

## WALKING IN NEW FIELDS

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*Saturday April 2, 2016*

### *PRELUDE*

Some folks arrived at 8:30 and went on a walk led by Lesley. Those who arrived between 9 and 9:30 were greeted by the rousing sound of bagpipes played by Rod. A number of people participated in a tai chi warm-up led by Deirdre. Others took the opportunity to walk the labyrinth.

### *OPENING REMARKS*

In his opening remarks, Sean reminded us that 10 years ago this weekend the Futuring Team was formed. He commented that after spending some time journeying through the desert St. John's is now being invited to walk in new fields.

### *INTRODUCTION*

Paul Hutchinson commented on all that he had seen happening before the workshop opened. "The abiding feeling I got was one of life," he remarked. "I am excited this morning because I think there's life here," he said; "excited to see what we can do together." He spoke about expectations for our time together, saying that "all the answers will not be forthcoming." He introduced the purpose of this workshop: to focus on how we can "walk together in new fields with passion." Then he offered a prayer for St. John's: "Build us into a place where God's love lives." After that Ray led us in singing #1 in *More Voices*, "Let Us Build a House."

### *SESSION 1: HOW DO WE JOURNEY TOGETHER TO NEW FIELDS?*

Two stones from Northern Ireland were passed around the circle as we took turns saying our name and how long we've been part of St. John's.

Paul told the story, "The Rabbi's Gift" (M. Scott Peck.) Then he asked the question, "What might St. John's look like if you began to act out that truth?" He invited us to wander around and greet people by looking into their eyes and saying, "The Messiah is among us."

Next Paul invited us to give thanks for what St. John's is already doing; "how you're already manifesting that the Messiah is among you." Then we divided into 4 "Holy Huddles." The question each group was asked to respond was: "What are you currently doing as a church?" Answers were recorded on newsprint sheets. Each group was invited to share five things from their list. Then Paul invited us to take a few minutes of silence to give thanks.

The next question each group was asked to respond to was: "What are the values behind the activities you've listed?" Answers were recorded on newsprint sheets. Each group was invited to share one of the values they talked about. Some of the values mentioned were: our children, sense of community, and life-long learning. Katie asked to speak. "There's a home for my kids here," she said. "As long as we have children we have a future."

## *SESSION 2: SHARING OUR PASSIONS*

Paul offered a pilgrim's prayer which included the words, "We journey together." Then he posed the question, "What one thing would you be excited to see St. John's doing?" He defined passion as "something that has grabbed me that isn't just rational." Each person was given a passion sheet and allowed 10 minutes to fill it out. Then Paul invited us to pair up with someone and share our passions.

"It's not normal to have this much excitement in church on a Saturday morning," Paul commented. "This is a sign of life and it's attractive to people of all ages. Life attracts life."

After everyone gathered in a large circle again, Paul invited people to share their passion with the whole group. After each person shared, he asked if anyone else had a passion that connected with that one. He quoted Walter Wink, saying, "Each church has an angel, a specific spirit that embodies what you value."

## *CLOSING*

Paul went around the circle and anointed each of us with water to equip us for walking in new fields. The blessing he offered was: "New fields, new life, transformation." In his closing words he said, "Thank you for not being normal. Thank you for showing me life."

## *CLOSING REMARKS*

Lesley expressed thanks and appreciation to all who had helped with this workshop and especially, of course, to Paul. "What we're going to do with all this is a wonder to behold," she concluded. Ray led us in singing #30 in *More Voices*, "It's a Song of Praise to the Maker."