

November 2009



Daring Discipleship

A HamPack mailing from Lorna MacQueen,
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resources, workshops, and opportunities

Leadership discernment

Soon, nominating committees will be meeting with lists in hand. It is time to think about the new year's looming vacancies in church structures. This work is often challenging, and repeated refusals can make it discouraging.

We have all been asked to take positions with invitations that are less than attractive: *"There is not much work involved... anyone can do it."* *"No one else will take it on."* *"If you don't say yes, then I don't know what we will do!"*

There must be a better way to do this.

None of these invitations are appreciative of who I am and what I might have to offer. None of them reflect the value of a ministry to the community. None of them would attract me to participate.

Guilt, obligation, and desperation do not sustain good ministry.

We are NOT just looking for warm bodies for our church structures. We are looking for people of faith, passion and giftedness. We are looking for people who recognize a call to participate in the Body of Christ and long to belong to a relevant community. They are in the midst of us. They are looking for meaningful ways to be a part of our

church. Many are less patient, however, with cumbersome bureaucracy and endless meetings. They want to be involved in something that directly feeds and reflects their faith.

We know that engagement in the church life can give us a new appreciation of our community, a new sense of belonging and new ownership of the church's work. It can be a place of spiritual, theological and personal growth.

What if we approach those vacancies with prayerful hearts and look with new eyes at the ministries to be filled, and the people available? What if our committee and community listens and waits for the movement of the Spirit in our midst? Perhaps it is time to risk those with dangerous new ideas even as we continue to value the wisdom of those whose work and faithfulness has long sustained us.

What if we invite participation and leadership with affirmation of the gifts needed and the value of the work that must be done? What if we affirm that there will be clarity around expectations, orientation, training and support... and we make sure that it will be so!

Our nominating committees' task will still be challenging, but who knows what God might bring us.

Programs:

Exploring Faith? Considering Vocation? Interested in Theological Education: Nov 11, 2009 at the Emmanuel Encounter, Emmanuel College Toronto: Contact Betsy Anderson 416-813-4096 or betsy.anderson@atoronto.ca ASAP

(over)

Resources

Duty of Care: <http://www.united-church.ca/local/duty/environments>
Safe environments for ministry.

Screening procedures for those in positions of trust in the United Church of Canada: Faithful Footsteps: <http://www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/faithfulfootsteps.pdf>

Whose Birthday is it, Anyway?

Ideas for a Christ-centered Holiday 2009, published by Alternatives for SimpleLiving.org... equipping people of faith to challenge Consumerism, live justly and celebrate responsibly is now available for this year.

Note: There are many **Spiritual Gift Inventories** available online. (Simply Google 'Spiritual Gift Inventory')

These can be useful to help us understand ourselves. Remember, however... that God equips us to which God calls us. God may not choose to call us to a place of strength, but a place of weakness where we will need to seek wisdom, and even training. God can see in us what we may never see in ourselves. If we think in terms of the Johari Window, (http://www.noogenesis.com/game_theory/johari/johari_window.html) God resides in all parts of that window and knows that 'unconscious self' or

Johari Window

	Known to self	Not known to self	
Known to others			
	Arena	Blind Spot	
Not Known to Others			
	Façade	Unknown	

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johari_window

'unknown quadrant' to which neither we nor others have access. I encourage us then, when discerning our own and others' gifts, to pay attention to all parts of this window, and to pay attention to the Spirit of God at work in us and in others.

For alternative sources of news and information...

Do you know about....

Sojourners (print) <http://www.soho.net/index.cfm> Mission: "Our mission is to articulate the biblical call to social justice, inspiring hope and building a movement to transform individuals, communities, the church, and the world ... In our lives and in our work, we seek to be guided by the biblical principles of justice, mercy, and humility."

New Internationalist (print) <http://www.newint.org/issues/current> "A communications co-operative ... the New Internationalist is renowned for its radical, campaigning stance on a range of world issues, from the cynical marketing of baby milk in the Majority World to human rights in Burma."

This Magazine (print and net)

<http://this.org> "... *This Magazine* is one of Canada's longest-publishing alternative journals. ... *This Magazine* focuses on Canadian politics, pop culture and the arts, but in keeping with its radical roots never pulls punches..."

InterPares (net)- <http://www.interpares.ca>

"The name Inter Pares means "among equals" in Latin, and reflects our belief in the equality of people, North and South. Inter Pares was founded ... on a commitment to address conflict and injustice ... We are also concerned with our role as Canadians in sustaining injustice abroad ... – and believe it is our responsibility to address these issues, while also confronting inequality and injustice here at home. "

Common Dreams (net) - <http://www.commondreams.org>

"CommonDreams.org is a national nonprofit, progressive, nonpartisan citizens' organization ... We are a powerful online voice for change in America. Our mission: To inform. To inspire. To ignite change for the common good."

Grants

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING GRANTS FOR LAY PERSONS

AND MINISTRY PERSONNEL: available through the Conference office. Applications must be completed prior to the event.

Expectation: 1/3 each applicant, pastoral charge, conference fund.

For more information and applications see: <http://www.hamconf.org/learning.html>

For information on:

- Church modernization and improvement grant
- Manse energy audit and energy conservation grant
- Capital assistance loans
- Technology grant

See: <http://www.hamconf.org/grantsloans07.pdf>