***Forum: Oct. 16, 2022: Leadership and Community Development***

***Present: Carolyn, DJ, Joan J., Larry, June, David L-B., Anne L-B, Julia, Jane W. Maggie***

***DJ expressed the purpose of forums and how they modeled after the Outreach Forum where Lyn as facilitator got people together, gathered ideas and let the people run with those ideas that got the most interest.***

***He then explained thee two parts to this forum with the need to develop Volunteers and Leadership, plus the two ways of looking at Community (Congregation and Wider Community).***

***Very quickly getting volunteers and leadership was related to developing community, particularly the congregation but looking ofr new members.***

***Because the first need for volunteers appears to be for the occasional coffee-time, ideas were explored for making that time meaningful. It was felt that having tables with four seats where conversations would happen and using some system such as colour cards or animals as signals to go to different tables (breakout rooms on zoom were random and well-received). Small tables and being with random people would facilitate community as well as safety. The UCW event Oct. 23 and the December tea (1st Saturday in Dec.) were thought to be good trials this year.***

***There was a strong agreement that we want to try to get people back into the sanctuary while not discouraging those who physically can’t from being virtual. We thought the group that met in May and wrote notes to some people who appeared to have disappeared to get more feedback from them. It was disappointing that none of them were present. It was suggested that either the group who already participated in this exercise or a follow-up group might be formed. We think Donna Smith, Susan Bake, and Jane Ridout might have been part of that exercise. Personal connection is important, phone calls give an opportunity to get feedback but even having coffee or tea in person is important.***

***Jane W offered to have a coffee time in her home for Newmarket people who attend RHUC. It was thought that model could be used in other geographical areas as well. Someone said homegroups were how the Church started and in Edmonton and Waterloo, I as facilitator had been part of Church home groups. In Missouri, adults had Sunday School (at the time I was part of the group who were in their 50s and still keep in touch with members of that SS Class)***

***There were warnings about what did not work (surveys, putting on activities and then not getting attendance). If there are activities personal contact and “gentle pressure” need to be used as well as making sure advertising sufficiently to get people there. Also, it is important to make activities appropriate for the people in our congregation while perhaps interesting some from the community.***

***In line with that, we had some ideas for activities appropriate to different age groups. One was a craft (colouring pictures either like a paint by number or with provided lines to stay within) [Maggie] and Ukulele learn and play [Anne}.***

***Some discussion was given to support for volunteers – many do not know what some of the tasks involve and so do not understand the work and trials people who volunteer face and may need help, Understand, and support when they are facing specific trials. That raised the question whether there is sufficient recognition of our volunteers and the jobs they are doing. An idea to include either recognition during a service or in the newsletter once a month focusing on a particular volunteer or position, perhaps titled “Our Gift is Our People” [Carolyn].***

***Not much was said about attracting the community around us but all felt it was important. We did mention “bring a friend” Sunday and we talked about other ideas that have not worked for us in the past. One thing that was agreed was we need to do something of this nature and a first step would be to make our presence on Yonge Street noticed – signage to indicate we are open (and not just the flag we put out each Sunday. We know the Communications Working Group was working on signage four or five years ago and would like to follow-up.***

***Added after the meeting, the Innovative Ministry Opportunity that Howe, DJ, and James were part of had a full video and discussion with a Church in the West that had put a coffee shop in the back of their sanctuary and had attracted some members from that exercise {DJ}. Of course, with Covernotes so close we probably would have to think of another way to make our building open and attract people into it.***

***It was remarkable had how participative this meeting was. The meeting ended 1 hour and 35 minutes after start with thanks to those participating and agreement the Board should get a review of what was said and that some dissemination of ideas to the Congregation would be appropriate.***

***DJ***

***Forum Coordinator Leadership and Community Development.***