

Question 10

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

10:00 – 11:00 am Session

- People leave or vote with their feet
- Not well shared with the parish
- Not addressing problems ahead of time
- Some stay, but stay mad
- Chaos in music program invisible to congregation
- What we want instead: more transparency, desire for participation to walk through decision together and bring closure; as a corporate body we take responsibility for helping make these decisions
 - Great example: recent listening session about 10 am service and Jeff had to make the tough decision after a very robust and loud discussion session; self-assessment is example of engaging full congregation then goes to Vestry to capture and decide how to move forward
 - Requires involving parish in the decision, which takes time and talent
- Growth initiative analysis indicated that people just drift away; need to find out why people leave; conduct exit interviews
- Conflicts over degree of ritual (can somewhat be solved with two services)
- Vestry membership list isn't fully visible or understood; can be more transparent; parishioners should know who they are so they can seek out
- Evolution and community is learning about how to handle conflict; we are learning
 - We are a small group so we are the stickers, and others have left. Easier to learn in this environment; and we still want to grow the congregation
 - Could a couple of Vestry members be assigned at the end of each service to be listeners; if they identify a pattern after a few times they that helps develop insights into potential problems earlier on

Noon – 1:00 pm

- Lack of transparency when changes happen
 - Issues not addressed
 - Example of attrition of choir members
- People leave
- Vestry should communicate more
 - Through announcements
 - During fellowship time
- Staff changes cause disruptions
 - Loss of Sunday School Director led to loss of members