

TRANSITION TIMES

A QUARTERLY OF THE INTERIM MINISTRY CONFERENCE

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Editor, Anne Schroeder

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IMPLEMENTATION: SHARING THE VISION *By Martin L. Schroeder*

W. Edwards Deming once said, “If you can’t describe what you are doing as a process, you don’t know what you are doing.” Many congregations I have served with have asked me to describe the Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM) process: what we hope to accomplish during our time together, how we hope to accomplish these goals, and a general time frame in which we hope to accomplish them. At first, I found these questions difficult to answer. Much of the work in churches and schools is spiritual and relational and, therefore, not readily visible or quantifiable. Martins and Osterling observe in their book, *Value Stream Mapping*, “The ability to visualize non-visible work is an essential first step in gaining clarity about and consensus around how work gets done” (12). I have found that providing a road map of sorts (visuals, charts, reports, timelines, stories, and cartoons) helpful in fostering clarity and consensus within congregations.

Many IIM tasks involve defining (and re-defining) ministry concepts, such as roles and responsibilities, mission and vision, governing documents, and governance models. These tasks naturally lend themselves to mapping or charting. I often draw organizational flowcharts and use MindView Software to generate mind maps. Mapping the IIM process (and updating the map at certain mile markers) is an excellent way to report out to the congregation what is going on and what to expect. Mapping and other visuals are also an effective way to describe and socialize the Intentional Interim Pastor’s (IIP’s) and congregation’s time together to engage understanding and involvement.

For example, in my current assignment, St. John’s in St. Johns, MI, the Transition Task Force (TTF) presented 9 recommendations which were each approved by the voters. One recommendation was to fully implement Pol-

icy Governance. This meant the ministry organizational chart needed to be updated to reflect the relationship of the elders to the pastor and to the governing board. It also meant the governing documents needed to be updated to reflect uniformity and harmony.

Each of the 9 recommendations was assigned to either the governing board, if it related to policy development, or to the staff, if it related to day-to-day ministry processes. The goal is to complete our given tasks prior to beginning the call process so that pastoral candidates will have the most accurate view of where the congregation is currently and where it is going.

Clearly defining processes is part of the congregation’s task to grow in self-differentiation. The time between pastors affords congregations an opportunity to reassess their identity and prepare for honest and well-defined interviews with pastoral candidates about organizational leadership and ministry processes.

“But if the work remained hidden and no one knew of it, it would have been all in vain, all lost.” - Martin Luther

Luther says, “The work is finished and completed, Christ has acquired and won the treasure for us by his sufferings, death, and resurrection, etc. But if the work remained hidden and no one knew of it, it would have been all in vain, all lost.” For these reasons, I use every available means to share and re-share the congregation’s vision with leaders and members to help everyone participate in creating the congregation’s future.

Rev. Martin L. Schroeder has served six IIM assignments in Michigan and the Southeastern District. He serves on the IMC board and as a NALIP trainer.



PRACTITIONERS TOOLBOX

THE KAISEN EVENT PLANNER: BY KAREN MARTIN AND MIKE OSTERLING

Book Report by Martin L. Schroeder

The Kaizen Event Planner is a manual on “an effective way to train organizations to break unproductive habits.” Churches are organizations and every ministry program is a process, made up of a series of steps. Therefore, *The Kaizen Event Planner* authors would hold that even church ministries could benefit from a Kaizen Event.

Both the Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM) process and Kaizen Events place the work of learning and improving on the organization. In the church setting, the work belongs to the congregation.

According to Martin and Osterling, a Kaizen Event is, “a two-to five-day focused improvement activity during which a sequestered, cross-functional team designs and fully implements improvements to a defined process or work area.” The authors note, “With each Kaizen Event, the pool of ambassadors grows, fueling a cultural shift that ... increasingly authorizes the workers themselves to design and implement tactical level improvements.”

The Kaizen Event concept fits nicely within the development and work of the IIM Transition Task Force team: (1) forming the group from a cross-section of the congregation and from those who are not currently in leadership positions; (2) assuming a research posture asking many ques-

-tions; and (3) checking back in with leaders and members to affirm the team’s recommendations are on track.

From a theological stand point, there is room to consider the congregation’s ability to listen to God’s counsel as He speaks through the entire body of believers. In a way, the TTF members are the ears of the congregation.

NEWS

NALIP Basic Education Training

A task force of the NALIP Education Committee is investigating new ways to use technology and digital learning modules in NALIP training to facilitate for more remote learning opportunities.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NALIP Basic Education Events

Northeast Ohio Synod

- Phase III — November 5-9, 2018
Luther Seminary, Mt Olivet Retreat Center, St. Paul, MN

- Phase I — Oct. 29 - Nov. 2, 2018

- Phase III — May 13-17, 2019

- Phase I — Oct. 28 - Nov. 1, 2019

Florida-Georgia District Offices- Orlando, FL

- Phase III — February 5-9, 2018

East Central Synod of Wisconsin (ECSW)

- Phase I — September 17-21, 2018

- Phase III — May 6-10, 2019

St. Francis Retreat House - Easton, PA

- Future classes TBA

See <http://www.nalip.net/education.asp#Basic>

Friedman One Liners

Prepared by Larry L Foster

Differing doesn't cause differences.

More thinking about the problem doesn't solve the problem.

- You have to "adventure"
- Move protoplasm through space in order to get new perceptions
- The imaginative capacity changes

