

# ***Managing and Implementing Change***

## **Case Study**

### **Background**

The Father Romero, Rector of St. Martha's Episcopal Church, recently attended a Nehemiah Workshop. One of the concepts introduced at the workshop was the formation of a "Parish Council".

The Parish Council would function as an advisory board to the Rector regarding the spiritual and material concerns of St. Martha's. The Parish Council would be composed of the Rector and a lay representative from each parish organization. Generally the Sr. Warden and another Vestry representative are also members of the Parish Council. The Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and Secretary would be elected by the Parish Council.

The Council would usually meet once a month. Agenda items would include:

- Review of past parish events (what went well?, opportunities for improvement, etc.).
- Review of future parish events (do they support the parish vision?, does it fit on the church calendar?, what resources are needed?, etc).
- Discussion of any parish conflicts that may be occurring or on the horizon and possible solutions.
- Review of Parish Ministry Plan goals – are they still on track? If not – what needs to be done?
- Review of the church 12-24 month calendar.

Father Romero thought the forming of a Parish Council would be a great asset to him and St. Martha's in managing the affairs of the parish, implementing the Parish Ministry Plans and growing the church. Father Romero also thought that the monthly meetings between the representatives of the various organizations would create a sense of collegiality and a support mechanism for the members.

### **Current Situation**

Father Romero introduced the Parish Council concept at the January Vestry meeting. He was surprised at the resistance of the Vestry members to this concept. A majority of the Vestry members voted against a motion that would have allowed the formation of a Parish Council at St. Martha's Episcopal Church.

### **Discussion:**

1. Why do you think the Vestry members resisted the idea of a Parish Council?
2. Why is the Council so important to the vitality of the parish?
3. Should Father Romero present the idea of a Council to the Vestry again?
4. If so – what suggestions do you have for him so that he gains the support of the Vestry members?