

St. Francis-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church Strategic Plan 2007-2011

In the fall of 2006, St. Francis' Rector Sandi Michels invited representatives of the congregation to serve on a Committee to develop a strategic plan to guide the development of the church for the next several years. The Committee has spent the last year:

- 👂 Gathering information and perspective on the history and evolution of St. Francis and developing a historical timeline.
- 👂 Gathering information from members of the congregation on what they value about St. Francis, their concerns, and their aspirations for the church's future. Written surveys were available for completion on-line and following church services. Six focus groups were held at the church and in parishioners' homes. In all, the Committee received input from over 100 parishioners.
- 👂 Interviewing members of the Zionsville community at large including representatives of other congregations and civic officials.
- 👂 Meeting to discuss the input it received, identify common themes and deliberate how this input should inform a plan for St. Francis' strategic direction.

In August, 2007, the Committee participated with the Vestry in a two-day retreat where participants:

- 👂 Reviewed and discussed their shared history at St. Francis.
- 👂 Developed consensus on publics to be served by St. Francis (e.g. parishioners, families, youth, children, those with pastoral need; publics to be attended to (e.g. the Diocese, targets of church ministries); and publics to be considered (e.g. other congregations, the Zionsville community, the Anglican Communion.)
- 👂 Shared their visions for the future of St. Francis.
- 👂 Began the process of developing a renewed mission statement, strategic goals and objectives to be met in their pursuit.

The Long Range Planning Committee recommends that the Vestry adopt the following Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives as the basis of a strategic plan to guide St. Francis into the future. The Vestry is best positioned to identify tasks and timelines to meet the objectives outlined in the plan and allocate church resources accordingly.

The Committee believes these goals honor St. Francis' history, allow St. Francis to retain those qualities parishioners value, and will move St. Francis toward to the church's' preferred future as a *growing, caring and faithful* Christian community.

St. Francis-of-the-Field Episcopal Church's Mission:

St. Francis strives to be a welcoming and nurturing community of servants of the Lord, worshiping in the Episcopal tradition, dedicated to supporting all who seek a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, through Christian education, spiritual formation, and service to others. Together may we grow in God's Grace and be instruments of God's Peace and Love in the world.

".....a welcoming and nurturing community....."

Goal 1: Increase the visibility of St. Francis in the community.

- † Demonstrate that we are a welcoming parish through our presence and participation.
- † Maintain attractive facilities and property.
- † Support and expand existing activities that provide visibility, such as the music series and the pumpkin patch.
- † Explore new activities that increase visibility, such as the award-winning float in the Fall Festival Parade.

"....worshiping in the Episcopal tradition...."

Goal 2: Explore additional forms of worship.

- † While keeping traditional Anglican liturgy central to our worship, explore a wide range of liturgical options, such as a Sunday evening contemporary service.
- † Establish a Worship Task Force, involving laity, clergy and music ministry, to survey the congregation, research options and develop specific recommendations.
- † Encourage greater participation in music ministries, including building children's music involvement through integration of music and Christian education.

“...supporting all who seek a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, through Christian Education, spiritual formation....”

Goal 3: Provide Christian education, experiences and activities that deepen spiritual growth and depth.

- † Develop and promote educational programs with primary focus on reinvigorating Sunday School offerings, such as the 4-6 program.
- † Increase involvement in adult offerings, including on-going programs such as Adult Forum and Bible studies, as well as selected special programs, such as Vacation Bible School and special lecture series.
- † Establish a Christian Education Task Force to evaluate long-term needs, including allocation of paid staff resources, training and support for lay Christian education ministry, educational materials and overall facilities.

“...supporting all who seek a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, through Christian Education, spiritual formation and service to others....”

Goal 4: Provide programming for our youth that builds community, engages their energies and enhances their Christian formation.

- † Develop a well-rounded program for youth grades 7-12 that includes not just fellowship, but also education, worship, outreach to the community and service to the church.
- † Create a youth task force consisting of youth, adult and clergy representatives to evaluate and plan youth programs.
- † Develop a mission statement for the youth program, develop a youth ministries budget, and plan/fund yearly mission trips.
- † Improve communications with parish youth and parents about activities.

”through service to others...”

Goal 5: Increase our commitment to Christian service through outreach to the community.

- † Identify ministries we want to support as a congregation and organize appropriate projects, creating general guidelines for appropriate projects, communicating with the parish and greater community, and being open to new opportunities for the church to serve.
- † Continuing to include support for the community as a budget item and provide opportunities for providing monetary support by the congregation for local, diocesan and national church programs.
- † Focus greater attention to supporting the ministries of individual parishioners, maintaining the outreach file box with information about volunteer possibilities and finding new ways to recognize and celebrate involvement.

“Together may we grow in God’s grace and be instruments of God’s peace and love in the world.”

Goal 6: Provide appropriate clergy and lay staffing to support the programs that the church undertakes.

- † Create a personnel committee to include the Rector, at least one vestry member and two others from the congregation to evaluate staff needs on a regular basis.
- † Create an organizational chart for the parish, write and review staff job descriptions and maintain an up-to-date employee handbook.
- † Provide training and support for lay volunteers who carry out programs, taking advantage of diocesan training program support, providing written job descriptions for volunteers and finding ways to recognize volunteers for work done.

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Goal 7: Develop and implement a plan for leadership transition.

- † Anticipating the retirement of our current Rector within the next 1-3 years, begin preparation by consulting with the Diocese to determine transition requirements and processes.
- † Develop a comprehensive plan for leading the congregation in an orderly transition.

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Goal 8: Improve internal and external communications.

- † Develop complete, accurate contact information for our membership and other publics served.
- † Identify a full range of communications methods and assure their availability to staff and lay leadership.
- † Establish written protocols that result in clear and timely communications of parish information and activities to affected publics.

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Goal 9: Increase participation of current membership in church activities.

- † Increase our attention to helping “attendees” become full “participants” as we build a true community of servants.
- † Develop a comprehensive program for welcoming newcomers, providing orientation and opportunities for involvement.
- † Focus as well on re-energizing our current membership, tracking “active membership” and exploring new programs to link individuals, families, members with special interests and ministries.
- † Provide a better means of identifying and responding to the needs of the lonely and lost sheep among us in our efforts to be a truly “welcoming and nurturing community of servants of the Lord.”

Recommended to the Vestry, October 14, 2007 by the Long Range Planning Committee:

Joyce Alley

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Adopted by the Vestry, October 15, 2007

[Member signatures]