

THE VITALITY TEAM

Follow up to Veritas is essential. Churches that create a Vitality Team do much better than those churches that simply let Veritas fade away. Veritas is a language, a lifestyle, a way of being. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth (that's reality) and the truth will set you free (that's vitality)" John 8:32. In other words, there is no vitality without reality. The Vitality Team helps to keep the conversation fresh and alive.

Here are a few suggestions that will help you create a Vitality Team:

Purpose: To gain input, which will inform elected leadership about the attitudes and actions of people since the Veritas experience, assist in discerning God's spiritual strategic direction, and recommend possibilities for the future of the church.

People: Usually comprised of 7-9, one or two of whom can come from elected leadership and thus serve as a liaison. Sometimes it is appropriate to have a staff person as well. Beyond that, the rest should be positive influencers who have the trust and respect of the congregation. At least a couple of people should have been to a Veritas workshop. The Team should become familiarized with the Veritas language and begin to consider the development of a Relational Covenant. (Please use the Veritas DVD to bring Team members up to speed on the language). The Pastor may serve on the Vitality Team. If the Pastor is on the Vitality Team, it is best that the Pastor not chair.

Vitality Facilitator: It is strongly encouraged that you invite a Vitality Facilitator to help the Vitality Team get off to an effective start. Please contact your classis for more information. The first two visits are subsidized. After these initial visits, you are invited to enter in to an agreement with a Vitality Facilitator for 3-4 more visits. Your Vitality Facilitator will explain this agreement with you in more detail.

Process: The Pastor arranges a meeting with the emerging Vitality Team. The Team organizes, develops a purpose and then subdivides and engages in various activities.

The functions of the Vitality Team are as follows:

- Developing a process for creating a Relational Covenant
- Gathering internal assessment data.
- Discern the biblical story for the Pathway journey
- Debrief the Veritas experience.
- Communicating between the Vitality Team, leadership and congregation.
- Gathering external assessment data which assess opportunities and feeds into the development of future possibilities.
- Establishing a process of pervasive prayer.
- Learning from the history on what informs the future.

Another note about communication: The Team reports regularly to the elected leadership and staff. The Vitality Team is a recommending and referring body, not a decision making body. They also can assist the leadership in creating and implementing a communication strategy, which is very necessary during a time of uncertainty. Frequent, transparent communication is essential. Say the same thing often in many different ways.

The benefits of a Vitality Team are many:

- Some work load is removed from elected leadership.
- "Space" is created, which facilitates healing and restores a sense of order.
- Movement indicates that there is a future and "we are moving ahead".
- It is an added resource in "taking the pulse" of the congregation.

Please refer to the Congregational Vitality Pathway and you may also refer to the 'Resource Pages' section of the Veritas workbook. There are two sections that will help guide your way forward: "Life after Veritas for the Congregation" and "Life after Veritas for the Pastor."