

Seeing through a glass, darkly....Sunday, April 14, 2013....St. James, Higganum

Notes of Meeting #1 of the "Crystal Ball Gazing, Chowder and Marching Society"

1- Some demographics (attained loosely, by eyeball and guesstimate...but close enough, as the saying goes, "for government work".)

- Higganum population:8,000	
- <b>Higganum Churches</b>	<b>Active Members</b>
-Episcopal	50
-Congregational (Higganum)	120
-Methodist	50
-Roman Catholic	200
-Valley Bible Church	40 (Haddamites)
-Congregational (Haddam)	<u>50</u>
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<b>Total:</b>	510 = .063% of population active
-Spiritual, But not Religious *(Guesstimate)	1,600 = 20% of population

\*We think the 1,600 "SBNR" number could be as high as 2,500 (or higher)...but wanted to go with the more conservative figure. We loosely defined these folks as sensing/knowing there is something bigger than, greater than and beyond them, "an ineffable something".

2- Why have two generations of people simply "bagged" religion?

- Hypocrisy of so-called believers
- Too many rules
- Overwhelmed with activity, church is the first activity to go (least relevant?)
- Today's life-style is dramatically different (one obvious reality...kids activities are far more organized than was true 30-50 years ago; hence, far more parentally time consuming)
- Don't want to make a commitment
- It's uncool
- Liturgy (worship) not meaningfully connected to how I live my life
- Don't believe religious claims (tenets, doctrines, creeds, etc.)

3- What are the SBNR's Missing?

- An intentional community
- Continuity

- Reinforcement
- Three generational gatherings
- Shared learning (garnered from three-generational gatherings)

#### 4- What Might We Do?

- Ensure that preaching is about real, relevant human stuff
- Less rigidity in liturgy (note bene: there is literally a world of opportunity here!!!)
- Work on getting younger people in (ideas: coffeehouse, music, story telling)
- Be unassuming
- Use a much broader scale and type(s) of music. Get creative!!!
- Look at Taize (Protestant monastery in France) life, methods and music
- Creative use of prayer book (Ash Wednesday cited, Rite III, etc.)
- Kids music/participation
- Journey stories (Time Line: [-----])

PS: I had a lovely talk with Barbara's son, Pete, when I got home, and commented that both music and what gets talked about needs to be much more relevant to where and how people actually live and reflect on their lives. He then commented that "religious" stuff needs to be more human.