



Finding Our Congregation's Unified Strengths

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The FOCUS Group consists of five Our Father's Lutheran Church congregation members and was created in June 2009 to facilitate a strategic planning process for Our Father's. The book "Discerning Your Congregation's Future: A Strategic and Spiritual Approach" has been used as the guiding principle to lead the congregation through the year long process. The end result of the process will include a new five-year strategic plan being presented to the congregation and church leadership in spring 2010. The following summary provides an overview of the process and progress to date:

An Evening of Historical Reflection – October 4, 2009

The FOCUS Group held its first congregational meeting as part of the strategic planning effort on October 4th from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to learn from founding members and existing members of the congregation about Our Father's past. Congregation member Liz Nuytten facilitated the meeting before approximately 40 attendees (and plentiful chili was enjoyed by all!). A number of key "meaning statements" were gained from the meeting and were unveiled at the November "FOCUS on Now" meetings.

FOCUS On Now – November 2nd and 8th, 2009

The FOCUS Group conducted two meetings with congregation members to gain an assessment of Our Father's in the present day by asking four key questions:

1. If our congregation did not continue to _____, I would lose interest in remaining a member.
2. The things that concern me most about our congregation are _____.
3. If our congregation would _____, I know I would call my friends and tell them what wonderful things they are missing.
4. If with a stroke of a pen I could change one thing at our congregation, I would _____.

Approximately 60 congregation members attended the meetings. Dessert was served at the November 2nd meeting and the FOCUS Group was grateful to Sheila Engebretson for helping to provide a meal at the November 8th meeting.

Leadership Council Presentation – November 10, 2009

The FOCUS Group met with the Leadership Council to provide a progress report on the feedback and general themes received from the first two meetings. In addition to the progress report, the FOCUS Group outlined the remaining scheduled meetings for 2010.

Next Step: Lunch with “Norms” – Sunday, March 7th at Noon

Following lunch, the FOCUS Group will invite members to meet in small groups to identify the church “norms” – those unwritten rules by which we live – in order to grasp fully what is dysfunctional and needs to be fixed. The session will help the FOCUS Group to establish the top priorities for the congregation.

Remaining Project Schedule:

- March – April 2010 – Interviews of Key People in Community; FOCUS Group Discernment and Prioritization of Goals
- May 2010 – FOCUS Recommends Five-Year Plan to Congregation