

## **St. Stephens Annual Vestry Retreat January 26th and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

### **Members in attendance:**

#### Vestry:

Cheryl Davenport	Steve Fragnoli	Bob Hoffman
Harold Hotelling	Carol Hyland	Tim Maxwell
Joan Morgan	John Morley	Anne Mortenson
Penny Piantedosi	Nancy Sparrow	Melissa Hardy

#### Staff:

Father Sams	Pastor Manisha	Gretchen Waters
Miranda Spates		

#### Absent:

Diane Kenefic	Rich Bialowas
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The Retreat began with an opening prayer.

### **The first half of the retreat was spent reviewing the goals from 2006:**

#### **I. Sunday morning:**

1. Theology – Worship together as a family
2. Occasional overcrowding @ 10. Generally at 80% capacity.
3. Teaching Children at Worship
4. Includes teachers in worship. Helps recruiting Sunday School teachers.
5. Discussion of how to evaluate success.
  - a. Attendance
  - b. Sunday School Attendance
  - c. Teacher Satisfaction
  - d. Number of Complaints
6. Feedback:
  - a. Like to see the kids go up to Communion
  - b. Many positive feelings for the kids' presence
  - c. Complaints of noise and distractions.
  - d. Parents can't worship with kids there.

#### **Future:**

1. Education for all
2. Child-friendly worship

## II. Adult Faith

1. Dilemmas (Lent) – (30 people)
2. Blitz – (80)
3. Vacation Bible School, Adult Class – (20)
4. Advent By Candlelight – (90+)
5. Sunday AM
6. Wednesday AM – (7)
7. Household of God – (17)

### Future:

1. Small group formation – distinct time frame
2. Using Video Learning materials - Host programs at home.
3. Parents of teenagers.
4. “Christianity for Dummies”

## III. Stewardship, Wisdom, Action and Teaching

1. Temple Talks
2. Letter to Congregation – demographic list
3. Covenant Prayer
4. Stewardship Conference
5. Thank you letters
6. “Fiscal Facts”
7. Newcomer – present the Covenant Prayer
8. Covenant Prayer
  - a. Pledge cards don’t hold us back
  - b. Not so guilt inducing
  - c. Flexibility for those not on steady paychecks
  - d. Better education on the program.

### Future:

1. Focus on Youth. Early education on Stewardship
2. Enlarge and Diversify SWAT
3. More holistic approach, not aggressive, intrusive or scolding.
4. Special Parish meeting (Struggle is good)
5. Customize Educational Resource.

## IV. Core Group

1. Emphasis on “Core Group”. YACYM model: Lavish care & gratitude on leaders.
2. “Host Program” – Hosts were assigned to newcomers
3. Welcome Packets.
4. After Service Greeters for new members.
5. Revamped the Volunteer Opportunities Cards.
6. New Members’ group. Changed format to one weeknight, one Sunday.

Future:

1. Reconstitute the new member bio's in the Witness.
2. Nametag push.

*(The meeting was interrupted to open a stubborn wine bottle for the Altar Guild).*

V. , VI. , VII lumped together.

Multi-racial Issues:

1. "How much does it bother us that we are not more diverse racially & culturally?"
2. Filling the pews not the only goal
3. Interfaith participation (Troy Interfaith Council)
4. Open House at Mosque
5. Youth swaps with Moslem Teens.
6. Unique Combination of Rector / Associate .

Future:

1. Chaldean Dialog?
2. Exchange with Urban congregation.
3. Education opportunity with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Detroit riots.
4. Talk about racism?

## **The Second half of the Retreat set goals for 2007:**

### **I. Sabbatical Planning**

1. Preaching. Budget for guest preachers? Pastor Manisha increases schedule?  
Lay preachers?
2. Pastoral Care.
3. Managing Parish Expectations (When the cat's away . . . ).
4. Support for staffs.
5. Administrative responsibilities
6. Weddings?
7. Saturday Services
8. Worship
9. Stewardship for Sabbatical planning.
10. Utilize the sabbatical for new types of service.

Brainstorms:

1. Lay preachers, Father Maxwell

2. Lay ministries, Miranda, Caring Ministry Committee, Jonathan's cell phone on bulletin board.
3. Communication. Explain why Jonathan gets a sabbatical. Share his goals. Temple Talk (Harold?)
4. Mutual Ministry. [Mutual Ministry committee](#) cares for the staff.
5. Is there Diocesan support for sabbaticals? Guest ministers?
6. Children's Sermons.

## II. Stewardship June 4<sup>th</sup> – Sept 4<sup>th</sup>.

1. Make the entire congregation "responsible".
2. Keep the focus on the core goals of the church. Keep financials balanced in presentation.
3. Involve a broader base on the entire population of congregation.

### Ideas:

1. Communications, fiscal facts.
2. Participatory fundraising vs. pledges / donations
3. Inclusive Involvement in the solution.
4. Personal communication. Increase involvement / create a wider vested interest.

## III. Future Vision 3 report.

1. Provide a range of opportunities to "Tell Stories". Not necessarily standing in front of a group. Write!
  - a. Blog (Excerpts in Witness)
  - b. Graffiti wall
  - c. Family posters.
2. Expressions. Take apart the Covenant Prayer.
  - a. Publish a sentence a week.
  - b. Monthly: Discuss an element. Keep it in front of people.
  - c. Utilize educational value of Covenant Prayer
  - d. Revise C-Prayer?
  - e. Encourage people to think of the Value St. Stephens has.
3. Openness and resolution.
  - a. Resolution is the key. How are "losers" perceived and treated.
  - b. Affirm healthy dissent
  - c. What is right for an individual is not necessarily right for the group.
  - d. Embrace the minority opinion to maintain a feeling of inclusion.
  - e. Stay in practice of the cycle of dissent, disappointment and reconciliation.
4. Develop a regular Adult Education program after the 10 o'clock service. First crack at it is a parents group for those waiting for their kids in Sunday school. Jon set a goal of 9 classes this time next year with 12 participants.

## **Other Business:**

1. March 10<sup>th</sup> is a Diocesan meeting for preventing sexual harassment and presenting the church as a safe environment. This meeting will be held at St. Stephens.
2. All Vestry are required to give permission for a background check. The forms are due by Feb 9<sup>th</sup>. (The Vestry took ten minutes to fill out the forms).
3. Pastor Manisha will hold a Personal Spiritual Growth Workshop for vestry members on February 13<sup>th</sup>, from 7:30 to 8:30.
4. Elections were held for Vestry Positions:

Sr. Warden - Bob Hoffman  
Jr. Warden - Steve Fragnoli  
Clerk - John Morley  
Sabbatical Committee – Bob Hoffman  
Finance – Steve Fragnoli  
Outreach – Carol Hyland, (w/ Deacon Liz)  
YACYM – Cheryl Davenport, (w/ Pastor Manisha)  
Worship – Harold Hotelling, (w/ Connie Jose and Father Sams)  
Adult Faith – Anne Mortenson, (w/ Father Sams)  
Hospitality – Diane Kenefic, (w/ Miranda Spates). Elected In Absentia.  
Buildings & Grounds – Rich Bialowas, (w/ Miranda Spates). Elected In Absentia.  
Caring Ministries – Penny Piantedosi, (w/ Pastor Manisha)  
Personnel – Harold Hotelling  
Information/Communication – John Morley, (w/ Gretchen Waters)  
SWAT – Tim Maxwell and Steve Fragnoli, (w/ Pastor Manisha)  
Member Development – Joan Morgan. (w/ Gretchen Waters)  
Endowment – Steve Fragnoli

The retreat closed with a prayer.