

**The College of Congregational Development**  
by  
Herb Quick

During the summer of 2023, I completed coursework with the College for Congregational Development (CCD), held at the Claggett Center in Adamstown, Maryland. Two, intense one-week sessions are required for this curriculum. My first session was completed in June of 2022, and my second session was completed this past June.

This Fall, I was invited to join the CCD training team. I will intern during the Spring and Summer of 2024, and the following year, will begin my service as a trainer.

At present, there are eleven teams across the country offering the College of Congregational Development. I plan to be based with the Diocese of Maryland team.

The College of Congregational Development is designed to train clergy and laity in congregational and organizational development. Some of the objectives are development of:

- Healthy, faithful, and effective congregations called to be the body of Christ,
- Congregations grounded in Anglican ethos and spirituality,
- Culturally competent leaders who can foster more diverse, equitable, and inclusive congregations,
- Leaders who make use of a variety of models and facilitation tools to engage people in their congregations and respond to challenges and opportunities,
- Leaders who build congregational capacity under guidance of the Holy Spirit and take action over time and in changing situations,
- Stronger connections among leaders for learning, community, mutual encouragement, and inspiration,
- Creation of useful training programs that can be shared and used by others.

Areas of study and practice included models and change processes, facilitation skills, group dynamics, gathering data, trust development and conflict resolution, congregational marketing, organizations, roles, systems and culture. The training we received is applied on individual, team, and whole system levels.

Those of us who have been active in congregational life have often experienced situations requiring us to “muddle through” in order to arrive at solutions. I’m sure we’ve all done this more than once!

At the College for Congregational Development, we learned there are dynamics, otherwise known as models, for the working characteristics of congregations and organizations. If we understand and utilize the models, we can be more effective leaders and congregations. Knowing the models saves time and energy. Models help us get to the core of the subject quickly.

No respectable education program will allow students to escape without doing homework. At CCD, all first-year students are required to develop two projects prior to their second session.

The purpose of my self-designed projects was twofold:

1. Assist the vestry and congregation in moving St. Luke's from a ten-year old plan, to a forward looking, sustainable plan for mission and parish life.
2. Base the projects on the Gather-Transform-Send model.

My projects focused on the facilitation of workshops based on the Gather-Transform-Send model. Gather-Transform-Send is the fundamental work of congregations.

The Invite Welcome Connect project of The Episcopal Church is an example of a gathering process. Invitations are extended, folks are welcomed into our community of faith, and we find ways to connect those people with the congregation. There are a host of subunits within the gathering process, such as greeters, websites, newsletters, personal invitation, print and social media, and others.

When we are transformed, we undergo a change of mind, heart, and action, and more become the people God intends for us to be. Think about what our baptismal covenant asks us to be and do. We are transformed within a community of faith.

When we are sent, it is intended that we live into our baptismal covenant, by working in the world. Think about the work you perform in our community: food pantries, working with the homeless, working with high school students, and providing space to others in our community.

To my knowledge, I am the third College of Congregational Development graduate in Delaware. Former Canon to the Ordinary, Martha Kirkpatrick, and my pastor, The Rev. Marianne Ell, both preceded me as graduates in 2022. I thank the both of them for their support and mentorship throughout this process. I also thank the Diocesan Council for its financial support of Delaware's CCD attendees, and for recognizing the benefits of this training to the Episcopal Church in Delaware.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, the regional sponsor of the College for Congregational Development, has for some time fostered a culture of laity trained in congregational development. It is promoted at a parish level, and folks are encouraged to attend as a leadership fundamental.

The 2024 class will have 60 attendees. Forty of them are laity. Each year, the lay presence increases.

It is my sincere hope that here too, in Delaware, we can foster a culture of developing a robust lay leadership with an eye on sustainable, mission oriented congregational life.