**Vestry Academy 2024**

**Spiritual and Practical Leadership**

**We are called as a Vestry and as Vestry members to be leaders who are:**

1. Sacrificial
2. Disciplined
3. Curious
4. Adaptive

**Sacrificial Leader: Servant, Unifier, Builder**

*In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant…* (Phil 2.1-7)

* **Servant:** Serves for the sake of the mission with humility and gentleness.
  + Made in the image of God, the giver, good of the other
  + Son of man came not to be serve, but to serve
* **Unifier:** works for the highest good. (Story of the Refrigerator Conversation)
  + Former rector, hour long refrigerator conversation in vestry
  + What is the point? Keep food from spoiling
  + What was your last “refrigerator conversation”
* **Builder:** strengthens the Body of Christ, raises up new leaders
  + Modeling the desired behavior for leaders and congregation: Eucharistic life, life lived in thanksgiving
  + For what are you grateful in your congregation? How might that charism lead you all into a new season?
  + Encourager: Thank you is so important, recognizing God’s work in folks brings momentum to the mission.
  + Making room for the newest folks while caring for the faithful servants
    - You are in my pew! You are in my ministry!
    - Single serving in stewardship, a lot of work, but worth it.
    - Smaller congregations can shake things up
  + Empowering leaders to train new leaders
    - Find your replacement
    - Is there no replacement?
    - Season of curiosity and adventure ahead (talk about that in a bit)

**Disciplined Leader: Prays, Plans, and Communicates**

* **Prays:** Threefold Pattern of Prayer,
  + Eucharist, Daily Office, Personal Devotion
  + “real time” prayer when discerning in vestry meetings (refrigerator conversation)
  + Field ed parish, vestry disagreement, stopped, red scripture, and prayed.
  + Left a lasting impression
  + Cooler heads, kinder words, clearer thoughts
* **Plans**: Discernment leads to a plan
  + Works with Rector or Vicar to discern vision and empowers faithful to carry it out
  + Responsible for all business affairs, properties, and finances
  + Oklahoma Canons, 7.11-7.15, https://www.epiok.org/canons
  + **Vestry Agendas (see sample)**
    - Rector or Vicar presides, Senior Warden in absence of Rector
    - Bishop’s Warden presides in absence of Vicar or Bishop
  + Saying “yes” to good ideas that fit with vision and mission
    - Todd Bolsinger, Canoeing the mountains: a year of “yes”
    - Messy but revealing
    - What if no new ideas? See Curious Leader.
    - Canon Steve, Kate Bond and team
    - All Canons work on vitality, call me!
* Communicates: a good vision and plan can be simply communicated
  + Clear identity and purpose: “Servants for God, the Parish, and the Community”
  + Epiphany was on a trajectory to close.
  + Came together to pray, ask God’s direction
  + Clear identity: Servants, informed all they did.
  + Tripled in numbers over the next decade
  + Casting a wide net vs personal invitation
  + Bulletin, verses personal conversation
  + Website, social media
    - Communications consulting/audit, [slemasters@epiok.org](mailto:slemasters@epiok.org)
    - Technology is doorway to younger folks serving and participation
    - Call high school, theater tech kids to help simple set up for streaming. Ended up blessed with a new young person worshiping regurlarly

**Curious Leader: Student, Relational, Adventurer**

*We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,**so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God* (Col 1.9,10).

* Student (always learning, always discerning)
  + Formation involvement
  + Who has adult Sunday school currently happening
  + Dwelling in the Word (explain), Lectio Divina, listening to God, listening to others
  + **Awareness of history, current situation (Neal Michell)**
    - DNA matters, how did you start, what big events impacted you all.
    - Story of a merger (conflict, resolution)
  + **Mutual Ministry Review, email** [**canonbetsy@epiok.org**](mailto:canonbetsy@epiok.org)

The Letters of Agreement for clergy of the Diocese of Oklahoma requires: “An annual mutual ministry review shall be completed using a process approved by the Diocese."

The Review will:

* Provide the Rector, Wardens and Vestry opportunity to assess how well they are

fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the ministry they share.

* Establish goals for the work of the parish for the coming year.
* Isolate areas of conflict or disappointment, which have not received adequate

attention and may be adversely affecting mutual ministry.

* Clarify expectations of all parties to help put any future conflicts in manageable form.
* A mutually agreed upon third party may be engaged to facilitate the mutual ministry review process.
* Review the Compensation of the Rector
* **Adventurer:** Following Jesus, noticing the work of the Holy Spirit

*“Come, “Jesus said, “and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.* (John 1.39)

* + Dwelling in the World
  + Stories of surprise: the library, the AA group, the International Market
* Relational: “I have called you friends” (John 15.15)
  + Telling God stories (holy ground upon which friendships are built)
  + Sharing our faith in word and deed (relational outreach, justice work, evangelism)
  + St. James Waggoner

**Adaptive Leader: Collaborative, Creative, Flexible**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!* (2 Cor. 5.17)

* Collaborative: invites other into the conspiracy (etymology of conspiracy)
  + This is not the season for top down ministry
  + Recognizing the work of the Holy Spirit, inviting others in
  + Durant, boys and girls club, invited the college staff to church dinner
* Flexible: embracing our present reality, sharing good news
  + Loneliness, division, secularization
  + Hunger for spirituality, purpose, and relationship
  + Intergenerational relationships
* Creative: Bringing good news to others in creative ways
  + Trying and failing with courage
  + This is how we discern
  + Again, bring new eyes and ears to the situation, be curious, notice opportunities, strike up conversations, care about folks
  + Low barrier to serving
  + Vitality grants, https://www.epiok.org/grants

**A word about conflict:**

*If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector (Mt. 18.15-20).*

* Conflict: healthy vs. destructive

**Level One:** Differences » When two people see a situation differently, understand the other party’s position and interests well, and feel no discomfort regarding the difference. (Creative solutions are found)

**Level Two:** Misunderstandings » Times or situations where what is understood by one party is different from what is understood by the other party. (Storms are helful sometimes)

**Level Three:** Disagreements » When two people see a situation differently and, regardless of how well they understand the other’s position and interests, feel discomfort that the other party disagrees. (Avoid, blame, dig in)

**Level Four:** Discord » Situations where the conflict causes difficulties in the relationship of the people involved even when they are not dealing with the original conflict. (wounded)

**Level Five: Polarization** » Conflict situations characterized by severe negative emotions and behavior with little or no hope for reconciliation. (want others to suffer)

Resolution

* Speaking the truth in love: “I” statements
* Refusing to triangulate: “Let me go with you to talk to the Rector and Senior Warden.”
* When to reach out for guidance (addressing at the parish/mission level, seeking guidance)

*Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body.*

*Colossians 3.14-17*