

Connections Event Summary - November 3, 2019

Connections are all of the ways we are connected, or not, to people, groups, and organizations inside and outside of the parish. God has placed us here, in this location, and presents us particular opportunities and challenges. God purposely puts us with people from different backgrounds and talents as a way of discovering together the fulfillment of our humanity. God works to remove obstructions between peoples and groups. Our responsibility is to people far off and near, and how that may apply to more than physical distances. We live in a mindset of scarcity, when God would have us live in a mindset of abundance.

65 people gathered in the parish hall.

The entire group discussed how we define our “parish” and how we perceive the scope, range, and distance of our responsibilities. Responses included:

- metro Richmond
- those who choose to come here
- Richmond’s East End
- GRTC bus lines
- VCU/MCV Campuses & Monroe Park
- I-95 corridor
- not limited

The entire group discussed the particular challenges & opportunities that face us in this area we just defined. It was noted that many challenges are also opportunities.

Challenges included:

- parking
- traditional image; rich white folks; church building
- fewer cradle Episcopalians
- transience of students and park people

Opportunities included:

- parking
- reality of our community
- connecting with VCU
- beautiful architecture

Individuals went to one of these 14 groups that interested them the most. Responses included:

Episcopal Churches & Groups:

- regional events, such as choir, Scouts
- invite Red Door participation

Ecumenical Churches & Groups (non-Episcopal):

- learn more about who is in our neighborhood
- central location attracts diversity

Arts & Cultural:

- sponsor/host community programs
- increase our street visibility and presence via signs, lighting, artworks

Business & Government:

- learn more about orgs. to recognize what we share or can partner in
- outreach to them

Non-Profits:

- partner with other orgs., to collaborate instead of compete for resources
- focus our mission; deep not wide

Youth, Children & their Families:

- Bible literacy for younger children
- full grade-appropriate classes

Senior Adults:

- building social networks across generations
- shuttle people to us and hold activities offsite

Schools (non-college):

- find out what they need
- offer volunteer service opportunities in summer when VCU students away

Belize:

- in-county dental and vision education programs
- help with children's access to education, incl. special needs children

Red Door:

- learn what it is like to do without, from individuals' own stories
- many additional services we could offer to our guests

VCU students, staff & faculty:

- transience is OK
- let the church be the church as a way to draw people in

Circles:

- more volunteers for meals and children's programs
- develop funding

Neighborhood & Monroe Park (non-VCU):

- coordinate with St Andrew's (school and parish)
- day care needs

The Overlooked:

- wider, additional means of marketing and promotion
- recognize affinity groups and provide support group space