

## Mission Action Planning – Writing the Plan

So who makes the MAP successful? The more input and ideas you can gather from the whole congregation, or as many as you can, the more likely people are to own and engage with implementing the plan. Once you have that input, it might be best to allow the key-stakeholders to draft and shape it; to prioritize perhaps three goals to tackle first. These goals must include the outcome of discipleship and spiritual growth.

If the church family, or at least the Vestry, has engaged in the process so far, you may have a lot of ideas to work with. It's amazing what ideas come up! You won't be able to do them all at once. Don't try! **Discern** the pace that will be best for your congregation. You may likely notice that the Spirit is leading your parish in a direction that sees 'goals' or 'initiatives' building on each other.

Please remember:

- Allow yourself some grace and take some risks; it is okay to try new things – please do!
- If something hasn't work, great! You tried it. What can be learned? Can you try something different?
- It's okay for things to turn out differently than you imagined
- It's okay to re-shape and change the plan as you go.

The MAP must be a "living" document which shapes your direction of ministry and focus, and does not stifle it. Some like lots of detail, perhaps you could have a clear focus on priorities, but not so much detail that you become locked into a timeline or task list that ends up being a burden. A MAP should motivate, encourage and bring clarity, not depress or weigh-down. Once the team has developed the shape of a plan, the Vestry can discuss and approve. (The Vestry could do the shaping as well, but sometimes it's easier to get traction in writing with a smaller group.)

Then comes the work of communicating the plan to the entire congregation, not just once, but continually talking about how it informs the mission and ministry of the church. Otherwise, it becomes a document we discussed once that now lives in a drawer.