

Visioning Small Group
 Sunday, September 20, 2009
 St. Mark's Library

Attendees: Dan Conaway, Wilma Linde, Tanya Carey, Gerald Carey, David Fletcher, Joyce Fletcher

Facilitator & Provider of Lunch: Jeff Hill

We met at noon, a little after the 10:30 service ended. I was surprised that there were not more people. I had invited several other people and also thought the time would be convenient. While the numbers were not large, we still had a good mix of people: relative newcomers and long term members; people from the early service and others from the late service; and there were equal numbers of men and woman. .

We started with lunch and got to know each other better while we ate, and began around 12:30. Joyce and David Fletcher were hosting coffee hour and could not arrive until later.

There was a great deal of information sharing. Dan Conaway serves as the Clerk on the Vestry and responded to a number of questions on what activities were being planned in music and outreach. There was also a good give and take on the role of music in the service. People were polite, but they were divided in what music they wanted.

Below are the ideas people presented as their hopes and dreams for St. Mark's, as well as few other ideas.

Category	Idea
Worship—Music	Greater emphasis on music during worship: more soloists and guests; more instruments; cantatas sung during worship
Worship—Music	Greater breadth of music: The music program should reflect diversity in terms of instrumental, vocal, and choral styles/ more diversity in eras of music from medieval chants to more contemporary.
Worship--Music	Music reflective of our global partnerships (African, Mexico, etc.)
Worship—Music	Charles or Marsha leading the congregation before the service to teach the music
Worship--Music	Slow down adding “sung” sections. The words are lost when it is sung and the impact of the message is altered.
Worship	Name tag Sunday should be emphasized more and added to the 8:00 service
Worship	integrate worship and music with global partnerships, e.g., Sunday School programs teaching about our Mexican partnerships while having worship also reflect Mexico
Fellowship and Community	Men's Retreat

Category	Idea
Fellowship and Community	Help newcomers become comfortable. Mix old and new members in a mentor system and publicize it so that it is widely known.
Fellowship and Community	Develop more small groups: study, service, etc. Push interaction within parish
Fellowship and Community	Grow the congregation, but how large is enough before we lose the community?
Fellowship and Community	Couples Retreat
Fellowship and Community	Singles group among the area parishes (St. Mark's, Trinity, St. Barnabas, St. John) to build a large enough membership for the group.
Fellowship and Community	Continue to expand intergenerational events such as the Superbowl Shuffle and the Women's Retreat
Fellowship and Community --Music and Art	Build and Arts Center, Concert Series, and rotating art display.
Fellowship and Community --Music and Art	An orchestra among all the local parishes or all local Episcopal parishes
Fellowship and Community --Music and Art	Once a year, have an orchestra of all the people and children in the church.
The Episcopal Church and the Chicago Diocese	Closer ties to other Episcopal Churches
The Episcopal Church and the Chicago Diocese	Emphasize more of a connection to the Diocese and the National Church.
Service—Targeting	Develop stronger <i>missions</i> , not just outreach. Build up the church and the Anglican Communion (e.g., the McGregors).
Service--Targeting	Target our service: clearly define our service missions to the larger church, the community, the national and the world, and take on projects that we can manage so we don't wear people out.
Service—Targeting	Target our service: identify service to provide and target local needs, regional needs, national needs, and international needs, in that order.
Service—Recruitment	Keep involving all members of the congregation so it is not "elitist"
Service—Recruitment	Rebalance from the 80/20 rule
Service—Recruitment	Call to invite people to serve, rather than waiting for them to sign up.
Service—Recruitment	Adapt to the parishioners who have constraints to allow them to contribute also.
Service—Recruitment	Have a goal of every parishioner in one ministry (or more) outside of Sunday services.
Education	Keep the two tracts of adult programs
Education	Draw on topics in the community for adult ed.

Category	Idea
Education	Bring in “outside” ideas with presenters who bring other points of view, e.g., other faiths and traditions
Education	In depth courses to improve theological understanding. e.g., School of Christian Studies
Education—Youth	synchronize children’s education with the liturgy
General—Parking	Set aside spaces for seniors and others who need closer access.
General--finances	Become solvent
General—environmental	keep moving toward being “Green.”