

2008–2018 Map of Future Forces Affecting the Episcopal Church

This customized ten-year forecast was prepared for the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes by the Institute for the Future (ITFF). It is an internally consistent, plausible, and provocative view of what IFTF thinks will be the most important external future forces for Episcopal churches to consider. It is designed to stimulate conversations that matter for you and your church.

This map is grounded in continuing research at IFTF, an independent nonprofit think tank in Palo Alto, California, that has been doing ten-year forecasting for over 40 years. The forecast is an independent, outside-in perspective by IFTF; it is not a forecast by the Consortium or by the Episcopal Church.

In essence, this map is a conversation starter. It is a thinking tool for inspiring stories about possible futures for the church, rather than a definitive representation of a single future. Its purpose is to spark discussions about faith, engage a broader audience, and provide a common framework to explore innovations, experiments, and new ways to negotiate living as a church.

Our forecast is not a prediction of the future of the Episcopal Church or of religion in general. That future, we hope, will be created by people who become inspired by faith in the future conversations. Rather, it is meant to provoke you using foresight so that you can make better decisions today. Using the map in this way, you don't have to agree with this forecast to find it useful.

To help equip you for the challenges of the next decade, consider the Leadership Skills for the Future. Four key skills for Episcopal leaders are plotted on the map, to respond to drivers of change and impact areas where they will be needed most.



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DRIVING FORCES

personal empowerment

From Consumption to Customization

Consumers are no longer content to receive mass messaging and employees won't conform to traditional top-down norms. Now, amplified by new interactive media and conscious of their economic and social power, individuals will expect to be part of the decision-making process. The engaged citizen is a force to be reckoned with at work and at home.

grassroots economics

From Economies of Scales of Organization

Economic and social ecologies, in which self-empowered individuals cooperate for mutual benefit, will challenge centralized industries. Expect a blurring of the boundaries between buyers, sellers, producers, consumers, companies, and individuals. Think amplified Ebay.

smart networking

From Individual to Social Network

Pervasive computing connects self-organizing aggregations of people, whose network flexibility and collective power can alter markets, politics, and societies—or anything else that draws them together.

polarizing extremes

From Fringe to Front-and-Center

Strong opinions meet strong social networks to create intense feedback loops. You can already find, connect with, and collaborate with anyone who shares your beliefs—no matter how extreme you are. Dark innovation will thrive—but so will dynamic new forms of cooperation that attempt to bridge the extremes.

health insecurity

From Health Care to Health Economy

As the world grows more connected, challenges like pandemics will get close and personal. Anxieties about health, hunger, and longevity will grow, and the intersection between environment, health, and lifestyle will receive increasing attention.

PEOPLE

BELWETHER BEHAVIORS

- Self-agency
- Self-customization
- Self-organization

DEEP PERSONALIZATION

More people reject mass offerings in favor of customization and do-it-yourself projects

dilemmas of difference

HOPE MATTERS
The Untold Story of How Faith Works in America

CONSUMER RFID

Users will:

- Create and program tags
- Tag everything—photos, kid's art, antiques
- Invent tag-based services
- Block tags

digital youth

SMART MOB ORGANIZING

SMO

SMART MOB ORGANIZING

MORE EVANGELISTS

SMSBible

4 God so loved the world...

PERSONAL RELIGIONS

Even as megachurches grow, religious sects and beliefs proliferate; and lay creation of religious content grows

high-impact religions

EXTENDED SELF

Technological modifications to the human body go from stigma to style:

- Medical modifiers
- Body builders
- Beauty builders
- Personality drugs
- Personal-christy management

AMPLIFIED EVERYTHING

People are searching for more intense experiences, while others seek out refuge

extreme climate variability

Greenland as an indicator:

- Warming 10X faster than estimated
- Ice sheet dropping at 10 meters per year

PRACTICES

"JOBBIES"

Jobs + hobbies = self-expression at work

boomers reinvent aging

- Aging body as the new frontier
- Creation of health-focused communities
- "Project manage" aging

RETIREMENT IS OBSOLETE

U.S. labor supply vs. demand

Source: Employment Policy Foundation

URBAN POPULATIONS ARE GROWING FASTEST IN:

- Bangladesh
- Congo
- Ethiopia
- India
- Indonesia
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Vietnam

HOT CITIES

Megacities will grow in both economic value and urban destitution

Urban wilderness

rich/poor gap

rich/poor gap

rich/poor gap

IMMERSION EXPERIENCES AS PEDAGOGY

- Merger of art, gaming, and social networking—across physical and digital spaces
- More complex media build dilemma sensing skills

RELIABLE RESOURCES?

Access to oil, water, and other resources shapes policy and business decisions:

- Regional and global tensions arise in securing resources
- Just-in-time processes highlight vulnerabilities
- Premium placed on substitute materials and processes

CONSTRUCTIVE DEPOLARIZING

dc

NETWORKING IQ

Six key factors:

- Group participation
- Referral behavior
- Online lifestyle
- Personal mobile computing
- Locative activity
- Computer connectivity

SIGNS OF BIO-DISTRESS

Increases in:

- Infertility
- Obesity
- Chronic disease

bio

BIO-EMPATHY

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Quality of access to health care

Genetics 10%
Environment 20%
Behavior 50%

Source: IFTF, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

MARKETS

Urban populations are growing fastest in:

- Bangladesh
- Congo
- Ethiopia
- India
- Indonesia
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Vietnam

TECHNOLOGIES OF COOPERATION

- Community computing grids
- Peer production networks
- Social mobile computing
- Social software
- Social accounting
- Knowledge collectives

SELF-REFERRING PRODUCTS

Imagine:

- del.icio.us for products
- Buddy lists for appliances
- A lipstick that recommends eye shadow

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ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

a grassroots economy

Source: IFTF

NEW LOCALISM

Local communities become the focus of experiments in sharing economies, sustainable environments, and new civil processes

MEDIA-RICH PERSVASIVE LEARNING

- Anytime, anyplace
- Pervasive gaming
- Virtual worlds

MORE URBAN THAN RURAL

urban & rural populations

Source: United Nations

HEALTHY SHOPPING

People expect more health benefits from more products

health benefits important to purchases of ...

Source: IFTF

LOCATION-BASED HEALTH TOOLS

Find out the locations of the latest infected buildings through our SARS Location Based Service via SMS and WAP!

CONSTRUCTIVE DEPOLARIZING

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bio

BIO-EMPATHY

PLACES

digital physical blend

From physical vs. digital to seamlessly physical and digital

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LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

The dilemmas you'll confront, the church communities you'll lead, the technologies you'll use, and the Earth on which you live will change sharply in the next decade. You must develop new skills uniquely suited to the threshold decade ahead. Combining research-based forecasts, real-world examples, and analysis from more than 40 years of forecasting, these are some leadership skills church leaders will need to thrive in the next decade.

MA

MAKER INSTINCT: Ability to turn one's natural impulse to build into a skill for making the future and connecting with others in the making. The maker instinct is basic to leadership in the future.

C

CLARITY: Ability to see through mazes and contradictions to a future that others cannot yet see. Leaders are very clear about what they are making, but very flexible about how they get it made.

df

DILEMMA FLIPPING: Ability to turn most dilemmas—which, unlike problems, cannot be solved—into advantages and opportunities.

LA

IMMERSIVE LEARNING ABILITY: Ability to dive into different-for-you physical and online worlds, to learn from them in a first-person way.

bio

BIO-EMPATHY: Ability to see things from nature's point of view; to understand, respect, and learn from nature's patterns. Nature has its own clarity, if only we humans can understand and engage with it.

dp

CONSTRUCTIVE DEPOLARIZING: Ability to calm tense situations where differences dominate and communication has broken down—and bring people from divergent cultures toward constructive engagement.

qt

QUIET TRANSPARENCY: Ability to be open and authentic about what matters to you—without advertising yourself.

RP

RAPID PROTOTYPING: Ability to create quick early versions of new innovations, with the expectation that later success will require early failures.

SMO

SMART MOB ORGANIZING: Ability to bring together, engage with, and nurture purposeful business or social change networks through intelligent use of electronic and other media.

CC

COMMONS CREATING: Ability to stimulate, grow, and nurture shared assets that can benefit other players—and allow competition at a higher level.

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HOW TO USE THIS MAP

This is a matrix-style map, with five driving forces and four impact areas. The driving forces along the left form rows that provide a visual summary of the forecast storyline as you read across. The impact areas are aspects of life in which the implications of these driving forces will be felt.

Expect to be a bit overwhelmed by the map when you first see it. As you take more time with it, you'll be able to reflect, tune, and design your thoughts about church leadership in the future.

Engaging with the Forecast: FORESIGHT to INSIGHT to ACTION

Our goal is to help you pull threads from the future into the present in meaningful and actionable ways. Engaging with the Foresight to Insight to Action cycle is just one way to interact with the map. For more on the cycle, see the other side of this page.

FORESIGHT: Try using a marker or sticky notes to identify spots on the map that resonate with you as you think about your role in the church or the issues that matter to you most. These may be specific signals on the map or combinations of trends. Why do they resonate with you? What questions do they raise about the future of the Episcopal Church?

INSIGHT: For each highlighted spot, imagine the implications for all members of the church, laity and clergy. What is the deeper meaning of this trend for the Christian faith, the Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church? These insights may form the basis of a strategy for your church.

ACTION: For each insight, develop a list of possible strategic plans for new partnerships, core competencies, and methods of communication.

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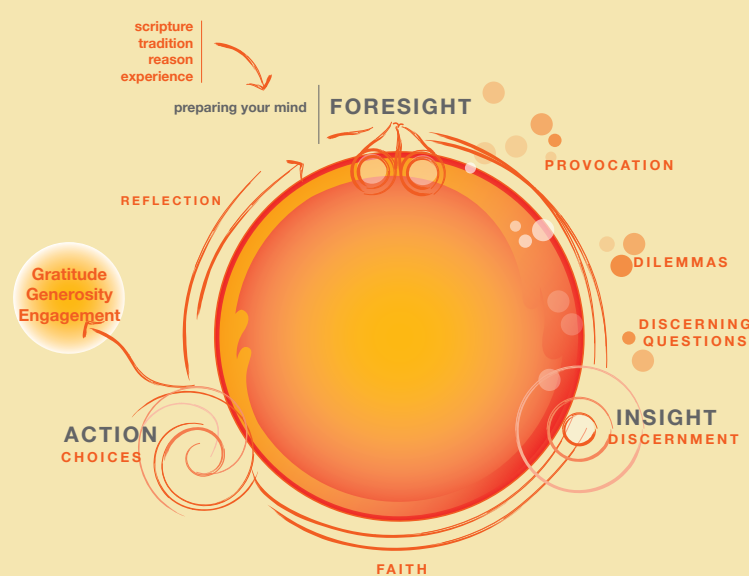
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FORESIGHT to INSIGHT to ACTION

The *2008–2018 Map of Future Forces Affecting the Episcopal Church* is designed as a tool to help you use foresight to reveal insights that can lead to more effective action in the present. Below is an illustrated version of the Foresight to Insight to Action Cycle.



You don't have to agree with our forecast to find it useful. In fact, some of the most valuable forecasts are those that articulate a future you want to avoid. A forecast gives you a chance to change your behavior in the present so that a frightening future never happens. In engaging with the Foresight to Insight to Action cycle in your church or community, you are responding to the opportunity to serve as stewards of the future Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal roots in scripture, tradition, reason, and experience are all inputs that will help prepare your mind for this ten-year forecast and for faith in the future conversations like the ones we are proposing. Your degree of mindfulness as you approach this forecast will frame your expectations and shape your learning. Conversations that cycle from Foresight to Insight to Action, as shown in the diagram, can help us all grow the skills and wisdom we need to thrive in the future.

For more information on the Foresight to Insight to Action cycle, see *Get There Early*, pages 1–11.

CLOSE-UP ON 4 LEADERSHIP SKILLS FROM THE FUTURE

Though all 10 of the leadership skills for the future are intended to help church leaders lead in the face of change, there are four that are particularly important for Episcopal Church leaders, given the major drivers of the next decade.

These four are plotted on the map (see reverse side) at the intersections of key drivers of change and major impact areas. Use these close-ups on current examples to watch and discerning questions around each leadership skill to help you hone in on each of these four skills. For more on the other skills, see *Leaders Make the Future: Ten New Leadership Skills for an Uncertain World* by Bob Johansen, which you can order from the CEEP webpage.

BIO-EMPATHY

Current Examples to Watch:

- Polyface Farms
- Syngenta
- Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- How do you look to nature for insight about challenges you have in your life? How do these life lessons get translated into your leadership style and skill set?

SMART MOB ORGANIZING

Current Examples to Watch:

- Jimmy Wales, Wikipedia
- *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution* by Howard Rheingold
- MDHealthEvolution

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- Do you find it satisfying to bring together groups of people? What are recent examples where you have done this? What aspects of this process do you find most satisfying?

RAPID PROTOTYPING

Current Examples to Watch:

- IDEO
- After Action Reviews from the Military
- The Grove

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- What is an example where you were able to learn from your own failures? How does your approach to “failure” fit in with your own leadership style? Do you encourage people you lead to learn from their own failures?

CONSTRUCTIVE DEPOLARIZING

Current Examples to Watch:

- Queen Rania of Jordan
- *Faith-Based Diplomacy* by Douglas Johnston
- *On Being Certain: Believing You're Right Even When You're Not* by Robert A. Burton

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- Think of an example where you have calmed a polarized situation and constructively engaged people toward some new path forward. How did you respond? What worked? What did not work?

PROVOCATION FROM THE FUTURE:



The world of the future will be an amplified world of extreme urgency, unpleasant surprise, and enigmatic choices. The future will be characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity: a VUCA world. VUCA is an unpleasant acronym, but it captures the spirit necessary to begin a useful conversation about the future.

Our Forecast Map unpacks a future that requires new forms of leadership beyond the quick-fix problem-solver style so common among today's leaders, who love to solve problems but hate dealing with dilemmas. Leaders must develop the same kinds of complex emergent qualities as the challenges they are facing in the VUCA world of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity.

—See *Get There Early*, pages 45–68.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- How do you look to nature for insight about challenges you have in your life? How do these life lessons get translated into your leadership style and skill set?

Problems that can be solved will abound, but the VUCA world will be laced with dilemmas: problems that can't be solved and that won't go away. In some ways, the Episcopal Church is an orderly religion in a disorderly world. The Episcopal tradition of discerning questions should tune you to the VUCA world, where questions will abound.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- In what ways could the clarity of the Episcopal principles and practices around scripture, tradition, reason, and experience help provide meaning for people in the VUCA world? How might church leaders help people make their own sense out of the VUCA world—which often seems to make no sense at all?
- How can your church help people nurture a faith that allows each person to avoid judging too soon, but still have the courage to act when action is needed?
- How does your congregation stack up in terms of the leadership style needed to thrive in the VUCA world? (To get a sense of how you might apply these criteria to your church, see *Get There Early*, pages 49–53 for a description of how Muhammad Yunus has reflected these values in his work on microeconomics for impoverished areas).

PROVOCATION FROM THE FUTURE:



Social networks are not new. What is new is the electronic amplification of networks to create powerful community connections that can span great distances. Smart electronic networking is not necessarily a good or a bad thing; it greatly increases the potential for both.

We are moving toward a global fishnet of connectivity, with regional talent clusters but uneven technological infrastructure and network practices. In a fishnet of connectivity, smart networkers live at the leading edge of market trends, making distinctive and influential choices about entertainment (which are abundant), health, home, policy issues, and elections. The people who make these choices are not just individuals, they are networks of empowered people. Increasingly, brands are selling to a social network.

—See *Get There Early*, pages 35–37.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

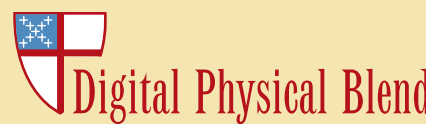
- How might your church function more like a social network and less like a hierarchy? For example, what could the Episcopal Church learn from Wikipedia? (See pages 152–154 in *Get There Early*). What could Wikipedia learn from the Episcopal Church?

The Episcopal Church is a community that includes both networks and hierarchies, but it is often viewed as more hierarchy than network. When an Episcopal congregation reaches out to potential new members, it is reaching out both to individual people and to the social networks to which those people belong. The risk for the future is that the Episcopal Church becomes a hierarchy in a networked world.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- How might your church function more like a social network and less like a hierarchy? For example, what could the Episcopal Church learn from Wikipedia? (See pages 152–154 in *Get There Early*). What could Wikipedia learn from the Episcopal Church?
- What if you re-imagined your congregation as a “smart mob” of loosely connected but amplified individuals working together for a common goal (see page 35 of *Get There Early*)? If you are already a smart mob, how could you improve your abilities to perform? How could you leverage smart networking to accomplish a social mission?

PROVOCATION FROM THE FUTURE:



The virtual and physical will come together over the next decade, with new opportunities to link virtual resources to specific geographic locations.

(We are) moving toward continuous connectivity where network connections are always on. Online identities will become increasingly important as people learn to express themselves—and leaders learn to exert leadership—in new ways that are consistent with the new media but are still linked to old media.

—See *Get There Early*, page 26, and pages 33–38.

IFTF researcher Alex Pang has referred to the digital physical blend as the “end of cyberspace,” since the physical and virtual worlds will be linked. In a world where sensors are everywhere, you can be both online and in person simultaneously. The place where you go when you “are online” will be the same as the place where you can be anytime.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- How might you re-imagine your congregation as both a physical and a virtual presence in the lives of your members and in the life of your community—beyond your church buildings?
- How might you help people navigate personal dilemmas caused by always-on lifestyles when there is no quiet place to focus attention on family or their own personal reflection?
- How would you describe the online identity of your congregation? What would you like it to become?

This shift will cause discomfort and tension for some. Young digital natives will feel far more at home in this world than will the older digital immigrants.

PROVOCATION FROM THE FUTURE:



It is difficult to argue that the rich/poor gap will narrow in the future, unless dramatic change is mounted. Also, the rich/poor gap is becoming both more visible and more blatant, with potentially severe implications.

The greatest psychological value of fundamentalism is a clear identity and a compelling sense of belonging. Of course, people who are hungry and hopeless are most in need of identity and belonging.

—See *Get There Early*, pages 78–79.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- The Episcopal Church has always been concerned about the poor, but how can you respond with more vigor and creativity as the Rich/Poor Gap widens?

People on both sides of the rich/poor gap see images of each other and they are often close enough to touch. A central dilemma is that the rich/poor gap, which in some ways has always been with us, is both more visible, more able to be addressed, and also more likely to trigger insurgent violence—particularly in heavily urban areas where daily life is dramatically difficult. Still, the Internet and micro-lending innovations are allowing new ways to engage across faiths, cultures and economic conditions to address the challenges of the rich/poor gap.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- What are possible alternatives that move beyond traditional forms of public generosity in response to rich/poor dilemmas?
- What are the ways in which your church may be widening the gap between the rich and poor? In a networked VUCA world, consequences often go unseen and unrealized—how can you detect and address those that might be harmful?
- How can your church be relevant to the very rich and encourage their ability to contribute to those who are poor?

PROVOCATION FROM THE FUTURE:



There is growing scientific consensus that we are a planet at extreme risk.

At IFTF, we have done expert panels on climate change since 1977. Until recently, most of the concern was at the fringes of science. Now, the mainstream of science is concerned, and most businesses are seriously considering the possibilities. We expect this concern to grow, along with a variety of responses. The gradual increase in global atmospheric temperature ... will have significant—but unpredictable—impacts ... Climate change is likely to have implications for global health. The human herd is not in a healthy state.

—See *Get There Early*, pages 94–100.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- The climate challenge is about respect for God's creation. How could the wisdom of the Episcopal tradition(s) help people engage with the dilemmas of extreme climate change?

Climate change involves at least two intersecting future forces: environmental and social. Environmental change means the climate literally will change with immense consequences. Meanwhile, society will struggle to respond to the social challenges as air and water quality decline. Society needs a long-term view in order to even explore these potential impacts and seek to avoid them—rather than wait until they hit a crisis stage.

DISCERNING QUESTION(S):

- The climate challenge is about respect for God's creation. How could the wisdom of the Episcopal tradition(s) help people engage with the dilemmas of extreme climate change?
- What is the carbon footprint (the contribution you are making to global warming) of your church? What is your own personal carbon footprint? To measure carbon footprints, just Google the term “carbon footprint” and you'll notice many ways of measuring it. Pick a measure and use it on yourself.
- The social and environmental impact of climate change will grow more volatile, and unforeseen consequences will arise and demand response. How can the Episcopal Church prepare itself to react with vision, understanding, clarity, and agility?

AN INVITATION TO THE VUCA TURNAROUND

To the left, there are 5 provocations from the map that are meant to stimulate faith in the future conversations in your community. For more provocations like these, see IFTF's *Book of Provocation: Faith in the Future Conversations*. There you will find ten further provocations that are linked to this forecast.

To some extent, human life has always been a VUCA experience, with the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity that every human faces during his or her lifetime—even in calm historical periods. But as we think about our prospects for the future, the stakes are high for us as a planet with global climate change looming, the rich/poor gap growing, global terrorism threatening, and amplified everything. Still, even in the VUCA world, there is strong reason for hope. Dilemmas hide opportunities.

Use these 5 provocations and those included in *The Book of Provocation* to discern ways to turn around the frightening aspects of the VUCA world and to engage with the future in constructive conversation. In *Get There Early*, the basic elements of a VUCA turnaround are introduced with these principles:

- **Volatility yields to Vision**
- **Uncertainty yields to Understanding**
- **Complexity yields to Clarity**
- **Ambiguity yields to Agility**

To bring about this VUCA turnaround, faith in the future will call for:

- **Vision that gives you meaning**, with intent that articulates a meaningful future—beyond the polarities of the present.
- **Understanding of grace for all people**, with a sense of empathy that grows with the differences all around us.
- **Clarity of discernment and communication**, in the fog of disbelief and the conditions of the VUCA world. Clarity of discernment leads to faith. For some, discernment means discovering God's will for your life or discerning your own calling. Clarity of communication means stating clearly to others what you think is going on and what needs to be done. Clarity is required to create an effective strategy for change. Clarity is needed so that others can understand your strategic intent for the church.
- **Agility in the practice of faith**, since predetermined action is brittle in a VUCA world riddled with surprises. An agent of change must be both practiced and agile. You need to prototype your way to success and fail in constructive ways.

PARTING FORECAST

Faith will live in the space between judging too soon and deciding too late