

# Covenant Continued

What else needs to be included in the covenant?

1. It takes all of us.
2. As you are able commit to this process through the giving of your time.
3. Thomas can't fix you. But, God has a plan, that we can discern.

# Homework for March 27<sup>th</sup>

- 1) Pray daily for St. George's and this work of discernment. You may use the prayer provided or ask God in your own way for guidance as you engage this process. Include in weekly Sunday Prayers of the People the Prayer for Discernment, praying together each Sunday for God's help in discerning your future.
- 2) Begin thinking, making a list if you like, of the places where the congregation and the town intersect.
- 3) Pray, asking God, if there are things the congregation may need to let go of or even let die so you may become the church God is calling you to in the future.



# Questions and Comments





## Closing Prayer



Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name, and finally by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Book of Common Prayer, p. 832