

# TALES OF TRANSITION

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Synod of British Columbia  
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ST. ANDREW'S  
PRESBYTERIAN,  
VICTORIA



## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTERIM AND TRANSITIONAL

Oversight of time between pastors

Maintain church worship & mission

Pastoral search

Fertile time for congregational  
development:

Who are we?

Who is God calling us to be?

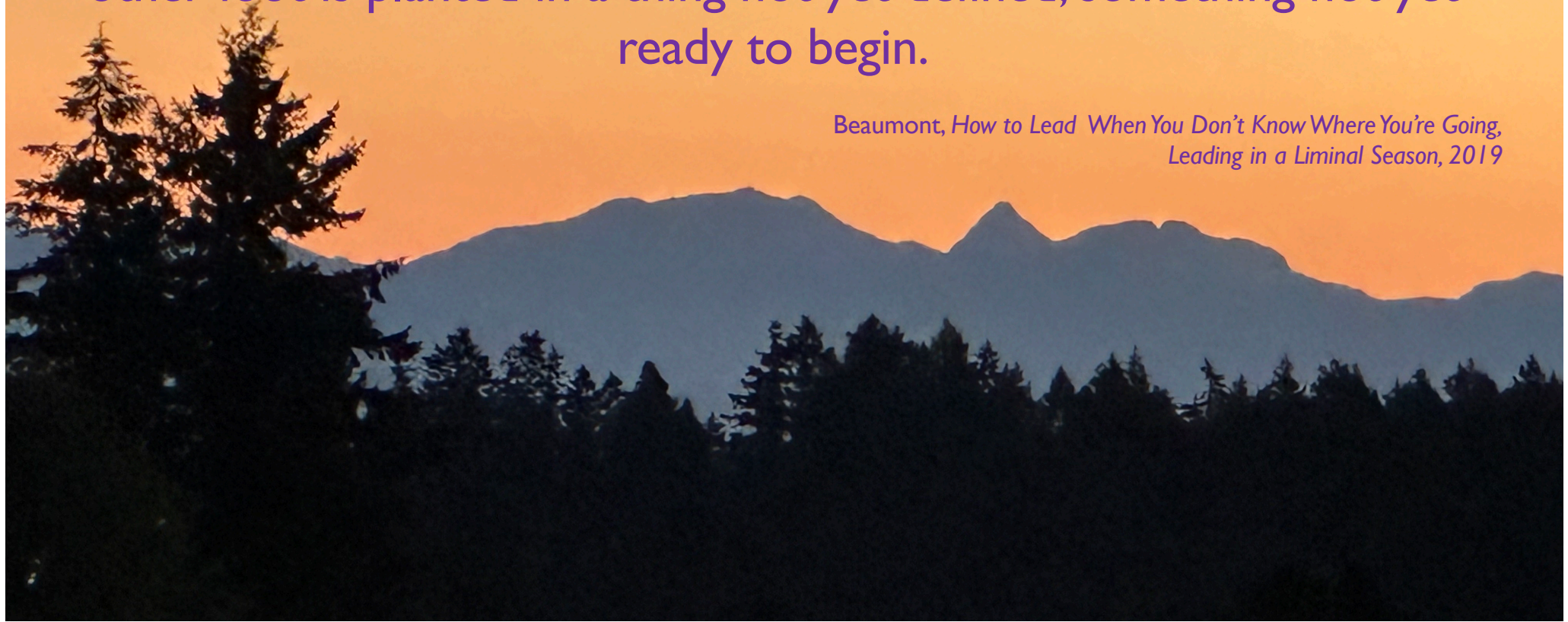
Who is our neighbour?

Rendle and Mann. *Holy Conversations:  
Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations*



During liminal seasons we stand on both sides of a threshold. We have one foot rooted in something that is not yet over, whereas the other foot is planted in a thing not yet defined, something not yet ready to begin.

Beaumont, *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going*,  
*Leading in a Liminal Season*, 2019



## TOWN HALL MEETING

CREATE A  
BROAD SENSE  
OF IDENTITY,  
MEANING,  
PURPOSE



### Created Historical Timeline

- Engage faithful listening
- Rekindle sense of belonging and joy
- Opportunity to remember, recognize, and articulate the defining stories of church

## TOWN HALL AGENDA

### **Faithful Listening : Colossians 3: 12-17**

What is God saying to **you** through these scriptures?

What is God saying to the church through these scriptures?

### **Discussion around tables**

What first brought you to St.Andrew's (linked to timeline).

Why did you stay?

What are your hopes and prayer for the church?



## KEY LEARNINGS DURING COVID

Ways to Worship & meet  
online

New ways to communicate  
with one another

Increased partnerships that  
were beneficial to both  
church and partner  
organizations and  
permanently altered available  
space for the church's use  
after COVID



## A **DECIDING** MINDSET

- Reports of facts
- Parliamentary procedures
- Majority rule
- Cost/benefit analysis
- Top-down guidance
- Specialized teams

## A **DISCERNING** MINDSET

- **Consensus**
- **Prayer**
- **Silence**
- **Scripture**
- **Listening circles**
- **Appreciative inquiry**
- **Story telling**



## VISIONING AND FOCUS GROUPS

Fall 2021

Visioning with elders

8 focus groups with  
congregational groups

### Getting us on track to discernment:

#### Questions for Elders

- Who are we?
- What is God calling us to do?
- Who are our neighbours?

#### Focus Group Questions

- Who are we as a congregation?
- What do you believe is our primary purpose at St. Andrew's and what do we need do to achieve that purpose?
- What specific ways might we gain a deeper sense of what God is doing in the community around us?

## ASSET MAPPING

- Recognize assets that are unappreciated or outside our vision  
(physical, individual, institutional, associations, economic)
- Propel session & congregation to accomplish collaborative work
- Experience an unfolding sense of a larger whole and a greater good
- Discover possibilities outside current view

## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY & PROVOCATIVE PROPOSITIONS

Find examples of the best of the past to move forward

Determine what circumstances that made the best possible

Take the stories and envision “what might be”

Write an affirmative statement (provocative proposition) that describes idealized future as if it is already happening

*Eg. We value connections with the community and recognize food insecurity of neighbours. We have space to offer community gardens. We will use the gardens to build supportive relationships.*

## TRANSFORMATIVE NATURE OF APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Our focus & attention becomes reality  
& defines the whole

People have more confidence  
journeying to the future when they  
carry forward the best parts of the  
past

We know what it feels like to have a  
collaborative view of where we are  
going.





## CORE VALUES DISCERNMENT

Session generated list  
responding to: What  
have we got and  
what might we do?

Activities/suggestions  
were categorized

Using categories  
Elders identified 10  
Core Values  
represented

Using Nominal  
Group Technique 3  
primary core values  
identified

**Elder volunteers research each value,  
interview other churches... how is this  
manifest in behaviour**

Spiritual formation/growth

Music and worship

Companionship/addressing loneliness

Hospitality

Mission/outreach/witness

Community support

Youth/children

Cultural emphasis and understanding

Education

Compassion and witness with no  
expectations



## Collaborative conversations

- began with shared needs
- Joint sessions met
- shared worship at 3 churches



## Shared Activities

- Bible studies, Lenten & Advent
- Music events
- PWS&D journey for hope
- Worship in the Park



## Shared ministry

### Amalgamation?

- joint sessions w/Dale 2 churches- discern shared vision
- congregational meeting ST-A continue "collaborative" conversations



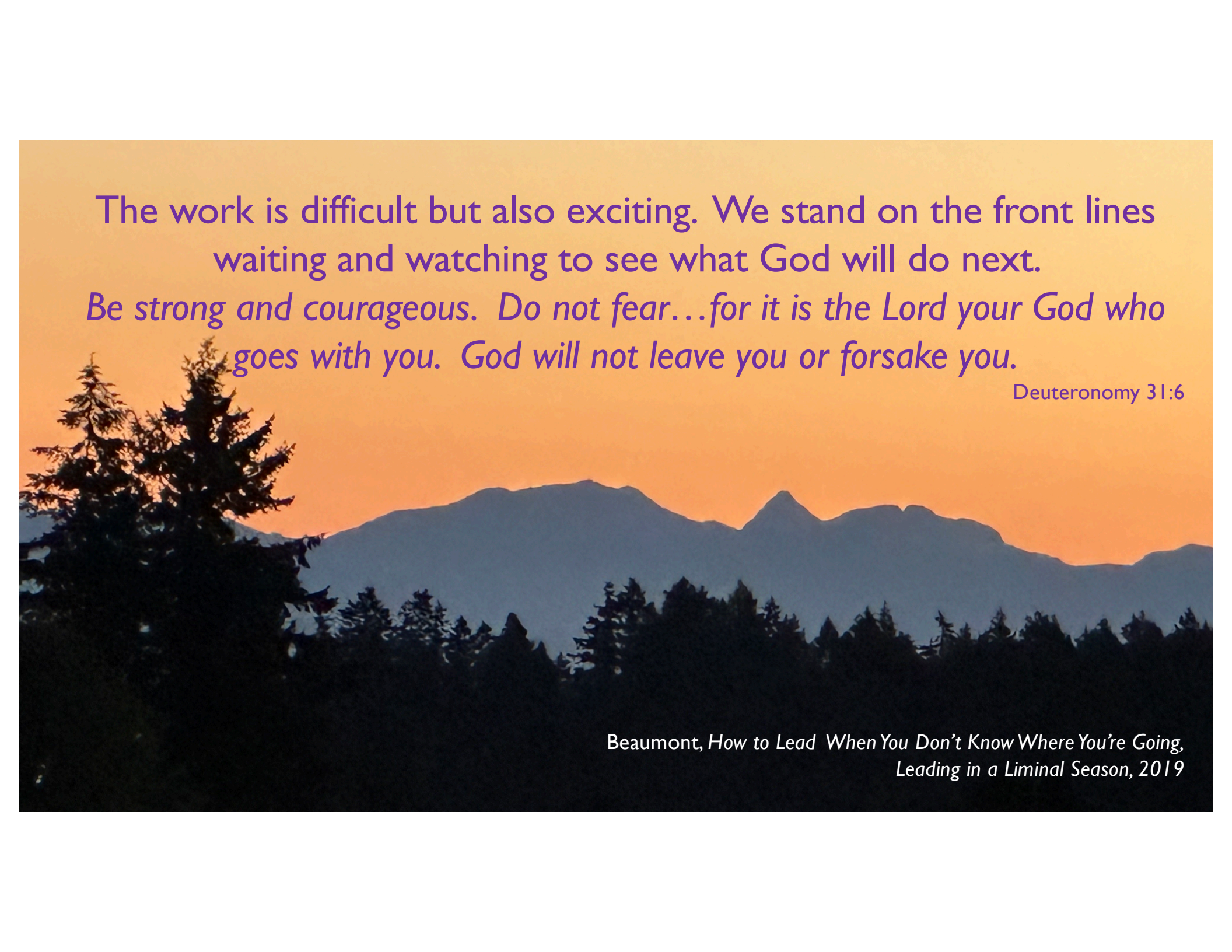
# DISCERNMENT CONTINUES

Deepening  
Discernment  
ongoing, messy

Need Clarity  
Shared Vision

“Continue  
collaborative  
discussions in  
whatever ways  
possible”

Who are we?  
Who is God  
calling us to  
be?  
Who is our  
neighbour?



The work is difficult but also exciting. We stand on the front lines waiting and watching to see what God will do next.  
*Be strong and courageous. Do not fear...for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. God will not leave you or forsake you.*

Deuteronomy 31:6

Beaumont, *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going,  
Leading in a Liminal Season, 2019*