

Prayer Triad #5

Scripture: Romans 12: 3-8

Scripture Question: Paul says that we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. What are gifts you have to share with the church?

- *Each of the members of our group reminded the others of the gifts and talents that the individual possessed. One of our members is kind and diplomatic while another is generous. One of our other members is helpful – doing things for others without having to be asked while another triad member is forthright and honest. One triad member is friendly, treating no one like a stranger while another is generous with her accomplished musical talents. Our last triad member is courteous and strong of will, a model of positive thinking.*
- *We discussed the spiritual gifts and other gifts that each triad member has. Within our group we have organizers and detail oriented members; a singer; those who have the gifts of discernment, intercession and knowledge; those who appreciate knowledge and education; a member with a multigenerational connection to the church; a member who has the experience of living in other places before coming to Pamlico County and our church; all of our members give monetary gifts to the church and all regularly attend service. We have public speakers, an idea person and analytical people. Some are concerned with outreach and others who don't mind servicing in roles that it is sometimes difficult to get others to fill.*

Question 1: Do the members of our church have a good sense that they each have gifts to share with the church?

- *The members have no clear sense of gifts – even the ones that they exercise. Would a survey of interests help enlighten members on what their gifts are? How about a survey of needs/expectations/willingness to participate of the congregation for worship?*
- *Mostly yes. A lot of our members serve often and willingly in the choir, the bell choir, etc... Our congregation has many gifted members; however, not all of them know their gifts. No gift is too small. We want to see more participation in the church, especially from members of the Diaconate.*
- *Some do, some sit back.*
- *The group felt that about 20% of our folks (self-energized) mostly do the organizational work of the congregation. The other 80% are wonderfully capable, but just need to be asked to help as few say NO when asked. We need to have the attitude that “if anyone sees a need, then go ahead and do it.” There are so many talented people in the church. Many would not say that they were talented but they are. We just need to compliment them when their talent is used – even having common sense is a talent.*
- *We think members have a good sense that they each have gifts to share. However, we think there are people who don't know what their gifts are or don't feel comfortable using them.*
- *We didn't feel that we could answer this question because we didn't know. We could assume that people don't participate more in the service and life of the church because they don't know what they have to offer, but we don't think that we can base that assumption on anything except conjecture. People may not contribute for other reasons. Perhaps if we, the members of the church, were together more on casual terms, then we would better understand each others' gifts. Small groups might provide opportunities to learn this (i.e Dinner for Eight). A question is what does our church offer that allows people to use their varying gifts, talents and experience? The most obvious answers are the audio-visual*

component of worship, Hanging of the Greens, Harvest Dinner, CMF, CWF, CYF, Sunday School, Choir, Bell Choir and Outreach, but is there something else?

- *Not all*
- *A core group has a good sense of gifts and share them, but many do not. Like the old saying "20% of the people do 80% of the work." Are those people willing to share the work?*

Question 2: What do you think we can do to get a greater participation of our members in the life and work of the church?

- *We need a good understanding of what we believe – Bible study – and to develop enthusiasm.*
- *Ask – do not wait for members to volunteer. Contributions are not always monetary. Time and service is very valuable. Find projects that people can share and complete together.*
- *Ask, encourage, supervise and give thanks and praise for doing things.*
- *We just need to ask for help of those who are reticent about extending themselves.*
- *We think we need to ask our members to do things, not rely on them to volunteer. Possibly a talent or time survey could be sent among the members with questions asking how they would like to use their time and talents to benefit the church. This survey might also help people discover where they can fill a need they might not even know exists or can help them discover a gift they don't know they have.*
- *We could do more small group things, not be critical of others' attempts at helping and ministry, be tough when criticized and not let it dissuade us from participating, accept offers of help from people and let them participate in a manner that is comfortable to them, survey the congregation and find out what interests different people and what is important and enjoyable to them. Ask the members what ways they would like to participate in church. Ask people what they liked about the service, what they didn't like about the service, what they would change about the service and what they would like to do in and for the church. Perhaps we could put time limits on some of the positions like Sunday School teachers. People may feel that if they say yes to help teach, then they are committed for the rest of their lives to teach Sunday School or be on committees, etc...*
- *Maybe have more things going on that would interest others. Free breakfast, blood drive, small group in-home Bible studies, adult plays, dinner theater, progressive dinners, dinner for eight, another service like on Sunday evening or a weeknight are some examples.*
- *Ask what hobbies or talents they have, rather than what committees they will serve on. Use task oriented structure rather than committee structure.*

Question 3: How important do you think worship attendance is?

- *Worship attendance is very important for personal growth and to support the Body of Christ.*
- *It's very important. To grow as a congregation, we need to say aware and informed of activities and other members. If you miss worship, it's hard to keep up the concerns of the church family and the community.*
- *Very important. It's a reflection of the church and high attendance is a good sign to visitors.*
- *100% say that it is very important. You get strengthened spiritually and learn something every time you attend. Attending helps you to strengthen your faith. However, we understand there are some who are unable to attend because of other commitments – work, obligations, etc. – so being active in other forms of church life is also important.*

- *We think worship attendance is important. One reason is that we have a sense of community in faith with each other. There may be a message one Sunday that reaches out to you. You find encouragement from others when you attend worship.*
- *We feel it is very important to the health of the church. Not only does it make us strong individually, but also contributes to the morale of the members and the leadership. It also has a financial impact. When the church is full it feels like good things are happening.*
- *Very important. It is good to be among other believers to keep from feeling isolated. It gives peace and strength to face another week. It is also important to be there for others and not just yourself. No one wants to come and see it partially empty and dead inside. Get the good energy.*
- *Very important. Worshipping together as a church is what Jesus wants. Worship is contagious.*

Question 4: What is one thing we all can do that would make a big difference in the effectiveness of our congregation's ability to reach others?

- *Invite people with whom we come in contact to church. Follow up with visitors - "Glad you came," "Do you have needs we could help with," "Hope you will return," etc... We could have a bread ministry. We could activate "One call now" not just for prayer needs, but also for good news.*
- *Communication. Communicate with each other. Discover your gifts and strengths so that you can serve better and more effectively together. Strive to work as a team.*
- *Encourage, greet, make people feel welcome and important.*
- *Communicate with all in the church – individually as well as collectively. Use more than the phone or word of mouth like social media (ie Facebook or Twitter). We need to be aware of all of the forms of communication that we can use like email and other platforms. Keep encouraging the kids to be part of the worship – Gospel Choir and Chime Choir. Bring a kid friend. Challenge the youth to memorize verses and present them to the larger group. Praise them for what they are doing – above and beyond what a lot of adults are doing.*
- *We think that the "One call now" should be used more often. We think when church members or family members of church members die, we should call all members to ask for prayer and then call again to inform the members of funeral arrangements. Prayer requests should go out to the entire congregation. We need more reminders of regular church events like 5th Sunday dinners. We should reinstate the Shepherding program and possibly involve other members, not just elders. Then people who are shut in would get visits and calls from other people, not just the minister.*
- *Visit people and invite people to church. Praise our church and its leadership. Advertise our church and its events.*
- *Make this important – which is exactly what we are trying to do.*
- *The most important thing is to get our own members to participate. Until we have participation and cohesion in our own congregation, we won't be able to reach people outside the congregation. Bethany needs to have male and female greeters at every door.*