



Ministry of Reconnection – Listing Connections

Objective(s): To use the concept of 'affiliation' and 'relation' to connect Ministers of Reconnection

Time

Commitment: 1 to 1.5 hours

Group Size: Ministers of Reconnection group

Needed: List of those with whom the congregation wishes to reconnect – 1 for each Minister of Reconnection; paper with the title "People with whom I am going to connect"; blank paper; flipchart paper and markers

Preparation: Photocopy lists of those with whom the congregation wishes to reconnect. It would be most helpful if the list had name, telephone number, address, and three other columns:

| Name | Address | Telephone | Very Well | Acquaintance | Not at all |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
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On the flipchart paper, print the following question: "How well do I know this person? Well enough to ask them questions about their congregational connection and faith, as an acquaintance, or not at all?"

Process:

1. After a check-in process, offer an reminder of *why* we are doing this: "As a congregation, we understand that we have a responsibility to care for each other, and for others in God's world. Part of our story is that there have been people with whom we have lost touch. A plan is coming together to find out if the people we've lost touch with still have – or still want – a connection with this faith community. With such an important task at hand, we need to do some thinking about how we can make these connections."
2. Invite people to listen to a reading of 1 Corinthians 12.22-26. (Consider using the "Lambeth" or "African" Bible Study model to explore this text.)
3. Take a moment to pray for both the Ministers of Reconnection and the individuals whose names are on the lists.
4. Show the question that is on the flipchart paper. The task for this gathering is to walk through the list of names and ask ourselves this question for each person named there.
5. It is important that the each Minister of Reconnection ask the question of themselves for each name listed. In past, we have found it most helpful for the facilitator to read through the names, giving time for each person to consider and mark the appropriate category.
6. The facilitator then reads through the list again. This time, the group shares their level of connection.
 - If only one Minister of Reconnection has a strong sense of connection to an individual, that name should be placed on their "People with whom I am going to connect" list.
 - If two or more Ministers of Reconnection have a strong sense of connection to an individual, the wisdom of those Ministers, and of the group, should be sought as to which Minister should make connection.
 - If no one has a strong sense of connection to a particular individual, see if there is anyone who has an 'acquaintance' connection.
 - If no one has a sense of connection to an individual, ask which Minister of Reconnection would be prepared to contact them.
 - If there is an 'issue of concern' (eg. The individual left because of a conflict), that information should be noted by the group. While it is *not* the task of Ministers of Reconnection to defend or attempt to explain what happened, it is important that they have some understanding of history.
 - Are there individuals who should be contacted by the minister?
7. As a group, set the timeline for making contact. Remind the group of the purpose of the conversations they will be having. Ask them to take prior to making contact to sit quietly and pray for the person with whom they will be speaking.

8. Close with the rereading of 1 Corinthians 12.22-26 and prayer.

An explanation of how this workshop worked in one congregation was first printed in *The United Church of Canada's Exchange magazine – Fall 2003 issue*: "A Ministry of Reconnection" by Richard Bott, and reprinted in Reginald Bibby's *Restless Churches*.