

Storytelling Evening

1. Gather a medium size group (around 20 - 50) together for an evening of storytelling about the history of the church. If possible get away from the church building to a comfortable neutral venue.
2. Begin with an introduction and a couple of mapping exercises (how long have you been in the church, and how far do you travel to attend this church)
3. Settle people into comfortable chairs if possible for an hour or so of sharing stories

Ask:

- a) What is the story you enjoy sharing about this church? What is the story you most often tell about the church? What story about this church that seems to capture “this is church as it should be”? What story seems to share the heart of the church?
 - b) There are all slight variations on the same question – word it as appropriate?
4. Listen to the stories as they are shared, allow for additions. People may have different perspectives on stories, allow this, but do not permit disagreement about details.
 5. Give each story a title and list it on a whiteboard.
 6. When enough stories have been shared, ask people to go back over the stories and to identify the core values that each story celebrates. E.g a story about the way the church cared for a needy family in the community may celebrate compassion, openness, generosity.
 7. Using a different coloured whiteboard marker – list all the values for each story.
 8. Ask at the end for reflections on what this list of values indicates about the heart and soul of the church.
 9. This is a good exercise for generating shared core values and even a sense of mission and vision.