

Community Leader Conversations

In getting to know the needs and assets of the community, it is often helpful to visit with community leaders such as: school administrators, leaders of social service agencies, administrators of the hospital/clinic, business leaders, government leaders, police officers, fire fighters, pastors, etc.

Following is a list of questions you might want to consider asking community leaders. May God's Spirit empower you during these visits and as you share the responses with your congregational team for on-going discussion, discernment and planning that leads to action.

- Tell me what you know about our church. Where is it located? What do we do?
- What are the community's assets?
- What are the community's needs? Are these needs being met? Where are there gaps?
- Are there any ways that we could partner with you to respond to certain needs in the community?
- What are your perceptions about the number of people who are not connected to a faith community in neighborhood/section of town/among your clients?
- What segment of the population do you serve? What are they like? Tell me about them.
- Five years from now, what do you hope will happen in the community?
- Is there someone else you know that I should visit with and ask these same questions?

*Pastor Nancy Nyland
Director for Evangelical Mission
Indiana-Kentucky Synod , ELCA
nnyland@iksynod.org
317-625-4057*

Conversations with People in the Neighborhood/Community

In getting to know the needs of the neighborhood/community it is helpful to visit with individuals in the neighborhood/community. When asked, "How do we know what doors to knock on in a neighborhood?" a community organizer answered, "Look for the flower pots!" That may sound funny, but it is a good method. When you arrive on a street or neighborhood, look at the houses. The ones with flower pots in front, or planted flowers, or seasonal decorations probably indicate the people have lived there for a while and plan to stay. It also may indicate that one of their gifts is hospitality and so they may be more willing to talk to you. So don't knock on every door.....just the ones with the 'flower pots.'

Here are some good questions to ask.

- Tell me what you know about our church. Where is it located? What do we do?
- What are some things most important in your neighborhood/community?
- What is happening in your neighborhood/community? How should a church respond?
- Why did you come here? What has it been like for you? Have people reached out and been welcoming?
- Are there things going on in the neighborhood/community that make you angry?
- Are there things going on in the neighborhood/community that make you hopeful?
- If you could change one thing about this neighborhood/community, what would it be?
- Who do you see as positive leaders in the community?
- If you want to know something about your neighborhood/community, who do you ask?
- Five years from now, what do you hope will happen in your neighborhood/community?
- What one good idea can you share?
- Is there someone else you know that I should visit with and ask these same questions?

Pastor Nancy Nyland
Director for Evangelical Mission
Indiana-Kentucky Synod , ELCA
nnyland@iksynod.org
317-625-4057