"The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation"

A National Symposium on the Future of Adult Faith Formation

October 1-3, 2015

Thursday, October 1, 2015

1 pm **Introduction to the Symposium & Scenario Planning**
Small Group Opening Experience: Storytelling & Prayer

2 pm **Session 1: Identify Trends Affecting the Future of Faith Formation in Congregations**

1. **Presentation: "**Significant Trends Affecting the Future of Faith Formation"
2. **Group Work**: Develop impact statements reflecting how the broad external trends impact adult faith formation in faith communities
   - **Individual Work**: Write impact statements based on the presentation.
   - **Group Work**: Share impact statements and identify up to 10 impact statements that reflect the group's thinking.
   - **Synthesizing**: Group members write the 10 statements on Post-it Notes and post them on the newsprint sheet under one of the major headings: Society, Ethnic-Culture, Economy, Technology, Education, Religion, Family
3. **Large Group:** View impact statements.

3:15 pm Break

3:30 pm **Session 2 – Identify Trends Affecting Faith Formation in the 4 Seasons of Adulthood**
(2 Rounds of Presentations with Group Work)

1. **Presentation by Symposium Team Members**
   - Young Adults – Kyle Oliver (Northington Room)
   - Midlife Adults – Jim Merhaut (Riverdale Room)
   - Mature Adults – Janet Schaeffler (Talcott Room)
   - Older Adults – Dorothy Linthicum (Towpath Ballroom)
2. **Questions / Discussion**
3. **Individual Work**: Write 4-5 impact statements.
4. **Group Work**: Share impact statements, post the notes on newsprint, and cluster the notes into common themes that reflect the whole group's thinking.

5:00 Break
5:30 pm Dinner

6:30 pm **Session 2 – Identify Trends Affecting Faith Formation in the 4 Seasons of Adulthood**
(2 Rounds of Presentations with Group Work)

8 pm **Large Group Wrap-Up**

1. **Review of Group Reports**
2. **Preview of Work Ahead**
3. **Presentation of What a Scenario Matrix Looks Like**

Individual "Homework" Time
Examine the "Impact Statements" (trends affecting faith formation & trends affecting adult stages) and identify 3 or 4 of the most **Critical Forces** (the degree of importance to the focusing question, and the degree of uncertainty surrounding those forces) affecting the future of adult faith formation in faith communities over the next 5 years.

9 pm Close

Friday, October 2, 2015

7:30- 8:30 am Breakfast

8:45 am Introduction to the Day

9:00 am **Session 3: Select Critical Forces with a 5-Year Horizon**

Task: Select the <u>two</u> most critical forces which will become the axes of a 2x2 scenario matrix, using the following two criteria: the degree of importance to the focusing question ("future of adult faith formation in faith communities), and the degree of uncertainty surrounding those forces.

Outcome: A 2x2 scenario matrix that presents the two critical uncertainties on axes that frame the poles of what seems possible in a five-year timeframe (2016-2020). These "axes of uncertainty" represent a continuum of possibilities ranging between two extremes.

1. **Group Work (4 Groups)**: Share the critical forces you have personally identified. Identify common themes in the individual reports. Select the two most significant forces affecting the future of faith formation in faith communities over the next five years.

   Group Meeting Rooms
   - Kyle Oliver (Northington Room)
   - Jim Merhaut (Riverdale Room)
   - Janet Schaeffler (Talcott Room)
   - Dorothy Linthicum (Towpath Ballroom)

2. **Whole Group Work**: Review the results from the group reports and select the two most significant forces affecting the future of faith formation in congregations over the next 5 years (2016-2020)

Break

Session 4: Create Scenario Narratives for the Future of Adult Faith Formation

Task: Develop Scenario Narratives for the 2x2 Matrix (4 quadrants)—a set of plausible scenarios that tell very different stories, each of which challenges our assumptions and illuminates the strategic issues we are facing.

Groups: Select a season of adulthood that you would like to focus on and join one of the Symposium Team Members and the group in one of the following rooms.
- Northington Room
- Riverdale Room
- Talcott Room
- Towpath Ballroom

1. **Large Group Presentation**: Review of Scenario Narrative Examples

   Move to separate meeting rooms organized by the seasons of adulthood.

2. **Work Groups by Adult Life Stage**: Creating narratives/stories for each of the four quadrants of the scenario:
   - Organize into four groups – one for each of the four quadrants.
   - Develop several one-sentence/phrase descriptions of how you see the scenario quadrant playing out over the next five years. Describe the people, the situations, the important events or trends, the programs or activities, etc. The

goal is to create a story of what each quadrant looks like in the 5-year timeframe.

- Present each of the four reports to the group and add new statements/ descriptions to the group reports.

12 noon Lunch

1:30 pm **Session 5: Envision the Future of Adult Faith Formation: Young Adult, Midlife Adults, Mature Adults, and Older Adults**

Task: Develop strategies and practices for bringing each of the four scenario narratives to life in each season of adulthood.

Groups: Select a season of adulthood that you would like to focus on and join one of the Symposium Team Members and the group in one of the following rooms.

- Northington Room
- Riverdale Room
- Talcott Room
- Towpath Ballroom

1. **Large Group Presentation**: "Examples of Completed Scenario with Strategies"

   Move to separate meeting rooms organized by the seasons of adulthood.

2. **Report on the Scenario Narratives**

3. **Presentation by Symposium Team Member**: A review of effective practices, strategies, and ideas appropriate for the particular season of adulthood.

4. **Group Work**:
   Imagine that each of the four scenarios **is** the future and you are living and working in each of the four scenarios. For each scenario narrative consider: ***What actions can we take to develop a desirable future (or mitigate a negative one) in this scenario?***

   Work together in a small group to develop new strategic directions for each of the four scenario narratives—programs, activities, online/digital, approaches, practices, resources, leadership, etc.—that create a desirable future (or mitigate a negative one).

5:30 pm Dinner

7 pm **Session 6: Moving from the Scenarios to the Future of Adult Faith Formation in Faith Communities**

9:00 pm Close

Saturday, October 3, 2015

7:30- 8:30 am Breakfast

8:30 am **Session 7: Building an Agenda for Action**

Task: Develop an "organizational" agenda for action to implement the scenarios and strategies.

Groups: Select a kindred group to develop an agenda for action: faith communities, regional /national church agencies, publishers, seminaries/universities, religious organizations, etc. Kindred groups will be assigned one of the meeting rooms for their work:

- Northington Room
- Riverdale Room
- Talcott Room
- Towpath Ballroom

1. **Develop an "Organizational" Agenda for Action**
   Facilitated by a Symposium Team Member each group will develop a practical "next steps" agenda for their ministry setting, addressing questions like: How do we build an "infrastructure" for the future of adult faith formation (training, resources, networking, support systems, etc.)?

2. **Develop a "Personal" Agenda for Action**

12 noon **Close**

The Future of Hardware Retailing
Global Business Network

Exploration: Critical Uncertainties

From the list of driving forces, a subset were deemed most important in shaping the landscape of hardware retail, yet also most "uncertain" in terms of how they will play out. This short list was further refined to express specific dimensions of uncertainty and associated, polar directions in which the issue could evolve.

Most Important Issues

1. U.S. Economy
2. Societal Role of Homes
3. Green Technologies
4. Consumer Attitudes Towards Disposability
5. Geopolitical Stability
6. Importance of Design
7. New Distribution Models
8. One Stop Shopping/ Experiential Shopping

Critical Uncertainties

State of the U.S. Economy

- **Growing/Stable** — Steady or strong growth
- **Declining/ Volatile** — Minimal patchy growth at best, with an economic downturn at worst

Emphasis of Home Use

- **Shelter and Security** — Emphasis of home use shifts towards basic, functional and security purposes
- **Lifestyle and Values** — Emphasis of home use shifts towards the expression of people's personalities, values, and lifestyles

Note: All of the forces identified during the discussion are still important in telling the eventual scenario story lines, and worth tracking as issues. However, only selected uncertainties are used to build the initial scenario framework.

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Synthesis: The Scenario Framework

When the top uncertainties are combined together, the resulting framework — in this case, a matrix — creates the outline for four very different environments in which the retailer, and its customers and competitors, will need to operate.

Growing/Stable

"Safety Rules"

Climate change protocols, the needs of seniors, and a sense of collective responsibility for future generations make efficiency and safety top priorities; new standards emerge.

"Mi Casa es MI Casa"

Technological advancement, open markets and a booming economy allow many to customize, personalize and upgrade their homes in diverse ways.

Shelter and Security

U.S. Economy

Emphasis of Home Use

Lifestyle and Values

State of the

"Scared Simple"

Economic downturn leads to social strife and isolation. Security is a top priority, and simple fixes are the norm.

"Feng Shui"

Facing economic slowdown, communities respond with an inclination for conservation, simple lifestyles, communal and multi-generational living.

Declining/Volatile

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Scenario: "Mi Casa es MI Casa"

This is a world in which…

The U.S. economy is booming and individual uniqueness is highly valued as a positive and necessary attribute of American life. Technological breakthroughs drive costs down and efficient global transportation systems enable many people to create their own customized (I'd like my room temperature set to "my last vacation in Maui") and prioritized (go light on the plumbing, I'm never home) worlds where international flows of products and people create complex demands and supplies of hardware goods and services. The cost of personalized entertainment declines rapidly with the advent of new technology and intense home media center wars ensue. This is a highly competitive environment for the hardware retail industry – competition can spring up from virtually any type of retailer, anywhere, and advertising mania (catered to individual needs) sweeps the country. Retina scanning and voice activation entry for the tech friendly are not uncommon, as are multilingual devices and cultural/country specific designs for the changing ethnic makeup of the U.S. population. This world is truly "lifestyles of the rich, the famous…and anybody else".

DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES:

- High-tech Unique
- Designer-everything
- Personality
- Individualism Booming economy
- Global competition
- Advertising mania
- "Genius" homes
- Green tech
- Bachelor pad of the future
- Dubailand Customization
- Expression

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Scenario: "Feng Shui"

This is a world in which…

The U.S. economy has experienced flat growth and there is a sense of continued uncertainty about what the future will hold in terms of jobs and earnings. Rather than retreat in panic about the economic hardships they are facing, most people look to their community for strength, developing a strong sense of ownership and desire to preserve resources for the long-term. A "back to the basics" movement takes place where people refrain from making luxury home purchases and focus instead on minimalism, simplicity and maintaining pre-existing infrastructure. Volunteerism, community gardens and parks gain popularity and multi-generational living arrangements are not uncommon. There is a strong move to "trash the clutter" and hold on to quality items; instead of big purchases and additions, many people add earthy accents such as potted plants (a natural air purifier), bamboo and wicker baskets to their homes and apartments. Shared/neighborhood bikes, lawnmowers, garden tools etc. also gain popularity.

DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES:

- Economic slowdown
- Back to the basics Green
- Keep the infrastructure, trash the clutter
- Gardening
- Earthy
- Minimalism
- Community oriented
- Culture
- Parks
- Multi-generational living
- Making the most of space Quality
- Plants
- Simple pleasures

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Scenario Storyline: "Safety Rules"

This is a world in which…

The overall U.S. economy is growing at a steady pace, creating a willingness among many to invest in home infrastructure. During this time, a sense of urgency for collective action to be taken around the environment develops after a series of climate change related disasters. After strong scientific evidence causes several Fortune 500 companies to be sued by flood and hurricane victims across the globe for polluting the environment, a "new Kyoto Protocol", one that is much more strict and much more binding, is developed that spans from the global to the individual level. The community (which encompasses the local, the national or the global, depending on the context) is often prioritized over the individual in matters of home choice. In the spirit of societal decision-making, child safety groups and the increasingly powerful senior lobby simultaneously push for nation-wide changes to make environments safe, comfortable and uniform for all ages and cultures (multilingual signs required, efficiency standards, cookie-cutter ramps, stairs and elevators). Building related products and services are designed to address public, as much as individual, needs.

DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES:

- Moderate economic growth
- Standardization
- Unique could be dangerous
- Highly litigious environment
- Lawsuits
- Child safety
- Elderly lobbying group
- Community safety
- Climate change
- Kyoto protocol
- Green technology
- Cookie cutter safety
- Cookie cutter efficiency
- Healthy homes
- High health care costs

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Scenario: "Scared Simple"

This is a world in which…

The U.S. economy is facing a significant downturn and social strife is on the rise as people try to hold on to what they have. Home security is a top priority, and gated communities, for those who can afford it, increase in popularity. There is little desire to "show off" externally to one's neighbor's as societal trust is low and most would prefer not to draw attention to themselves ("mind your own business"). Isolationism and market protectionism are features of the global economic environment, in part due to continued uncertainty about geopolitical stability and regional conflict. For many, foreign goods and services are viewed as contributing to the overall economic malaise. Most people are careful about how they spend their money and frugality becomes a virtue, splurging mostly on simple pleasures. In addition, a number of identity theft cases and Internet security breaches have made online shoppers more conservative.

DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES:

- Fences
- Security
- Locks
- Economic depression
- Fear of the future
- Cautious
- Suspicious of neighbors
- Gated communities
- Isolationism
- No immigration
- Protectionism
- Don't attract attention
- Mind your own business

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Implications: Contextual Scenarios → Hardware Retailing

	"Safety Rules"	"Mi Casa es MI Casa"	"Scared Simple"	"Feng Shui"
The "World"	▪ Renewed urbanism ▪ Global and regional standards ▪ Manufacturers go direct to retail ▪ Local emphasis on efficiency and public safety	▪ New affinity groups ▪ Patchwork city planning and regulations ▪ Fashion orientation ▪ Immigration ▪ Global sourcing	▪ Rolling blackouts and brownouts ▪ Contractor business declines ▪ Domestic production of goods ▪ Urban decay	▪ Shared service models ▪ "Tribes" gain importance ▪ Local sourcing, local services
Homes	▪ Accessibility and ergonomics ▪ Lower carbon footprint per home ▪ Explaining/navigating regulation for home owners	▪ Architect entrepreneurs, modern craftsmen ▪ The smart home, upgradeable home ▪ Experiential design, ornamentation ▪ Build up of remote areas, suburbs	▪ Security ▪ Less municipal service = more DIY ▪ Hidden elites ▪ Self-sufficiency ▪ Decorative and functional, rather than structural	▪ Space maximization (e.g. Murphy beds) ▪ Gardening as civic duty ▪ Social network/ community-based DIY ▪ Public spaces
Hardware	▪ Uptick in DIY ▪ Plug 'n' play, standard products ▪ Holistic, life-cycle oriented products ▪ Certified materials ▪ Service based competition ▪ On-line sales and marketing	▪ Competition from electronic retailers ▪ Niche fashion retailers, customization ▪ Product fads ▪ Experiential shopping ▪ Strong contractor market	▪ Upgrades vs. new purchases ▪ Contractor market declines ▪ High trust required for services ▪ Quality and longevity over image	▪ Neighborhood/ home-grown competition ▪ Fragmentation and specialization (e.g. gardening, home decor) ▪ Decline of big box ▪ Local products

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Options: Emerging Growth Areas for Products and Services

"Safety Rules"

- ❑ Task–specific displays and integrated packaging
- ❑ "Ikea for hardware"
- ❑ Virtual consumer DIY design center
- ❑ Full life-cycle products (use & disposal)
- ❑ Material disposal services
- ❑ Energy conservation systems, smart plugs, timers;
- ❑ Alternative energy system supplies
- ❑ Set locations depending on regulatory standards

"Mi Casa es MI Casa"

- ❑ Integrated showrooms/experiential shopping/virtual or simulated displays
- ❑ Establish unique themes per store location
- ❑ Home fashion / decor leasing
- ❑ Partner with in-store design consultants
- ❑ Larger electronics offering
- ❑ Custom products through global, low cost supplier relationships

"Scared Simple"

- ❑ Focus on storage and emergency supplies
- ❑ Reinforcements and upgrades
- ❑ Develop security/insurance partnerships
- ❑ Water purification kits, generators
- ❑ Trust building through brand reputation
- ❑ Serve as reference and resource for local contractors
- ❑ Focus on urban locations

"Feng Shui"

- ❑ Enable community-based solutions and purchasing, in-store and online
- ❑ High-end tool sharing
- ❑ High quality tools
- ❑ Arts and crafts supplies
- ❑ Refurbishing and restoration supplies
- ❑ Gardening, irrigation, water filers
- ❑ Organizational/space savers and services; e.g. partner with storage providers
- ❑ Serve as reference and resource for local contractors

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Faith Formation 2020 Scenarios

Relationship with Organized Religion and Christianity

Receptive to Organized Religion

Scenario #4
Participating but Uncommitted

The fourth scenario describes a world in which people attend church activities but are not actively engaged in their church community or spiritually committed. They may participate in significant seasonal celebrations, such as Christmas and Easter, and celebrate sacraments and milestone events, such as marriage and baptism. Some may even attend worship regularly, and send their children to religious education classes. Their spiritual commitment is low and their connection to the church is more social and utilitarian than spiritual. Congregations are challenged to provide faith formation that recognizes that belonging (engagement) leads to believing (spiritual commitment) and a more vibrant faith, and develop approaches for increasing people's engagement with the church community and the Christian tradition.

Scenario #1
Vibrant Faith and Active Engagement

The first scenario describes a world in which people of all ages and generations are actively engaged in a Christian church, are spiritually committed, and are growing in their faith. People have found their spiritual home within an established Christian tradition and a local faith community that provides ways for all ages and generations to grow in faith, worship God, and live their faith in the world. Congregations are challenged to provide lifelong faith formation for all ages and generations, at home and at church, that develops vibrant faith, is continuous throughout life, and engages all people in the life and mission of the church community.

LOW ← Hunger for God and the Spiritual Life → **HIGH**

Scenario #3
Unaffiliated and Uninterested

The third scenario describes a world in which people experience little need for God and the spiritual life and are not affiliated with organized religion and established Christian churches. The Unaffiliated and Uninterested reject all forms of organized religion and reflect a steadily increasing percentage of the American population, especially among the 18-29-year-olds. Congregations are challenged to find ways to "plant" themselves in the midst of the cultures and worlds of the Unaffiliated and Uninterested, build relationships, and be witnesses to the Christian faith in the world today.

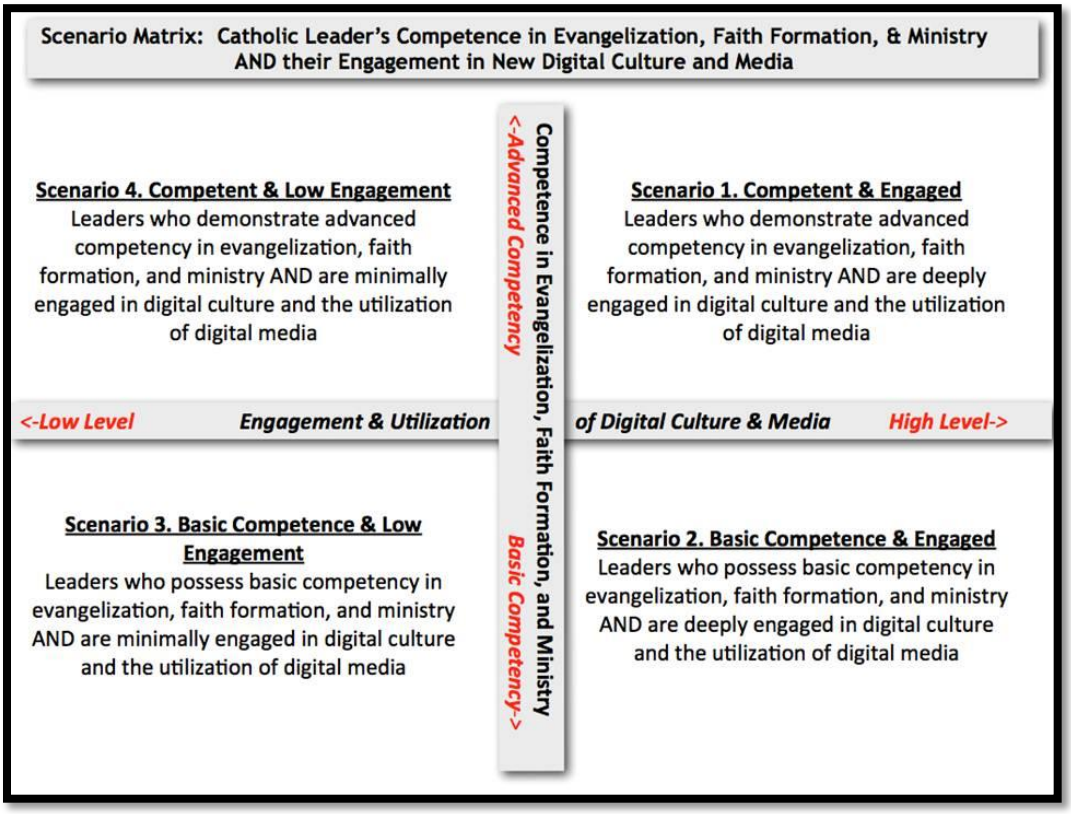
Scenario #2
Spiritual but Not Religious

The second scenario describes a world in which people are spiritually hungry and searching for God and the spiritual life, but mostly likely not affiliated with organized religion and an established Christian tradition. Some may join a non-denominational Christian church focused on their spiritual needs, while others may find an outlet for their spiritual hunger in small communities of like-minded spiritual seekers, in local or global acts of service—or in online spiritual resources and communities. The Spiritual but Not Religious reflect a growing minority of the American population, especially among the 18-39-year-olds. Congregations are challenged to engage people where their live (physical and virtual communities), build relationships, engage in spiritual conversations, and offer programs and activities that nourish their spiritual growth.

Resistant to Organized Religion

The Future of Catholic Media in a Digital World

National Association of Catholic Media Partners (NACMP)



De La Salle Christian Brother's Scenario Matrix

Future of Faith Formation in the Episcopal Church

Response of the Episcopal Church to Changing Global Realities

Engaged

Scenario 4 **A Church Engaged in the World & Community and Connection Diminished by Technology** This is a world in which the Episcopal church utilizes its energies, resources, and faith tradition to address the increasingly complex global realities facing people locally and around the world. Faith formation—in a variety of settings—leads the way in forming lifelong disciples and preparing people for engagement in mission in the world. The Episcopal Church is pioneering new ways of utilizing the new technologies to connect people, create community, and engage people in faith formation. In a world where technology diminishes community, local churches have recommitted themselves to nurture a sense of community for all parishioners and the surrounding community that bridges cultural and economic divisions. In a technological world Episcopal faith formation is helping people develop new relational abilities and immersing them in a variety of human communities. It is also helping people rediscover creation and the natural world.	**Scenario 1** **A Church Engaged in the World & Community and Connection Enhanced by Technology** This is a world in which the Episcopal Church utilizes all of the potential in current and emerging digital and web technologies to connect with people 24x7x365, build relationships, and engage people in lifelong faith formation and mission to the world. Faith formation in physical places—congregations, camps, conference centers, and school—are all web- and digitally-enhanced, extending their programming into the everyday lives of people, anywhere and everywhere. People connect and mobilize for mission and collective action in the world using the new communication tools and web technologies. The Episcopal Church becomes a leader in utilizing the new technologies to develop lifelong disciples who are growing in their Episcopal faith and are actively engaged in transforming the world.
Diminished	**The Relationship of Technology & Community** ***Enhanced***
Scenario 3 **A Church Separated from the World & Community and Connection Diminished by Technology** This is a world in which technologically-mediated relationships, using new devices and social media networks, become the norm, while physical connections and physical community diminish in importance. Many of the activities once done in physical places—education, commerce, and worship—are now done primarily online. People are increasingly cut-off from creation and the natural world, preferring a virtual world. The rise of technology creates an almost "hyper-individualism," at the expense of community and relationships, and exacerbates the decline of local faith communities, including Episcopal churches. The Episcopal Church's retreat from the world and its distrust and contempt for the "technological world" places it at a distinct disadvantage in addressing the impact of technology, and in engaging people in faith formation and the mission of transforming the world. The Episcopal Church is increasingly marginalized in a world dominated by technology and ever more complex global realities.	**Scenario 2** **A Church Separated from the World & Community and Connection Enhanced by Technology** This is a world in which the Episcopal Church retreats from the world and focuses its energies and resources internally, concerning itself with preserving Episcopal identity and membership through faith formation and worship. Nonprofit organizations, local and global in scope, and large nondenominational churches increasingly provide an array of social services to people in need and address global justice issues—work once done by the Episcopal Church. At the same time, technology is being integrated into all spheres of life—people work, learn, shop, play, and even worship virtually. Technology is being used to create and enhance human relationships and community, even rebuilding relationships lost due to distance and time. People are discovering rich resources for their spiritual lives online, connecting with each other, and creating virtual faith communities to nurture and support their faith growth. There is a growing distrust and contempt for technology in the Episcopal Church as its members find an array of religious options and content online.

Separated