

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral

2014-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Visioning Task Force met from June–October, 2013. Task force members included Co-chairs Maria Coldwell and John Neitzel, Dean Steve Thomason, Senior Warden Walter Stuteville, Junior Warden Jo Ann Bailey, Carmen Brady, Mac Brown, Mel Butler, Lynne Markova, Cara Peterson, Anjelica Sloan, and Kathleen Tyrrell. Committee members worked with the various active ministries and committees at Saint Mark's over the summer months, and two congregational forums were held in September 2013 to gather input. The Vestry reviewed the first draft at its workday on October 26, 2013. The revised Plan was sent out to committee chairs for further review and edits in November. The final draft of the plan was approved by the Vestry on December 17, 2013.

The Task Force made a conscious decision to preserve as much of the original wording as possible of comments and suggestions made at meetings and forums, so that readers may hear the voices of various individuals in the plan. The level of detail that came up in meetings, however, was much higher than we could include. All of the comments recorded at various meetings and forums are

preserved in individual reports posted on the Saint Mark's web site Strategic Visioning page. It is our hope that the various committees and ministries will use the detailed reports they created, in addition to the Strategic Plan itself, as planning tools for their groups.

For organizational purposes, the Plan is divided into five major sections, corresponding to the five major ministry areas at Saint Mark's (Prayer, Worship, Faith Formation, Justice, and Community Life). However, we hope that the implementation of the Plan will not take place in "silos," with committees and ministry groups paying attention only to their particular areas. Rather, we hope that all members of the congregation will familiarize themselves with the Plan as a whole, and recognize how their particular area of interest fits in and overlaps with other areas.

This is a time of great change and activity at Saint Mark's, and as a result, this Plan will most likely be out of date a year from now. It is our hope, therefore, that the Plan will be updated by the Vestry once a year, at the time of the new Vestry's formation (generally the February Vestry retreat).

VISION ⊕ MISSION ⊕ VALUES ⊕ MAJOR GOALS

WHO WE ARE

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral strives to be:

- A house of prayer for all people, where we worship God and proclaim the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ
- A loving, welcoming, inclusive community that nurtures faith, encourages service, and integrates social and environmental justice into our lives
- A sacred gathering place for the Diocese of Olympia and the broader community in times of crisis, sorrow, and celebration

WHAT WE DO

- We gather in **prayer** to experience God and to seek spiritual renewal and direction
- We offer diverse **worship** services that engage people through liturgy, spoken word, and music
- We create **faith formation** opportunities that invite people to grow, wherever they are on their journey of faith
- We build a vibrant **community life** by sharing our stories and nurturing our relationships
- We practice Christ's message of **justice** in all of our ministries through service to others

Our spiritual practices include:

daily prayer
weekly worship
regular study
serving others
taking Sabbath time for renewal
practicing hospitality to all
generous, joyful giving from what we have been given

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Welcome—We invite people of all faiths and cultures to share this house of prayer.

Inspire—We are inspired by the light of Christ and are fed by the deep springs of the Spirit.

Transform—We seek to be transformed by love and to share this love generously with others.

Serve—We serve the poor and those in need, we engage in the work of justice at home and abroad, and we seek to be good stewards of the earth.

WHERE WE WANT TO GO:

- Create more opportunities to nurture our spirituality through prayer and worship
- Enhance efforts to integrate new members and more fully engage existing members in our community life
- Renovate and upgrade our facilities to preserve them for the future, improve accessibility and sustainability, and support the ministries of the cathedral
- Increase staff, both clergy and lay, to address our growing pastoral care and ministry needs
- Improve cathedral communications to better share the many facets of our ministries with each other, the diocese, and the world
- Develop a strong linkage between the cathedral and the congregations of the diocese, to act on our role as the cathedral church of the diocese.

STRATEGIC GOALS

*Divided into 5 main sections: Prayer, Worship, Faith Formation, Justice, Community Life
Plus a special section on Immediate Priorities for Cathedral Facilities*

PRAYER

- Create more opportunities to be together in prayer, contemplation, and silence
 - Practice in small groups at diverse times
 - Offer seasonal, parish-wide, quiet days
- Encourage a focus on “being” and “reflecting” rather than constantly “doing”
 - “Be still” and practice spirituality in acts of ministry
 - Reflect on why we do what we do in ministry
- Increase awareness of and participation in the Daily Office
 - Evening Prayer
 - Evensong
- Intentionally incorporate prayer into all areas of ministry
- Transform the community through a new understanding of prayer

WORSHIP

- Make the various Sunday services “signature services”—each with unique characteristics—to appeal and respond to particular constituencies with the hope of increasing participation
- Provide Anglican instruction
 - Offer instructed liturgies
 - Engage in theological conversations and explanations about rituals
- Increase participation of children in both liturgy and music
 - Joint liturgies with cathedral choirs and Compline Choir
 - Especially in the 9am service, include children in diverse roles throughout
- Offer diversity of clergy voices that reflect our broad community, in preaching and presiding
- Enhance the worship experience with visual elements
 - New vestments and liturgical furnishings
 - More flowers
 - Art exhibits in the Nave
- Create more opportunities for the diocese to join in worship at the cathedral
 - Guest preachers from various parishes
 - Cathedral Day and other special events/liturgies
- Provide liturgical resourcing to diocesan congregations, either as invited or through workshops

FAITH FORMATION

- Support the excellent faith formation work being done in Sunday school and the children’s music programs
- Repeat multi-parish youth confirmation classes and inquirers’ classes
- Expand participation in youth group
 - Increase involvement with youth who are struggling because of health, sexual orientation, bullying, or homelessness

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FAITH FORMATION (*Cont'd.*)

- More activities just to hang out, like bowling, pizza, or ice skating
- Provide opportunities for parent participation
 - Parents together for classes and groups
 - Parish-wide activities at times parents can participate
- Offer inter-generational events
 - Opportunities for support and shared knowledge
 - Live the Baptismal promise “Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?”
- Encourage, and provide tools for, home spiritual practices for all ages
- Instruct the parish in all aspects of what it means to be Episcopalian
 - Radical hospitality—“everyone is welcome”
 - Spirituality
 - Worship, Word, Sacrament
- As a cathedral commons, invite recognized spiritual leaders and educators who will serve the diocese and the greater Seattle community
- Offer diverse adult faith formation opportunities that nourish spirituality
 - Sunday, daytime and evening schedules
 - Ongoing series, Bible studies, book studies and/or one-time events
 - Advent and Lenten topics that meet during the specific season
 - Quiet days
- Encourage continued growth and participation in faith formation events.

JUSTICE

- Develop a mission statement and overall plan for the Justice Ministries at Saint Mark’s
- Expand offerings to increase interest within the whole St. Mark’s congregation
 - Offer more parish-wide service opportunities and more limited-time opportunities
 - Offer more educational activities, including forums, classes, and guest speakers
 - Provide opportunities for pilgrimages
 - Use social media and other applications to create updated, engaging informational resources
- Integrate ministry activities more fully into the overall life of the Cathedral
 - Provide a spiritual focus for the ministries
 - Align practices within Saint Mark’s with the values of the Justice Ministries
- Build and expand the volunteer and leadership base
 - Increase volunteer and leadership recruitment efforts to ensure ministry growth and sustainability and to avoid burnout
 - Use social media as a recruitment device to expand messaging beyond core group
- Improve ministry partnerships
 - Build stronger partnerships within the Justice Ministries through better communication, collaboration, setting of norms and focus group evaluations
 - Continue to build relationships within the diocese and broader community
- Present controversial issues in a balanced manner
- Respectfully engage in dialogue with those with differing points of view

COMMUNITY LIFE

Divided into 8 subsections (Hospitality and Building our Community; Communications; The Arts; Cathedral Shop; St. Mark's Counseling Service; Preschool; Stewardship and Building our Resources; Facilities)

Hospitality and Building our Community

- Make hospitality everyone's responsibility
 - Educate people on how to be more hospitable; encourage more active listening
 - Involve more people as greeters, ushers, coffee hour hosts
- Incorporate newcomers more fully
 - Extend direct invitations to people to get involved in ministries
 - Have someone regularly available after services to answer questions about St. Mark's
- Increase the number of ministry volunteers in all areas
 - Ask for volunteers more directly, especially among seniors and young adults
 - Offer a volunteer-appreciation lunch or social once a year
- Make room for each of us to tell our stories in smaller, more intimate groups
 - Expand on the concept of Gratitude Gatherings—not just in the summer
 - Create “circles of trust”
- Build an intergenerational village
 - Create more opportunities for people of different generations to interact, work together, and build relationships
 - Create support networks for parents, including older people who've had experience
 - Make it easier for seniors and the disabled to participate in events, ensuring accessibility for all
 - Create more programs or events for young adults
- More FUN: social events, potlucks, parties, for all ages—intentionally schedule one a month
 - More participation: we need to “show up” for events and get involved
- Create a more welcoming Narthex for socializing before and after services and events

Communications

- Expand the online database to create a more data-rich and valuable directory
 - Include photos
 - Include information about professions, skills and gifts, areas of interest
- Make the many facets of Saint Mark's better known to the broader community by creating a brand and messaging strategy which reflects Saint Mark's strategic vision
 - Develop a visual identity, messaging framework and a tagline and improve awareness and perceptions of Saint Mark's across multiple communications channels
 - Rebuild the website to streamline it and make it easier to use
 - Leverage new technologies such as social media, YouTube, web streaming, and podcasting
- Improve SIGNAGE in the facilities for location, directions and brand messaging
- Hire a staff person dedicated to IT/web/social media strategy and execution

The Arts

- Use arts events to reach out to the diocese and the broader community
 - Increase publicity for current arts offerings to build audiences
- Increase the resources of the Arts Ministry
 - Seek dedicated financial gifts to sponsor arts projects
 - Recruit volunteers to manage events
 - Hire staff person to manage arts administration
- Increase participatory musical programs
 - Host an annual diocesan choir festival
 - Enlarge the summer choir camp for children
- Host more invitational visual arts exhibits that are spiritually based
- Create new or expanded offerings in the areas of drama, film, and writing
 - Develop a series of play readings
 - Develop a series of creative writing classes/workshops
 - Expand the film series

Cathedral Shop

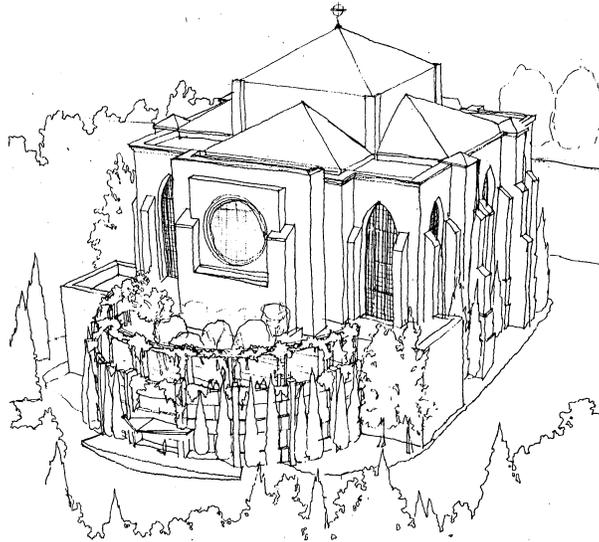
- Continue to serve as the “front door” of the cathedral, welcoming in visitors to the campus
- Build an e-commerce web site for shop sales
- Improve facilities at Leffler House to include more office and storage space for the shop

St. Mark's Counseling Service

- Continue to provide a ministry of healing through a professional counseling program with an Episcopalian and wider Christian perspective
- Continue to provide pre-marriage counseling for couples seeking the sacramental rite of marriage at St. Mark's and in the wider diocesan community
- Continue participating as an affiliate staff member on the Cathedral Staff Team
- Update and improve the website page for the counseling service

St. Mark's Preschool

- Make determination (early 2014) as to whether the Preschool will continue as a cathedral ministry
 - Explore possibility of separate non-profit status
 - Create a balanced-budget, self-sustaining entity
 - Consider the employee status of the preschool teachers (to include better benefits)
- Begin working to meet Episcopal school standards (curriculum revision, etc.)
- Market the school (rebrand the school?) to increase enrollment and to attract more Saint Mark's families
- Renovate the outdoor play space at Leffler House
- Plan for bigger, better space at St. Nicholas Building
- Plan for expanding the number of grades offered by the school

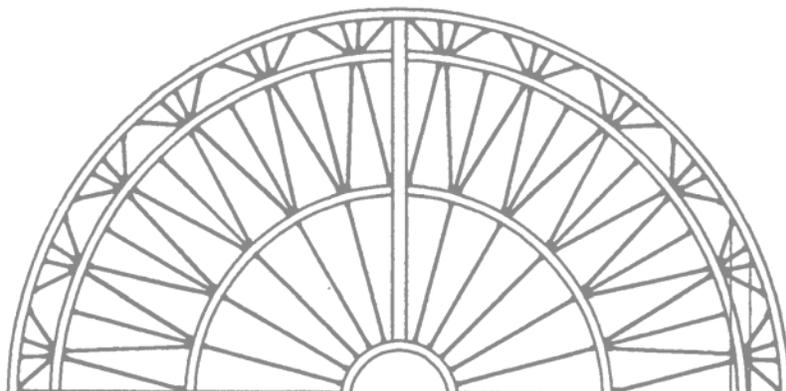


Stewardship and Building our Resources

- Move from a mindset of scarcity and fear to one of abundance and trust
- Make pledging a regular part of our spiritual practices
- Celebrate gifts of time and talent, as well as financial gifts
- Create a clear, multi-year set of financial priorities for the cathedral
- Communicate financial information regularly to the congregation in a transparent manner
- Increase staff, both clergy and lay
 - Add one full-time clergy position in 2014
 - Expand sexton hours as needed
 - Add lay staff positions in IT, capital campaign support, and elsewhere as needed
 - Do salary comparisons and compensate all staff appropriately
- Expand the role of the Foundation in building relationships and raising funds throughout the diocese
 - Encourage the Vestry and the Foundation to work together more closely
 - Integrate the Dean into the leadership of the Foundation
- Conduct a Capital Campaign in 2014 to raise funds to address our facilities needs and build for ministry
 - Spread campaign responsibilities as broadly as possible, involving many volunteers
 - Define the scope of the campaign and projects in light of the Feasibility Study conducted in fall 2013
 - Create a campus concept plan that includes the St. Nicholas Building, Leffler House, grounds and parking areas

Facilities

- Renovate cathedral facilities and systems, to preserve them for the future
- Enhance the cathedral's sustainability and energy efficiency
- Enhance the cathedral's accessibility
- Make the cathedral a more welcoming and functional space
- Create a maintenance and operations manual



SPECIAL SECTION: IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES FOR RENOVATING, IMPROVING, AND PRESERVING CATHEDRAL FACILITIES

- Enhance the cathedral's sustainability and energy efficiency by:
 - Sealing the exterior of the building and cladding it in limestone, as used previously on the West Wall
 - Designing and replacing windows in the nave with new insulated glass that matches the aesthetic of the Cathedral
 - Repairing the Cathedral roofing and soffits
 - Replacing the original boiler system with an efficient one
 - Installing a new radiant in-floor heat system and new flooring in the Nave and Narthex
 - Installing solar panels
- Enhance the cathedral's accessibility, by installing an elevator to connect the Nave with Bloedel Hall, and making other improvements as necessary
- Make the cathedral a more welcoming and functional space by:
 - Redesigning the Narthex and entry to provide a more spacious enclosed area
 - Replacing the existing pews with more flexible cathedral seating
 - Upgrading the sound system while preserving the acoustics of the Cathedral
 - Constructing a labyrinth
 - Improving the grounds and parking



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