

Section II: Facilitator Resources

A. Structuring Fresh Start[®] for Your Diocese

Fresh Start is deliberately designed to be flexible to meet the needs of your diocese. At the same time, the material is proprietary and contains copyrighted material. Thus the following minimum standards must be met in order for your diocesan program to be called **Fresh Start**.

- Be overseen by an individual trained through the churchwide training program;
- Have a diocesan coordinator who maintains an on-going relationship with the national program, staying up-to-date on materials and supporting evaluations, etc.;
- Use **Fresh Start** material and methods;
- Offer the *Transition* module; and
- Be supported by the bishop.

A clergy Fresh Start program is intended to include the newly ordained, clergy new to the diocese, first-time rectors and first-time assistants. Non-parochial clergy, vocational deacons, any clergy called to a new position, interims, priests-in-charge, and others are frequently included as well. To be called **Fresh Start** a clergy program must meet the above standards and be designed as a series of periodic sessions offered over the course of at least one year. Ideally the bishop should be involved in at least one of these sessions.

This section raises some issues for you to consider and offers some suggestions for how to structure your program.

Involving the Bishop

The bishop's support is critical to your program's effectiveness. She/he must set the expectation for participation, as well as make clear that the facilitators have the full backing and support of the bishop. Many dioceses include participation in **Fresh Start** in clergy letters of agreement, and all should make clear the bishop's expectations (whether in the letter of agreement or not) during the transition process. Clearly established, written expectations also help the congregations understand the importance of the time devoted to **Fresh Start** by their new clergy person. Diocesan transition officers and search/transition consultants can help introduce **Fresh Start** to congregations.

It is important for the bishop to be personally involved in the program in whatever manner suits his/her style and interests. At a minimum each clergy program should include a session with the bishop regarding expectations for clergy in the diocese (see suggestions below). Some bishops may want to be even more actively involved, perhaps facilitating one or more sessions (especially if they have expertise in a topic area) or hosting an overnight retreat with clergy participants. The bishop may want to consider meeting with them and their families, particularly those who are new to the diocese.

If lay leaders are to be included in your **Fresh Start** program, the bishop can reinforce the importance of supporting them in their transition by actively promoting and/or participating in their sessions. Since transition for a congregation begins when the previous incumbent announces that he/she is leaving, the most effective intervention with lay leaders begins at that time. The bishop can make such intervention an expected part of the transition process.

Dealing with Diversity

Fresh Start has been implemented successfully across a range of dioceses, from the homogenous to the diverse; however its format, process and content may need to be adapted for particular cultural settings. While this requires more than simply translating the words of the program, it can be as easy as asking the participants: “What do you think of this (slide, concept, idea, etc.)? Does it make sense in your cultural context?” For example, in response to this question one very diverse **Fresh Start** group noted that church size theory (which is based on studies of white, suburban, mainline congregations) made no sense from their cultural perspective. Their experiences led to a wonderful conversation and an exceptional opportunity for cultural learning. Where possible, the **Fresh Start 3.11** material includes some of these questions.

Revising how material is presented may also help. The **L.A. Circular Model**, so called because it was developed by facilitators in the Diocese of Los Angeles, provides a less linear way to enter into discussion. Participants are asked in advance to bring a scripture reading and a personal story, poem or hymn verse that relates to the session’s topic. Sitting in a circle, participants offer their readings and stories as they are moved to do so. Silence is observed after each sharing, and there is no discussion or “back talk.” What emerges is a spontaneous thread of connection which leads to a deeper discussion of the topic. After a time of sharing, the facilitator calls a break during which the room is set up for the presentation of the module’s material. But the discussion continues to be informed by what the participants have already shared. The *Family & Friends* module incorporates this approach in the module design, but it can be used with any topic.

Whom to Include

Beyond the basic categories of individuals to invite (newly ordained, clergy new to the diocese, first-time rectors and first-time assistants), there are a number of decisions to be made. Will you involve the lay leaders of **Fresh Start** congregations? Do you have vocational deacons you want to include? How about non-parochial priests such as chaplains or cathedral/diocesan staff? Family members?

In considering the inclusion of lay leaders, non-parochial priests, and vocational deacons you will need to be aware that their schedules frequently prevent them from attending during the normal work week. If they are to be included, you may need to hold special evening or weekend sessions. Including family members would raise similar scheduling issues. Other than your time and diocesan resources, there is nothing to prevent designing a **Fresh Start** program with multiple tracks to accommodate the needs of different groups.

What to Do About Repeat Participants

As **Fresh Start** has expanded to more dioceses and been in existence longer more clergy have gone through the program. While we would still urge that they participate in the program if they are moving into their first rectorship or parochial ministry, experienced rectors may be less than enthusiastic about going through the program again, even in a new diocese. You may need to think of creative ways to engage them in **Fresh Start** or decide to help them acclimate to their new ministry in a different way. The important thing to remember is that ALL new relationships, regardless of the experience of the clergy person, involve transition and require support.

When to Start

For clergy: There are two schools of thought about when to invite clergy participants into the program – immediately upon their entry into their new position or at a set time each year.

The advantages of the former are that the clergy person gets help and support immediately and is provided a safe place in which to discuss the multitude of questions and issues that arise during the first few months of a new ministry. The down side is that the **Fresh Start** group is constantly changing, making the development of the relationships and trust needed to encourage candid conversation difficult. Orientation and incorporation of new members becomes an on-going process, and you must pay careful attention to what modules have been offered to what participants. You could facilitate the entry of a new member into an ongoing group by using an informal gateway orientation. A current member of the group could introduce the new member to the format, ground

rules, confidentiality standards and general expectations of the program prior to the participant's first meeting with the group.

The advantages of having specific entry points during the year are the ability to create the group cohesion that promotes candid conversation and to design a program with a clear beginning and end, making it easier to assure that all the modules you deem important are covered. The down side is that someone who arrives at his/her new position the month after a class starts might have to wait some time before beginning the program. After a long wait some may doubt their need for a "transition" program. You can mitigate this to some extent by having two entry points a year, so that no one would wait more than five or six months.

For laity: Transition for the congregation begins when the previous clergy person announces he/she is leaving. So the best time to start working with lay leaders is at that time, perhaps even prior to the exit of the incumbent. Intervention at this time can help assure a good exit as well as prepare lay leaders for transition in advance of the new person's arrival. A separate set of materials, **Fresh Start in the Search Process**, provides resources for diocesan transition ministers, search/transition consultants, and **Fresh Start** facilitators to use with congregations during this time. This resource may be downloaded from the Episcopal Church Foundation's *Vital Practices* website (look under the Tools tab on the home page at www.ecfvp.org and then under Clergy Transition).

Work with lay leaders can be done at the congregational level or in cross-diocesan meetings of lay leaders from congregations in transition. Another option after the new clergy person is in **Fresh Start** is to schedule opportunities for lay leaders to be involved either in sessions for themselves alone or in joint sessions with their new clergy person.

Program Length

Research has shown that the first twelve months of a ministry are critical, and **Fresh Start** program standards require a minimum program length of one year. However many programs operate on a two-year time frame. This enables participants to apply what they have learned and report back on the results. A longer program also allows you to cover more topics.

Recognizing that transition in the congregation begins much earlier than the arrival of the new clergy person, **Fresh Start** for lay leaders should be long enough to cover the time from the exit of the previous incumbent through at least the first year of the new ministry. Thus the program for lay leaders may be two years, even if you decide the clergy program should be one year.

What to Include

The curriculum contains more modules than you could cover even in a two-year program (see annotated list in Part D below). Beyond the *Transition* module, what to include is for you to decide. Your decision should be informed by the make-up of your **Fresh Start** group (e.g., are they all newly ordained or do some have years of experience as a priest?), the length of your program, and the context within which your participants' ministries is unfolding (what are the issues of most concern to them?). Some program facilitators plan for the program year, providing a fixed agenda at the beginning. Others prefer to keep the agenda loose, adding whatever topics are on the minds of the participants. You may want to include the participants in the design. One way to do so is to give them the annotated list of modules found later in this section and ask them to vote on their favorites (be sure to warn them that it may not be possible to include all of their choices!).

Frequency of Sessions

The standard design for clergy sessions is a monthly one-day meeting through the academic year (September through May or June), with many possible variations. For lay leaders, designs range from sessions held in individual congregations through periodic cross-diocesan meetings (with or without clergy).

These decisions are driven by the culture of the diocese and, more practically, by travel time. Dioceses with widely dispersed congregations are more likely to opt for quarterly retreat style sessions. Costs are also a factor. Other considerations are the number of other gatherings clergy and/or lay leaders are expected to attend during the year (e.g., clergy conference, clergy days, diocesan convention, lay leader workshops); whether any of the **Fresh Start** congregations are involved in "total ministry" (or equivalent) and who would need to attend from these congregations. Consider as well how many of the **Fresh Start** clergy are part time.

Part B of this section, "Designing the Session," provides agendas and suggestions for different formats.

Where to Hold the Sessions

Most **Fresh Start** programs meet on a diocesan-wide basis, so choosing one central location or deciding to rotate to different congregations is the typical question to be addressed. For some widely-dispersed dioceses, however, holding sessions by region or deanery may be appropriate. Even in regional settings, however, you could decide to either stay in one location or move around.

The consistency of meeting in the same location offers several possible benefits. A central location can help minimize the impact of travel time on participants. Meeting in a regular place makes logistics (room setup, ordering lunch, having audiovisual equipment handy, etc.) more manageable. Participants will quickly learn how long it takes to drive the distance from their homes to the regular meeting place and are more likely to arrive on time. Having a regular meeting place lowers the anxiety that comes from being unfamiliar with the diocese and the location of its churches.

On the other hand, there are advantages to meeting in the various churches where the participants are doing ministry. Having a visual image of the context in which ministry occurs promotes relationships among the participants. Seeing life in a tiny, struggling, congregation with a part-time vicar as well as in a multi-staffed, well-resourced, wealthy, suburban one is a great reminder of the variety of contexts in which clergy and lay leaders are called to serve. In some dioceses, this may be the only opportunity individuals have (or take) to see congregations other than their own or those nearby.

This latter, roving approach to location also has its disadvantages. Participants may be unsure about how to get to the meeting place or forget where this month's meeting will be held and arrive late. Travel time may be extreme for certain participants, dampening participation, and the logistics of getting equipment, lunch, etc. may be more complicated.

At least one session should be held at the diocesan office (in some dioceses, the diocesan office or conference center may be the only location). Diocesan leadership usually assumes that everyone – especially clergy – are familiar with and comfortable around the diocesan office. This may not be the case, especially if the clergy person or lay leaders are not actively involved in diocesan committees, commissions and decision making bodies. Holding occasional **Fresh Start** sessions at the diocesan office may help lessen the perception of distance felt by so many congregations and clergy toward their diocesan structures and staff.

The session at the diocesan office could be the occasion of the session with the bishop. This would also be an ideal time for the bishop's administrative assistant to sit with the group and describe how he/she performs the appropriate function of maintaining the bishop's calendar, scheduling appointments, or getting word to the bishop in times of emergency. In addition, the session could include a tour of the facility, showcase the resources of the diocese and provide an opportunity for a face-to-face introduction to staff members.

Confidentiality Guidelines

Given the nature of **Fresh Start** gatherings, clear guidelines about confidentiality must be established. You want people to share what they have learned about

themselves and the models and theories that are presented, but you do not want them to share personal information about another participant or his/her congregation without permission. They should also not relate the content of discussions that would in any way identify the persons involved. These guidelines should be understood and subscribed to by every participant. Violations of the confidentiality guidelines should be dealt with immediately and publicly, that is with the community for whom this is a shared responsibility. The responsibility for keeping these norms lies with the entire **Fresh Start** community, not just with the diocesan facilitator.

Whether to Use Mentors

Providing mentors to clergy participants in new positions has proven highly successful and advantageous in some dioceses and may be something you want to consider. When the clergy person arrives at his/her new congregation, the bishop and **Fresh Start** coordinator assign a mentor who seems appropriate in terms of temperament, experience and willingness to serve. In pairing clergy with a mentor, you might consider the size of congregations served, similarity in position (an assistant might be assigned as mentor to a new assistant), and personality or temperament (might these two people “click”?).

Expectations of mentors should be clearly spelled out. Should mentors attend **Fresh Start** sessions along with new clergy? (This involves veteran clergy in helpful continuing education and is highly recommended!) Are the mentorship pairs expected to meet on a regular basis? What kind of ongoing contact is expected?

If you do decide to include mentors in the program, be prepared to design a role for them (in and outside of formal sessions), as well as to deal with the occasional break-down of a mentor relationship.

Use of Outside Resources

While the modules in this curriculum are designed to be led by non-experts, no facilitator will feel equally comfortable leading all the modules. Recognize that there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise among the participants. Your role may be to facilitate the conversation and the sharing of that knowledge.

Calling in additional resources and specialists is certainly acceptable, and it provides variety to the program. The bishop will have expertise and interest in certain areas and may have the time to lead a session. Diocesan staff members and other clergy and lay persons in the diocese may have a particular area of expertise that can be tapped. Neighboring dioceses may have resource staff that might be willing to help at little or no cost (except your reciprocal assistance with their program). Trained spiritual directors and retreat leaders may provide needed resources for the modules on spirituality. A specialist might be brought in

for an extended overnight session on a particular topic. Remember that the product of **Fresh Start** is as much about building relationships as providing information. The topics are important, but sessions are also meant to encourage reflection, conversation and the sharing of expertise among participants.

Granting CEU's

Some dioceses grant continuing education units (CEUs) to their **Fresh Start** participants. The standard formula is to grant one (1) CEU for each ten (10) hours of content face-time (meal time and breaks do not count). Thus, for example, a program that meets monthly during the academic year from 9:00 to 1:00, with lunch at 12:30, might grant 3 CEUs of credit (9 sessions x 3.25 hours per session, assuming one 15 minute break).

The legitimacy of the CEUs can be established by asking your Commission on Ministry or other body responsible for the continuing education of clergy to grant recognition to the program. A simple certificate signed by the bishop noting successful completion of the program and the number of CEUs awarded can be given to each participant at the end of the program.

If you decide to offer CEUs you should have a formal attendance policy that clearly states how many absences are allowed. Multiple absences, consistently late arrivals or frequent early leaving may be cause to **not** grant the CEUs.

Awarding CEUs signals the serious nature of the program and also provides clergy with additional justification for their vestries regarding attendance at **Fresh Start**. If you want to safeguard the continuing education time of **Fresh Start** participants you may need to state in letters of agreement that **Fresh Start** time is in addition to any continuing education time stipulated in the clergy contract.

B. Designing the Sessions

For Clergy

What to Include

Each clergy **Fresh Start** session has several components:

- a gathering worship,
- time for a check-in to reengage the participants as a community,
- presentation of module content,
- community sharing around contemporary issues of transition, and
- time for informal fellowship.

The modules are fairly self-explanatory, and two methods have been used to build community around the sharing of issues pertinent to the participants.

Theological Reflection on Key Issue – In advance, a participant is asked to come prepared to talk about some situation (current or recent) in the congregation which presents the clergy person with an ongoing dilemma. The presenter has 10-15 minutes to describe the situation, the players, the issues, and the feelings and questions raised in the presenter by this situation. The group members share the thoughts and feelings the presentation has raised for them while the presenter listens. This is followed by a time of reflection during which the group discusses, asks questions, shares perceptions, and identifies any Scriptural passage or theological framework which sheds light on the situation. There is no advice-giving. Finally, beginning with the presenter, members reflect on their experience, sharing any insights or new perceptions gained from the session. The underlying principle is that one can only be responsible for one's own actions, not those of others. (This is **not** a group problem-solving session.)

Focused discussion – rather than assign someone in advance, this model uses community building time as a chance to ask how things are going in an informal, less structured way. The time is very open-ended, and there is an opportunity to explore personal as well as professional issues. No particular person is the assigned focus for these sessions, and therefore any participant can feel free to share an issue. It is important that facilitators monitor how much air time is being used by individual participants, so that no one is overlooked or allowed to dominate the group's time on a regular basis. This is meant as an opportunity for colleagues to share among themselves the trials, tribulations, joys and successes of ministry with congregations, and in so doing, to create an ongoing community of caring, supportive and connected colleagues.

In both of these approaches personal as well as professional issues are named and explored. And in so doing, a spirit of trust, shared vulnerability and common mission is built among the participants. The resulting community pays off in the life of the individuals, the congregations and the diocese. In addition to these two models, you are encouraged to create other appropriate ways of building a community of colleagues which fits the style and needs of participants.

Length and Timing of Sessions

While the standard model is a one-day, monthly meeting, the benefits of **Fresh Start** can be realized in a variety of settings and using a wide range of time frames. No diocese should feel deterred from reaping the rewards of **Fresh Start** merely because the standard model does not seem to apply.

The standard model assumes that clergy participants can gather, meet and return home in one day. It also assumes that these gatherings will occur monthly, with or without a summer break.

Depending upon travel distances, session length can vary. A longer day provides for a more in-depth process and consideration of topics. On the other hand, a shorter period of time may make the program more accessible for clergy. Following are two possible time frames. Beginning and ending times can be adjusted to later/earlier in the day:

Four-and-a-half-hour time frame:

- 9:30 Gather, refreshments, tour of facility (if applicable)
- 10:00 Worship/check-in
- 10:30 Module
- 12:00 Lunch, fellowship
- 1:00 Building a community of colleagues (key issue/focused discussion)
- 2:00 Go in peace

Five-and-a-half-hour time frame (extended time for each segment):

- 9:00 Gather, refreshments, tour of facility (if applicable)
- 9:30 Worship
- 10:00 Check-in
- 10:30 Module
- 12:30 Lunch, fellowship
- 1:30 Building a community of colleagues (key issue/focused discussion)
- 2:30 Go in peace

If travel distances prohibit meeting on a one-day, monthly basis, any number of variations are possible. In general the less frequently the group meets, the

longer it needs to meet each time to gain benefit from the program. Some possible alternative schedules might be:

- Once every six weeks or every other month, with several of the sessions being overnight
- Quarterly 3 day/2 night overnight sessions
- Semi-annual 4 day/3 night sessions

Whatever the variation, all sessions contain: a period of gathering with prayer/worship, a check-in to catch up on what has taken place since the group last met; one or more modules; relationship building through use of key issues or focused discussion; and time for informal fellowship. The multi-day, overnight sessions could do some intentional and thorough community building at the beginning, followed by *several* teaching modules, interspersed with key issue or focused discussion sessions.

A Session with the Bishop

Every **Fresh Start** program should include at least one session for clergy participants with the bishop. The content, tenor, and style of this session will depend upon the bishop him/herself, but in all cases the purpose of this session is to build relationships (**not** to do business). Here are some possible topics for conversation.

- How does the bishop see his/her authority? What does it mean for clergy to be “persons under authority?” When are clergy likely to see the bishop exercise his/her authority?
- What are the boundaries of authority and dependence in this relationship?
- What are the canonical boundaries of authority between bishop and clergy?
- How do clergy access the bishop when they need him/her? What does the bishop want to know? For what things does he/she **not** want to be bothered?
- What are the bishop’s expectations related to official acts (e.g., policy on remarriage after divorce, participation in ecumenical services, confirmation)? What does the bishop expect out of parish visitation and how are visitations scheduled and handled?
- How does the bishop support the health and well-being of clergy and their families? Of what does he/she want to be informed? What assistance is there for counseling, addiction treatment, etc.? Can clergy access these services without the bishop’s knowledge?
- What can clergy expect from the bishop if they are accused of sexual misconduct?
- What are the bishop’s expectations regarding liturgy and how flexible is he/she? The mission and ministry of the diocese?

- What are the bishop's expectations of the prayer and spiritual lives of the clergy?

Or ask participants to come up with questions they would like to raise with the bishop (obviously this only works if the bishop is comfortable dealing with a spontaneous and open agenda).

The timing of the session will depend on the bishop's schedule, and you may want to design this as an extra session rather than try to fit it into the standard schedule for a regular **Fresh Start** session. It is wonderful if the bishop can join participants for a meal and have that time for more informal conversation.

If the session takes place at the diocesan office, you may want to include time for clergy to meet diocesan staff. It is especially appropriate for the bishop's administrative assistant to share how he/she maintains the bishop's calendar and how to communicate with the bishop in times of crisis. A tour of the diocesan offices might also be arranged.

For Laity

What to Include

For the laity, as well as for the clergy, **Fresh Start** provides both an opportunity for learning and a chance to build relationships (between them and the new clergy person, with other lay leaders in the diocese who are going through transition, with diocesan staff). Two resources are available to help guide this process: ***Fresh Start in Your Congregation: A Resource for Lay Leaders***, included in Volume 1, and the downloadable ***Fresh Start in the Search Process*** (under the Tools tab at www.ecfvp.org – go to Clergy Transition to find it). The former covers the entire transition process in congregations and includes variations of the regular modules which can be used in congregational settings. The latter offers shortened versions of selected modules and additional resources designed specifically for the period from the exit of the incumbent to the arrival of his/her successor. When and how you engage lay leaders in **Fresh Start** will affect your choice of modules.

If you engage lay leaders at the start of their transition (i.e., as the previous incumbent is exiting), sharing the model of transition, leading them in a history-sharing, and exploring the issues of exits and entrances can support their planning for the interim time and their role as leaders in a time of transition. When the new clergy person arrives, the emphasis should shift to relationship building, helping the new ministry team share their history, developing common expectations, and being transparent about habits and norms.

As with clergy-only sessions, the flow of the sessions remains the same: gathering for worship, time for check-in, content, relationship building through sharing of concerns and insights, and time for informal fellowship.

Length and Timing of Sessions

Starting When the Congregation Enters Transition (Individual Congregation Model): Diocesan staff and/or transition or search consultants may want to introduce some **Fresh Start** topics that cover the basic theories (*Transition, History-Sharing and Understanding, and Exit and Entrance* are particularly relevant).

Sessions can be designed to meet the needs of the congregation. Some diocesan facilitators and transition ministers have conducted sessions after church on Sunday, on Saturday morning, or in the evening. The vestry and search committee are usually involved, with some sessions held for the whole congregation. A **Fresh Start** facilitator could also be invited to a vestry and/or search committee meeting to introduce the program and conduct a module. These sessions are typically fairly short (a couple of hours, which may include business other than **Fresh Start**).

Starting When the Congregation Enters Transition (Diocesan Program Model): Wardens, search committee chairs and lay leaders from all congregations in transition could be brought together on a regular, periodic basis (e.g., quarterly) to discuss how things are going in their call process. You could use one or two of the modules on exit and entrance issues or some of the shortened versions from ***Fresh Start in the Search Process*** to frame this conversation. This would also be an excellent opportunity to provide an introduction to the diocesan **Fresh Start** program. Bringing lay leaders from various congregations together has the advantage of helping to create community among the lay leaders within the diocese.

The agenda for a one-day meeting might look something like the following. It assumes that lay leaders can gather, meet and return in one day. Depending upon travel distances, the session might be longer or shorter than indicated. A longer period of time provides for a more in-depth process and consideration of topics. On the other hand, a shorter period of time may make the program more accessible. Beginning and ending times can be adjusted to later/earlier in the day and/or the day could be extended to include dinner.

Five-and-a-half-hour time frame:

- 9:00 Gather, refreshments, tour
- 9:30 Worship
- 10:00 Check-in
- 10:30 Module
- 12:30 Lunch, fellowship

- 1:30 Building a **Fresh Start** community of lay leaders
- 2:30 Go in peace

Various factors may make the one-day model impractical. Some other possibilities include:

- Meeting semi-annually but with an overnight session
- Meeting more often (e.g., every six to eight weeks) for a three hour evening session.

For multi-day, overnight sessions consider doing intentional and thorough community building at the beginning, followed by *several* teaching modules interspersed with sessions focused on issues of particular concern to the participants.

Starting When the New Clergy Person Arrives (Individual Congregation Model): **Fresh Start 3.11** includes a resource for lay leaders that suggests ways of bringing **Fresh Start** to the congregation. The use of an outside facilitator is recommended for most of the activities. That could be you, someone from the diocesan staff, a search or interim consultant, or even another clergy person who has been through **Fresh Start**. This approach helps strengthen the new ministry team in the congregation and provides support in the context where it is most needed, in the building of relationships within the congregation. Again, sessions would have to be tailored to meet the schedules of lay leaders (i.e., evening or weekend sessions). Suggested agendas for these activities are included in both versions of **Fresh Start in Your Congregation**.

Starting When the New Clergy Person Arrives (Diocesan Program Model): Since the modules in **Fresh Start 3.11** can be used with mixed clergy and lay groups, offering a day-long program for the lay leaders and their new clergy person can help build community across the diocese. It allows lay leaders to see the kind of program their clergy person has been attending and provides them with the opportunity to learn from members of other congregations who are also going through transition. Such programs could be offered semi-annually or quarterly and may or may not substitute for the regular clergy **Fresh Start** session that month. The modules contain the instructions needed to use them in such mixed groups.

Using a Congregational Transition Person: Another alternative is to train a skilled lay person from each congregation to bring some of the **Fresh Start** content back to the congregation. In this way, the **Fresh Start** congregation would have a clergy-lay team able to introduce **Fresh Start** to the congregation, thus modeling shared clergy-lay leadership. Obviously it would be important for the lay person and the clergy person to have mutual trust, respect and a willingness to work together.

For Families of Fresh Start Clergy Participants

Just as we recognize that transition affects not only the clergy person, but the congregation and its lay leaders, so we must recognize that it also affects clergy families (spouses, partners, children, parents, etc.). Various modules make reference to some of these dynamics and you will want to encourage clergy and lay participants to reflect upon the impact of the transition on the family. You might also involve family members directly through some activities such as the following.

- Inviting the new clergy family members to a diocesan orientation.
- Providing clergy **Fresh Start** participants with resource referrals for their families.
- Identifying a member of the diocesan clergy family network who feels called to shepherd clergy families in transition. An invitation from the bishop to help the program in this way might be helpful.
- Holding a weekend retreat hosted by the bishop for clergy new to the diocese and their families (remember to arrange for child care!).

If you choose to include family content in your program, it is very important to be as inclusive as possible. “Family” does not look the same for all clergy persons.

A Note About the Modules

Regardless of your audience, you may find that the content of the modules is sometimes more than you can cover in one session. There are several ways to deal with this:

- If the content is of great importance to your group, you could spread the module over more than one session. This decision can be made in advance or could come about as the result of a deepening conversation on the module’s content which leads you and the group to decide to continue it in a subsequent session (even if that means dropping some other module).
- You can go as far as you are able in one session, then provide a brief overview of the rest of the content and give participants any remaining handouts so they can pursue their learning on their own. This might be particularly effective for those modules that ask the participants to analyze a given situation (e.g., *Organizational Systems Theory; Planning; or Power, Authority & Influence*).
- You can provide copies of the handouts to participants in advance and ask them to complete the analysis prior to the session. This will allow you to focus on the discussion without taking the time for individual work in the session. Prewrite is already built into a couple of sessions (*Finances:*

What You Need to Know and *Family and Friends: Leading an Integrated Life*), but would also be appropriate for any module that calls for a longer analysis of the congregation's situation (e.g., those mentioned in the bullet above, *Habits, Norms & Expectations*).

- You can decide in advance, based upon the needs of your participants, to cut some parts of a module and focus on one or two key points. For example, in *Family & Friends: Leading an Integrated Life* you might drop the discussion of roles to insure that you have time to get to the piece on developing support systems (or vice versa).

The point is to tailor each session to the needs and interests of your participants – and remember that relationship-building is as key to **Fresh Start**.as learning.

C. Facilitation Tips

National evaluations of the **Fresh Start** program have revealed a not-so-surprising reality – the success of the **Fresh Start** group depends on the skills of its facilitator! Indeed the skills of a facilitator in a group can make or break any group experience. How a group is gathered, led, and managed can make it a fruitful experience - or a disaster.

If you are reading the Facilitator Resources Section for **Fresh Start 3.11**, you have already been chosen or have volunteered to be a group facilitator. It is your responsibility to make sure that you use good facilitation skills as you plan for your group's time together. When considering how you want your **Fresh Start** group to function, consider the role facilitators played in successful groups in which you have participated in the past:

- What was the facilitator's role?
- What style did the facilitator use to help the group form?
- How did the facilitator deal with anxiety or inappropriate behavior in the group?
- How did she/he help newcomers blend in?
- What about closure and celebrations at the end of your time together as a community?
- Did the facilitator know the material being presented?
- Was he/she confident and comfortable in the role?

These are critical factors to consider when planning for effective facilitation of a **Fresh Start** group (see also the list of skills and characteristics of a good facilitator under subsection H).

Group Development and Role of the Facilitator

An important aspect of **Fresh Start** is building relationships among the participants. As with any group, a **Fresh Start** group's effectiveness and the quality of relationships among members depend on how well all the members meet their responsibilities to:

- The task to be done
- The harmony of the group or group maintenance
- The needs of individual group members.

As a facilitator, your role is to help balance all three and establish an environment wherein participants themselves begin to do the same. If your **Fresh Start** group never discusses anything of substance and is never on agenda or on time participants will get bored or frustrated and begin dropping out. On the other hand, if the agenda drives everything to the detriment of meeting the needs of

individual members or if the group becomes mired in controversy people will become disinterested or hurt and similarly begin dropping out.

David W. Johnson and Frank P. Johnson in their book, Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills, identify seven stages that groups go through. These are:

1. Defining and structuring procedures;
2. Conforming to procedures and getting acquainted;
3. Recognizing mutuality and building trust;
4. Rebelling and differentiating;
5. Committing to and taking ownership for the goals, procedures, and other members;
6. Functioning maturely and productively; and
7. Terminating.¹

As a facilitator you help the group move through these stages by actively intervening when necessary to keep the group from getting stuck. Johnson and Johnson list the facilitator's tasks at each stage as follows.

1. Introduce, define, and structure the group.
2. Clarify procedures, reinforce members for conforming to the procedures, and help members become acquainted.
3. Emphasize and highlight the positive interdependence among group members, and encourage them to engage in both trusting and trustworthy behaviors.
4. Accept the rebellion by and differentiation among group members as a normal process. Use integrative negotiations to help members establish their independence from another and the prescribed procedures.
5. Help members commit themselves to and take ownership of the group's goals and procedures.
6. Be a consultant to the group, providing resources for the group to function effectively.
7. Signal termination and help members move on to future groups.²

As you can see, early in a group's life your role is to provide the boundaries for group interaction and promote trust-building. Later in its development the group takes on more of these functions itself, and your role becomes more one of providing resources. Remember, too, that any time someone enters or leaves a group, the group goes back to an earlier stage of development and your role shifts with it.

¹ David W. Johnson and Frank P. Johnson, Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills, 10th Ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ, Pearson Education, Inc., 2009) p. 28.

² Johnson and Johnson, p. 29.

Preparation: Getting Your Fresh Start Group Started

As a **Fresh Start** facilitator, you will be responsible for certain decisions, plans and processes. You will need to:

- Organize
- Plan and schedule meetings
- Communicate with participants
- Attend each meeting
- Keep attendance
- Maintain a group roster
- Make meeting arrangements
- Lead worship (see Worship Resources below)

Consider these details as you begin your diocesan **Fresh Start** program:

Time Required: Meeting time requirements depend on how often you meet, but be sure that you have the time to attend all regular meetings, including travel to and from the meeting site. Preparing for each session may take up to three hours (or more if you are unfamiliar with the topic), so include this in your planning and be sure that you can dedicate the time for preparation.

Communication/Invitation: In order to start your **Fresh Start** clergy group, you will need to make sure you have the correct contact information for all participants. This should come from the diocesan office, with approval from the Bishop. Most **Fresh Start** facilitators use e-mail to stay in touch with participants, but the first invitation usually comes from the bishop in letter form. Many dioceses incorporate **Fresh Start** attendance in letters of agreement, so clergy will expect an invitation. You are responsible for regular reminders about meeting times, location(s) and topics.

Diocesan Office: If you are not part of the diocesan staff it is critical that you maintain contact with them, scheduling the bishop's time with the group and making sure that new clergy are invited into the program in a timely manner.

Information for the Parish: Be sure to send your **Fresh Start** participants information for their vestry and other lay leaders about the program, and let participants know that they will receive materials to take back and use with their parish leadership. If you have a congregational component to your **Fresh Start** program, you may need to get information to lay leaders before the new clergy person arrives (remember that the congregation's transition starts much earlier!).

Co-Facilitation: Many **Fresh Start** facilitators find that it is best to work in pairs or trios, sharing the responsibility for leadership, administration and communication for the regular meetings. In choosing a co-facilitator, be sure to communicate clearly what is required of a facilitator and clarify your expectations of each other. You may want to use this list of facilitator tasks plus the skills and characteristics of a good facilitator in subsection H as a checklist.

Meeting Time: When planning your meeting time, consider the specific needs of the participants, clergy or lay, especially with regard to travel times. Take into consideration as well any existing colleague groups, clericus/deanery meetings or other diocesan meetings when scheduling your **Fresh Start** time.

Topic Expert Visits: If you are planning on using topic experts, research who is available in your area to present on your chosen topic and schedule that person's participation well in advance. You may want or need to provide the person with an honorarium. Make sure the expert knows something about the purpose and structure of **Fresh Start** and arrange for any handouts, supplies, or equipment that he/she may need.

Meeting Location: You need to create an environment where people feel safe to share their stories and views. Consider where you will meet, and be sure that it is in a location that serves the group needs. Will you meet in the same place each time, or move locations?

Meeting Details: Be sure that you:

- Have your meeting space reserved;
- Have sufficient copies of handouts and other resources;
- Arrive early to arrange the meeting room and welcome participants;
- Plan ahead for beverages, snacks, and meal, as needed;
- Provide for any technological tools (LCD projector) and set them up and test them prior to the group start time;
- Bring other needed supplies (markers, newsprint, pencils, pens, paper) for the group session;
- Provide nametags for every session (and wear your own, please); and
- Know who will and will not attend any given session (group norms may determine how this is reported).

Flexibility in Design: Be flexible with design structure and accept feedback and new ideas from others. To vary the pace and encourage people to get to know each other, you may want to use different small group formations in your meetings, e.g., pairs, trios, groupings by church size or role (warden, rector, associate). Be sure you plan ahead how the small groups will be led or facilitated.

Choosing Modules: When choosing which modules to present, remember to include the *Transition* module in your plan for the year. Some facilitators give participants a list of the other modules and ask them to rank order them as a way of getting input into the topic line-up.

During the Session

As the facilitator you set the tone, pace, and environment of the gathering, and need to deal with problems or issues that arise in group process. Doing so requires a basic knowledge of group process and formation. Here are some things to keep in mind.

Establish Norms: You need to lead the group in setting norms that create a respectful context for the gathering and ensure that these are maintained. Maintaining confidentiality is especially important – a broken confidence kills a group. Be sure that you are able to deal with any breach of confidence among members.

Accommodate Differences: Understanding how personality type, especially extroversion/introversion can influence participation and interaction in a group setting will help you structure ways to include everyone and balance participation. Become comfortable with silence in order to give the introverts a chance to talk, and model a group behavior that values differences among participants.

Lead Process: Give directions clearly and preferably in more than one way recognizing that some people want all the details and others only need general instructions. Present material in a manner that encourages conversation, rather than doing too much formal presentation. Be prepared to keep the conversation on track/topic, to listen, to give feedback, and, when necessary, summarize. Time management is critical to successful group process.

Use Questions: Ask open-ended, stimulating, or provocative questions to lead beyond the superficial to deeper conversation, paying attention to both their wording and delivery. Remember that you are not called to be an expert, but the facilitator of a conversation about a particular topic.

Using PowerPoint: If you plan to use PowerPoint you must be familiar with your equipment and know how to transition slides and work the projector. Otherwise the technology becomes a distraction. Do NOT simply read from the slides – there is nothing more boring than someone simply flashing slides to a group and reading what they can read themselves!

Summarize: Be ready and able to display group input (on newsprint or by other means).

Keep Time: Start and end on time and manage beginning and ending time and breaks.

Stay in Role: It is critical for you to stay in role as facilitator, not taking sides in a discussion or letting your own viewpoint interfere with the conversation. Pay attention to body language and other physical signals of group members, and respond appropriately and promptly to pastoral situations that arise during the session. Be prepared to bring closure to a topic, celebrate successes and move to next appropriate area of conversation.

Have Fun: Fresh Start sessions can be a rich and fruitful time for participants, and for facilitators. Give yourself permission to have fun without being silly or distracting.

Managing Difficult Group Situations

The church is a human institution, and because we are human there is always the possibility of a problem with a group member's behavior or attitude. Your ability to manage difficult situations in a group setting is one of the most valuable skills you can have. You must be able to recognize and deal quickly and appropriately with distracting or destructive behavior in a group. It is critical that you:

- Confront difficult, disruptive, or problematic behavior in the group;
- Handle intense emotions;
- Recognize and deal with conflict; and
- Remain neutral when conflicting opinions or views are shared.

You may want to use the following chart to identify and deal with problem behaviors in a group:

Behavior

Needy people who seek affirmation and approval or focus on crises sap group energy and can derail a group quickly.

Complainers/whiners who take a critical approach to topics, ideas, and other people.

Possible Response

"I am aware of our time . . . perhaps we could talk more about that outside of our group."

Maintain use of "I" statements as a group norm, and remind the group of norms if necessary.

Behavior

Possible Response

Long-winded, over-talkative types who usually have longer stories, side conversations, expert opinions, are not good listeners, and often interrupt others.

“I hate to interrupt, but we need to move on.” “Let’s go back to where we got side-tracked.” “The group will be more productive if only one person talks at a time.”

Angry or hostile people who are argumentative or bully-ish produce fear in others, can be toxic, and make others want to leave a group.

Don’t excuse or ignore destructive group behavior; carefully assess the level of anger and, if needed, look into other interventions; deal directly with problem behavior outside of group.

Some other phrases or techniques used by facilitators in dealing with problematic behaviors are:

- “I want to stop you there – you said something that we might want to look at.”
- “In order to do my job I need to _____ (move us along, re-focus, go back to...)”
- “When you _____, it makes me feel _____.”
- Acknowledge the hurt or pain that a person is experiencing and invite discussion of it in another forum that may be more appropriate or helpful.
- Be careful to avoid emotional triangles and deal directly with problematic people while assuring others that you are aware of the problem.
- Be able to re-state a problem or point if people do not understand what you mean.
- Sometimes it is appropriate to stop and hold some silence or prayer, or even call for a break so that you can deal with matters confidentially.

Sometimes a problem is situational or temporary while at other times problematic behavior is chronic. It is important to know the difference and respond appropriately. Groups do well when the leader can maintain a non-anxious presence. As a leader you are called to be self-aware, prayerful, pastoral and authentic.

You will know you have an effective group when your **Fresh Start** participants begin to gain energy from their meetings and become more flexible in how they handle differences. Members of healthy groups will be consistent in their attendance, share a sense of reunion when they gather and exhibit an increasing trust in each other.

After the Meeting: Evaluation and Celebration

Evaluation: It is helpful to track the results of your **Fresh Start** gatherings through the use of evaluation tools. Some facilitators use a simple format for this: *What worked? What didn't? What do you want more of? Less of? Other comments?* Others create more elaborate and customized evaluation instruments. Whatever you use, be sure that you report the results to those who can best use them – other facilitators, your diocesan contact, bishop, national **Fresh Start** trainers.

Celebration: Many **Fresh Start** facilitators find that it is meaningful to mark and celebrate the end of a **Fresh Start** group term. Some prepare certificates, present small gifts, write prayers or poems, or have a special meal together. No matter what method you choose, marking the completion and ending of your time together is important.

Bibliography

Christian, Sandy and Tubesing, Nancy Loving. Instant Icebreakers: 50 Powerful Catalysts for Group Interaction and High-Impact Learning. Duluth, MN, Whole Person Associates Inc., 1997 – an interesting collection of ice-breakers to help you design ways for people to get to know each other.

Johnson, David W. and Johnson, Frank P. Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills, 10th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2009 – a good overview of the research regarding group development, group leadership and group processes (e.g., decision making) this classic work includes instruments for self-assessment of behaviors and skills as well as exercises to promote group formation.

Weisbord, Marvin and Janoff, Sandra. Don't Just Do Something, Stand There! Ten Principles for Leading Meetings that Matter. San Francisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler, 2007 – a basic primer on group facilitation, with practical tips and interesting examples.

D. Fresh Start 3.11 Modules Menu

Core Modules

The following modules are considered core to **Fresh Start**. They cover the underlying theory of transitions (*Transition*); the basic story-telling process that begins to build relationships (*History-Sharing and Understanding*); the reminder that self-care during this time is important, too (*Family and Friends: Leading an Integrated Life*), and how to enter a new congregation (*Entering a New System*).

Entering a New System – A congregation is a living system, and the arrival of a new leader causes disruption to its equilibrium. Participants identify healthy ways to enter the system. Two companion resources, one each for clergy and lay leaders, provide practical methods for engaging the congregation in sharing histories, exploring norms and expectations, and committing to on-going feedback.

Family and Friends: Leading an Integrated Life – Finding time for family, friends AND self is often difficult during a time of transition. During this session participants look at their use of time, boundary-setting, and the extent of their support networks, and begin to think about how professional life, time for family and friends, and respite all need to be part of an integrated life.

History-Sharing and Understanding – The clergy person, the diocese, and the congregation all enter into this new relationship in the context of their histories, personal and institutional. Sharing these histories promotes understanding and trust, helping to build the relationship. This module incorporates a process that facilitates the story-telling.

Transition – This module introduces the concept of transition (as opposed to change), exploring ways of responding appropriately given where people (the clergy person and the congregants) are in their response to change.

General Modules

The following modules should be chosen according to the needs and interests of participants. The order of listing is alphabetical and does not indicate degree of importance.

Conflict Part I: Awareness – From a base definition of conflict this module explores types of conflict and helps participants assess their personal styles for dealing with conflict and learn how to recognize the early warning signs.

Conflict Part II: Diagnosis and Response – In this module participants are introduced to Speed Leas' levels of conflict and the concept of behavioral covenants. Appropriate interventions for different levels of conflict are discussed.

Church Size and Its Implications – This module introduces the latest in church size theory, asks participants to look at their own experience with different size congregations, and raises questions about the implications of size for their current congregation.

Decision-Making: Style and Clarity – Participants explore the factors to consider in determining how decisions should be made and who should be involved, using case studies to promote their understanding. They analyze the decision-making styles of their congregations and their consequences and look at the impact of culture on decision-making.

Dialogue: Searching for Common Ground – How do we learn to live in harmony with those with whom we have deep disagreement? Focusing on what we share in common, instead of our differences, and foregoing the need to convert we can create a space that allows us to live and worship side-by-side. In this module participants learn and practice how to phrase the kinds of questions that will open up that space.

Exit and Entrance: Patterns, Emotions and the Wilderness – This module helps participants understand that the success of a transition depends in part on how exits and entrances are handled. They reflect on the exits and entrances involved in the current transition, from the perspective of both the clergyperson and the congregation, and learn to become more intentional about entering a new ministry.

Family Systems Theory – This module provides an introduction to Rabbi Edwin Friedman's family systems theory and its particular application in times of transition in congregations.

Finances: What You Need to Know – Getting a handle on the financial situation of a new parish can be challenging. This module provides a road map through the financial maze, including a look at the canonical requirements governing parish finances.

Habits, Norms and Expectations – This module is designed to help participants identify the habits, norms and expectations of their congregations, particularly in the areas of liturgy and worship, music, programs and structure, and staff. Participants also explore the underlying sources of these expectations. Clergy identify their own habits, norms and expectations so that differences between these and those of the congregation can be explored and resolved.

Leadership for Our Times – A look at the demands being made on leaders in today’s world, this module builds on the work of Ronald A. Heifetz and Peter Steinke. Participants do a quick assessment of their leadership style and analyze current challenges facing their congregations, using Heifetz’s and Steinke’s models to craft an appropriate response.

Leading Planned Change – The very fact that a new clergy person has been called introduces change into a system, and sometimes other changes are thrust upon a congregation even if the time is not appropriate. Participants identify those changes that are occurring in their congregation and learn how to help people navigate through them.

Organizational Systems Theory: Using Organizational Analysis in Congregations – This module introduces participants to a structured way to analyze the effectiveness of their congregational systems. Starting from a mission focus, participants look at the current context for ministry and how structure, rewards, relationships, leadership, and other mechanisms support or detract from achievement of mission.

Planning for Effective Ministry – Planning is a spiritual discipline, and clarity of mission and vision are the foundations for good goal-setting. Planning is part of a cycle, a model for which is presented in this session. Participants identify the type of planning already occurring in their congregations, where their congregations are in the planning cycle, and what should be done next.

Polarities: Differences to be Managed – Polarities involve opposing viewpoints, neither of which is “right” or “wrong,” and both of which have positive aspects. This module introduces the polarity matrix as a process for engaging these complex issues, which often lie at the heart of on-going congregational conflict, and coming up with potential solutions.

Power, Authority and Influence – This module introduces participants to various types of power in the congregation and gives them tools for assessing power structures. The module defines power, how it can be used, and how to deal with both formal and informal power in congregations.

Renegotiating Roles and Expectations – When one’s understanding of role or expectations of self do not align with those of members of the congregation, renegotiations are in order. This module outlines some ways to begin those renegotiations, including tips on how to give and receive feedback and how to hold difficult conversations.

Role Clarity – This module helps participants understand the role expectations – both formal and informal – placed on clergy by their congregations and to assess the impact of a congregation’s culture and history on these expectations. A card sorting exercise is used to define role priorities.

Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition – Spiritual, physical, mental, emotional and relational health are all important, and any or all may suffer during times of transition. The rhythms of a holistic life, so important to wellness and balance, may be difficult to maintain in a new place without familiar people and routines to draw upon. Through reflection participants get in touch with what they need to do to maintain their balance during the stresses and strains of transition.

E. Getting to Know You Exercises

All of **Fresh Start** is, in a way, a “getting to know you” exercise but special exercises to quickly allow people to connect are helpful when new groups form or new people enter a group. The *History-Sharing and Understanding* module is an extended “getting to know you” experience that is an appropriate opening module for your **Fresh Start** program. Similarly *Entering a New System* offers a good way for participants to get to know one another. If you are not planning to include the latter in your program, look at Loren Mead’s Evangelism Quadrilateral (in *Entering a New System*) and consider using it as a “getting to know you” exercise in one of your other modules.

Here are some other session openers that will help participants get to know each other and their congregations.

Metaphors: Give each participant a worksheet like the following and ask them to write their answers, then introduce themselves by reading their answers.

In a few words describe your congregation’s –

- a. Size:
- b. Setting:
- c. Physical attributes:

In a few words describe your congregation’s personality –

Being the rector/vicar/assistant/deacon in my congregation is like...

Where Were You Born/Formed? Imagine that the meeting room is a big map of the United States. Ask people to stand in the spot where they were born (be sure and leave room around the edges for those not born in the US!) and introduce themselves by name and their birth place.

After everyone has spoken, ask them to stand in the spot where they lived before moving to their current home and quickly ask them to share where they were and what brought them here.

Ask them to move once again to stand in the spot where the church that formed them was located and have them give the name of the church and the town where it was located.

Church Basics: Ask people to group themselves by the faith tradition in which they were raised: cradle Episcopalians, other mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, other (you may want to add other groupings if there are a large number who don't fall into the first three categories – and be sure to leave room for the unchurched!). Ask each group to discuss why they stayed Episcopalians (for the first group) or why they became Episcopalians (all others), then facilitate a sharing of what each group said.

Another question to use is “What size congregation formed you?” (under 75, 75 - 140, 141- 224, 225 – 800; 800+), and have people arrange themselves in a line from small to large size congregation. Ask them to share a little bit about that congregation. If participants come from different congregations, a follow-up question about the size of their current congregation could be added, with a report-out on how it is like/different from the size congregation that formed them. These are especially appropriate questions to use when size dynamics are the topic of the session.

Context of Ministry: Give participants several minutes to reflect on the following, then ask them to share their answers with the group. Encourage them to have fun with this!

- Describe your congregation's size, setting and physical attributes.
- How did your congregation describe its greatest strengths and needs during the search process? What do you find to be their greatest strengths and needs?
- What key events shaped your congregation's history?
- (For clergy) Tell us about your predecessor. How is his/her tenure related to their choice of you?

Church Models: Using the following descriptions of models of the Church based on the work of Avery Dulles, ask participants to cluster around the model that best describes their congregation, then have the groups explain why they selected that model.

Institution: the church as a legal entity like other institutions in society considered in terms of budgets, building, governing structures and membership roles.

Mystical Communion: the church as a community of Christians, both visible and invisible, which is created and sustained by the Holy Spirit; this mystical communion is described as the “body of Christ,” the “people of God,” and “the communion of saints.”

Sacrament – the church provides outward signs by which God transforms human life so that we may show forth the love of God in the world; describes the experience of those who live their lives in a regular Eucharistic rhythm.

Herald – highlights the mission of the church as proclaiming the Good News and announcing the reign of God among us: “Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.” A herald is one who receives an official message and passes it on, often in a public place.

Servant – “I am among you as one who serves” (Luke 22:27). Since Christ came not to be served, but to serve, the church also serves in the world as servant.

Community of Disciples – the church is comprised of communities of people who are learners or disciples that enable, support and encourage one another on their own faith journeys.

Leisure Time: Designate different parts of the room as read, go to movies, cook, music, travel, sports and exercise. Then, given those categories, ask people what they do to relax and have them go to that part of the room. Ask the different interest groups to talk with each other about what they do in this area or to share something exciting that they have recently experienced (best movie, best book, latest trip, etc.). After a few minutes ask them which of these activities they hate most to do and have them move to that part of the room. Again ask them to spend a few minutes talking about why they do not find this activity very relaxing. Then ask them to go to the area which they would most like to learn more about, and again have them discuss what they would like to learn and why.

Fortune Cookie Exercise: Print and cut out the quotations which appear in subsection G, one quotation per strip of paper. One set relates to change and transition and the other to expectations and reality – use the set that most relates to your session topic.

Fold each strip in half and place in a large bowl or basket. Have each person draw one quotation from the bowl, and then pair up with someone else to reflect on and formulate a response to the quotation (i.e., agree/disagree and/or relevance of quote to topic of the day). After 5 minutes put strips back in bowl, mix them up, have people draw new quotes and select another partner for reflection and response. After 5 minutes, again have participants return the strips to the bowl and do another round.

If the quotes are printed on colored paper it makes it easier for people to avoid getting the same quote twice. Debrief by asking people to share their responses to the quotes and any thoughts that come to mind about the topic of the day. If you would like to use this exercise with a different topic, you can search for other quotations by topic at www.quotations.about.com. If you want to find Biblical quotes try www.biblegateway.com, which also allows you to search by topic.

F. Resources for Worship

Note: *While beginning a **Fresh Start** session with Morning Prayer or the Holy Eucharist is always appropriate, other worship resources can be used to provide variety to the sessions. In addition to considering the prayer books of other Anglican Churches as resources, think about using prayers or poems by others as part of your worship together. The following resources have been recommended by **Fresh Start** facilitators around the country.*

Print Resources

Anders, Isabel. Simple Blessing for Sacred Moments. Liguori, MO: Liguori/Triumph, 1998 – a collection of blessings for a variety of occasions by a variety of authors.

The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. A New Zealand Prayer Book. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997 – the litanies, psalm translations, and prayers of this creation-themed prayer book offer a fresh perspective.

Carlisle, Thomas John. Beginning with Mary: Women of the Gospels in Portrait. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986 – out of print, but still available through on-line used book dealers, poems by the late Presbyterian minister which highlight themes of the connections with Jesus of these family and friends.

_____. Eve and After: Old Testament Women in Portrait. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984 – a companion book to the one above, also out of print but available; includes a study guide.

Church Publishing. Book of Occasional Services. New York, NY: Church Publishing, 2004 – the services for Church plantings, discernment of new mission, and setting apart secular space for sacred use all contain litanies and collects that could be adapted to **Fresh Start** gatherings, as could the suggestions for retirements or work transitions.

Episcopal Church Indigenous Ministries Office. A Disciple's Prayer Book – this book of Native American gathering prayers for morning, noon and night, organized by the colors of the liturgical seasons, is a product of the former Ethnic Congregational Development office of the national church. It may be downloaded free from the Episcopal Church website (www.episcopalchurch.org – go to Ministries at the top of the home page, then to Indigenous Ministries; click on Archive: Native American Ministries and on that page, click on Resources to find the document in both English and Spanish).

Episcopal Church Executive Council Committee on Indigenous Ministry. Native American/Alaskan Native/Native Hawaiian Liturgies: A Sampler. July 2009 – prepared for the 76th General Convention this sampler of liturgies and prayers can be downloaded free from the Episcopal Church website (www.episcopalchurch.org – click on Ministries at the top of the page, then on Indigenous Ministries; click on Archive: Native American Ministries, and on that page, click on Resources to find it).

Gately, Edwina. Growing into God. Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 2000 – a collection of poems based on the cycle of life by a well-known spiritual writer.

Geitz, Elizabeth Rankin; Burke, Marjorie A.; and Smith, Ann. Women's Uncommon Prayers: Our Lives Revealed, Nurtured, Celebrated. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2000 – this book contains a variety of prayers relating to transition.

Hays, Edward. Prayers for the Domestic Church: A Handbook for Worship in the Home. Leavenworth, KS: Forest of Peace Publishing, 1979 – has a lovely prayer for change.

Loder, Ted. Guerrillas of Grace: Prayers for the Battle. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 2005 – prayers for a variety of different occasions by a Methodist minister and author.

_____. My Heart in My Mouth: Prayers for Our Lives. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 2000 – another collection of prayers by Loder focusing on themes of invocation, praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition and reflection.

_____. Wrestling the Light: Ache and Awe in the Human-Divine Struggle. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 2005 – poems and narrative reflections on grace.

MacBeth, Sybil. Praying in Color: Drawing a New Path to God. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2007 – by the wife of an Episcopal clergyman, this book outlines a creative process for praying that can easily be used with groups.

Melander, Rochelle and Eppley, Harold. Growing Together: Spiritual Exercises for Church Communities. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1998 – 50 worship resources for church committees facing a variety of issues from incorporation of new members through budget-making and conflict, these can easily be adapted for **Fresh Start**.

Newell, J. Philip. Celtic Benediction: Morning and Night Prayer. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000 – a week of Celtic prayer services with each day focusing on a different theme of creation.

_____. Celtic Prayers from Iona. New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1997 – a week of Celtic prayer services focusing on a different theme such as “justice and peace” or “healing” each day.

_____. Celtic Treasure: Daily Scriptures and Prayer. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005 – seven week-long cycles of prayer and scripture around different themes (e.g., creation, journey and promise, songs of the soul).

Oliver, Mary. Thirst. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2006 – an especially spiritual book of poems by one of America’s preeminent authors.

Rupp, Joyce, OSM. Out of the Ordinary: Prayers, Poems, and Reflections for Every Season. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2000 – prayer resources for a variety of occasions with a focus on the liturgical seasons and the special times of passage in people’s lives by a member of the Servite community.

_____, OSM. Praying Our Goodbyes. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1988 – a series of poems and reflections on the spirituality of change.

Smith, Kathleen S. Stilling the Storm: Worship and Congregational Leadership in Difficult Times. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2006 – contains prayers, responses, and readings for times of change or difficulty.

Tutu, Desmond. An African Prayer Book. New York, NY: Image Book by Doubleday, 1995 – prayers, meditations, and litanies selected by the former Archbishop of Cape Town from across African cultures and the African diaspora.

Wehlander, Keri K. Circles of Grace: Worship and Prayer in the Everyday. Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada: United Church Publishing House, 1998 – a collection of short worship services by a retreat leader and staff associate with the United Church of Canada.

_____. Joy Is Our Banquet: Resources for Everyday Worship, Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada: United Church Publishing House, 1996 – another collection of short worship services around a variety of themes.

Web-Based Resources

Anglicansonline: <http://anglicansonline.org/resources/liturgical.html> – has links to a variety of sites, some of which have prayers, psalters, and litanies on-line.

Church of England:

<http://cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/index.html> – website with contemporary language versions of liturgies and daily worship services; see especially the daily prayers which include an abbreviated version of Morning and Evening Prayer for each day of the week.

Justus: <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/> – has on-line a number of Books of Common Prayer from a variety of Anglican Churches (some in languages other than English) with links to other resources.

Scottish Episcopal Church: www.scotland.anglican.org/index.php/liturgy – posts liturgical resources on-line; see especially the short form of Morning and Evening Prayer.

G. Quotations for Fortune Cookie Exercise

Set I: Change and Transition

Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. *William Congreve*

What we anticipate seldom occurs, what we least expected generally does.
Benjamin Disraeli

Change yourself and your work will seem different. *Norman Vincent Peale*

You have the power to change. *Les Brown*

You must be the change you wish to see in the world. *Mahatma Gandhi*

You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of. *Jim Rohn*

You must welcome change as the rule but not as your ruler. *Denis Waitley*

The greatest revolution of our generation is the discovery that human beings, by changing the inner attitude of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives. *William James*

The more things change, the more they remain the same. *Alphonse Karr*

The most damaging phrase in the language is: "It's always been done that way."
Grace Hopper

The most useless are those who never change through the years. *James Barrie*

The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn ... and change. *Carl Rogers*

The universe is change; our life is what our thoughts make it. *Marcus Aurelius*

There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered. *Nelson Mandela*

If you want things to be different, perhaps the answer is to become different yourself. *Norman Vincent Peale*

It is change, continuing change, that is the dominant factor in society today.
Isaac Asimov

It is in changing that things find purpose. *Heraclites*

It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory. *W. Edwards Deming*

Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change.
Alfred, Lord Tennyson

We must always change, renew, rejuvenate ourselves. Otherwise we harden.
Johann Wolfgang Goethe

We shrink from change; yet is there anything that can come into being without it?
Marcus Aurelius

What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality. *Otto Rank*

You can clutch the past so tightly to your chest that it leaves your arms too full to embrace the present. *Jan Glidewell*

You can't have a better tomorrow if you are thinking about yesterday all the time.
Charles F. Kettering

They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself. *Andy Warhol*

Unless you change how you are, you will always have what you've got.
Jim Rohn

People are very open-minded about new things – as long as they're exactly like the old ones. *Charles Kettering*

People can cry much easier than they can change. *James Baldwin*

The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings.
Okakura Kakuzo

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.
Tolstoy

I wanted to change the world. But I have found that the only thing one can be sure of changing is oneself. *Aldous Huxley*

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain. *Maya Angelou*

Become a student of change. It is the only thing that will remain constant.
Anthony D'Angelo

Change is a part of every life. Resisting is often as futile as it is frustrating.
Unknown

Change is not merely necessary to life – it is life. *Alvin Toffler*

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. *Margaret Mead*

No one is in control of your happiness but you; therefore, you have the power to change anything about yourself or your life that you want to change.
Barbara De Angelis

None will improve your lot if you yourself do not. *Bertolt Brecht*

Nothing is easy to the unwilling. *Thomas Fuller*

One must never lose time in vainly regretting the past nor in complaining about the changes which cause us discomfort, for change is the very essence of life.
Anatole France

The past is really almost as much a work of the imagination as the future.
Jessamyn West

Time is the wisest counselor. *Pericles*

He that lacks the time to mourn, lacks the time to mend. *Sir Henry Taylor*

It's not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear ... It's like being in between trapezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to."
Marilyn Ferguson

I have a great belief in the fact that whenever there is chaos, it creates wonderful thinking. I consider chaos a gift. *Septima Poinsette Clark*

Only the hand that erases can write a true thing. *Meister Eckhart*

Every beginning is a consequence. Every beginning ends something.
Paul Valery

Beginnings are always messy. *John Galsworthy*

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter into another. *Anatole France*

There is a time for departure, even when there's no certain place to go.
Tennessee Williams

One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time. *Andre Gide*

Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everybody gets busy on the proof. *John Kenneth Galbraith*

Confusion is a word we have invented for an order which is not understood.
Henry Miller

Nothing is so dear as what you're about to leave. *Jessamyn West*

In life it is more necessary to lose than to gain. A seed will only germinate if it dies. *Boris Pasternak*

The important thing is this: to be able at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we can become. *Charles DuBois*

Lord, grant that we may always be right, for thou knowest we will never change our minds. *Old Scottish Prayer*

The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order. *Alfred North Whitehead*

The interval between the decay of the old and the formation and establishment of the new constitutes a period of transition, which must always necessarily be one of uncertainty, confusion, error, and wild and fierce fanaticism. *John C. Calhoun*

When our first parents were driven out of Paradise, Adam is believed to have remarked to Eve: "My dear, we live in an age of transition." *Dean Inge*

Disenchantment, whether it is a minor disappointment or a major shock, is the signal that things are moving into transition in our lives. *William Bridges*

In every age of well-marked transition, there is the pattern of habitual dumb practice and emotion which is passing and there is oncoming a new complex of habit. *Alfred North Whitehead*

Set II: Expectations and Reality

Doubt is the father of invention. *Galileo*

If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties. *Sir Francis Bacon*

Modest doubt is called the beacon of the wise. *William Shakespeare*

A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience.
Oliver Wendell Holmes

It is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye. *Antoine Saint-Exupéry*

One sees great things from the valley, only small things from the peak.
G. K. Chesterton

People travel to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars; and they pass by themselves without wondering.
St. Augustine

Perhaps all the dragons in our lives are princesses who are only waiting to see us act, just once, with beauty and courage. Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love.
Rainer Maria Rilke

Progress lies not in enhancing what is, but in advancing toward what will be.
Kahlil Gibran

Personally, I am always ready to learn, although I do not always like being taught. *Winston Churchill*

The little that is completed vanishes from the sight of one who looks forward to what is still to do. *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. *William Congreve*

What we anticipate seldom occurs, what we least expected generally happens.
Benjamin Disraeli

A thing long expected takes the form of the unexpected when at last it comes.
Mark Twain

An intense anticipation itself transforms possibility into reality; our desires being often but precursors of the things which we are capable of performing.
Samuel Smiles

Few enterprises of great labor or hazard would be undertaken if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages we expect from them. *Samuel Johnson*

Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you. Never excuse yourself. Never pity yourself. Be a hard master to yourself – and be lenient to everybody else. *Henry Ward Beecher*

Life is largely a matter of expectation. *Horace*

Look and you will find it. What is unsought will go undetected. *Sophocles*

The most damaging phrase in the language is: “It’s always been done this way.”
Grace Hopper

If you want things to be different, perhaps the answer is to become different yourself. *Norman Vincent Peale*

It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory. *W. Edwards Deming*

You can clutch the past so tightly to your chest that it leaves your arms too full to embrace the present. *Jan Glidewell*

To change and to change for the better are two different things. *German proverb*

The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings.
Okakura Kakuzo

I wanted to change the world. But I have found that the only thing one can be sure of changing is oneself. *Aldous Huxley*

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing oneself.
Leo Tolstoy

H. Skills and Characteristics of a Good Fresh Start Facilitator

A good **Fresh Start** facilitator is able to:

- Create a diocesan **Fresh Start** program and individual **Fresh Start** sessions that meet the needs of clergy and congregations in transition;
- Assess the group based on knowledge of group process and formation;
- Create a safe environment for sharing and a respectful context for learning and growth;
- Confront difficult, disruptive, or problematic behavior in the group;
- Keep conversation on track/topic;
- Listen, give feedback, and, when necessary, summarize;
- Ask open-ended, stimulating, or provocative questions that take the conversation to a deeper level;
- Present material in a manner that encourages conversation;
- Handle intense emotions;
- Recognize issues that confuse or distract from group work;
- Understand how personality type (e.g., extroversion/introversion) can influence participation and interaction in a group setting;
- Draw out all group members and balance participation;
- Be comfortable with silence;
- Model behavior that values differences;
- Deal with conflict and stay neutral in the face of differences;
- Be flexible with session structure and agenda, accepting new ideas from others;
- Give directions clearly;
- Use different group formations – e.g., pairs, trios;
- Display group input (on newsprint or other means);
- Think on his/her feet and respond appropriately to the situation at hand; and
- Gauge the impact of him/herself on the group.

In addition, a good **Fresh Start** facilitator is:

- Pastoral
- Prayerful
- Self-aware
- A team player
- Self-regulated – balance being connected and yet apart from the group
- Enthusiastic
- Confident
- Authentic
- Empathetic
- Able to speak truth

- Affirming
- Committed
- Consistent
- Respectful
- Patient
- Prepared
- Organized
- Able to stay in role

And above all, a good **Fresh Start** facilitator has an appropriate sense of humor!