

Bethany Church Council Breakout Session Summary

1. We must continue to center everything we do, our decisions, etc. around the solid foundation of **MVG**, and translate MVG into more specific and focused programs and plans. Alignment of staff/dollars is essential for key programs and outreach. They are health/wellness, youth, spiritual gifts, community outreach and the like. We need a few thematic goals that are clear, with graphics to make the points easily understood and connect the dots for the congregation.
2. **Personnel reviews and administration.** We need concise job descriptions for all, with year-to-year goals and periodic formal reviews. We must re-visit the ombudsman idea for staff. All of our necessary personnel changes (hires, assignments, promotions, departures etc) must be more effectively done and based upon fact not emotion. These will help everyone get on the bus and be aligned with our MVG; our staff is a critical piece of this alignment.
3. **Communication** - We can't say enough about improving communications! Listening to, as well as informing, is critical, by keeping all channels open. Communications must be many and varied, not just sending the message. We need to know if and how they were received and understood. Our task force should shed light on tools/mechanisms; the content is up to us.
4. Communicators must understand that rumors will be present. "Coffee with Council" periodically and a parishioner questionnaire seem like great ideas. (Do we need the pastors at these sessions or is this role of council?) We must address perceptions that council is "rubber stamp" or that clergy and staff are scapegoats for policies and decisions.
5. **Transparency** – For clarity about status, we need better graphics, more generous communications, with smaller bites. Managing our budget and its transitions is still difficult, as is dealing with trust at all times.
6. **Change Management.** Our transition to our new leadership model is still in process. How does the vote affect us? Leadership must be proactive in managing this change. How do we enlist other respected individuals in this? Our approach must account for members steeped in BLC traditions, especially when they may want the "good old days", historic staff, council compliant and the like.
7. **Stewardship and Fellowship** - Our budget problems are not over, and another crisis will occur if giving doesn't pick up. Next reductions will be truly painful. We must create opportunities for members to invite new prospects and guests, leading to engagement for all.