

Sample Shared Ministry Plan July 2015 to September 2017

GOAL NUMBER ONE

By September 2017, most members of the St. Christopher's Church community will have been exposed on several occasions to the ideas of shared ministry, gifts, call, and vocation in a variety of settings.

Objectives: Leadership Training

1. By December 2015, the Vestry and Rector will sponsor a half-day workshop on gifts discovery and shared ministry for congregational leaders. A paid trainer will lead the workshop.
2. By May 2016, St. Christopher's vestry will have included speakers on gifts discovery and Shared Ministry on 5 of its 10 working agendas for the quarter. The Senior Warden will work with the Shared Ministry Facilitator and the Shared Ministry Team to ensure that Shared Ministry is on the agenda and a speaker is prepared for the event.
3. In September 2016, the Vestry, Shared Ministry Facilitator, Rector, Youth & Families Minister, Music Director, and Children's Ministry Director will develop and sponsor an annual ministry training day for everyone in ministry within the St. Christopher's community. This day will include Safe Church training.
4. In February 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will sponsor a short workshop on gifts discovery and shared ministry during the annual retreat for vestry members.
5. In September 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will sponsor the second annual ministry training day. This will include a Safe Church training as well as training on recruitment and evaluation.

Objectives: Community Education

1. Throughout the period, the Rector and other preachers will regularly preach on topics associated with gifts, call, and vocation. This would include the theology of gifts, call, vocation, and shared ministry and the rationale for bringing shared ministry to St. Christopher's.
2. On Rally Day in September 2015, the Children's Ministry Director, Music Director, and Youth & Families Minister will organize a "commissioning Sunday" to commission lay ministers for the upcoming year.
3. During the 2015-2016 program year, the Youth Minister will organize monthly talks for members of the community to share their ministry experiences with the youth group.
4. Beginning in February 2016, either the Shared Ministry Facilitator or (when formed) a member of the Shared Ministry Team will write a Shared Ministry column for the monthly newsletter.
5. By April 2016, the Children's Ministry Director will devote one "Growing in Faith" evening to gifts discovery for children and their parents.
6. During Lent 2016, the Rector, with assistance from the Shared Ministry Facilitator, will lead a 5-week long adult gifts course on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.
7. During Easter 2016, the Youth Minister will offer a 3-week gifts discovery course on Sunday mornings for youth group members and their parents.
8. On Pentecost in 2016 and 2017, the Children's Ministry Director, Youth & Family Minister, Music Director, Rector, and the Shared Ministry Facilitator (and the Shared Ministry Team

when it is formed) will organize a ministry celebration during the 9:00 service to recognize the gifts shared in ministry in the community.

9. On Rally Day 2016 and 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will organize “commissioning Sunday”. In conjunction with the “commissioning service” on Rally Day 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will organize a “ministry fair” to advertise the ministries available within St. Christopher’s.

GOAL NUMBER TWO

By May 2016, St. Christopher’s will begin to develop the infrastructure for Shared Ministry.

Objective: Hire a Shared Ministry Facilitator

1. By September 2015, the Rector and Vestry will develop a Shared Ministry Facilitator position description.
2. By September 2015, the Rector and Vestry will develop a budget for a Shared Ministry program.
3. By January 2016, the Rector and Vestry will hire a part-time Shared Ministry Facilitator who will work closely with the Rector and Vestry and become part of the Shared Ministry Team.

Objective: Create a Shared Ministry Team

1. By March 2016, the Shared Ministry Facilitator, Rector, and Vestry will develop position descriptions for a Shared Ministry Team.
2. By July 2016, the Vestry will appoint a 7-person Shared Ministry Team, which will include the Shared Ministry Facilitator.

Objective: Assess Current Ministries

1. By November 2016, the Shared Ministry Team will create and distribute an assessment tool to measure the current climate for ministry within the congregation.
2. By December 2016, the Shared Ministry Team will develop a database for recording the results of the assessment tool.
3. By January 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will collect the assessments and input the results into the database. The data will be prepared for report to the congregation during the Annual Meeting at the end of January.

Objective: Create Position Descriptions

1. By June 2016, the Shared Ministry Facilitator will work with current St. Christopher’s major ministry programs – staff, vestry, children’s ministry, youth ministry, and music ministries – to create position descriptions for all lay and staff positions.
2. By June 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will work with all St. Christopher’s ministry programs to create position descriptions.
3. By September 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will create a database and written catalog of ministry positions within the congregation. The catalog will be available for distribution at the Rally Day Ministry Fair.

Objective: Create Reliable Risk Assessment Programs and Coordination

1. By September 2015, the Rector, staff, and vestry will create a Safe Church Coordinator position description.
2. Beginning in September 2015, the Rector will advertise for a Safe Church Coordinator in the church’s monthly newsletter and Sunday bulletin.

3. By January 2016, the Rector, staff, and vestry will appoint a Safe Church Coordinator from within the community.
4. By September 2016, the Safe Church Coordinator will create a system for coordinating Safe Church certification and training records.

GOAL NUMBER THREE

By May 2017, the St. Christopher's community will participate in a Gifts Inventory to enhance the members' ability to identify and apply their gifts for ministry in all areas of their lives.

Objectives: Conduct a Gifts Inventory for St. Christopher's

1. By early February 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will develop a Gifts Inventory for use in the community.
2. By Ash Wednesday 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will distribute the Gifts Inventory throughout the congregation.
3. During Lent 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will sponsor both Sunday morning and Wednesday evening shared ministry and gifts discovery adult education programs.
4. By March 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will create a ministry database to enter the Gifts Inventory results.
5. By Palm Sunday 2017, Gifts Inventories will be collected.
6. Throughout the Easter Season 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will enter the results of the Gifts Inventories.
7. During the Pentecost 2017 gifts celebration, the Shared Ministry Team will celebrate the gifts inventory process with a special liturgy and reception.
8. By September 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will follow up on Gifts Inventories with phone calls or personal interviews with respondents.

GOAL NUMBER FOUR

By September 2017, St Christopher's will have a 2-year Shared Ministry Plan for the period of September 2017 to September 2011 that will enhance the ability of all ministers to participate fully in the work of God and the life of the St. Christopher's community.

Objectives: Create a 2017-2011 Shared Ministry Plan

1. By May 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will have a retreat to create a 2-year plan for ministry at St. Christopher's from September 2017 to September 2011.
2. By July 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will present the new Shared Ministry plan to Vestry and staff.
3. By August 2017, Vestry and staff will have approved the new Shared Ministry Plan.
4. In September 2017, the Shared Ministry Team will incorporate celebration of the new plan into the annual Commissioning Sunday.

Two-Year Shared Ministry Plan

Background

With two and a half weeks of class behind me, I approached the Rector at St. Christopher's Church about shared ministry. I was surprised to learn that he had taken a workshop on "Sharing the Ministry" years ago but had lost hope of implementing even the basics of a shared ministry program at St. Christopher's. By the end of our conversation, he was interested to see what I would come up with in a Shared Ministry Plan and encouraged me to write one with the assumptions that:

1. Our new part-time staff member would be a Shared Ministry Facilitator.
2. We would have funds for at least a small shared ministry budget.
3. We would have the full support of the church's Rector, program staff, and vestry.

Although I have some misgivings about whether the St. Christopher's community and Rector are really prepared for Shared Ministry, I have proceeded to write this plan based upon these assumptions.

Rationale

With staffing, support and budget, I believe that shared ministry could take hold on some basic level at St. Christopher's. While I don't begin to believe that everyone (or even a majority of the congregation) would participate, I do believe shared ministry would lift up those community members without voice or purpose in the church. I know from conversations with several current vestry members and parents that there are pockets of energy and enthusiasm for gifts assessments, especially in the Youth Ministry Program and among newer congregants. If enough people catch the vision, participation in Shared Ministry activities could become contagious, drawing in even reluctant participants. This could happen well outside the 2-year time frame of this plan.

In writing this plan, I acknowledge that this would be an aggressive and multi-faceted undertaking. As you can see from the timeline, this plan would create quite a bit of activity in the parish. Many of these events, like the Rally Day celebration and the Lenten adult education series, already occur in some limited form. This plan would simply focus the event on gifts.

Finally, the following limitations would need to be addressed for this plan to have any measure of success:

- St. Christopher's has a history of strong resistance to change and innovation. The theology and rationale behind this program would need to be carefully laid out to the vestry and key leaders to get them on-board. This plan is not written to incorporate everyone in the community at once. It is created as a program that builds interest and support over time through energy, trust, and momentum.
- Just the right person would need to be hired into the Shared Ministry Facilitator position. This person would need to be extraordinarily relational and able to work within the existing system, rather than come in and try to immediately impose an entirely new structure on the church. They would need to spend a lot of their early time getting to know folks in the community, especially members of the Shared Ministry Team and key leaders.
- This may sound terribly political but appointments to the Shared Ministry Team would need to be strategic. Choosing the right mix of personalities and leaders from various "cliques" within the community could automatically lend credibility and support to the project.
- Ultimately, this program would only be as successful as the clergy allow it to be. The members of St. Christopher's are extremely dependent upon the clergy for most functions within the church. As a result, the community calls clergy who consciously or unconsciously want to be

in the center of the community. In order for this plan to be effective the clergy would not only have to get on-board but would also have to allow for change within the role for the ordained as well.