* 1. HEF
     1. point back to God; tied deeply to identity
     2. strength
        1. some are expressing their HEF (in words or actions), though they may be doing so badly or immaturely
     3. growth
        1. understand the HEF of all involved in the presenting problem
        2. understand the HEF of the church leadership
  2. Pastoral Care of Those in Need (1/2 page)
     1. strength
        1. people who did go see Ansa and try to comfort her the best they knew how to do
     2. growth
        1. improve on the good to make it better/best
           1. forums may not have good attendance if they’re outside normal church worship hours, for example (given that people are so busy working); see Solutions for suggestion
        2. understanding the cultural HEF of church’s members
           1. therefore at taking care of its members
           2. see Solutions for suggestion

1. Steps Forward **(10 ½ pages)**
   1. Attitudes to Cultivate (1 page)
      1. self-giving attitude
         1. Philippians 2 — kenosis
         2. 1 Corinthians — weaker brother, not eat meat
      2. seek to hear rather than be heard; advocacy; honor others over self
         1. letters to the editor may need to stop/change
            1. encourage letter-writers to refrain, or at the very least to ask questions
            2. what is the goal? to be heard, or to reach a solution?
      3. learn to ask questions rather than making assumptions
         1. less blindness/ignorance/anger that way
   2. Solutions and Practical Suggestions (GET MORE PRACTICAL IN MY WRITING THAN HERE!) (9 ½ pages)
      1. For Presenting Problems (2 pages)
         1. recognize that Ansa is not a problem child; the congregation has a problem
            1. make sure Ansa doesn’t feel attacked — she’s not the problem; differing expectations are the cause
            2. we may not have it all together, but together we can have it all
            3. we are for each other
         2. celebrate the good things
            1. Ansa is comfortable enough with her minister to call him
            2. Ansa loves the church enough to try to work it out instead of just leaving
            3. Ansa is very committed to the church and has made time and given effort for its people and projects.
         3. how can specific people be used in this situation?
            1. Bruce
            2. Susan — understands Ansa’s anger and isolation; has connection with her; heart hurts
            3. Fred — can validate Ansa and her role in the congregation; appreciate but don’t instrumentalize her
            4. Jonathan — explain his reasoning to Ansa in an honest way; convey his intention and perhaps apologize (or at least recognize) that his actions did not express that intention
            5. Ann — explain HUMBLY to Ansa that in this particular situation different culture have different norms and responses; express thankfulness for the intention but express its unintended effects (as a counterpoint to Jonathan); can understand what it’s like to have your HEF unmet; can help others see this in their own lives and sympathize
         4. *monthly* meeting for sharing concerns — what is the time sensitivity of this issue with Ansa? might it be better to have some other kind of structure in place for pressing issues?
         5. role of a mediator (or a particular conversation/conflict-resolution structure) in conversation?
            1. to help all sides express their feelings
            2. to help all sides understand one another
            3. to guide conversation along healthily
      2. For Larger Problems (4 pages)
         1. Identity
         2. Diversity
            1. seek out better understandings of diversity within this particular congregation

need to be able and invited to share cultural history, loves, and expressions of faith in a safe environment

more intentionality about this on a regular basis

* + - * 1. recognize differences in life circumstances of immigrants

some probably successful businesspeople

some immigrated because of hardships and may be struggling

struggles don’t indicate less worth as people; merely circumstances

* + - * 1. recognize beauty of this congregation’s particular makeup and understand ways in which diversity makes them stronger
        2. time of blessing/affirmation for each of the cultures represented in the church; emphasize its representation of God’s characteristics and show how it is an important part of the body
      1. HEF
         1. ask about/determine cultural norms for HEF
         2. express generalizations (recognized *as* generalizations!) of how HEF are affected by cultural norms/experiences/expectations

also express the need to understand the HEF of particular *individuals*

* + - * 1. incorporate HEF forums into worship as an examination of the diversity of the church body?
        2. discern congregation-wide HEF as part of determining identity?

BIG task — remember the values retreat!?!

perhaps best guided by an expert

evaluative tools: surveys, stories, etc.

* + - 1. Pastoral Care
         1. come to an understanding of the validity and usefulness of feelings — SASHET? clearing?

feelings reflect desires, desires reflect design, etc. — Kent

feelings reflect HEF

in situations like Ansa’s, whether or not Ansa is right is not the only question here; how to deal with her feelings and concerns is important

* + - * 1. need for open, honest, reflective conversation in a safe space

e.g., hymns — why are they important to you? do you understand how they could be offensive to other? how can you best love your brother/sister in this situation? what are you willing to give up?

perhaps studying the theology behind such militaristic hymns would be beneficial; sentimental attachment is okay, but knowing the theology of what you’re singing is also important; can help you let go of the sentimentality if you come to the understanding that the theology’s not so great

what did this make you feel and why?

what are your HEF?

what do you appreciate about \_\_\_?

what would you like to be different about \_\_\_?

what are you willing to do about \_\_\_?

what is nonnegotiable in your mind?

is there some reason you need to let this go?

ALL HELPED BY attitudes cultivated above

* + - * 1. have an understanding in place of what is expected/helpful in life transitions like death, and then have people (small group, team, etc.) prepared to enact such responses when the time comes

e.g., have someone at the airport to welcome Ansa back and to get her settled in at home (if this is deemed appropriately helpful); have people willing and scheduled to come sit with her and grieve; communicate to the entire congregation Ansa’s needs at the moment (be frank and specific, as in “please spend some time with Ansa right now, but don’t press her to be further involved in church activities than she herself chooses to be”)

* + - * 1. make sure individual members of the congregation (in general) are also continually affirmed so that they know the importance of their place within the congregation and their value to the body as a whole; times of prayer/praise and blessing/affirmation
  1. Difficulties/Considerations/Questions (2 pages)
     1. Bruce’s difficulty as a relatively new minister (2 years) in an already established church
        1. what kind of authority does he have/should he have?
        2. not a founding (or even long-term) member — will people listen to and respect him?
        3. will people listen to his suggestions or will they have to be handed down as law?
           1. should those kinds of suggestions come from another source?
     2. Bruce’s role as an advocate/voice for those who can’t/don’t express their HEF?
     3. WHAT IS SUCCESS? What standard are we working by? Does that need to be examined further?
     4. need for a unified (or at least clarified) ecclesiology and understanding of identity and purpose
        1. leads to better understandings of practices (and simply better practices) on the whole
        2. change needs to happen (at least at some level) from the grassroots, from the ground up, because it’s important to the “normal” people of the congregation, not just because one person (or a leadership team) thinks it’s important; unified understandings help this
           1. Bruce and leadership can teach/preach on things like the body and kenosis and diversity, challenging people to deeply engage those ideas
           2. Bruce and leadership can lead by proposing/organizing vision-casting meetings to dream about the future of this church

get people excited about positive moves forward (rather than just frustrated/guilty about negative past/present

spend some time in prayer and communal discernment, seeking the Spirit’s guidance!

* + - * 1. honor the Spirit of God in the lay members of the congregation
        2. get lay members involved through ownership of (or at the very least, excitement about) the process
    1. how can this church be better structured on the whole to take care of the needs of its members?
       1. smaller and more intimate?
          1. likely means losing multicultural feel
       2. small groups?
       3. committees/teams set up to take care of needs like these?
       4. requires major restructuring and paradigm shift
          1. perhaps better left aside for now in this paper
    2. What is the role of hope and the recognition that it’s not the end of the world if things don’t work out perfectly?
       1. living in the already/not yet
       2. Bruce’s positive feelings shattered; sympathy and concern turn to frustration; self-assurance crumbles
       3. he needs to have hope in the guidance of God and be able to point people to that
          1. otherwise it’s easy for them to get dragged down by frustration and despair
       4. confidence in what God can/will do
          1. with realization that people will sometimes rebel against God’s guidance, so we have to be prepared for that too (but attempt to avoid it)
       5. recognition that God will be faithful even if/when we’re not
  1. Tools to Use ( 1 1/2 pages)
     1. praise for the good, aim for more of it; focus on strengths named above and how they reflect what the congregation wants to be; grow in areas of weakness so strength is present there
        1. appreciative inquiry
        2. solutions focus
        3. coaching
     2. communal spiritual discernment (with all or a diverse leadership group)
        1. how can/should this be done?
        2. third way (rather than compromise)
           1. leave no one behind
        3. attention to scripture, prayer, fasting, conversation, and other disciplines
     3. SASHET?
     4. something like clearing that allows for HEF to be expressed?

1. Closing Statements/Thoughts/Inspirations **(1/2 page)**

**CASE STUDY QUESTIONS REPSONSES**

1. misunderstandings of community; differing expectations; bad communication — all leading to a desire to be around other that look just like us because that’s easy, as well as a desire to make others look like us
2. attempts at understanding diversity are good, but they do not go much beyond surface-level understandings of what it means to be diverse; look at cultural norms rather than just overt cultural expressions
   1. also, the church is still run by and at the standards of the WUMC — diversity in name and on the surface, but not at the core
3. all people — banquet table, diversity in unity (God, body), reconciliation of diverse (even opposing) peoples (Ephesians, etc.); this is a witness to the world of the power of God and the glory of the Kingdom
4. yes (mourn with those who mourn) AND to challenge us to grow spiritually, to serve as a witness to the world of the inbreaking power of God to change us and our world for the better, to provide encouragement for people in their faith (they are not alone but are part of a body of people who care)