

ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LONG RANGE MINISTRY PLAN
2010 – 2014

Submitted to the Vestry of
St. David's Episcopal Church
February 9, 2010

**ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LONG-RANGE (3-5 YEAR) MINISTRY PLAN
FEBRUARY 2010**

Introduction. In the summer of 2008 the leadership of St. David's determined the need to proceed with the development of a 3-5 year long-range ministry plan for the parish. This was especially important as St. David's reached an important milestone with the completion of an extensive renovation and expansion project to its physical plant. The question was then posed, where do we go from here, both to maximize use of the new facilities and the resultant opportunity to expand upon or create new ministries for the benefit of the parish and the wider community?

In considering various approaches to planning, it was agreed that a planning model emphasizing the dominant values of the parish would be the most effective way to embrace and build upon the natural "spiritual DNA" of the parish as reflected in the identification and articulation of St. David's "core values." Therefore, the model utilized in developing this long-range plan is grounded in these identified existing core values along with several "aspirational" or emerging values of the parish to be pursued so that by the end of this 3-5 cycle, these additional values will also be core to the parish's identity and mission. It is core values, both current and aspirational, that serve as the spiritual road map in directing the development of the parish's mission and vision statements, and supporting long-range goals and objectives.

The parish's leadership, once agreeing upon the need for a long-range plan and model for this planning process, then formed a parish-wide Planning Committee composed of a diverse membership representative of the overall congregation so to ensure that input, deliberations and recommendations were representative of the parish's overall ethos and ministry aims. "Appendix I" provides a listing of the Planning Committee membership which began its work in August 2008 and concluded with the final review of the plan's goals and objectives in January 2010. The usual time period to complete such a comprehensive planning process is usually 9 months. However, this particular effort took longer due in large measure to the starts and stops associated with several natural occurrences including departure of the incumbent rector, welcoming of an interim rector and various other related matters. The Planning Committee is to be recognized with great appreciation for their time, dedication and resilience in staying with this process and bring it all to this very fruitful conclusion.

To follow is the long-range plan itself composed of the following sections:

- Statement of Core Values
- Statement of Mission
- Statement of Vision
- Environmental Scan
- Listing of Long-Range Goals and Objectives

After offering these various sectional components to the plan, a brief concluding section will provide suggested guidance regarding implementation of the plan.

Statement of Core Values. The identification of core values answers the first question to a values-driven planning process: why do we do what we do? The answer is the parish's core values. Core values explain who St. David's is, your collective identity and is the foundation on which the mission and vision is built. Using a technique known as "storyboarding" which included brainstorming, the workout (sorting and grouping of suggested values) and voting, the committee identified six current core values for St. David's. Although the parish holds many values, the committee agreed that the identification of the six key current core values would substantially accomplish the aim of identifying and explaining why St. David's does what it does, ministry wise. Additionally, through a similar process the committee then identified two additional core values that they hope will be emphasized and focused upon even more so in the coming years and thus become more readily identified with the dominant core values of the parish. These two more futuristic and emerging values are identified for purposes of this plan as "aspirational core values." Once these eight single word core values were identified the committee then developed a one to two sentence description of what each core value means to St. David's. To follow are the core value statements of the parish:

- *Worship.* We value diverse, spirit-filled worship, ranging from traditional to contemporary, grounded in The Word and Sacraments and based upon faith and prayer.
- *Fellowship.* We value coming together and fostering friendships in a loving and joyful community, centered in Christ.
- *Hospitality.* We invite and embrace our neighbors, newcomers and visitors in the spirit of Christ.
- *Outreach.* Responding to Christ's teachings and call, we offer ourselves to the wider community to serve those in need.
- *Pastoral Care.* We are a compassionate community that expresses the love and healing power of Christ, supporting one another with hope and encouragement.
- *Inclusion.* As a diverse community, we embrace one another in a spirit of love, acceptance, and friendship, providing opportunities for all to participate in worship and ministry.
- *Christian Formation.** We aspire to know God and understand our faith by providing opportunities for life long learning and growth while supporting one another in our spiritual journeys.
- *Stewardship.** We aspire to be good stewards of all the gifts, of "time, talent and treasure," entrusted to us for building up God's Kingdom. We seek to embrace the tithe as the biblical standard of giving.

(*Aspirational values)

Statement of Mission. The next step in the planning process was to answer the question: what is St. David's supposed to be doing? The answer to this question is the parish's mission statement. Again, because this is a values driven planning process, the exercise undertaken by the committee to develop the mission was by a small group process with each group assigned one of the eight core values and asked to respond to the following question: where has this value taken you (or in the case of the two aspirational values: where will it take you)? In other words, how has (or will) each of these values manifest itself in the life of the parish? The output from the small groups was distilled down to a twenty-five word or less mission statement. The short length of the statement forced the committee to offer up a succinct and memorial mission that can be readily published and kept before the eyes of the congregation. The statement is as follows:

Mission Statement: "We reach out with joy and acceptance in worship and ministry, inviting all to experience and share God's gifts and abundant love as we grow in Christ."

The committee then extracted from this statement a brief and memorial slogan: "Sharing God's Gifts and Love."

Statement of Vision. The next key question was then asked: what kind of church would we like to be? The vision statement is the answer to that question. Once again, the committee was divided into small groups with each assigned a core value. But this time they were asked to answer this related question: what will the parish look like when it begins to fully realize this value? The input from these groups was then developed into St. David's vision statement as follows:

Vision Statement: "We participate, adapt, and grow in our worship and Christian learning. We are fully engaged in loving each other and our community, drawing one another closer to Christ and His teachings. We support our members and others with compassion, in accordance to God's will. We give fully and sacrificially from all that God has placed in our hands, to continue the work of His Kingdom."

Environmental Scan. Before commencing with the development of long-range goals and objectives based on the core values and the mission and vision statements, the committee next looked at the wider community in which St. David's is situated as well as the internal life of the parish. Related discussions, observations, findings and conclusions were meant to help the committee gain additional insights into the realities of the corporate life in which these values and statements will be lived out. The scan was segmented between the external and internal environment. Regarding the external or the wider community, the committee received and digested a comprehensive demographic report for zip code 23236. This "Percept" report offered census projections through 2013 and looked at other factors including diversity, ethnic and generational groups present, household and community concerns, and faith preferences.

The committee then considered an internal assessment of the parish based on the identified core values. This input and assessment was gathered through a “parishioner questionnaire” administered in the autumn of 2008 with results summarized and presented to the committee by Mr. Robert A. Hanayik in February 2009. The survey asked parishioners to respond to a series of three questions surrounding each core value including one statement to which the respondent was to strongly agreeing to strongly disagreeing and then two additional questions of what aspect of the ministry related to each value the parish was doing well and what could be improved upon. A total of 43 parishioners responded to the questionnaire representing 25-30% of active adult membership. This number of responses offered a strong sampling and validity to the input and confidence in considering such in developing the long-range goals and objectives.

Listing of Long-Range Goals and Objectives. The final aspect of the planning exercise was to develop a series of goals and objectives based on the core values while being guided by the overarching statements regarding the parish’s mission and vision. To facilitate the development of such goals and objectives, the Planning Committee was once again divided into small groups. But this time, the committee members to each group would serve as leadership surrounding their assigned core value and drawing upon other members of the congregation who might have a particular interest in the assigned value to participate in the formulation of proposed goals and objectives for the Committee’s consideration. Additionally, the Vestry was asked to provide other goals and objectives that would normally fall outside of the core values, but remain critical to the further growth and development of the parish. Therefore, eight core value workgroups met over a number of months and more recently presented their proposed goals and objectives to the Committee as did the Vestry. To follow is a finalized listing of goals and objective by core value along with a final grouping provided by the Vestry.

Worship

Long range Goals

While corporate worship will continue to be grounded in “Holy Eucharist,” we will be open and flexible in offering other worship experiences that help meet the needs and expectations of our diverse church community.

Recognizing that liturgy is “the work of the people,” we will create opportunities for broad congregational involvement and direct participation in worship planning and leadership – especially for our children and youth.

Acknowledging that the Episcopal liturgy can be confusing and a possible “barrier” to newcomers, consider a variety of liturgical expressions and alternatives that promotes accessibility and engagement.

Offer an enhanced atmosphere of worship that is: joyful and reverent, speaks to the needs of all ages, all are embraced “just as we are,” and equips “the saints for the work of ministry.”

Incorporate a welcoming spirit throughout the worship experience being especially sensitive to and supportive of newcomers.

Supporting Objectives

Educate the congregation, including newcomers, about worship in the Episcopal tradition and prepare all before new liturgies are introduced.

Involve youth and children in the planning, conducting and serving in a variety of worship opportunities.

Recognize all members who support and serve in worship services in any capacity.

Explore opportunities for interfaith worship services and community building.

The Worship Commission will work with the Hospitality Commission to ensure that worship services are “user-friendly” to visitors and newcomers.

There will be 2 combined services in 2010 and in 2011 and thereafter, four combined services per year promoting social interaction.

Develop a program of “Outreach Sundays” or a series of “Outreach Minutes” during either the service or announcement period to promote outreach activities and participation.

Fellowship

Long Range Goals

Continue existing fellowship activities, and actively discern interest in, and unmet needs for, additional fellowship.

Effectively communicate and promote fellowship offerings to “stay connected” and optimize participation that deepens relationships of mutual care and encouragement.

It is recognized that many fellowship activities might indirectly lead to “outreach” opportunities to the wider-community and will be encouraged in order that such connections might be strengthened.

Supporting Objectives

Establish an expectation that events are planned and promoted well in advance; and, when possible occur at regularly scheduled dates and time. In promoting fellowship activities optimize use of various communication vehicles.

Events will be effectively organized, including back-up/contingency plans for the “unexpected.”

Encourage fellowship groups to develop and strengthen their own leadership.

Establish and promote procedures for facilitating increased use of our parish hall. Further, consider use of other outside facilities for certain events.

Assess and promote networking opportunities with other fellowship groups, especially when event ideas may not have a nucleus of support and interest within the parish.

Invite the extended parish family (e.g. families of youth, vacation Bible school participants, preschool and scouts) to participate in fellowship events.

Hospitality

Long Range Goals

Cultivate a culture of hospitality in which visitors and newcomers will find a congregation that is warm, friendly, and enthusiastic without being overbearing.

Our hospitality will not stop when a newcomer is no longer new to the parish. Therefore, programs of growth and maturation will exist not only to invite and greet, but also to effectively incorporate new parishioners into the life of St. David’s.

Our Hospitality will be an effective process of: (1) inviting (to come), (2) greeting (upon arrival), (3) orienting (to the church), and (4) incorporating (into the family) newcomers.

Hospitality, as a ministry, will be embraced and “owned” by the entire congregation.

Supporting Objectives

The Vestry will establish a Hospitality Commission to oversee or lead hospitality-related activities. Key ‘tasks’ of this commission will include:

- Cataloging the portal ministries and implement initiatives that ensure that the ministries effectively deploy hospitality techniques.
- See that the rector, the SOD, the greeters and others seek out newcomers and welcome them to St. David’s.
- Institute greeters’ training and also expand the number of parishioners serving as greeters.
- Provide and document procedures to ensure that follow-up occurs with newcomers.

- Foster parish-wide support of hospitality initiatives by providing parishioners with guidelines and techniques to effectively and personally welcome newcomers.
- Research, catalog, and implement methodologies designed to advertise the parish to the wider-community.
- Extend welcoming efforts to all families of children in the preschool program.
- Having a policy and procedure in place assigning a “Sponsor” to newcomers returning for a second visit.
- Provide reference material to help newcomers through the incorporation process.
- Catalog steps needed to incorporate newcomers into the culture of the parish and track progress of newcomer incorporation.

Working with the “Inreach Commission,” offer several parish-wide social events with emphasis on incorporating newcomers into the parish.

The Vestry will budget for a paid staff person to track newcomers through the process and coordinate volunteer efforts.

Formalize a stewardship component to our Newcomer “On-Boarding” program.

Outreach

Long Range Goals

In recognition that we are not to leave the work of God within the walls of the church, we will live out our lives in service to others in our church family and most especially, in the wider-community.

Promote a flexible environment of “service response” enabling the parish to effectively respond to the ever-changing economic and social conditions of the community.

Encourage members of the parish to become involved in outreach initiatives according to their gifts, skill sets and interests.

Activities will concentrate on the most pressing unmet needs to optimize ministry effectiveness while remaining open to other emerging needs.

Supporting Objectives

Increase congregational participation in local outreach ministries by developing more community-based activities and encouraging parishioners to invite family and friends to attend.

Expand parish’s national and international outreach efforts by increasing support of ERDF and by partnering with other churches to explore such outreach and mission opportunities.

Increase youth awareness of community needs and opportunities to serve. Additionally, encourage youth participation by having them invite a friend to help.

Promote outreach activities by effective communication:

- Enhance parish website to “advertise” outreach opportunities and benefits of participation.
- Utilize all other means to increase awareness: Facebook, email, Kiosks in narthex in advance of outreach events.

Solicit greater involvement in various outreach roles of leadership, committee members and participants – promoting fit of skills to outreach need by:

- Identifying potential leaders for outreach ministries and provide for their development and training.
- Inventory parishioner to catalog their talents, abilities and interests. This will be accomplished in part via an electronic pictorial directory accessed by a website link.

Identify and promote “family-friendly” outreach opportunities and short-term national and international trips.

Pastoral Care

Long Range Goals

St. David’s will evaluate the effectiveness and convenience of existing communication techniques; develop and implement appropriate plans to inform all members of the activities of Pastoral Care; ensure the privacy of those receiving care; and establish a chain of command for each Pastoral Care ministry.

Pastoral Care will become an integral part of life and worship at St. David’s and not just a committee.

Leaders of each Pastoral Care ministry will actively recruit and follow up with interested individuals immediately involving them in ministries.

Supporting Objectives

A “cell group ministry” will be established to act as an extended family by contacting one another regularly, ensuring that no one is overlooked and especially as needs are identified by the pastoral care ministries or other ministries of the parish.

Promote and provide an effective transportation ministry by soliciting volunteer drivers and gaining other resources (such as a van) to assist with parishioners’ attendance at worship and events.

Offer and promote a consistently scheduled Grief Group meeting open to members of the parish and the wider-community that will include periodic talks by trained professionals on related topics.

Enhance the Meals Program with dedicated freezer space, a variety of meats to meet needs, a binder of recipes that address dietary concerns, a nutritionist advisor, a well coordinated assignment of meal deliveries, improved methods to identify those in need of meals, and the recruitment of volunteers.

Promote participation and provide training for the Lay Eucharistic Visitor ministry to ensure that home and facility bound parishioners receive a Eucharistic visit on a regular basis.

Establish a Parish Nurse Program to provide and promote holistic health and well being for parishioners.

Form a Pastoral Care visitation ministry by the recruitment, training and ongoing support of those who will make visitations to members who are shut-in, hospitalized or in other care settings.

Offer an organized program and method of making follow-up contacted with lapsed members of the parish. This may entail sending a card, making a call or other contact to understand their needs and concerns.

Continue and enhance the Card Ministry with special attention given to sacred and secular celebrations and holidays. Engage children and youth to make cards for distribution to the congregation or outside groups and settings such as hospitals, nursing homes and shelters.

Establish a Prayer Shawl Ministry to make prayer shawls, lap robes, and blankets for distribution to members of the parish and wider-community.

Explore the development of other pastoral care programs responsive to current and emerging needs such as: NA, AA, Parents without Partners, marriage workshops, etc.

Inclusion

Long Range Goals

St. David's will promote understanding and appreciation for others, while encouraging members to develop as individuals.

Provide a broad spectrum of worship and service opportunities.

St. David's will continue to ensure equal access to programs, respecting the rights and needs of one another, promoting fairness in policies and programs.

St. David's will be welcoming to all people regardless of circumstances and background.

Improve the retention of our young adults (age 18-30).

Supporting Objectives

Focus on inclusion in all aspects of parish life.

Increase awareness and responsiveness to needs.

Be more pro-active in looking for barriers to inclusion: doing a better job of asking people to get involved, reminding people to go the website to see where they can get involved.

Perform a community assessment to see if some groups are not readily accepted.

Establish a group similar to our middle school and high school EYC for college age young adults. Provide counseling and liturgical support within the group structure.

Christian Formation

Long Range Goals

Provide for a structured program of life-long learning in Christian formation for all parishioners offering a variety of topics, times and settings. Education will include an assortment of Bible studies and programs such as Lenten series, the Alpha Course, prayer meetings, book club/study groups, and an inquirer's class.

Special attention will be given to our children and youth with extensive program offerings, including Sunday school, vacation Bible study, Episcopal Youth Community and confirmation classes.

Continued development of Christian formation leaders and teachers by participation in outside training and conferences as necessary, to help them in their facilitation of programs and encourage others to step forward for leadership knowing that instruction and support is readily available.

Develop resources such as a library of Christian formation books/literature and use of computer technology to promote ease of access of such material.

Improve EYC planning and execution by ensuring that responsibilities are assigned to a paid staff member.

Supporting Objectives

In support of offering a variety of topics, times to meet and settings the following “tasks” should be considered:

- Survey congregation of educational topics of interest, meeting times and leadership needs.
- Add classes on Sunday morning, particularly an adult offerings in addition to the Adult Forum.

Promote leadership for Christian formation and provide training and support.

Provide for a centralized place to house resource material for all age groups that is easily accessed. Promote resource usage and a tracking system for material that is signed out.

Assess merits of hiring a full-time Christian education director.

Assess the most appropriate assignment of resources to support a paid EYC staff member.

Expand the Christian Education Director position to include Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, EYC, Adult Forum, God’s Word for Children, and Adult Bible Study.

Formalize a stewardship component to our Christian formation program.

Stewardship

Long Range Goals

Cultivate an atmosphere of loving service to one another and the world by sharing our gifts of time, talent and treasures.

Continually increase awareness of how to use these gifts in support of our worship and ministries, by promoting faithful stewardship that also encourages the principle of tithing.

Create a sense of personal investment and ownership in the spiritual and physical growth of our parish that meets the needs of our members as faithful stewards of our resources.

Supporting Objectives

Expand the Stewardship Commission and conduct monthly meetings to plan, execute and coordinate various initiatives. Key “tasks” include:

- Weekly “Stewardship Minutes” in worship services.
- Stewardship “Witnessing” – at least two times per month.
- Assessment of professional resources to enhance the overall program response in parishioner giving of time, talent and treasures.
- Conduct a Parish Ministry Fair at least two times per year, one of which will be during the Annual Parish Meeting.
- Develop forms and methods to help parishioners identify their gifts.

- Explore more effective and efficient “giving technologies” such as on-line banking, credit and debit cards, etc.
- Conduct quarterly stewardship focused workshops for parish membership with in-house or professional resources.

Communicate financial results and time/talent contributions to the parish on a monthly basis thereby increasing awareness of performance and needs.

Explore ways to increase Time and Talent (service) component of Stewardship and develop a means to measure increased giving and participating and activity incorporation.

Vestry Provided

Long Range Goals

St. David’s will improve maintenance and use of the church facilities by hiring a part-time sexton/maintenance employee.

St. David’s will strive to be better stewards of the environment, being “greener” and more environmentally friendly.

Assess ways to enhance our transportation options.

Supporting Objectives

Hire an employee to satisfy needs of the parish for sexton/maintenance services.

A “Green Committee” will be formed to determine steps toward being better stewards of the environment. An example of these steps includes providing parishioners with the ability to “opt out” of paper intensive mailings (e.g. The Voice, financial statements).

Create a task force to assess the pros and cons of the church owning or leasing a van, and to recommend the best alternative considering all available.

Implementation of the Plan. Once the plan is approved by the Vestry attention should then turn to its implementation. One way to proceed would be for the Vestry to initially review the plan’s goals and objectives and determine which of them should be pursued in the coming 12 months. This will become the parish’s “operating plan” upon which the 12-month operating budget is developed. This should be an annual occurrence during the life of the plan. And then at the end of each year the Vestry should also assess the plan’s performance, planning assumptions and correspondingly, any changes that need to be made to the goals and objectives. This annual review recognizes that the environment is dynamic and should be taken into account. Having stated this, for the most part the plan should have a stable and long “shelf life,” but consideration should always be given to the ever changing environment to make sure that the direction the parish is taking is grounded in reality, therefore, giving the parish the greatest possibility of fulfilling its

forward looking vision. And finally, at all times the parish should keep every aspect of this work bathed in prayer so that St. David's plan continues to align with God's will.

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