

HAPPENING
A CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE SM

Standards and Guidelines
for the Happening Weekend

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HAPPENING - A CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE_{SM}

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm}* program is to be one of the instruments within the Anglican Tradition to renew the Christian Church in the power of the Holy Spirit, in order that the Church may respond more readily to its call to spread the Kingdom of God throughout the world.

Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm} seeks to achieve this purpose by bringing young persons and adults to a more fulfilling personal knowledge of and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and to a deeper level of commitment and apostleship.

The ingredients, sequence, and definitions of *Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm}* outlined in this *Standards and Guidelines for the Happening Weekend*, are protected by a service mark held by Happening National, Inc. This was done to protect the integrity of the historic Happening program and to insure that this model is used to help develop teenage Christian leaders ready to share with their peers a living experience of what is fundamental to being a Christian.

Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm}

Happening is a Christian experience presented by teenagers for teenagers with the help of clergy and lay adult leadership.

Every diocesan *Happening- A Christian Experience_{sm}* program shall operate under the authority of its diocesan bishop or appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority.

The following are the required elements of the *Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm}* event:

1. An approximately 48 hour event usually taking place on a weekend.
2. A cloistered environment.
3. Balanced diet and rest.
4. Defined Christian standard of behavior, including appropriate observance of safe church guidelines for youth ministry.
5. Prepared staff of youth, clergy, and lay adults.
6. The content and sequence of twelve talks. (For talk titles or names, sequences, and definitions, see pages 7 through 18 of this document, *Standards and Guidelines for the Happening Weekend*.)
7. *Caritas*: Caritas is a critical element of the weekend. It is prayer, sacrifice, service, and support for the community, symbolized by notes, letters, warm fuzzies, or other tangible items. The concept is introduced at the conclusion of the Church and Grace talk.
8. Appropriate facilities to accommodate large and small group activities and accessibility for physically challenged persons.
9. Small group / large group interaction.
10. Daily worship including at least one celebration of the Eucharist during the Happening experience.
11. Fun, games, and singing.
12. A Post Event Profile filed after each weekend event.

THE HAPPENING EXPERIENCE

The PROGRESSION

Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm} invites the participants to consider various aspects of their life, God, their relationship with God in Christ, and their response to God.

Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm} progresses in four distinct segments.

I. **The “Me” Segment** – A time for self examination.

Time: **Typically Friday night**
Activities: Singing and games
Talk #1: Rector's address
Talk #2: Please Hear/Please Listen/Masks
Talk #3: Reality
Small/large groups
Worship/meditation

II. **The "GOD" Segment** – A time to reveal and share Relationship with God in Christ.

Time: **Typically Saturday morning**
Activity: Worship
Talk #4: Faith
Talk #5: Jesus Christ
Small/large groups
Singing and games

III. **The “God and Me” Segment** – A time to discover that a relationship with God is possible and to present an invitation.

Time: **Typically Saturday afternoon & evening**
Activities: Talk #6: Reconciliation
Talk #7: Church & Grace/Caritas
Caritas: An Experience
Talk #8: Prayer and the Christian Life
Small/large groups
Worship/meditation

IV. The “God, Me, and The World” Segment – A time for responding to God's call

Time: **Typically Sunday**
Activities: Talk # 9: Sacraments
 Talk #10: The World/Spirituality/Back to Reality
 Talk #11: Mission and Ministry/Apostolate/Christian Action
 Talk #12: Rector Wrap-up
 Singing and games
 Worship
 Official Closure
 Closure for the cloistered community
 Welcome by and celebration with wider community

NOTE: Although most Happening Weekends take place over a weekend, beginning Friday late afternoon/evening and ending Sunday afternoon, a Happening Weekend may occur over any 48-hour period. For example, a Happening Weekend schedule may be constructed to begin on Saturday noon and end Monday noon of a holiday weekend such as Memorial Day or Labor Day.

TALK SEQUENCE AND DEFINITIONS

The talks presented during the Happening Weekend are intended to present the elements that define a mature profession of faith and the catechism process. The presentation of key talks by youth using personal life experiences is intended to offer Christ's message to attending participants on a level they can understand and to answer many of the faith questions youth struggle with on a daily basis. The clergy-given talks are critical to Happening. They are presented by a church authority who presents important Church doctrines in a friendly and interesting manner. The entire series of talks is given in a sequence that is intended to guide Happening participants by opening an avenue of discussions to help them verbalize and internalize their faith questions in a safe environment and hopefully lead to a renewed or new relationship with Christ.

Suggested Outlines and references to Scripture and Prayer Book for the talks are provided here to assist in the preparation by the persons giving the talks. They represent guidelines, and are not intended to restrict the creativity of individual talk givers, or to make the presentation of talks to be a "cookie cutter" experience. Rather, they are presented as guidelines for the standards, or norms, that each Happening Community should strive to maintain.

Each *Happening - A Christian Experience_{sm}* event must include the content and sequence of talks as described in these Standards and Guidelines. If for some reason a local diocesan program wishes to change the content and/or sequence of talks, permission may be granted. The local diocesan Happening is required to submit a request in writing to Happening National, Inc. at least 30 days prior to their Happening weekend, for any change to the content and/or sequence of talks, stating the practical and/or theological reasons for requesting the change. Additionally, Happening National, Inc. encourages meaningful contextualization and appropriate adaptations reflecting the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

THE TALK SEQUENCE

1. RECTOR'S ADDRESS (Sets the ground rules for the weekend)

After greeting the new Happeners, the Rector (the teen leader for the weekend) outlines the process of the weekend, reviews the rules of conduct (community covenant), introduces appropriate staff members, and gives necessary details about the facility being used for this Happening event. The primary purpose of this talk is to make the Happening participants feel welcome, informed, and secure.

2. PLEASE HEAR/PLEASE LISTEN/MASKS

This talk may use a script from one of the very earliest Happenings, which establishes an attitude of openness, sharing, and trust for the weekend. It deals with the fact that all humans wear masks that we do not really want to wear. Yet we wear them for protection and to hide our insecurities. What we really want is to be open and loved for who we really are. To accomplish this openness we must remove our masks.

The Masks talk began as a pre-written talk. It has been revised since its origin. A version may be found online at www.happeningnational.org. However, use of this version is not required. Youths are encouraged to write their own talk utilizing the basic message or specific elements/phrases from the available pre-written talk. If the pre-written version is used, youths should be certain to include details from their own life experiences within the text of the talk. A good Scripture reference for this talk is Psalm 139:1-16.

3. REALITY

The Reality Talk is the keynote talk of the first segment. It tells the Happeners that we live in a world of social and material reality, but we cannot depend on these realities. The material and social worlds are constantly changing. However, there is a deeper reality: spiritual reality. We define Spiritual Reality as the existence of the Spirit that is in you and that is you. We explain the reality of God, the Creator, as timeless and eternal; God is constant and changeless. As people looking for answers to life's questions in a confusing world, we need to take off the masks that sometimes define us so that we can be "real" to ourselves and to those around us.

Possible Scripture references for this talk: Romans 7:21-23, 8:28-31;
Galatians 4:6-9, 5:19-25; Colossians 1:9-13

Book of Common Prayer References: “Renunciations,” page 302,
Baptismal Covenant, pages 304-305

Possible Outline:

- I. Physical Reality - Measurable
 - A. The realm of science and technology
 - B. Economic Reality
 - C. Temporal, changing – Newton’s Laws have been superseded by Einstein and Quantum Physics
 - D. Contemporary examples from news, history, media, etc.
- II. Material Reality: Stuff
(use personal examples of how *things* cannot satisfy)
- III. Social Reality
 - A. Family
 - B. School (support, learning environment, peer pressure)
 - C. Friendships, including deeper relationships
(cannot bear the pressure of filling the “hole in the heart”)
 - D. Personal examples from the talk-giver’s own experiences
- IV. Spiritual Reality
 - A. We are made in the image of God
 - B. Our true and lasting strength (Colossians 1:9-13)

4. FAITH

In the fourth talk of the weekend, a teen discusses the idea and meaning of faith. The prime elements discussed in this talk include: We all have faith—faith in our parents, history, and/or future events. The object here is not a set of doctrinal propositions, but the personal reality of God in Christ. Faith itself is understood in terms of personal relationship. It is through faith, not sign or sense, that Christ is made present in our lives. To truly believe the Gospel is to have faith in God through Christ. In this talk the teen should include his/her faith story.

Possible Scripture References for this talk: Matthew 6:30-34, 17:14-21;
Mark 4:35-41; Luke 7:6-10; Romans 10:17; Philippians 3:7-17; Hebrews 11:1-2;
1 Corinthians 2:5; Galatians 5:22-6:10; Romans 5:1-5

Possible Outline:

- I. What is faith?
 - A. Faith has many faces. People put faith in God in a variety of ways, including nontraditional approaches such as the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. We live in a pluralistic world.
 - B. Christians follow Jesus. Jesus shows us what being faithful is all about.
- II. Based on Relationship
 - A. Within family
 - B. Among true friends (give examples)
- III. Built on personal history of trust such that confidence increases (share a brief personal story here)
- IV. Faith in God
 - A. It is personal—based on relationship with Christ (1 Corinthians 2:5)
 - B. Share an example/story from Scripture of someone who lived life by faith. The example should be one that the talk-giver can easily and confidently share.
 - C. Available always, but especially can rely on in time of need
 - D. Supports others in their spiritual walk (Galatians 5:22-6:10)
 - E. Base for hope in and for the future (Romans 5:1-5)
- V. Personal witness: share a time when your faith in God made it possible for you to be able to get through a time of personal difficulty.

5. JESUS CHRIST

The purpose of this talk is to present Jesus Christ as a living and believable human, as well as the Son of God. Jesus loved humanity enough to die on the cross and rise again to free us from sin. In this talk we introduce the carpenter from Nazareth. The challenge of this talk is to present Jesus not only as true God from true God, but also as a man speaking to us in the concreteness of our everyday life. If we know Christ as fully human and fully God, we can understand the power of God's love for us as evidenced by the Cross and Resurrection.

Possible Scripture References for this talk: Colossians 1:13-19; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Romans 1:3-6, 6:1-2; Matthew, chapters 5,6,7, 26:31-28:10; Mark 1:9-11, 1:29-39, 9:2-9, 14:26-16:8; Luke 9:18-20, 22:39-24:35; John 18:1-20:23; 2 Corinthians 5:21

Prayer Book reference: Catechism, pages 849-851; Baptism, page 302; Apostles and Nicene Creeds

Possible Outline:

- I. Tell the story of Jesus in your own words. Consider that he was a teen like us. Give examples of struggles and joys you face that you can imagine Jesus facing.
 - A. Teacher, Healer, Friend (Matthew, chapters 5,6,7 and others; Mark 1:29-39)
 - B. Worker of Miracles (Matthew 8:24-27; Mark 8:1-8; and others)
- II. “Who do they say I am?” (Luke 9:18-20)
 - A. The reality and mystery of Jesus is greater than any of these descriptions of him
 - B. What are some things said today about who Jesus is? We have to give our own answer.
- III. Son of God (Mark 1:9-11, 9:2-9) His Passion, Death, and Resurrection—died to liberate us to live for God’s love
(Matthew 26:31-28:10; Mark 14:26-16:8; Luke 22:39-24:35; John 18:1-20:23; Romans 6:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- IV. Tell the story of your own relationship with Jesus, the Christ
- V. Invite the audience to establish or deepen a relationship with Christ this weekend. (Possibly conclude with an invitational prayer here.)

6. RECONCILIATION

The purpose of this talk is to make as real as possible what God does for us in Jesus Christ to bring about reconciliation and to explore what reconciliation is. Reconciliation is about repairing a broken relationship, and overcoming sin and evil. It is one of the most central realities and ideas of Christian faith, but it is often not well understood or practiced! God gave himself to us as Jesus to repair the relationship between God and humankind. When Jesus as God and human died on the cross, he reconciled us to God.

The personal relationship between God and me also gets broken sometimes. I am the one who breaks it, not God. We sin in “thought, word and deed, by what we do and by what we leave undone.” We sin by “not loving God with our whole heart and not loving our neighbor as ourselves.” How do we turn back to God? By being truly sorry and by repenting. To repent means to change our lives and honestly to try not do those same things again.

How do we communicate this to God? By confession. We confess either by talking to God in our hearts, or by having the Church help us talk to God. A way the Church helps us is in the Rite of Reconciliation, a service in the Book of Common Prayer during which a priest prays with us and assures us that God has absolved us from our sin.

Is there anything God won't forgive? No. Will God forgive the same thing over and over? Yes, but if I plan to keep doing the same sin, then reconciliation doesn't happen, because I can't manipulate God.

How does God act when we repent? When I repent, God is totally there for me. (Read the story of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-32) God is joyful! (Luke 15:1-10)

Can we be reconciled to God if we are unwilling to offer reconciliation to others? No, but sometimes we try to have it both ways! Reconciliation is about building up and seeking what is best for us and for others.

NOTE: This talk is usually presented by a clergy person. An added benefit is that for many teens, this is the first time they experience the fact that clergy are human too.

Possible Scripture References for this talk: 1 John 1:5-2:2; 2 Corinthians 5:15-21; Romans 3:21-26, 7:14-25, 8:2-11; Hebrews 2:17-18; James 5:13-16; Romans 12:21; Mark 15:34; Matthew 27:46; Psalm 22

Luke 15:1-10	Parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and God's joy
Luke 15:11-32	Parable of the prodigal son
Luke 23:32-43	Jesus forgives his killers and a criminal
1John 4:7-21	God is love
Hebrews 4:15	Jesus was tempted in every way that we are
Isaiah 53	Jesus on the cross was the Suffering servant
Matthew 5:38-48	Love your enemies
Matthew 28:2	Christ promises to always be with you
Romans 8:38-39	Nothing can separate you from God's love

Prayer Book References: Catechism, page 861; Healing—presented as a natural companion to the sacrament of Reconciliation, page 446, pages 453-456

Possible Outline:

Talk about your experience with sin, repentance and forgiveness, and repairing relationship with God and others. In this talk, present unconditional love and forgiveness as you know it from God.

- I. Describe sin as a separation from God and reconciliation as putting God back at the center of yourself. Talk about why you are sorry when you separate from God. Describe ways of returning to God.
- II. Alienation and brokenness harm human life. Christians call the evil, injustice, and suffering people endure and inflict upon one another, "sin."
 - A. Sin – George Robinson, author of *Essential Judaism*, notes that the Hebrew word for sin is *kheit*, a term derived from archery which refers

- to a shot that falls short of its mark. Sin causes us to miss the full measure of our life to which God calls us, a breach in our relationship with God.
- B. Sin hurts our soul – the most essential part of our being – and opens the door to physical, emotional, and spiritual stress, distress, weakness, and sickness, both physical and emotional.
- III. Talk about how Jesus overcame evil, and helps you overcome sin and evil, in the ways that speak most powerfully to you.
- A. The Cross and Resurrection
- B. Jesus overcame by refusing to use evil’s methods.
- Jesus overcame evil with good. (Romans 12:21)
 - He refused to use force to save himself.
 - He refused to hate his enemies. He loved his enemies, and prayed to God to forgive the people who crucified him. (Luke 23:34)
 - Jesus refused to abandon God even when he couldn’t feel God’s love. (Mark 15:34; Matthew 27:46; and Psalm 22)
- IV. Reinforce the importance of on-going reconciliation with God and others throughout your entire life.
- V. Help everyone feel God’s loving forgiveness. Reconciling with God means we forgive others and seek to build others up.
- VI. Healing grace, acts, sacramental rites
- A. God grants forgiveness as a healing act.
- B. Ways we act to reconcile and forgive in every day life.
- C. The Rite of Reconciliation in the BCP can be used by any layperson(s) or
done with a priest to promote spiritual reconciliation. Anointing—praying for healing in our bodies, our minds, and our memories, as well as seeking forgiveness for our sins and those of others—is a spiritual practice of reconciliation the Lord has commanded and empowered the church to do.

NOTE: It is especially valuable for a personal witness to be included. This not only demonstrates the humanity and credibility of the clergy, but also serves as a mentoring example.

7. CHURCH AND GRACE/ CARITAS

This talk addresses the question, “What is the Church?” It defines the Church as a group of people, a body of believers. Caritas is a visible form of God's love expressed through

the prayer and sacrifice of God's people; an unconditional, unearned, unexpected, freely-given gift. This talk deals with the reality of the fact that we are the Church and that the Church is as good or bad as we make it. In the progression of the weekend, this talk follows the Reconciliation talk. The act of reconciliation brings forth the act of God's gift of unconditional love in forgiving our sins. Make reference to the Jesus Christ talk given earlier in the weekend to reinforce that we all are brothers and sisters in Christ and as such can affect each other. Likewise, people reveal God to each other. God uses people to touch us with divine love.

Traditionally, Caritas (expressions of prayer, support, and sacrifice for the community gathered for the weekend) is introduced at the end of, or following, this talk. Email and letters showing prayer support from outside the cloistered community are often presented here for the first time, opening participants' awareness that they are parts of a worldwide Church.

CARITAS: From the Latin, *Caritas* translates as "charity" or "love." That is, the kind of love that is expressed in giving, affection, and esteem—an expression of value or great worth. St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, "Faith, hope and love [*caritas*] exist—these three. But the greatest of these is love [*caritas*]." Jesus himself is the ultimate *caritas*.

Caritas is a critical element of the weekend. It is prayer, sacrifice, service, and other forms of support for the community symbolized by notes, letters, warm fuzzies, or other tangible items.

The concept of Caritas is introduced at the conclusion of the Church and Grace talk often with expressions sent from outside the local Happening community (for example, email or mailed letters from other Happening dioceses, from Cursillo communities, or other renewal groups). Caritas may be presented to candidates in various forms and at other times during the weekend.

It is fun to give *things* (such as prayer cards, bookmarks, pencils, key chains, buttons, etc), and make and exchange notes using prayers, scripture quotes, quotations of the saints and spiritual leaders, and even poetry and popular songs (be careful here for copyright issues). Certainly *things* contribute to the joy and festival atmosphere of the weekend. Remember that the real meaning of Caritas is that the *things* are only important as outward and visible signs or expressions of the spiritual offering of prayer and sacrifice.

Possible Scripture References for this talk: 1 Corinthians 12:12-13:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 2:8-9, 4:1-6, 4:14-16; Hebrews 12:1-2, 18-24

Prayer Book References: Catechism, page 858-859; Baptismal Covenant, pages 305-305

Possible Outline:

- I. What is the Church?
 - A. Not a building and its contents (although the community does set apart “sacred spaces” from the Temple in Jerusalem to your own congregation)
 - B. Rather, it is a people called together by the Holy Spirit through Baptism
 - C. An “ecclesia,” a holy nation, a royal priesthood of all believers
 - D. A sign of God’s presence in history at all times and all places
 - E. The Body of Christ
- II. What is God’s grace?
 - A. A gift, freely given, not earned or deserved, from the heart of God, according to God’s plan
 - B. The blessing of forgiveness, wisdom and understanding
 - C. Tell the story of John Newton, former slave ship master, and the hymn, “Amazing Grace”
 - D. Enables community to form—people called, chosen, and brought together by God
- III. Tell your story as a Baptized member of the Body of Christ, and share what the Church means to you

Caritas is explained and delivered

Particularly valuable are communications from groups outside the diocese, indicating that the wider—indeed, worldwide—Church is offering prayer and sacrifice for each Happening Weekend. Remember, the material *things* exchanged, are sacramental expressions of this greater spiritual reality.

8. PRAYER AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

This talk focuses on the expansive and personal nature of prayer and the many ways we have to communicate with God. It follows the Happening participants’ first experience of prayer and sacrifice in the form of Caritas and reinforces the fact that a continuing relationship with God is possible. This talk calls for the witnessing presence of a teen leader who can show by his or her own life that the message of the Happening is not mere theory, but rather something accessible to all with the grace of God’s plan. Piety is presented as an expression of our love for God and for our neighbor. Prayer is the means of living in union with God.

Possible Scripture References for this talk: Mark 14:38; Romans 8:5-9, 14-17; Ephesians 4:20-22; 1 John 4:7-19; Colossians 3:16-17; Matthew 6:7-22; 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Prayer Book References: Catechism, pages 845, bottom of page 861;
Baptismal Covenant, pages 304-305

Possible Outline:

- I. Communication is important; there are lots of ways to connect with friends; give examples.
- II. Communication with God is important, there are lots of ways to connect with God.
 - A. Jesus himself frequently went off to be alone to pray—both before and after many of his great works, teaching, or being with large groups of people.
 - B. We can create opportunities to pray in different ways.
- III. Stories and struggles—share your personal witness from your own life experience
- IV. Ways to Pray
 - A. Adoration, Thanksgiving, Confession, Supplication: Explain and possibly teach or model these
 - B. Memorized Prayers: The Lord’s Prayer
 - C. Laying on of hands and other prayer acts
- V. Prayer leads to a life lived in harmony with God
 - A. Jesus promises us newness of life: “anyone who is in Christ Jesus is creation”
 - B. Show “newness” in your life that has come from a closer relationship with Christ
 - C. Invite others to find newness of life and share it.

* This talk is referred to as the “Piety Talk” in some communities. It is often presented as two separate talks, starting with Prayer and then moving to the life of Piety.

9. SACRAMENTS

This talk should be given by a priest. It explores the two great sacraments of the Gospel—Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist—and the five other sacramental rites which evolved in the Church: confirmation, ordination, holy matrimony, reconciliation of the penitent, and unction (BCP pp. 858-861). This talk should point out that these sacraments and sacramental rites, along with many other sacramental experiences in our lives, are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace given by God to assist us in living our life of spiritual reality. *It is important that this talk not take the form of a catechism class.* The challenge for the priest giving this talk is to help the participants feel, grasp, and understand the power and love of God working through these sacraments.

10. THE WORLD/SPIRITUALITY/BACK TO REALITY

We live in the physical world. We can take spiritual reality into the physical world. We must seek God's guidance on how to do so. We need the support of Christian community to maintain and grow our connection to God's spiritual reality. We will need the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church, and the Sacraments to sustain us. We will need to set our values in advance. We will fail, be forgiven, and try again, many times. We gain strength from the fact that spiritual reality is nourished by Prayer, the Church, the Sacraments, Bible study, and that a Christ-centered focus can give us a firm foundation on which to build our lives in the physical world.

Possible Scripture References for this talk: Deuteronomy 30:11-14; Matthew 22:34-40; Luke 9:24-25; John 13:34-35, 15:9-17, 15:18-25; 1 Corinthians 2:4-12; 1 Tim 2:1-4; James 5:13-18; 1 John 5:14-17; 1 Corinthians 2:4-12

Prayer Book References: Compline, pages 133-134; Baptismal Covenant, 304-305

Possible Outline:

- I. The everyday world we left behind when we came to Happening, with its preoccupations and challenges, will face us when we leave here. (Give some humorous examples.) How will we maintain the spiritual connection we experience in this supportive community?
- II. You have new spiritual tools to help you live by the Spirit in your world
 - A. Community: The Church, Camps, Conferences, Youth Groups, Happenings, Bible Study, and Prayer Groups
 - B. Worship & Sacraments:
 - Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Ordination: organize spirituality into structures for spiritual living
 - Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Unction: nourish and support our spirituality through out our life
 - C. Personal faith and our relationship with Christ
 - D. Support from our Christian friends
 - E. Christian music, praying, serving others
- III. Tell your story as a witness to living a spiritual life in the everyday world where everyone wears masks

11. MISSION AND MINISTRY/APOSTOLATE/CHRISTIAN ACTION

This talk suggests that the participants in the Happening weekend are called to share the Good News of a living, loving Savior with others. Our words mean little if we do not live the mission of reconciling love, and the promises in the Baptismal Covenant of the Book of Common Prayer. This talk, along with the preceding one, points the way from the Happening experience back to the environment from which the participants came. They are asked to consider whether or not this Happening weekend has been God's call to an apostolic commission for them. Do they choose to accept such a call? What do we do about it? Can we “Make a Friend, Be a Friend, and Bring a Friend to Christ?”

Possible Scripture References for this talk: Acts 1:6-8, 2:1-13;
Matthew 16:24-28, 28:18-20

Prayer Book Resources: Catechism: “What is the ministry of the laity?” page 855;
Confirmation, especially prayers on page 418; Commitment to Christian Service,
pages 420-421

Possible Outline:

- I. Happening
 - A. Happening is not an end to itself. The purpose of the weekend is *not* to create Team Members and Staff for future weekends.
 - B. The purpose of the *Happening- A Christian Experiencesm* program is to be one of the instruments to renew the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit, that we may embrace our call to spread the kingdom of God throughout the world.
 - C. *Happening-A Christian Experiencesm* helps us discover a deeper personal knowledge of and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, to embrace a deeper level of commitment and apostleship, to find the identity God gave us in our baptism into Jesus Christ.
- II. The Baptismal Covenant calls us to remember that God's love is for everyone
 - A. To continue in the Apostles Teaching and Fellowship, in the Breaking of the Bread and the Prayers. Simply stated this means being an active, worshipping member of the Church.
 - B. To proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ. This suggests making your own life (at home, at school, and at church) a good example to others.
 - C. To seek and serve others, loving your neighbor as yourself. This means to first take care of yourself—mentally, physically and emotionally—and then act towards your friends and all other people with the same love and care for them that you have for yourself, regardless of where you are and what you are doing.

- D. To strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.
 - Somewhat like the above, this means considering everyone as equal to yourself. It may be summed up in the phrase, “Make a friend; Be a friend; Bring a friend to Christ”
 - It also means getting involved as a leader in social justice ministries, such as Episcopal Relief and Development, Bread for the World, Habitat for Humanity, local food pantries and meal programs, and other similar activities.
- III. Your personal witness
 - A. Share how you answered the call.
 - B. Challenge the new Happeners to find their own way in which they, too, can respond.

12. RECTOR WRAP-UP

The Rector shares his/her feelings about the weekend and offers whatever he/she feels appropriate for the group. The rector can summarize the weekend by pointing out that: We can build our lives on the firm foundation of Spiritual REALITY based on FAITH in JESUS CHRIST, through a relationship of PRAYER, nourished by the CHURCH and GRACE, and SACRAMENTS, living in the world THE WORLD/SPIRITUALITY/BACK TO REALITY and heeding a call to be a disciple APOSTOLATE/CHRISTIAN ACTION/MISSION AND MINISTRY, serving others with God’s love. This talk is often closed by offering others an opportunity to share their feelings about and reactions to the weekend. After that sharing, tell participants that they will have an opportunity to share during the closing liturgy when they are introduced by their family leaders.

NOTE: Some new Happening participants may experience their first deep encounter with Christ on this weekend. It is very likely that this experience will be something of a “mountaintop experience.” We do them a disservice if we do not help them understand that they will not always feel this mountaintop experience, even if they closely follow Jesus.