

A Scenario for a Faith-Based Agency

A SOLI Scenario

In Chapter 4, an approach to planning described as “scenario development” is described, and a mythical congregational scenario is presented. The following is an actual scenario developed for an organization based at Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary in a planning session facilitated by Michael Cooper-White. It has guided SOLI in its ongoing development and strategic planning.

It is May 2006. The Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI) board has just concluded its semi-annual meeting in which the following programmatic accomplishments were celebrated:

- A congregational stewardship course, “I have something that belongs to you,” first developed in 2001, has been utilized in over 50 ELCA congregations annually for the past four years.
- An advanced course in Biblical principles and practical applications has been developed; while usable in single congregational settings, it has been specifically tailored for use in cluster settings, including with ecumenical partner ministries.
- Stewardship-focused rostered leader support retreats and workshops have been initiated in 6 synods per year for the past 4 years.
- The *SOLI Deo Gloria* website provides a broad array of online resources and stewardship-focused networking. It is updated weekly and receives an average of 300 weekly visits.
- Grants to ELCA seminaries were made available and supported stewardship coursework for enrolled students and continuing education participants
- An online course, “Biblical Stewardship For Smarties” continued in its 4th year, with 20 for-credit students and 10 auditors in each of two annual sessions.

In reviewing the work of the SOLI staff, the board noted:

- Continuing effective service by the part-time executive director, noting in particular the efforts to present areas of research in creative approaches to stewardship education among youth and emerging new constituencies.
- Creative new website offerings by the contract webmaster.
- SOLI office streamlining steps taken by the part-time administrative assistant.

The annual SOLI audit revealed its current fiscal status:

- Through a combination of investment returns and gifts and grants received, the endowment grew to over \$3 million, well on the way to the \$5 million goal by 2010.
- Of the annual \$150,000 budget, 30% was spent in grants; 30% in programmatic costs; and 40% in personnel and project contract staff compensation.