

Roadmap to Renewal: Rediscovering the Church's Mission

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(Available for order through Cokesbury at www.cokesbury.com,
\$9.95, ISBN: 978-1-933663-39-5)

STUDY GUIDE

INTRODUCTION: READINESS

Roadmap to Renewal is an invitation to rediscover what God is calling a church to be and do. The questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of each chapter are designed to help guide a team of people from the local church through a process of both discovery and rediscovery. Participants will rediscover who they are, who lives in the surrounding community, and in their journey of rediscovery they will discover a fresh vision for the mission to which God invites them.

This *study guide* is designed to be a resource for the Leadership Team as they work their way through this process. There are ten sessions that correspond directly to the book *Roadmap to Renewal* beginning with the introduction. When, how long, and how often the team will meet will need to be decided upon by the team itself.

It is our prayer that through this process, the Leadership Team will be drawn more closely together and become the leaven which will help the whole church become more outwardly oriented—a true missional church.

In the appendix of this guide, there are supplemental resources, including a sample announcement to the congregation during worship and a liturgy to consecrate members of the team. There is also a sample survey to solicit input from the congregation as a whole. If the survey is used, gather this information early on in the process.

Choosing a GPS (Guided Process Servant, as described in the text):

Talk to your conference staff person responsible for congregational development about possible "Guided Process Servants" or coaches who could accompany a Leadership Team from your church. The Guided Process Servant should be able to ask good questions, be a good listener and able to follow the process as outlined in the book, *Roadmap to Renewal: Rediscovering the Church's Mission*.

Planning the Road Trip

Objective: By the end of this session, participants will have gained an understanding of the process involved for engaging the *Roadmap to Renewal* and have begun to build themselves into a leadership team.

Assignment prior to session: Read the "Welcome" and "Introduction: Readiness". (Pages 7-18)

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Introductions

Engage in an exercise to get to know one another better. Pair up with another member of the team and share with each other a) about your hometown; b) how you came to be part of this church; and c) one bit of information that people may not know about you. When ample time has passed for sharing, have the partners introduce each other to the larger group.

Scripture reading: Luke 24:13-35

Discussion

1. Assign someone to take notes on behalf of the group.
2. Read the "Welcome" on page #7 as a group. Invite discussion about the process outlined in *Roadmap to Renewal*. As a group, respond to the question, "What expectations do you have for this roadtrip?"
3. Respond to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the introduction.
4. Determine if the Leadership Team will be consecrated for the task during a worship service. *[For a sample liturgy for such a consecration, see the appendix.]*

Closing prayer

Looking to the next session: Read Chapter One: "Reality Check." Jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER ONE: REALITY CHECK

Reading the Signs

Objective: By the end of this session, participants will have gained insight as to how their congregation measures according to an ecumenical consensus of the understanding of what it means to be a church serving as a “sign, preview, and instrument” of the Reign of God.

Assignment prior to session: Read Chapter One: “Reality Check.”

[In order to gain more information and input from the wider congregation, consider surveying the congregation. The appendix to this Study Guide includes a sample survey. If used, assign members of the Leadership Team to collect the information and report at this session.]

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Preparing to connect with community

In anticipation of the "Driving Around" session of the *roadmap* process, begin to discuss the people you will be contacting as part of the exercise to learn about community perceptions of your congregation. How will you engage in “Ministry By Walking Around?” Which town leaders will you contact? Who will do the contacting? When will you “drive around” to see your community with fresh eyes? Assign someone from the group to collect demographic data.

Scripture reading: Matthew 6:25-34

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Respond to questions #1-6 in the “Your Turn” section at the end of Chapter One.
3. Discuss the statement, "The mission-oriented church rediscovers the needs of its surrounding community and world and engages in ministry to address those needs."
4. Using a flip chart, write down responses to question #7, "What are the items that your "scorecard" uses to measure church effectiveness?"
5. Report findings from the congregational survey, if used.

Closing Prayer

Looking to the next session: Read Chapter Two: “Reconnect.” Jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the “Your Turn” section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER TWO: RECONNECT

Avoiding Road-Kill

Objective: By the end of this session, participants will have worked on the prayer foundation for the *roadmap* process.

Assignment prior to session: Read Chapter Two: "Reconnect."

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

The centrality of prayer

Prayer needs to undergird any process of renewal in the life of a church. Discuss together the meaning of prayer and prayer practices in the life of participants of the group. Consider teaming up with another person from the Leadership Team to form "prayer partners" where you will check in with each other at least once a week to pray either in person or by telephone.

Scripture reading: Psalm 34: 1-10

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Respond to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of Chapter Two.
3. Review Plans for "Ministry by Walking Around" (MBWA), "Driving Around" and "Town Leader" interviews. In the previous session, team members were invited to plan ahead for the exercise of MBWA, driving around together and arranging interviews with town leaders. Report back to one another on progress for these plans.

Closing prayer

Looking to the next session: Read Chapter Three: "Rediscover the Landscape of Our Parish." Jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

Go out with another team member or members to engage in "Ministry by Walking Around." The questions on page #42 will help you gather information. Think of some of your own questions to ask people as well.

Make arrangements to drive around your parish before the next session. Plan to get out of the vehicle from time to time to ask questions and take notes about what you see. Arrange to visit town leaders following the suggested questions on page #42.

CHAPTER THREE: REDISCOVER THE LANDSCAPE OF OUR PARISH

Driving Around

Objective: By the end of the session the Leadership Team will have collected pertinent information regarding the characteristics of the parish your church serves. This information will serve as a building block for putting together a Ministry Action Plan (MAP) as the *roadmap* process continues moving forward.

Assignment prior to session: Read Chapter 3: "Rediscover the Landscape of Our Parish." Collect demographic information about your parish area and have someone make printouts of this information for everyone on the team. Engage in activities that take you outside your church walls via "Driving Around", "MBWA", and interviews with key leaders in the community.

[As a way to gather information from influential leaders in the town, in addition to the personal interviews, one church hosted a "Panel Discussion" inviting an owner of a real estate office, the President of a community organization (i.e. Kiwanis, Rotary), a member of the town council, and a guidance counselor from the public school. The Leadership Team engaged in conversation with the panel about the needs of the community and the community's perception of their church.]

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Demographics

Distribute copies of demographic data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau or from your judicatory's subscription service. Appoint someone from the team to give interpretation of the data, including population trends and how ethnic diversity is or is not changing the landscape of your parish area. Discuss surprising or new information.

Scripture reading: I Corinthians 9:20-23

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Respond to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of Chapter Three.
3. Discuss together what it might mean in your parish to "become all things to all people," for the sake of the gospel.

Closing prayer

Looking to the next session: Read Chapter Four: "Reassess Our Current Ministry" and jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER FOUR: REASSESS OUR CURRENT MINISTRY

Rechecking the Map

Objective: By the end of the session the Leadership Team will have honestly assessed the current ministry of the church, identified key issues it needs to address, and identified core values.

Assignment prior to session: Read Chapter Four: "Reassess Our Current Ministry."

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Core values

Core values of a church help define its theology of mission engagement. When it comes time to articulate vision and mission, core values provide a reference point. Take time to discuss the core values of The United Methodist Church.

Scripture reading: Proverbs 11:13; 2 Corinthians 12:19-20

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Discuss together what it means "to be built up" as a community of faith, especially in light of the litany of things the Apostle Paul would fear to find as recorded in the passage from 2 Corinthians.
3. Respond to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter. As you share responses in the context of the entire team, seek consensus around the most important issues identified.
4. Prioritize what should be continued, stopped and started and then focus on three to five key issues the church faces as it discerns God's guidance into the future.
5. Assign one or two members of the team to research the issues that you identified. When taking the upcoming "Road Break" visit to another church, see if the visited church dealt with similar issues and ask how they handled them. Call a judicatory leader for suggestions of churches or pastors who have dealt with similar issues. Prepare to report findings at the next session.

Closing Prayer

Looking to the Next Session: Read Chapter Five: "Road Break" and jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER FIVE: ROAD BREAK

Rest Stops and Welcome Centers

Objective: By the end of the session the Leadership Team will have debriefed from a visit to a teaching church and will have discussed together the meaning and importance of hospitality.

Assignment prior to session: Read Chapter Five: "Road Break." Make a "Road Break" visit to another church, see if the visited church dealt with similar issues and ask how they handled them.

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Scripture reading: Hebrews 13: 1-2

Discuss together this passage and how it translates into modern day hospitality in the church.

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Respond to questions #1-4 in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter.
3. Give time to the one or two team members who have researched issues (question #4) and discuss together their findings.
4. Using a flip chart, in response to question #5, list core values that the church holds dear. Discuss.
5. Using the list of core values, have the group formulate ground rules for leadership team behavior as they move on "down the road."

Closing prayer

Looking to the Next Session: Read Chapter Six: "Reaching Younger People" and jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER SIX: REACHING YOUNGER PEOPLE

Opening the Doors

Objective: By the end of the session the Leadership Team will have discussed together how to begin conversations with younger adults about faith in Christ and the church.

Assignment prior to the session: Read Chapter 6: "Reaching Younger People" and jot down notes in response to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter.

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Scripture reading: Galatians 2:11-14

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. How does this passage from Galatians help inform us about reaching new and different cultures with the gospel of Jesus Christ?
3. Spend the majority of your time together discussing questions #1-3 in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter.
4. In response to question #4, discuss the term "missionary mindset" and how this mindset will help cross the culture divide to reach younger adults.
5. Develop some "action steps" in response to questions #3 and 4 and write them on a flip chart. Determine how you will follow up on the implementation of those steps.

Closing prayer

Looking to the next session: Read Chapter Seven: "Roadmaps start with vision" and jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ROADMAPS START WITH VISION

Choosing a Destination

Objective: By the end of the session the Leadership Team will have gained clarity about the content of a Ministry Action Plan (MAP) and have begun to articulate a vision statement for the church.

Assignment prior to the session: Read Chapter Seven: "Roadmaps Start With Vision."

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Vision

Vision is a powerful connection with God through prayerful discernment of what God is calling us to be and use of our God-given imagination. A vision statement helps the church gain clarity about where it's going.

Scripture reading: Micah 6:6-8

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Spend time responding to questions prompted by the vision of Micah (the same questions which are in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter).
3. Begin work on **Vision**. Invite a general discussion on visioning from the entire group. What important information does the group want to convey to the Vision Statement Team as they begin work on a statement?
4. Name a "Vision Statement Team" to work on the articulation of a vision that reflects the work done so far.

Closing prayer

Looking to the Next Session: Read Chapter Eight: "Realign Mission, Goals and Objectives" and jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team.

CHAPTER EIGHT: REALIGN MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Resetting the Course

Objective: By the end of the session, the Leadership Team will have begun to articulate a Mission Statement for the church and will have begun to fill in the ingredients for a complete Ministry Action Plan (MAP).

Assignment prior to the session: Read Chapter Eight, "Realign Mission, Goals and Objectives."

Agenda for the Meeting:

Opening prayer

Scripture reading: Matthew 28:16-20

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Respond to questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter.
3. Discuss with the team what they feel God is calling them to do from what they have learned on this journey so far.
4. Using the chart on page 87, discuss the goals and objectives of a Mission Action Plan (MAP).
5. Begin work on a **Mission Statement**. Assign two or three persons from the Leadership Team to draft a Mission Statement to be discussed at the next meeting. Before sending them out on their task, discuss together the elements the entire group wishes to remember.

Closing prayer

Looking to the next session: Read Chapter Nine: "Roadmarkers on the Road to Renewal" and jot down thoughts and responses to the questions in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter to be shared with the team. Read the afterword of the book. Assign two or three persons to work on filling in the chart that is included in Chapter Seven. As a team, schedule a time when you will present your Ministry Action Plan, including vision and mission statements, to the governing board of your church.

CHAPTER NINE: ROADMARKERS ON THE ROAD TO RENEWAL

Reaching Your Destination

Objective: By the end of the session, the Leadership Team will have delineated the benchmarks or 'roadmarkers' for the Ministry Action Plan.

Assignment prior to the session: Read Chapter Nine: "Roadmarkers on the Road to Renewal" and the afterword of the book.

Agenda for the meeting:

Opening prayer

Scripture reading: Jeremiah 29: 10-14 and Jeremiah 31: 21

Jeremiah wrote letters to the people of Israel living in exile in Babylon assuring them of God's plans for them. In Chapter 31 Jeremiah addresses the Israelites who were on their way to exile, exhorting them to place road markers on their way so that they would be able to find their way back home. In light of all that your team has learned together, and the plans you have discerned that God has given, begin to articulate the 'roadmarkers' by which you will find your way 'home' to a place where ministry is vital and you are fulfilling the promise God has for you.

Discussion

1. Make sure someone takes notes and keeps them together with other notes from the road trip.
2. Discuss the questions found in the "Your Turn" section at the end of the chapter.
3. Review plans for presenting your MAP to the governing board of the church.
4. Evaluate the journey you have just completed. How has it helped? What would have made the journey better?
5. Please send your comments and suggestions, including ways to improve this Study Guide to: Druffle@gnjumc.org.

Closing Prayer

Supplemental Resources for *Roadmap to Renewal*

Sample Announcement to the Congregation about the *Roadmap* process during a worship service:

Good Morning:

Over the past two years the Administrative Council—which as you know is comprised of the heads of the various Ministry Teams of the church—has attended two retreats with the objective of assessing who we at [your church name] are and where we want to go as a congregation...plus our future role in the community.

Each Ministry Team has also held numerous meetings and either formulated or updated goals and objectives for their department. Each team made great progress towards their goals; however, we have concluded these efforts are not enough.

Let me tell you why...

In recent years there have been changes that have altered our congregational life and our relationship with the community. The completion of the addition to our church building has enabled us to provide new programs that reach out to the surrounding community, but there have also been a series of changes in our staff.

Like all mainline churches, we also face a tight financial period, and our membership numbers—despite some great new members joining—are not increasing when you consider the loss of some members that are retiring and moving out of state.

In light of these factors we have concluded that we need to evaluate the direction our congregation should take in the future...and that an overall assessment of who and what we are and where we are going would help [your church name] grow in ministry and continue to be a healthy, active congregation.

We have decided that the best results could be obtained using a dedicated team and guidance from an expert coach.

In the meantime, know that we are NOT asking for financial support of this "assessment".

We ARE asking that you participate in the process as we believe it is important we reenergize our church and update our long-term mission and vision statements and goals.

To assure that our church grows in ministry and continues to be a healthy, active congregation, a long-term planning project has been authorized by the Administrative Council. We will work on a Ministry Action Plan (MAP, for short) which is a structured, objective process coached by an expert Guided Process Servant (i.e. coach) provided to us at the suggestion of our conference staff. The team will lead the church in determining, by objective observation, what our key issues are for the next three to five years. This structured process will result in a MAP with goals and mileposts and a means of follow-up to be recommended to the Administrative Council for implementation.

The team members are [names of members of the team] along with team leader, [name].

Input from everyone in the congregation is being sought by the team. A survey which the team hopes will be filled out by all members of the church is available this morning as well as on our website. Please place the surveys in the box provided in the Welcome Center. Additional comments can be sent to our team leader by e-mail [provide address]. We will update the congregation periodically on our progress. The target for completion of this project is [date].

Commissioning Liturgy for the *Roadmap to Renewal* Leadership Team

(Adapted from *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, Nashville, TN, The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992, No. 599, by the Basking Ridge United Methodist Church, the Rev. David Dutcher, Pastor.)

Dear Friends, you have been called by God and chosen for the special responsibility of visioning ministry. This ministry is a blessing and a serious responsibility. It will require the use of the gifts God has given you as you lead the congregation in reflection on its ministry in the community and in the world. In love we thank you for accepting your obligation and challenge you to offer your best to the Lord, to this team and to our mutual ministry. As you carry out the tasks that will require your time and energy, we urge you to call on the spiritual resources that God alone provides.

Today we commission [name each member of the team].

To the team members:

As you stand in the midst of the congregation and in the presence of God, will you do all in your power to be responsible to the task for which you have been chosen?

We will.

To the congregation:

Dear Friends in Faith, give thanks for these who stand before you. Will you do all you can to assist and encourage them in the responsibilities to which they have been called, giving them your cooperation, your counsel and your prayers?

We will.

Let us pray:

Gracious and eternal God, pour out your blessings upon these your servants who have been given this particular ministry of visioning for your church. Let their work, on behalf of the church that they love and to which they are committed, be guided by your powerful presence. Grant them grace to give themselves wholeheartedly in your service. Keep before them the example of our Lord, who did not think first of himself, but gave himself for us all. Guide them in their work. Reward their faithfulness with the knowledge that through them your purposes for the church are accomplished. Through your Spirit, inspire the whole congregation to be faithful and encouraging participants in this time of looking forward to the end that the witness of your people in the community and the world will be strengthened. We pray in the name of all that is holy and which brings life in all the abundance that we have seen in Jesus of Nazareth.

Amen.

Supplemental Congregational Survey for the *Roadmap to Renewal* process¹

Congregation Values Survey

Select the top priority as "1" and rank the others 2 through 5.

Our church's primary concern should be:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Charitable work | <input type="text"/> |
| The spiritual needs of its members | <input type="text"/> |
| Members helping each other | <input type="text"/> |
| Ministry to young people and children | <input type="text"/> |
| Teaching of God's Word | <input type="text"/> |

Choose 5 items below that are MOST IMPORTANT to you and rank them in their order of priority, with "1" being MOST important and "5" being LEAST important.

- _____ Ministry of social justice
- _____ Discipleship
- _____ Administration (finances, buildings, etc.)
- _____ World missions
- _____ Reaching out to the community
- _____ Planning and setting goals
- _____ Assimilating new attendees
- _____ Fellowship
- _____ Small groups
- _____ Worship
- _____ Prayer
- _____ Training/equipping members to use their gifts
- _____ Counseling/pastoral care
- _____ Music ministry

What should we stop doing?

What should we start doing?

What should we continue doing?

¹ This survey was put together by the Leadership Team of the Bishop Janes United Methodist Church in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, as they worked through the *Roadmap to Renewal* process. We thank the chair of the Team, Mr. Howard Leary, for permission to reproduce the survey here.

[Your Church Name]

Congregation Values Survey

The following questions relate to your personal view in regard to the church and its ministry. In response to the following statements, please circle the number corresponding to your opinion:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want our congregation to grow in size and bring in new people.	1	2	3	4
Our church should be open to innovation and change.	1	2	3	4
I would prefer slow and steady change rather than rapid and progressive change.	1	2	3	4
I would rather see the church accept things as they come instead of planning and setting goals.	1	2	3	4
We should be more concerned about the needs of the community around us than the needs of our members.	1	2	3	4
At church, my privacy is more important to me than intimacy.	1	2	3	4
We should have different styles of services.	1	2	3	4
Lay people should be involved in the Church's ministry.	1	2	3	4
We have the right programs in place for young families.	1	2	3	4
We have the right programs in place for teens and young adults.	1	2	3	4
We have the right programs in place for single people.	1	2	3	4
We have the right programs in place for seniors.	1	2	3	4
We have a good music program.	1	2	3	4

Age: 21 or under 22-40 41-60 60+ **Gender (M/F):**

Married or Single? _____ **Ages of children in household:** Boys: _____, _____, _____, _____,
Girls: _____, _____, _____, _____

Others in my household have submitted a survey (Y/N): _____

Additional Comments:

Name (optional) _____

A Design for a Process to Create a Ministry Action Plan (M.A.P.)

STEPS IN THE PROCESS	Define Core Values (What are the essentials of our beliefs?)	Diagnose Present Situation (Where are we now?)	Discern Vision (What are we called to be?)	Describe Mission (What are we called to do?)	Determine Goals and Objectives (What are the measurable goals and action steps needed to live out what we are called to be and do?)
	Core Value #1	Issue #1	Called to be . . . #1	Called to do . . . #1	Goals
	Core Value #2	Issue #2	Called to be . . . #2	Called to do . . . #2	Goals
	Core Value #3	Issue #3	Called to be . . . #3	Called to do . . . #3	Objectives
RESULTS FOR EACH STEP	Values we want to preserve and remember:	Key Issues that need to be addressed:	Vision Statement:	Mission Statement:	S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Objectives:

