



Preparing for the Vital and Healthy Parishes Consultation 2016

The annual Vital and Healthy Parishes Consultation is a timely response to the need for leaders in congregational ministry from across the country to share, learn and resource each other in the work of building vital, healthy, and missional congregations.

VHP is for lay and ordained Anglican and Lutheran church leaders, who work with congregations and have perspectives and responsibilities beyond a single congregation (ex. bishops, archdeacons, diocesan staff and volunteers, regional deans, regional missionaries). It will be held at the Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba, from 12:00 PM on June 6, to 3:00 PM on June 8.

Goals:

- Mutual and shared practical learning across the many and diverse contexts of the Anglican and Lutheran churches nationally;
- New resources and ideas, expanded tool kits, and a sharing of best practices;
- Connecting with colleagues who are willing and able to share insights, experiences and resources with each other.

What to bring in preparation:

- You are invited to bring your **stories, knowledge, questions, hopes, and challenges**. These are the foundations from which **insight** and **renewed practice** will be built.
- Carry with you the lessons you have learned, and even more importantly, the things about which you **wonder** and the **puzzles** with which you engage.

- We will share reflections on congregational life initiatives that have **borne fruit** in ministry, mission and worship, as much as we ponder and learn from those that **failed, flubbed or froze**.
- All of these are learning opportunities, especially when we bring the fragility of our discipleship and leadership into **holy conversation** with others.

What to expect in the process:

- Mutual and shared practical learning across the many and diverse contexts of the Anglican and Lutheran churches nationally;
- New resources and ideas, expanded tool kits, and a sharing of best practices;
- Connecting with colleagues who are willing and able to share insights, experiences, and resources with each other.
- We will then reflect together on these stories in light of what we see as **characteristics of vitality** in congregations. You will also spend time in **diocesan/synodical** or regional **groups**, to talk, to vision, and to plan together about what you will be bringing home with you.

Much of our time together will be in focused discussion groups, the topics for which will be created by you in a process known as ‘The Marketplace’. Here is what you should be thinking about in advance:

What puzzle, question, or wondering do you have about congregational vitality that comes from your own local context, about which you want to engage others in conversation?

- Note that this is not a time for ‘show and tell’ and for making a presentation to a group, but about **mutual engagement** on a point of challenge and in the spirit of **engaging mutual learning**.
- That said, all things worthwhile begin in story, so the **sharing of the story** out of which your questions have arisen is important. What do your conversation partners need to know about the location—culturally, socially, ecclesially, and so forth—from which your questions arise?
- Think about an initiative that has **gone well**, and what further you wish to explore coming out from that experience. Think about work that has you **stumped**.

- Think about something that is presently **in process**: an experiment, a fledgling ministry, a significant turn-around in a community.
- Please bring with you any **resources** that you have to share, whether locally developed, or from networks and associations with whom you have connections. Again: presentation of these sorts of things is not the principal aim of the Marketplace conversations, but the sharing of resources is a major gift in our network-building and mutual learning. Please also **share these resources—before the Consultation**, if possible—with our staff (see the end of this missive for contact information), and certainly during or shortly after the event.

The whole group will together determine the content and schedule of these focused conversations. Opportunity to revisit Marketplace sessions will be provided on Wednesday.

Please register using the form in the following link: <http://goo.gl/forms/EN01XcmOqM>

If you have questions regarding the programme, please contact:

Eileen Scully, Director of Faith, Worship, and Ministry
(escully@national.anglican.ca; 416-924-9199 x286)

If you have questions regarding logistics or registration details, please contact:

Dayjan Lesmond, Administrative Assistant for Faith, Worship, and Ministry
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Grace and Peace to you,

*Eileen Scully
On behalf of the Vital and Healthy Parishes Working Group*