



# SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

## *Introduction*

The Strategic Visioning Task Force met from May to December 2019. Task force members included Co-Chair Lynne Markova, Co-Chair and Senior Warden Julia Logan, Dean Steve Thomason, Linda Chia, Rachel McNary Crosbie, Kari Nasby, David Thompson, Scott Kovacs, Communications Director Greg Bloch, Head Verger and Cathedral Sacristan Michael Seewer, and Vestry members Roberta Kanive and Marjorie Ringness. Before convening the 2020 Strategic Planning Committee, the Vestry discussed its scope. They determined that the Mission, Vision and Values that had been developed for the 2013 plan should be revisited. This version of the Strategic Plan, therefore, would focus on updating the entire Strategic Plan.

As with the previous Strategic Plan, committee members gathered input from the various active ministries and committees at Saint Mark's over the summer and autumn. Two congregational forums were held in October 2019. This particular Strategic Planning Committee felt that the online survey could be a stronger instrument for data gathering. A task force met to develop the survey, which yielded over 80 responses, a much higher return rate than in previous years. Once the data was collected, it was

compiled and analyzed; an initial plan was drafted and went through several rounds of edits and reviews before being presented to and approved by the Vestry at its January 2020 meeting.

In writing the plan, the Task Force consciously chose to preserve the original wording of comments and suggestions, so that readers may hear the voices of various contributors to the plan. The level of detail that was collected, however, was much higher than we could include, with significant overlap on many key points. 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. The various groups are encouraged to use this information, in addition to the Strategic Plan itself, as planning tools for their groups.

The Strategic Plan is organized into five major sections, corresponding to the five major ministry areas at Saint Mark's (Prayer, Worship, Faith Formation, Justice, and Community Life). The goal for plan implementation is, however, that all members of the congregation will familiarize themselves with entire Plan and recognize how their area(s) of interest relates to other areas.

# MISSION, VISION, 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 and through care for God's creation.

## OUR SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

**Pray daily**

**Worship weekly**

**Learn constantly**

**Serve compassionately**

**Give generously**

**Welcome genuinely**

**Observe Sabbath time and make pilgrimage**

## 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 those experiencing economic injustice and marginalization, 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 worship, prayer, engagement of scripture, and participation in this community of faith.
- ◆ Develop a new 7-year plan for the St. Nicholas' building's use, care, and addressing deferred maintenance in responsible ways.

- ◆ Revise and expand the 2030 Campus Master Plan to address three principal goals: reduction of our carbon footprint, integration of campus assets, and upgrades to Cathedral nave interior and operating systems (heat, air, lighting, sound, electrical, flooring).
- ◆ Continue to upgrade our facilities to preserve them for the future, improve accessibility and sustainability, and support the ministries of the cathedral.
- ◆ Develop and maintain a sustainable clergy and lay staffing model, to support the cathedral's mission, and the parish's ministry needs, including a robust, multi-faceted pastoral care ministry.
- ◆ Continue to improve cathedral communications, including the use of technology, to better share the many facets of our ministries with each other, the diocese, and the world.
- ◆ Build on the growing linkage between the cathedral and the congregations of the diocese and continue to grow in our role as a diocesan resource for all Episcopalians in Western Washington.
- ◆ Explore additional opportunities to serve as a resource for the broader community and a gathering place for non-profits, the interfaith community, and greater Seattle and a gathering place for the community in times of crisis, sorrow or celebration.

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## STRATEGIC GOALS

### **PRAYER**

- ◆ Keep prayer at the center of all we do.
- ◆ Encourage all members to adopt a rule of life (or spiritual practices) that include daily practice of prayer.
- ◆ Provide educational opportunities and programming designed to assist people in the developing a sustainable practice of prayer, drawing on an array of methods and resources.
- ◆ Provide multiple opportunities for communal prayer, including Centering Prayer and other contemplative practices.
- ◆ Continue to offer support for the parish and the broader community in times of crisis, sorrow, or celebration, as a house of prayer for all people.

### **WORSHIP & MUSIC:**

- ◆ Preserve and enhance music and worship excellence, offering an array of liturgical experiences designed to meet the worshipping needs of a diverse community.
- ◆ Continue to support our excellence in preaching, with a full complement of voices.
- ◆ Continue our focus on excellent music. Consider offering the congregation and the broader community opportunities to gather to sing and make music occasionally.
- ◆ Provide more faith formation events about liturgy and music, including instructed Eucharists and history of hymns and our musical traditions.
- ◆ Support and expand the choir school.
- ◆ Consider offering musical instruction for those 0–5 years old.
- ◆ Continue to explore new expressions of liturgy, with intentional efforts to integrate expansive religious language in rites and music.

- ◆ Invite more children and youth to serve as worship leaders (i.e. acolytes, lectors, etc.) at all services. Welcome and integrate new, diverse worship leaders on an ongoing basis.
- ◆ Provide more opportunities for exploration of diverse musical styles and for collaboration with other faith traditions.

## **FAITH FORMATION**

- ◆ Build on and expand Wisdom School; continue providing space for deeper conversations.
- ◆ Develop and launch a new “Cathedral College” with a diverse faculty offering an array of tuition-based classes and series that engage the body, mind and spirit with academic rigor.
- ◆ Establish the position of Canon Theologian for the Cathedral.
- ◆ Identify a “common theme” for the program year in which the whole community can participate.
- ◆ Expand faith formation opportunities for affinity groups, such as young adults, parents or seniors.
- ◆ Continue to offer and grow opportunities for retreat and pilgrimage to sacred places.
- ◆ Provide expanded opportunities for study of Scripture and theology.
- ◆ Link Faith Formation events to current issues, including racial reconciliation, climate change, income inequality, structural social injustices, and other relevant topics. Offer an expanded series and opportunities to discuss and reflect on these topics.
- ◆ Offer discussions on death and dying, funeral planning, situating our mortality in the context of the faith journey.
- ◆ Offer more intergenerational events that draw the community together, such as Eat, Play, Love.
- ◆ Continue, support, and grow the Children’s and Youth ministries, such as the Youth Group, Children’s Chapel and Godly Play. Continue to brainstorm additional opportunities for participation, especially for those who choose not to participate in the Choir School.

## **JUSTICE**

- ◆ Offer a spiritual dimension to our focus on Justice Issues, rooted in our identities as Christians and in our Baptismal Covenant.
- ◆ Continue to be a prophetic, Christ-centered voice for justice and to model civil discourse amidst disagreement.
- ◆ Continue and expand support for the Sanctuary movement and for immigrant and refugee issues.
- ◆ Continue work on Creation Care in addressing climate change. Integrate care for creation across the ministries and operations of the Cathedral: i.e. faith formation, preaching, and facilities and budgeting discussions.
- ◆ Offer programming on how to identify and address systemic social injustices, with a specific focus on issues of racism and racial injustice.
- ◆ Work collaboratively with our interfaith and ecumenical partners, as well as with the Faith Action Network, Earth Ministry, and Church Council of Great Seattle.
- ◆ Foster a culture of diversity and inclusion. Welcome everyone, including those who the church has historically marginalized including People of Color, LGBTQIA+, lower-income individuals, and individuals with disabilities.

- ◆ Expand opportunities to share worship, learn from, and build partnerships with other faith communities.
- ◆ Continue to provide opportunities to learn about and address issues of income inequality and homelessness. Explore ways to expand our support for individuals experiencing these issues.
- ◆ Continue and expand the Front Door ministry as a ministry of hospitality.
- ◆ Provide more opportunities for collaborations with other faith traditions.

## **COMMUNITY LIFE**

### **GENERAL COMMUNITY LIFE**

- ◆ Ensure that both clergy and lay staffing remains at optimal levels to support the growth and maintenance of Saint Mark's Cathedral. Support and nurture excellent clergy and staff.
- ◆ Actively recruit, develop, and grow lay leadership across all program areas.
- ◆ Provide expanded opportunities for the congregation to interact in small group settings.
- ◆ Expand specific (Seniors, Parents, Youth), intergenerational, and community-wide offerings.
- ◆ Provide a safe space for those who are drawn to engage with the Christian faith and the Episcopalian/Anglican tradition.
- ◆ Continue to support the Seattle Service Corps in their ministries and growth.
- ◆ Continue to build partnerships with the Diocese and other Episcopal churches. Host Cathedral Day, ordinations, guest choirs, distinguished preachers, workshop leaders and speakers; and other similar events.
- ◆ Continue and explore additional opportunities to expand in our role as a Cathedral and faith community for the City of Seattle, the Diocese of Olympia, and the Capitol Hill community.
- ◆ Continue to support our excellent concert series. Expand and re-invigorate the Visual Arts ministry, especially art exhibits in the nave.

### **STEWARDSHIP**

- ◆ Continue the focused, streamlined appeal for pledges to the annual operating fund.
- ◆ Develop an engaging, year-round Stewardship program to supplement the annual campaign.
- ◆ Expand the Planned Giving ministry, communicate additional opportunities for giving.
- ◆ Explore potential new, diverse revenue and income streams.
- ◆ Plan for and hold intergenerational stewardship events.
- ◆ Foster a stewardship culture where we are comfortable talking about money.
- ◆ Partner with Finance and Facilities to develop an environmentally responsible, long-term strategy for the ongoing development and care of Saint Mark's buildings and grounds, with a special focus on the nave, the narthex, and the St. Nicholas property.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

- ◆ Continue to develop and implement our communications strategy, including telling our stories more effectively to broader audiences.

- ◆ Drawing on demographic data gathered from Insight and other platforms, develop strategic communication plans to reach those in the Capitol Hill region, with special emphasis on liturgies and events that invite those who live nearby (Blessing of the Animals, Christmas Eve, Compline, Pageant, concert series, etc.)
- ◆ Continue to implement new technologies, including videography and livestreaming, social media, and other platforms. Continue growing our social media presence.
- ◆ Provide Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and other program information on the web site, including ones targeted for specific populations (i.e. parents) or for specific initiatives (i.e. stewardship).
- ◆ Increase public relations and outreach to the broader community about Cathedral events and programs.
- ◆ Foster improved communication between ministries and within the congregation, the Diocese, and the community.
- ◆ Become more proactive in civic involvement, with Cathedral leaders writing op-ed pieces, speaking to community groups, and testifying before governmental bodies as ways of expressing our values and positions informed by the gospel.

#### **HOSPITALITY**

- ◆ Build awareness and skills around the idea of radical hospitality and welcome. Partner with the Justice Ministries to support and expand the Front Door Ministry.
- ◆ Commit to interacting on a personal level with each other and with those we seek to serve.
- ◆ Support existing programming to welcome and engage newcomers. Offer information about the Saint Mark's community, including answering questions and how to become involved in the community.
- ◆ Explore ways to more fully integrate new members and families into ministry involvement and leadership.
- ◆ Continue to offer welcoming, hospitality, and social opportunities to the Saint Mark's and the broader community.
- ◆ Celebrate community milestones and achievements.

#### **PASTORAL CARE**

- ◆ Continue to support existing pastoral care programs, such as the Eucharistic Visitor program, the Quilt Ministry, the Caring Card Ministry, and the Prayer Chain.
- ◆ Provide comprehensive program to ensure the safety and well-being of all people, drawing on recognized curricula such as Safeguarding God's Children and Safeguarding God's People.
- ◆ Continue extending support and pastoral care for life events such as weddings, funerals, illnesses, and other events.
- ◆ Identify and develop new lay pastoral care leaders, offering training and support.
- ◆ Assess opportunities for additional pastoral care.

#### **FINANCE**

- ◆ Continue with strong financial controls and procedures.
- ◆ Continue saving through budget surpluses to grow the temporary restricted savings to six months operating cash on hand in the event of a major emergency/disaster.

- ◆ Continue to communicate financial information regularly to the congregation.
- ◆ Recruit and welcome new Finance Committee members with financial expertise.
- ◆ Explore potential new, diverse revenue and income streams.
- ◆ Partner with Stewardship and Facilities to develop an environmentally responsible, long-term strategy for the ongoing development and care of Saint Mark's building and grounds, with a special focus on the nave, the narthex, and the St. Nicholas property.

## **FACILITIES**

- ◆ Continue progress on deferred maintenance.
- ◆ Address ongoing facilities issues, including lighting and the sound system.
- ◆ Renovate bathrooms in Narthex and Cathedral House, adding all-gender bathrooms.
- ◆ Identify environmentally responsible, interim methods for addressing larger facilities issues, including the heating system and the parking lot.
- ◆ Continue to increase the usability and function of Bloedel Hall.
- ◆ Partner with Stewardship and Finance to develop an environmentally responsible, long-term strategy for the ongoing development and care of Saint Mark's building and grounds, with a special focus on the nave, the narthex, and the St. Nicholas property.

*Approved by the Vestry of Saint Mark's Cathedral Parish, January 21, 2020*

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**SAINT MARK'S**  
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

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