

February 1, 2023  
"Plant It Forward!"

Enslow Park Presbyterian in Huntington, WV conducted a two-day Strategic Discernment process on Jan. 27th and 28. The purpose was to align the church's vision with God's vision. Jody Christian, a trained facilitator and strategic planner, led the effort. Jody and Pastor John Yeager worked together at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Pastor Yeager developed a four-part series of sermons leading up to the weekend event. About 20 members of the congregation participated, but all members were encouraged to pray. The series was loosely based on the work of Britt Mooney, author of "Say Yes: How God-Sized Dreams Take Flight."

The Strategic Discernment process started with meditation on scripture. The presence of the Holy Spirit was palpable and brought a sense of unity. Pastor Yeager said, "The good news is that after three years of crisis management including Covid and a flood, we can now move forward with clarity of purpose pending Session approvable of the plan."

The group completed a detail evaluation using a SWOT analysis identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This led to a definition of the church's purpose. Priorities were then defined. Yeager said, "Nothing listed wasn't anything new, but setting priorities is vital given the resources we now have."

During one session, the group was discussing the tribute and honor they need to give to those who instilled faith in them. In that context, the idea of the mustard seed of faith was mentioned and also the need to “pay it forward.” Just then, Jaclyn Pyles, an Elder, put these two ideas together and said, “We need to ‘Plant It Forward!’” This may become the tagline for the church’s initiative.

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