

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
in Glen Ellyn, Illinois



Parish Profile

June 2005



A Message From the Vestry and Search Committee to Our Prospective Rector:

We at St. Mark's, both relative newcomers and families that have been in the parish for generations, are drawn together by a common ministry and mission. Parishioners continue the St. Mark's tradition of being a body of believers who take their faith seriously within the context of our common participation in the liturgy and the creeds, while accepting diverse theological viewpoints. We are committed to serving Christ and to building His church. St. Mark's is a vibrant community. We appreciate each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, each of us uniquely created by God. Our goal is to work together to further God's mission for each individual, for our church body, for our local community, and for the world. In 2003, differences in beliefs within the St. Mark's community were brought to light by decisions of the Episcopal Church USA. Many members of St. Mark's left both our community and the Episcopal Church because they could not accept these decisions. We miss those who departed and wish them God's blessings. We are still working through the stages of our collective grief over losing them. St. Mark's members have weathered church controversies in the past and are determined to move forward as we work through this one. We are encouraged by the enthusiasm of our current members and by the addition of new families to the parish since the 2004 departures, and we hope to help each other continue to mature spiritually through this process. St. Mark's is blessed with beautiful new facilities that offer the parish a wonderful home in which to grow and flourish. We face the tasks of continuing to build membership and to meet the financial challenge presented by our new building. While our recent experiences have tested us, we have responded with renewed energy and resources. Many members of the parish have come forward with new and creative ideas to meet these challenges. We have a deep appreciation and enthusiasm for St. Mark's parish and for our church family. We trust God to empower us as we seek to build His church. Our common beliefs will provide the foundation for this work. We will eagerly welcome the rector who is called to join us in our mission to heal, grow, and strengthen St. Mark's parish.

God has already prepared the perfect rector for us. We have but to find her or him.¹

¹ Throughout this Parish Profile, italicized quotes are taken from responses to our April 2005 Parish Survey.

Leadership Qualities That We Seek

Our April 2005 Parish Survey showed that we have strong consensus on the four most important qualities that we seek in a rector:

- *Preacher* – a person with the ability to preach with clarity and to make the Gospel relevant to people's lives.
- *Administrative leader* – a person with the ability to oversee the affairs of the parish including programs, organizations, finances, and personnel.
- *Life pastor/Pastoral care* – a person with the ability to minister to people at significant points in their lives such as birth, death, illness, trauma, and success, and with a willingness to visit people at home or in the hospital.
- *Strategic leader* – a person with the ability to establish and communicate vision and direction for the parish and to move the parish in that direction effectively.

The responses to the 2005 Parish Survey showed that we also strongly value other pastoral traits such as church growth and lay ministry leadership. And while we consider the rector's ability to lead Christian education, theology, liturgy, stewardship, children and youth, and mission and outreach to be important, the responses recognize that many of these ministries can be effectively delegated to the lay members of the parish by a rector who is supportive of the parishioners and of their ministries. We also recognize that it is important for our rector to participate with other clergy in Glen Ellyn to meet the needs of the community.

"... a person who can express God's love to our parish and help us grow as a community of faith." "... a spiritual director/mentor who can facilitate Christ's transformative vision for our community." "A positive Episcopal priest who can effectively preach about God's love and grace."

"Ability to connect to the youth groups, grow them, and show interest in them." "[A priest] who is loving enough to understand that people with different viewpoints still do have many things in common and [who] can agree to disagree and bring these spiritual people together"

"Someone who demonstrates wisdom, maturity, fairness, diplomacy, compassion, an honest desire to shepherd, and a loving nature. ... A true servant of the Lord."

St. Mark's Mission Statement

We worship in the Anglican tradition and seek to proclaim and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as we welcome, teach, and serve in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



Worship

Worship is an elemental and vital affirmation of our relationship with God and is a profound expression of our communal life. We bring our whole selves to worship: senses, voice, body, mind and spirit. Holy Eucharist is the focal point of our worship together.

Throughout the year we hold two Sunday morning services: Rite I with hymns at 8:00 a.m., and Rite II with music and choir at 10:30 a.m. The 10:30 eucharist during the academic year makes full use of service music, choral music and hymns, which vary in settings and complexity according to season, at times including sung portions offered by the celebrant. The Office of Compline is held on the second and fourth Sundays at 9:00 p.m. during the academic year. This brief service consists of scripture, psalms, prayers and meditative silence.



Bishop Persell celebrates Confirmation for the Aurora Deanery at St. Mark's – May 2005

Diocese of Chicago

St. Mark's parish is part of the Diocese of Chicago, which covers the northern third of the state and extends up to the Wisconsin border, from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River. The population of the area is about nine million, 75% of the total in the state, and provides a richly diverse mix of ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds. The Diocese includes congregations comprised of African American, Hispanic, West Indian and Anglo-Korean members. The Diocese of Chicago strives to acknowledge and celebrate what we have in common within our diversity, and is committed to social witness and community service as expressed through the work of the Episcopal Charities and Community Services (ECCS), a network of 11 social service agencies.

Under the spiritual guidance of the Rt. Rev. William D. Persell, Bishop and the Rt. Rev. Victor Scantlebury, Assistant Bishop, the diocese contains 137 parishes and missions and is the 12th largest Episcopal diocese in the United States. St. Mark's has a history of strong participation in the diocese; in addition to our financial support, many of our parishioners have dedicated substantial time and talent to diocesan ministries.

At present St. James Cathedral shares building space and facilities with the Diocesan Offices on Chicago's Near North Side. However, construction of a 63-story office and residential tower to replace the current five-story office building is underway. Proceeds from the property lease of this new building are expected to greatly enhance the mission of the diocese.

More information on the Diocese of Chicago is available at www.episichicago.org.

St. Mark's Local Community

The Village of Glen Ellyn

Glen Ellyn, sometimes called “The New England of the Midwest,” is a beautiful suburban village of about 27,000 people in DuPage County, Illinois. Located 25 miles west of Chicago, Glen Ellyn is just a short train ride away from the city and provides ready access to area airports

Glen Ellyn is host to a variety of academic communities. The College of DuPage is located in the village, along with two high schools, Glenbard West and Glenbard South. Several other secondary education institutions such as Wheaton College, Elmhurst College, and North Central College are nearby.

Cultural and recreational activities abound in Glen Ellyn. There are 27 churches, a modern public library, an active YMCA and Park District, and several golf courses, including a highly rated 27-hole public course. The McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage presents more than 250 performances annually by artists like Bill Cosby, Wynton Marsalis and the American Ballet Theatre. The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County owns over 24,000 acres of protected natural areas as well as facilities dedicated to environmental education and recreation.

Downtown Glen Ellyn contains an appealing mix of shops, excellent restaurants, and other businesses, including a vintage movie theatre and a Starbucks coffee shop. Lake Ellyn Park in the center of town is the location for many special events, including an annual Festival of the Arts and the Annual Great Cardboard Boat Regatta.

Glen Ellyn is an ideal place to raise a family. Visitors and residents alike find it to be a charming village with both a hometown feel and the sophistication of a major city suburb. Although many members of St. Mark's live in Glen Ellyn, the parish also draws members from surrounding communities including Wheaton, Lombard and Naperville

More information about Glen Ellyn is available at www.villageprofile.com/illinois/glenellyn.



Lake Ellyn

St. Mark's Staff

St. Mark's is blessed to have a hard-working staff of both salaried and volunteer personnel. Since July 2004, the Rev. Sheila Ferguson has served as our interim rector, bringing her gifts of pastoral care to the parish. The Rev. Dr. Walter Dunnett, a retired seminary professor who has faithfully served the parish for the past seven years, assists Sheila. Walter brings his seminary experience to his sermons, which are richly imbued with theological and biblical expertise.

The music ministry at St. Mark's has been wonderfully tended for more than 18 years through the outstanding leadership of Mr. Charles Snider. This year we have also added Ms. Merry Deutscher to our staff in the part-time role as Children's Choir Director. Beginning in spring 2004 Ms. Mary Woodiwiss has served as part time Director of Children's Ministries, overseeing the children's programs from nursery to 5th grade.

Mr. Miguel Briones has faithfully served as the parish Sexton for more than six years. Norma Cid is our nursery supervisor.

A capable, cheerful and committed group of volunteers serve in the office, work with the parish middle and senior high school students, and produce the monthly parish newsletter, the *PostMark*.

Music at St. Mark's

As worship is elemental to our life as a parish, so music informs and infuses our worship. Music matters in the life of our church. The St. Mark's music ministry strives for music that serves the mission of the church, that transcends and has the power to change us.

Four separate choral groups provide music throughout the liturgical year. As a part of the Anglican Communion, St. Mark's draws much of its choral music from the rich tradition that comes to us through the Church of England. A variety of other musical styles are used as well, from those of early monastic chant and Renaissance composers to contemporary American works and spirituals. On several occasions during the year, full choral Evensongs are offered.

*The music program is one of
the cornerstones of this parish.*

The **Children's Choir** consists of our youngest singers, those in grades 1 through 3. Under the leadership of the Children's Choir Director, the children rehearse weekly and sing for Sunday services several times a year.



Fun at the 2005 Choir party



Our **Treble Choir** includes singers in the 4th grade and above. This group sings for services approximately once a month, and also participates in occasional diocesan festivals. Participation in the group offers learning opportunities for its members, with discussion and exploration of topics relating to the church such as bible study, saints, and liturgics.



Trebles at the 2005 Choir Party

The **Adult Choir** ensemble provides the majority of choral music sung for services in the parish. This group leads the parish musical worship every Sunday of the academic year, as well as additional services including Lessons & Carols, Christmas Eve, Holy Week, and various Evensongs. For some of these special services, instrumental ensembles accompany the adult choir. The charter of the **Compline Choir** is to provide a monastic style of music for the service of Compline, held two Sunday evenings per month.

Children's Ministries

The goal of Children's Ministries at St. Mark's is to "nurture, teach, and guide the children and families of St Mark's in response to God's grace, truth, and love revealed in His Son. We seek to proclaim the Gospel, develop disciples of Jesus Christ, and strengthen His church in this time and place." To that end, Mary Woodiwiss, Director of Children's Ministries, has gathered a team of talented and nurturing volunteers to the Nursery, Sunday School, and Children's Worship. Held during the Sunday 10:30 a.m. service, Lamb's Chapel is offered to children 2-3 years old and Children's Worship to those 4 years through first grade. Presently more than 80 children from nursery to fifth grade participate in the Sunday School program. Vacation Bible School is a regular offering each summer at St. Mark's and includes children from the parish as well as the larger community.

I love the educational programs for children. They are one of the wonderful parts of St. Mark's.



Vacation Bible School August 2004



As a part of parish outreach, St. Mark's offers area families a *Parents' Day Out* program for preschoolers. The children attend one day a week for a time of structured play and crafts.



Youth Ministries

St. Mark's youth ministries program is called *CONNECTIONS*. It provides an opportunity for youth, grades 6-12, to connect with Christ, each other, the St. Mark's parish family, and the community. *CONNECTIONS* emphasizes Bible studies, fun, worship, and fellowship.



Youth from St. Mark's help load donated boxes of food and Christmas gifts into the Cathedral Shelter Truck

This May, twenty middle school students were confirmed by Bishop Persell. Each student completed twenty hours of community service in addition to attending class and meeting with their mentors for discussion and reflection.

St. Mark's is both honored and proud that one of our high school students, Mallory Holding, was chosen as a member of the diocesan delegation that visited Sudan in February.

We at St. Mark's are committed to and excited about strengthening and enriching our programs for middle and high school youth.

Adult Education

St. Mark's has a long history of providing lively and engaging educational opportunities for adults, as well as children. The **Adult Education** class meets in the hour between Sunday services, at the same time as children's Sunday School. Recent topics have included an examination of Christians and the political process (just in time for the November presidential election), a study of the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, a review of Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" and a discussion about spiritual mentors (including Edith Stein and Robert Coles.) Instructors for our sessions include St. Mark's clergy and parishioners, as well as experts from local colleges.

The adult education classes are ... as helpful to my spiritual growth as the sermons and the music

Another long-standing tradition is the **Wednesday morning Bible study**, which celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary this year. The group convenes at 6 a.m. with coffee and donuts. This study group is led by a parishioner – clergy are not required to attend!

Once a year the clergy sponsor an **Inquirer's Class** for those adults who wish to learn about the Episcopal faith or desire to be received into or confirmed in the Episcopal Church. **Women to Women** meets twice monthly and provides a regular opportunity for all the women of St. Mark's to support each other and enjoy each others' company. This intergenerational group also has an annual retreat in the fall. **Neighborhood Fellowships** also meet regularly for study, support, and prayer.



Fall 2004 Women to Women Retreat

Missions & Outreach

The Missions & Outreach (M&O) Commission serves as the formal parish expression of Christ's love extending from St. Mark's to the community and to the world. The Commission has supported Episcopal missionary families in Chile and Kenya, Five Talents (an Anglican micro-enterprise organization), and the work of the International Centre of Reconciliation of Coventry Cathedral (England) and its Directors, Canons Andrew White and Justin Welby. Closer to home, M&O has established an on-going relationship with St. Gregory School, an Episcopal school for boys in inner-city Chicago. M&O has also regularly supported a number of community service agencies that care for the elderly, the homeless, those suffering from addiction, and the sick.

Besides the official channels of M&O, the church and its members reach out beyond the parish in many ways, including: serving on the board of the diocesan Cathedral Shelter, participating in the Shelter's Christmas basket program for needy families, volunteering at PADS (a community based program for the homeless), volunteering at the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry, taking part in the community wide CROP Walk, working with Habitat for Humanity and working with the People's Resource Center. As we anticipate new clerical leadership, we look forward to invigorating our present commitments and taking on additional ones.



"Soup's on" at the 2004 Holiday Bazaar for the benefit of Habitat for Humanity and Glen Ellyn Youth and Family Counseling Services

Daughters of the King

St. Anne Chapter of the Daughters of the King currently has 30 active members and almost 70 years of history at St. Mark's. Throughout the years the service provided by the women has been as varied as the women themselves, and this tradition continues today. Many members serve the Lord by participating in the Altar Guild, others are called to funeral and wedding hospitality, and some women serve on their knees in fervent prayer.



St. Mark's Daughters of the King Salad Supper, May 2005

Our Facilities

St. Mark's Episcopal Church is located at the corner of Main St. and Hillside Ave. in downtown, picturesque Glen Ellyn. Our beautiful stone building is reminiscent of an earlier time in church architecture, but is actually a blend of old and new. The original stone church began in 1949 and was extended in 1960.

The people are the church, not the buildings. But we do have beautiful buildings.



Our new parish hall and education building, which so beautifully blends with the previous church building, was completed in 2003 on the site of the old Parish Hall and Education building. The building was honored with a Craftsman Gold Award, the Village of Glen Ellyn Design Award, and a Best Religious Silver Award for Excellence in Masonry from the Illinois Indiana Masonry Council.

The worship space, nave and adjoining chapel are graced with wood beams and white walls punctuated by beautiful stained glass windows. The space inspires, and allows for solemnity; it is a place of meditation and prayer as well as praise and celebration. The nave seats 300 worshippers and the adjoining chapel seats 30.

Our new education building has eight classrooms, a nursery and a large room for our youth group. The lower hall beneath the sanctuary, which we call the 'undercroft', has additional rooms for classrooms, offices and meeting spaces. Mahon Hall, our beautiful new parish hall, is named for our beloved late deacon Jeannine Mahon. South of the sanctuary are the library, parlor, and main offices.

A loft above the rear of the nave houses the organ and provides space for the choir. The pipe organ was custom designed and built for our parish by the firm of J.W. Walker and Sons, Ltd. of Brandon, Suffolk, England. It arrived for installation on Shrove Tuesday of 1991 and was blessed and first used in services at the Great Vigil of Easter that same year. It is a wonderful part of St. Mark's, and receives high praise for its flexibility, action, and warmth and breadth of sound.



St. Mark's Columbarium

The Columbarium is located adjacent to the chapel on building grounds. It provides wall niches and ground sites for the remains of deceased parish members and their families. It also serves as a peaceful garden for prayer or meditation. The remaining grounds are beautifully landscaped and include a small playground.

St. Mark's is blessed with a beautiful and spacious rectory, completed in 2000 adjacent to the church on the location of the former curacy. This lovely home was designed in the Craftsman style to blend with the neighborhood, and the inside design continues with Craftsman simplicity. It is a home that will nurture our clergy for generations to come.



St. Mark's Rectory

St. Mark's Parish History

Our First Century 1897 – 1997

The first Episcopal service was held in Glen Ellyn on July 11, 1897. The Rev. William P. Hawthorne, rector of Trinity Church, Wheaton, conducted the worship service. Ten communicants and a large number of friends attended.

In 1900, a frame building was erected on Hillside Avenue and Main Street, St. Mark's became a Mission Church, and Bishop Anderson confirmed a class of eight. St. Mark's achieved parish status on June 19, 1909.

Guild Hall was built in 1916 and served St. Mark's and the community until it was demolished in 2001. In 1923, St. Mark's purchased a new organ from the Hill Organ Company which, with substantial modifications, was used until 1990 when the current tracker organ made by J. W. Walker and Sons, England, was purchased.

By 1949, the old frame church building could no longer serve the needs of the parish and, under the leadership of Dean Gowan C. Williams who served as rector from 1929 to 1964, construction of our present church buildings began. The Gothic Revival stone church building with colorful stained-glass windows was dedicated by Bishop Conkling on September 28, 1952. Thereafter, the old church edifice was removed and a new two-story church school building was added adjoining Guild Hall. On October 7, 1962, this addition was consecrated by Bishop Burrill.

In September 1964, the Rev. Alfred Whistler became rector. During Father Whistler's tenure, the church building was extended, furnished with new pews and a new pulpit, and equipped with new lighting and a new sound system.

The last rector of our first century was the Rev. Raymond E. Cole, Jr. who served the parish from 1979 until June of 1996. St. Mark's celebrated its centennial anniversary with a Solemn Pontifical Eucharist on April 20, 1997. The Right Reverend Frank T. Griswold, III, Bishop of Chicago, was the celebrant.

Recent History 1997 – 2004

The Rev. Charles F. Edgar, III was called in 1997 to be rector of St. Mark's. During Fr. Edgar's tenure we experienced thought-provoking sermons, active Christian education for all age groups, excellent music, addition of the Columbarium, and significant growth in the parish. With Fr. Edgar's leadership, this growth motivated us to undertake construction of our new education building and parish hall, which was completed in the fall of 2003. This ambitious \$4.1 million project involved upgrades to the infrastructure of the existing buildings, removal of the old Guild Hall, and construction of the new building. It made our facilities accessible to parishioners and visitors with disabilities, brought us into compliance with contemporary safety codes, and most importantly, met our growing needs for more space for fellowship and education programs for all ages.

Divisions in St. Mark's came to the forefront in August 2003 when Fr. Edgar found his interpretation of scripture to be incompatible with the Episcopal Church USA. He resigned not only from St. Mark's and the Diocese of Chicago, but also from ECUSA. Our assistant priest likewise resigned from St. Mark's and from ECUSA in mid-2004. Many parishioners, including one of the wardens and about half of the vestry, followed, feeling that they could not continue to worship in a parish affiliated with the Episcopal Church USA. Some of them founded a new church nearby, leaving St. Mark's with significantly fewer members and with a profound sense of loss.

The Interim Period mid-2004 – 2005

Under the able leadership of our interim rector, the Rev. Sheila Ferguson, St. Mark's has been adjusting to the loss of our clergy, our friends, and our Christian brothers and sisters. Rev. Ferguson and the Rev. Dr. Walter Dunnett have helped us heal from this trauma, and with their inspiration we continue to thrive as an active Christian community. The challenges have been significant and we have responded. Although our pledging units decreased by about a third, we are now on track with our 2005 operating budget. We had a successful follow-up building campaign that is enabling us to meet loan obligations. We anticipate beginning another capital campaign in 2006.

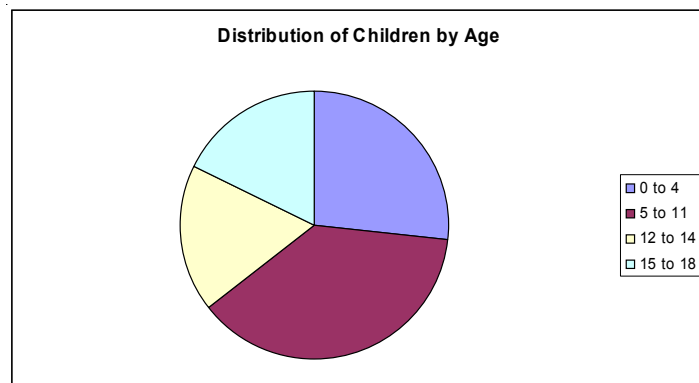
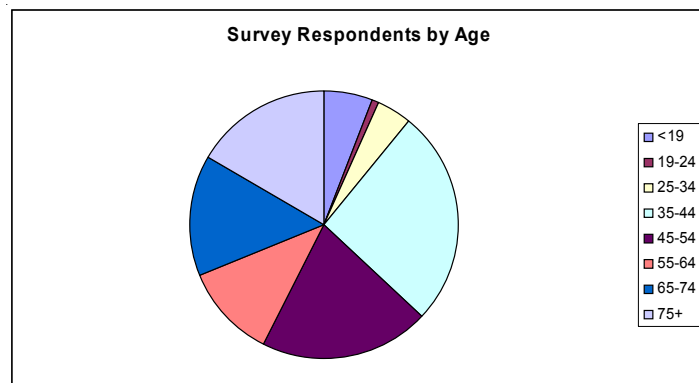
God continues to bless St. Mark's. Our next rector will join a parish that has acted out its faith in the face of challenging circumstances and is committed to our future together. We have stepped up to fill the voids created by those who left – as vestry members, Sunday School teachers, Daughters of the King, choir members, office volunteers, and many other parish roles. Among respondents to our 2005 Parish Survey, 47% say that their participation in church activities has increased over the past two years. While many people say they are already doing as much as they can, a third of respondents say they would be willing to volunteer more if asked.

Our View of Ourselves

The following material comes from responses to an April 2005 parish survey.

Who responded: We had a high response rate; close to 150 parishioners answered the adult survey. Forty-six percent (46%) of the respondents were between 35 and 54 years old, and 41% are 55 or over. The majority (69%) have been Episcopalian for at least 16 years and more than half of those consider themselves “cradle Episcopalians.” A majority of 79% attend almost every Sunday, and 69% pledge to both the building and operating funds.

There are about 100 children in the households represented by the survey respondents; over half are under 12 years old. About 72% of the children actively participate in parish life. Twenty children in 3rd through 8th grades completed a separate youth survey. These young parishioners are extremely involved, responding that they participate in an average of 4.5 parish activities. Overall they are pleased with St Mark's but want more activities for youth.



How We View Our Parish: Most people agreed that St. Mark's is a warm and inclusive community. There were some interesting exceptions, however. About half feel that St. Mark's does not have enough events to help people get to know each other. Some also feel that we can do a better job welcoming newcomers and helping people get involved in the parish.

An overwhelming majority are pleased with St. Mark's worship services (81%) and value and enjoy the music program (88%).

Although 45% responded that they do not know much about the adult education program, a large majority of those who did respond expressed satisfaction with the program.

Many respondents (38%) said they do not know much about St. Mark's mission and outreach programs. A majority (55%) would like to learn more about these activities.

The most positive responses pertain to the children in St. Mark's parish. A large majority of parents feel positive about their children's welcome at St. Mark's, their spiritual growth and their educational programs (especially those for nursery age through grade 5). There is not as much agreement regarding teenagers. While most parents are positive about their teenagers' spiritual life and growth at St. Mark's, opinions are mixed about how we welcome youth and about their educational program.

A strong majority of respondents (69%) believe that, outside the core beliefs of the Episcopal faith, there is a diversity of theological views at St. Mark's, and that this diversity is beneficial to their own spiritual growth and faith (87%). Eighty-one percent (81%) feel comfortable holding views that differ from those of others in the parish.

For more details, explore "Survey Results" on our website, www.stmarksglenellyn.org.



Parish Statistics:

Average Sunday Attendance

12 months ending May 31, 2005 190

Budget

2005 Operating Budget \$317,697

2005 Debt Service Budget \$141,240

2005 Total Budget \$458,937

2005 Pledge Units 135

Endowment* None

Restricted and Memorial Funds 12/31/2004 \$274,186

Building Mortgage / Loans \$2,716,966

* Plans for future endowment are underway.

Our Vision for Our Parish

Our April 2005 survey asked respondents to rank various components of the church's mission. These results tell us that our parishioners believe that we should be about:

1. Providing worship that deepens members' experience of God and the Christian tradition.
2. Helping members deepen their personal and spiritual relationships with God and with each other.
3. Providing a caring ministry for the sick, shut-ins, those in crisis, and the bereaved within our parish.
4. Assisting the needy in our local community and beyond.
5. Providing religious education for parish members.

Additionally, growth in numbers is important to our parish. We believe this growth will come about by continuing to be an inviting parish and by focusing on achieving ever-increasing strength in the five ministries listed above.

It is important that movement comes from one's heart. ... Joy comes as a gift from God and God needs to be trusted to transform our community.

Parish Picnic, 2005



Egg toss



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For more information, explore our website to see our *Annual Report for 2004*, recent issues of our monthly newsletter the *PostMark*, our *Mission and Outreach* page, more comprehensive results of the 2005 Parish Survey, and other descriptions of parish activities.