

The Christian year begins now, with the beginning of the Advent season. As we look ahead anticipating what this new year will be like, I see four main areas of development that will be key to the coming year for the Presbytery of San Diego.

1. I believe we need to continue to focus on **ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**. We need to continue to build the adaptive capacities of our church leaders and cultivate an adaptive culture within our presbytery. We have long been good at technical leadership – working longer and harder and being able to improve what we are already doing. But more and more I am hearing from people that that is not good enough. We have to learn to lead differently. We have to discover new ways of ministry that we have not tried before. While we always want to continue the best of our past, we don't want to be stuck in methods that aren't effective anymore. As the culture of discontinuous change shifts around us, we have to shift to keep up with what God is doing. Many of us have good management training, but many have not had much leadership training. This is going to be key for us in the coming year.

2. I believe we need to continue to focus on **MISSIONAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT**. When fewer and fewer people are looking for a church and visiting churches, we need to find ways to engage people in our communities. We need to discover how to continually move back into our neighborhoods and join what the Trinity is already doing there. As we do this, we will likely have to address issues of homelessness, immigration, education /children/youth, and senior citizens. We will be pushed to do more evangelism and more social justice. We will learn how to listen to people, have conversations, and look for how God might be at work in their lives. As the scriptures teach us, we will want to extend the gift of hospitality to the stranger and the alien. As the Bible prods us, we will want to assist the widows and the orphans. This may require us to shift how we do some of our congregational ministry, but we want to be on board with whatever God is doing in our community. We need to increase the number of missional experiments we are launching to discern what directions God wants us to move in.

3. I believe we need to focus on **NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT** and **NEW MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT**. It has been 25-30 years since the last new church development in our presbytery chartered as a Presbyterian church. We currently have two new churches going in Trinity Life and Orange Ave. Both have seen a number of positive signs of growth. Both are reaching out to the non-anglo, non-caucasian part of our region, which are the people sectors that are growing the fastest. I believe we need to be launching new ministries that will reach into new corners of our community, and be in ministry reaching new people in new ways.

4. I believe we need to focus on **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**. The majority of Presbyterians get their only Bible for the week in a single, weekly worship service. Many people are not reading their Bibles away from the church building. Many are not engaged in the spiritual disciplines and practices that lead to a deeper discipleship and a mature faith in Christ. This stunts the growth of the church and causes the church to make ill-informed decisions. 29% of American Christians believe in reincarnation, which is actually not found in the Bible. People don't know the historic faith of the

church. We need to teach the faith. We need to help people read the Word, pray the Word, study the Word, memorize the Word, and live the Word. Without this foundation, we will not make wise decisions. STEWARDSHIP is part of our spiritual development. It is surprising to me how many churches, in this economy, are still afraid to talk about money. By doing so, we are stunting people's spiritual growth. As Christians, we need to give. We need to be challenged to give. Stewardship is a natural part of our discipleship. We need to teach the discipline and importance of financial giving, and we should not apologize for it.

We will have many tough challenges to deal with in 2011. But, I am optimistic about what Christ is doing and what the Holy Spirit will continue to do in the coming year. We have some great people here, and it is a privilege to serve the Lord alongside of you. I think 2011 can be a great year for us if we focus our time and energy in four areas: adaptive leadership development, missional church development, new church/ministry development, and spiritual development. Let's be in prayer for one another in this coming year. Let's act so that God can use us in what the Trinity is already doing around us.