Storytelling for You and Your Church

Workshop by Erica Nelson
Texas Impact’s Courts and Ports Coordinator
What’s Your Story?

– Write about a moment where your voice counted or where you made a difference
– Think of one of your strengths. Write about a moment where you demonstrated that strength.
– Think about a time when you were heartbroken. Write about that experience.
– What is a moment in your life that has made you who you are today?
What’s Your Community’s Story?

– Describe a defining moment in the history of your community.
– Describe a recent moment (within the last year) where your community lived up to its values or mission.
– Describe a recent moment (within the last year) where your community failed to live up to its values or mission.
Why We Tell Our Story

– Stories define us, they remind us of who we are and how we came to be
– Stories bring us in relationship with others
– Stories can impart important lessons
– Stories can help us understand something we have never experienced
– Stories can move others to action and impact change
The Way We Tell Our Story Matters

- Hero Narrative:
  - Reactive
  - Reacts to a singular event
  - One person

- Movement Narrative:
  - Proactive
  - Works towards long term change
  - Groups of people
David LaMotte writes about the story of Rosa Parks:

- Schools teach us that she was “a seemingly powerless little old African American lady who had made a spontaneous decision not to give up her seat to a White man on a Montgomery bus in 1955 and literally changed the world with her courage.”

- Hero narrative: she rose up in a moment of need and changed the world

- Movement narrative: she was part of a movement, had trained and planned for this moment, had been an activist for more than a decade before this happened
Telling Your Story Requires Knowing Your Story

– Who are you? Or who is your community?
– What are your strengths and values?

– Know Your Community Treasure Hunt
How We Tell Our Story

- What’s the context in which you are sharing your story?
  - How long do you have to talk?
  - Who is your audience?
  - What is your desired impact?
What Stands Out About Your Story?

- Focus on the things that make your story unique
- Use descriptive language: what sights, sounds, smells, or tastes stand out in your telling of the story?
Formats

– Social Media
– Articles or OpEds to your local newspaper
– Sermons, bible studies, prayer circles
– Meetings with elected officials
– Conversations with others
As people of faith, we should know our local community.

We are **better citizens** when we appreciate the challenges our local leaders face. We are **better advocates** when we can use personal experience to share community needs with elected officials. We are **better neighbors** when we understand the lives our sisters and brothers live.

Know Your Community Treasure Hunt

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Community Treasure Hunt

- We are working on updating our old Community Treasure Hunt publication and making it a formal study that your congregation can use.
Know Your Community Beta Program

- We are looking for three churches to participate in our Know Your Community program.
- Two churches are already participating in the Alpha program, helping to design and tweak the program as we go.
- We would like three churches to follow behind and make sure the changes we have made to the program work and make sense.