

Vestry Meeting Highlights – St. Mark's Episcopal Church – 19 May 2009, 730pm

1. Consent Agenda: corrections to March minutes, vote on discretionary fund for Katie, and approval of finance audit authorization; these items all moved to the Discussion Agenda.

- March minutes: correction to April attendees list.
- Katie's discretionary fund: \$5878 was disbursed to St. Andrew's Church, Elyria – Katie's new parish.
- Finance audit authorization: Eric: audit not done since 2005; suggest we get back on a three-year schedule. Resolution to engage and accept the terms of accounting firm Selden Fox to perform an informal audit on the books of St. Mark's in 2009 (per their letter of April 22) was approved unanimously.
- George distributed a calendar for monthly planning / rotation of ministry reports at vestry meetings.

2. Rector's Report: George

- The 3rd annual St. Mark's Cinco de Mayo dinner was held on Saturday, May 11 and attended by over 100 parishioners and friends. Combined with the Mother's Day rose sale, the two events have raised over \$4,000 for our partnership with San Marcos. Many thanks to Kim Reed, Norma and Miguel Briones, Kim Toliver, Fiona Miller, Andrew Dorn and Bud Zweibel for their planning and hard work.
- Fourteen people from St. Mark's attended this year's Bishops Associates lunch on Thursday, May 7. The Bishops Associates sponsor events and programs that bring members of many different congregations together. Parishioner Donald Sutherland serves on the board of the Bishops Associates.
- A spring clean-up day was held on Saturday, May 2nd. A special thanks to Dick Mylander for organizing this event and grilling a delicious lunch for the hungry volunteers.
- Baptism and farewell: Kate Adler was baptized on Sunday, April 26th. This was also Katie Wright's last Sunday at St. Mark's. Katie's first Sunday at St. Andrew's in Elyria, Ohio is May 10th. At the coffee hours, presents and applause were offered to Katie and her family in recognition of their many contributions to St. Mark's.
- George Smith presented a workshop on conflict at the Diocesan Ministry Fair on Saturday, April 25th. The workshop title: Managing Conflict for Congregational Vitality.
- Bishop Scantlebury visited St. Mark's on Sunday, April 19th, confirming six 8th graders, 1 adult and receiving 2 adults into the Episcopal Church. The bishop met with confirmands, mentors and parents for breakfast in Mahon Hall before the 10:30 a.m. service. Following coffee hour, the Bishop met with the vestry for conversation.
- St. Mark's has applied to the Congregations Commission of the Diocese of Chicago for a three year grant to help fund an associate rector position. Notification of the grant request will be in June.
- I am pleased to announce that The Rev. Robin Currie will be assisting at the altar and with other pastoral duties as her schedule permits. Robin is a Lutheran (ELCA) minister who retired from Grace Lutheran Church in Glen Ellyn in 2008. She and her husband, Bob Beeching, have been attending St. Mark's since last fall.
- I am pleased to welcome Charles (Chuck) Tupta as a field education student at St. Mark's. During the summer and fall of 2009, Chuck will be worshipping at St. Mark's and assisting with several projects, including updating our web site and assisting in planning the Giving Campaign. Chuck and his partner, Sam live in Oak Park. In recent years, Chuck has worshipped at Grace Episcopal Church in Oak Park and St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Chicago.

3. Ben Varnum: youth programs consultant

George: Two different ways (models) that youth programs often work

- a) programs feature a central youth leader – who then burns out, and the youth bail; OR
- b) worship-centric model is developed, centering on family worship, integrated participation (readers, acolytes, etc.), plus weekly separate meetings and get-togethers, plus special events. This model needs a FACILITATOR (Marsha, right now) to coordinate the volunteers, NOT be the leader.

Model b) may take 3-5 years to fully develop; keyword here is RELATIONSHIP: the whole parish values the relationship.

Ben: this parish is starting from a good place: George did the research, and I can see your energy and commitment. Youth ministry does burn out rapidly, often on a 2-3 year cycle.

We'll use the acronym "PART" here to discuss a successful model:

- P: parental involvement: support and logistics;
- A: authenticity to lived-experience: young people are thinking through what they believe; if there is no authenticity, they will walk away;
- R: relational: the leader works with and is depended-upon hard by the kids – sometimes too hard; youth issues can be challenging;
- T: true to the Gospel.

We'll use another word as acronym to model a successful program:

- G: grow from strengths in the parish (music, mission, volunteerism);
- O: oversupport the programs: come up with different ways to support them, even if \$\$ are short;
- D: dream BIG: think creatively to deal with challenges such as busy youth calendars.

4. Open Items list circulated for discussion:

- special needs parking spaces requested by parishioners: DONE
- vestry request to include a Campbell Trust line-item in the Treasurer's report: DONE
- vestry to revisit M&O survey in August or so: OPEN – surveys still coming in.
- ensure clarity around M&O budget: OPEN – finance will be invited to M&O meetings
- shore up communications around M&O initiatives: OPEN – in process; vestry being asked to support suggestions / direction of M&O survey
- explore engagement with another consultant for capital campaign: OPEN – in process; rector, wardens, and members of capital campaign exploratory committee held a conference call with Ray Christenson of Philanthropic Stewardship Council.

Unofficial notes by Daniel Conaway