

Dear Shenandoah District Pastors,

I am writing to introduce myself to you. My name is Steve O'Dell and I have served as Lead Pastor at Emmanuel Wesleyan in Roanoke VA for the past two years. Although most of my 28 years in ministry have been spent planting or helping to plant new churches, God spoke to my heart prior to accepting the call to Emmanuel. He gave me a new vision for helping existing churches that are plateaued or in decline to revitalize their ministry. For the past two years now we have been working to revitalize the ministry of EWC. So I don't write this letter as an expert in the church revitalization process. I'm writing because our District Superintendent Pastor Greg Reynolds has asked me to serve as our district CMAD Director. CMAD is the new department of Church Multiplication and Discipleship, formerly the Evangelism and Church Growth Dept. In our district our CMAD team will be working toward two primary goals - church planting and church health and revitalization.

I want to let you know about an exciting opportunity for those of us working to lead our ministries forward. If you were at District Conference this past week you had the privilege of hearing Rev. Paul James, District Supt. of the Eastern NY and New England share about the success of their "District Transformation Project. The new DBA voted Tuesday to partner with Rev. James to launch our own "Shenandoah District Revitalization Project."

The revitalization process is described in detail in Dr. Paul Borden's book Assaulting the Gates. After Rev. James shared the success stories of churches in his district many of you expressed interest in going through this revitalization process with your church. I am excited about your enthusiasm and desire to be a part of this project. Wouldn't it be great if in a few years our district was full of healthy growing multiplying ministries? That is my dream for Emmanuel and I'm sure it's the dream God's given you for your church as well. I believe this process is key to helping us realize our ministry dreams.

This process though is not something to enter into lightly, it is not a panacea but a commitment to enter into a process that if completed can be a helpful tool for moving our ministries forward. We currently have just one slot available for a consultation this fall. If you are interested in having your church be on the cutting edge of the revitalization project I would recommend several things.

- Seek God's guidance in this decision.
- Read Dr. Borden's book Assaulting the Gates. This will give you a clear picture of the entire process.
- Go to www.enynewesleyan.org and read the prescriptions that have been written for the individual churches that have gone through the process in the Eastern New York District. This will give you an idea of the kinds of things that may be required of your church as you go through the revitalization process.
- Fill out the enclosed application for the Shenandoah District Revitalization Project and return it to me no later than August 15, 2013 My address is Steve O'Dell, 402 Hershberger Rd., Roanoke VA 24012

The CMAD team will review the applications and make a selection no later than August 30th 2013. If your church is selected you will need to set aside Nov. 22-24, 2013 for the consultation weekend. If your church is not selected this first round, there will be other slots available as early as next spring.

I am excited about this opportunity to help move our district churches to a place of health and vitality. I can't wait until we have success stories of our own to share with each other at future district gatherings. If you have further questions about the Shenandoah District Revitalization Project please feel free to call or email me at (734) 239-3511 or sodell@go2ewc.org.

Together in Ministry,

Steve O'Dell

Shenandoah District CMAD Director



THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

The Shenandoah District

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District Transformation Project

Church Consultation Application

Thank you for your interest in the Church Consultation Process with the Shenandoah District. The Shenandoah District is on a journey of transformation that will see our local churches and their leaders become energized and equipped to reproduce healthy, growing churches. If you would like for your church to become a part of this transformative process, please complete this application and submit it to the District Office.

Church Name _____

Pastor _____ I am the Pastor

Address _____

Best Phone Number _____ Email _____

How old is your church? _____

How long have you been Pastor? _____

Why do you wish for your church to become a part of the District Transformation Project?

Have you shared your interest in participating in the DTP with your Local Board of Administration?

- Yes No I plan to very soon

If you checked "Yes" above, what is the LBA's view of your church's need for this process?

Is your church willing to commit to a \$2000 consultation fee payable to the district by your consultation date?

Is your church willing to commit to hiring a coach for the pastor for the 12-month period following a positive vote?

Transitioning Local Churches from Islands of Disease to Islands of Health

CONGREGATIONAL SELF-STUDY

Congregational Self-Study

This study and report should be created by a group of staff and leaders. All material should be stored on computer with widely-used software, and printed out in a notebook. It is preferable to have the entire staff and board involved in compiling this information and discussing it.

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HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

1. Write a brief history of your congregation (maximum four pages). Include those events that contributed to periods of growth or decline in the number of people participating. Write in a factual style. Avoid the temptation to puff the story for public relations and the temptation to inject personal commentary regarding past problems.
2. Provide a list of all full and part-time program staff positions for the last twenty years, or from the beginning if founded more recently. List schools and degrees for full-time program staff. Give the dates for people's tenure and state the real reason why individuals left. (Leave out the pertinent specifics only where required by law.)
3. Provide a list of all people who oversee specific areas of service. List the number of positions for which they are responsible in their oversight. State whether these people are full-time, part-time, or volunteer staff.
4. List dates and provide descriptions for any building construction, major renovation, land acquisition, or leasing of facilities. List the amount of acreage you own, lease, or rent, the square footage of building(s), and number of parking spaces (distinguishing between off-street and street parking).
5. Write a summary of your congregational structure including the individuals or groups who are responsible for program decisions, budgeting and financial oversight, buildings and grounds, and any other major interests of the congregation. List committees, task forces, program teams, etc. and explain how these relate to boards or councils. Provide a chart that reflects your current organizational structure.
6. List any formal ties or major informal ties to other organizations or associations. State how the congregation views and interacts with such groups.

DEMOGRAPHY

1. Prepare a chart and graph for each of the following items for each year over the last twenty years, or entire history if founded more recently.
 - a) Number of members (if applicable) or regular participants (if no members exist)
 - b) Average attendance of your weekly worship services
 - c) Average weekly attendance of all your groups and classes combined
 - d) Number of persons transferring in to membership or regular participation
 - e) Number of persons transferring out of membership or regular participation
 - f) Number of baptisms
2. Estimate the average age of the people participating in the regular activities of your congregation. State how this was determined.

3. State the percentage of people who attend your worship services who also attend some group meeting such as a class, support group, or service team. Count each individual only once.
4. Prepare a list of the number of current members or regular participants who got involved:
 - Prior to 1960
 - From 1961-70
 - From 1971-80
 - From 1981-90
 - From 1991-2000
 - From 2000-present
5. List the total receipts and total expenditures for each of the last 20 years or for your entire history if founded more recently.
6. Without listing names, state the amount given by each of the top ten contributors of record in the last fiscal year. Total these amounts and state the percentage of giving this total represents in relation to total contributions.
7. State the same information for the second ten contributors of record.
8. State the total number of contributors to the congregation during the last fiscal year and the average amount given per contributor during the last fiscal year.

COMMUNITY STUDY

1. Write a brief overview of the area and community in which the congregation is located or which the congregation serves.
2. This overview should include about one paragraph on each of the following features:
 - a) History
 - b) Population
 - c) Income levels
 - d) Education levels
 - e) Social, ethnic and religious diversity
 - f) Age distribution
 - g) Growth/decline trends
 - h) Other characteristics you deem significant
3. Briefly describe the square mile that surrounds the primary location of the congregation.

BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

1. List the core values and/or basic beliefs of the congregation.
2. List other important commitments or practices that characterize the congregation, such as:
 - a) Covenants or Codes of Conduct
 - b) Key Social Issues
 - c) Political Positions
 - d) Regular Activities
 - e) Significant Financial Commitments

DOCUMENTS

1. Please send one copy of this self-study in typed form one month prior to the assessment visit.
2. Please send copies of the following documents (if you have them):
 - a) Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (or "Constitution")
 - b) Doctrinal statement
 - c) Last two annual reports
 - d) Last two annual budgets and financial statements
 - e) Sample bulletin and/or newsletter
 - f) Any policy statements
 - g) Other printed documents you deem helpful in providing insight into your congregation

SELF-STUDY GROUP

1. After the self-study information has been compiled, the board and staff need to discuss the following questions as a group and complete an exercise pertaining to congregational conditions before printing the results in final form. (In smaller congregations gather 20-30 leaders, whether in official positions or not, to fulfill this requirement).
2. Please include the general consensus on each of these discussion questions in the report. Be sure to give the date when this discussion took place and list those involved in this meeting.
 - a. What are the three greatest strengths of this congregation, listed in priority order?
 - b. What are the three most significant weaknesses of your church, listed in order of the greatest need first?
 - c. What three changes would you like to see made in your church, listed in priority order?
 - d. Do the leaders want this congregation to grow significantly?
 - e. Are the leaders willing to make the difficult decisions required for change and growth?
3. Ask the board and staff to complete the exercise on congregational conditions supplied by the consultant in order to determine where they perceive the congregation to be at this time. (This exercise is found at the end of this self-study).

EXERCISE

Name: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: In each row, mark exactly two statements that best describe current conditions in your church.

ROW 1: Commitment to Mission and Purpose

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Positive supportive attitude | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong sense of mission and purpose among every member | <input type="checkbox"/> High visibility and understanding of purpose and mission | <input type="checkbox"/> Lowering of members' understanding of purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> Purpose is lost |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty of future demands visionary leader with high commitment level | <input type="checkbox"/> High level of goal "ownership" | <input type="checkbox"/> Common purpose throughout ministries of the church | <input type="checkbox"/> New members do not sense church's purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> Mission not understood |

ROW 2: Involvement of Membership

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mutual dependency requires everyone to be involved, or leave | <input type="checkbox"/> High percentage of individuals' time and identity committed to the church | <input type="checkbox"/> New members quickly find a place to become involved | <input type="checkbox"/> Members assume there are enough others to do the job | <input type="checkbox"/> Programs eliminated for lack of participation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All members willing to work | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers easily found | <input type="checkbox"/> High level of enthusiasm among membership for participation | <input type="checkbox"/> More paid staff to "enhance" ministries | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult to find volunteers |

ROW 3: Programs, Structures, and Organizations

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Function of ministry determines form | <input type="checkbox"/> New programs created to respond to new needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Few, if any, new programs added | <input type="checkbox"/> Programs deleted for lack of funds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneity in decision making | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure created in response to needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Delegation begins | <input type="checkbox"/> Forms of ministries begin to determine function | <input type="checkbox"/> Primary goal is preservation/survival |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditions begin to form | <input type="checkbox"/> New roles and responsibilities created | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure creates needs rather than responds to needs | |

ROW 4: Attitude toward Change

- | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members are receptive | <input type="checkbox"/> Changes easily adopted and integrated | <input type="checkbox"/> New proposals given serious consideration | <input type="checkbox"/> Few changes proposed | <input type="checkbox"/> "We've never done it that way before" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quickly accomplished | <input type="checkbox"/> Suggested from all levels of membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Church leaders responsible for initiating and implementing | <input type="checkbox"/> Few changes considered that radically depart from status quo | <input type="checkbox"/> Rationalizations often made for why it can't be done |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ownership is unanimous | | | | |

ROW 5: Morale and Self-Esteem

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morale is high | <input type="checkbox"/> Morale is higher | <input type="checkbox"/> Morale is highest | <input type="checkbox"/> Morale polarizes into groups of high and low | <input type="checkbox"/> Few have high morale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem is in the process of being formulated | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem easily affected by circumstances and short-term successes/failures | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem at its highest level | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem develops uncertainties | <input type="checkbox"/> Frustration and/or despair by leaders in not knowing how to stop decline |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Confidence is contagious that goals can be reached | | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-esteem lowers |

CONSULTATIONWEEK END

PREPARING FOR THE WEEKEND

1. Begin the self study at least three to four months prior to the week end.
2. Plan on how you can talk about the upcoming event at every board or council meeting.
3. Develop a plan for sharing with the congregation each week for three months about the upcoming event. Remind them that all the N.T. epistles were church consultations where the apostles reminded the congregations to whom they were writing of what they were doing well, what they were doing poorly and how to change.
4. Get as many leaders and key members of the congregation as possible involved in doing the self study and provide ways to share what they are learning, whether the news is positive or negative.
5. Remind the people that the judicatory (region, state, district, conference, presbytery etc.) thinks enough of the congregation to invest in them in order to see positive change occur.
6. Print and post the schedule for the weekend in as many places as possible. Invite people to mark their calendars so they are there for the Sunday of the week end in order to hear the report.

FRIDAY OF THE CONSULTATION WEEKEND

1. Friday is a day for interviews and focus groups.
2. The pastor is usually interviewed first for a two hour session.
3. All other interviews are usually one half hour in length, with some exceptions.
4. Make sure an hour and a half lunch break is scheduled for the consulting team and plan for either lunch to be brought in or for the team to go to lunch at a near-by restaurant. If the lunch is on the church grounds the team needs to be able to eat in privacy (with only team members eating lunch together) in order to interact and de-brief about that which has occurred up to that point.
5. In smaller congregations, that have few or only one paid staff member the team needs to interview, a secretary or administrative assistant, a key financial person, a key children's person, the board or council chair (and vice chair if that is appropriate), and any key leaders or influencers in the congregation. Sometimes interviews may involve 2/3 people at the same time, if such is required for time constraints. Who should be interviewed should be discussed with the consultant prior to any schedule being arranged for interviews.
6. The last interview needs to be completed by 5pm.
7. The consultant will then go to dinner with the pastor and the pastor's spouse if the pastor is married. The spouse and the pastor will both be interviewed at this time. If the pastor has young children, someone needs to watch them at home since children are not part of the dinner or interview.
8. A comfortable room in the church should be set aside for the interviews.

9. The pastor will put together a focus group that will meet at the church from 7pm to 8:30pm. This focus group should be between 15-30 individuals who represent a cross section of the congregation (women, men, various ages including teens but no children, long time members, new attendees, married, single etc). The only people who should not be there are leaders that will be interviewed or invited to the Saturday training session. It is best if their spouses are not in this group although such may be difficult in smaller congregations. In such cases spouses, teenagers or adult children of leaders can be invited. No one related to the pastor should be invited.
10. The pastor will introduce the consultation team and then leave in order for the team to conduct the focus group without the pastor being present.
11. The focus group needs to be in a room where 15-30 chairs can be set up in a semi-circle. (THE ROOM SET UPS FOR INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS AND TRAINING ARE CRUCIAL). The consultant will need nothing else in the room. People need to be told that the consultant will be asking them questions and that this is not a teaching time. If refreshments are served they need to keep to a minimum since it is after dinner for most individuals and the purpose is to keep time open for questions and answers.
12. Once the focus group is finished the Friday part of the consultation is completed.

SATURDAY OF THE CONSULTATION WEEKEND

1. The pastor, council and key lay leaders of (children, youth, worship, women's/men's ministries, small groups, etc) will meet with the consultant from 9am to 3pm. The size of this group should be anywhere from ten to thirty people. If it will be larger or smaller this needs to be discussed with the consultant before the week end ever begins. *This meeting is one reason the pastor should make sure that all leaders are planning to be involved in the consultation that weekend.*
2. The room needs to be set up in a large square with tables with the people sitting around three sides and the consultant at the head of the square of tables.
3. The consultant will need a dry erase board or flip chart on which to write. Please make sure they are plenty of markers and a good eraser if it is a dry erase board.
4. The consultant will give the pastor a series of handouts to be copied this day so every person in the room including the consulting team has a copy of each one.
5. If possible this six hour session should be recorded on at least a CD if not a DVD.
6. There will be a forty-five minute lunch break. Lunch should be at the church and done in a relatively simple way (sandwiches, pizza, etc.).
7. If possible all the leaders need to be there from 9 to 3.
8. Once this session is over the pastor and lay leaders will leave and the consultation team will stay to write the report. Hopefully the report will be completed by 6pm.
9. The consultant will email a copy of the report to the pastor Saturday evening. Normally this is so the pastor is apprised of to expect in the report. If there are any MAJOR concerns the pastor and consultant will interact by phone Saturday evening.

SUNDAY OF THE CONSULTATION WEEK END

1. The consultant team will meet with the pastor one hour before the first scheduled meeting on Sunday morning to go over the report. The pastor will have printed enough copies so each person in the meeting can have one copy.
2. The purpose of this meeting is to go over the report for errors and to discuss the wording of the report.
3. Once the report is completed the pastor will have someone make enough copies for every person in the congregation.
4. The consultant will preach and the liturgy or order of worship, need to be adjusted so the consultant has at least thirty minutes to preach.
5. After the worship service there will be a town meeting to which the entire congregation is invited in order to go through the report. This meeting will last one hour. No questions will be taken from the congregation at this time.
6. *This meeting needs to be recorded as well.*
7. Each member of the congregation will receive a copy of the report during the meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to set up the context of the report and then go through line by line. The meeting will be led by the consultant.
8. It will be announced during the meeting that the pastor and a member of the consultant team will lead one or two town meeting in the next several weeks for anyone to ask questions or share their agreement or disagreement with the report.
9. Four to six weeks after the week end the congregation will vote to either accept or reject the report.
10. Once this meeting is over the consultation week end is completed.