

Trinity Episcopal Church
VESTRY RETREAT: VISIONING FOR THE FUTURE
Saturday, May 30, 2015, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Rob Baldwin (Rector), Susan Terry (Assistant Rector), John Bullock (Senior Warden), Andrew Hoyt (Junior Warden), Nora Clark, Lindy Eakin, Brenda Clary, Steve King, Glenna Kleinkauf, Terry Mandle, Marilyn Russell, David Severance, Bill Benso (Treasurer), Maria Thompson (Clerk)

Absent: Rodney Olson, Bruce Scoular

Fr. Rob opened the retreat with a prayer.

Visioning for the Future

By necessity, we have spent the last few years being reactive to circumstances, such as the lightning strike that damaged the organ. It's now time to be proactive and plan for the future.

Fr. Rob referred to information in *Facts on Episcopal Church Growth*, a 2005 study of growth and decline in faith communities. Membership growth is essential to the life of a church, and Trinity Parish needs to figure out how to grow our membership.

Vestry members discussed their views of Trinity now, and what we'd like to see five years in the future.

- Now: We are a joyful, welcoming, caring church.
- Five years from now: We will continue to be joyful, welcoming and caring, but will also be intentional about bringing in new parishioners and families, and become known in the community for what we do well.

Future Vestry Meetings

We are going to try a change to the way Vestry meetings are run.

- 1) The reports of the clergy, wardens and treasurer will be submitted in writing one week prior to the meeting.
- 2) We will follow the same format each month:
 - a. 7:00-7:30 – Discussion and responses to the reports
 - b. 7:30-8:30 – We will break into four small groups to work on projects. The projects will change as needs change. The first four projects will be:
 - i. Renovation of the downstairs rooms
 - ii. Pledge drive
 - iii. Debt reduction
 - iv. Newcomers
 - c. 8:30-9:00 – Each group will report on what they're doing.

Everyone was asked to send Fr. Rob their top two project choices, and assignments will be made at the June Vestry meeting.

Finances

Financial Reports

Bill asked what the Vestry would like to see in the financial reports. It was agreed we would mostly like to see highlights:

- 1) Summary of money coming in
- 2) Summary of money going out
- 3) Summary of our financial health
- 4) Trends and exceptions
- 5) Any issues that need to be dealt with

Check Signatories

The Vestry had directed that Sarah Johnson be removed from the list of signatories, but if that is done, she will be unable to get information from the bank regarding our accounts. Since her focus is going to be on communications, rather than finances, it was suggested that she remain listed as a signatory so she can get information. However, Fr.

Rob is looking into hiring a part-time person to handle the financial reporting that Sarah does now, so she might not need to be the one contacting the bank.

The discussion was tabled until the staffing plan is finalized.

Evening Services

The Sunday evening service needs attention. Fr. Rob stressed that the concerns about the service are not about how much it costs to run it. He's going to talk to the parishioners who regularly attend the service to see what could change and what must remain the same, and then the congregation will need to buy into whatever changes are made.

What Works

- The service meets the spiritual needs of those who attend.
- The people in attendance are ones who can't or don't want to attend at other times.
- For those who attend, it's considered a much loved, sacred time that they don't want to change.
- Being a smaller group, it's easier for attendees to meet others, and the dinner after the service increases fellowship. However, most of them don't get to meet parishioners from the other services.
- It's a unique experience.

What Might Need to Change

- Visitor retention – we frequently have new people at the service, but they don't return.
- Low attendance – there are usually 10-18 people in the pews. That small number of people in such a large space can give newcomers the impression that something is wrong in the church.
- Some people are feeling discouraged and anxious about the possibility of losing the service.
- The service has never really had congregational buy-in.

Adjournment

Fr. Rob closed the retreat with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Thompson, Clerk