

Notes from Strategic Planning Session

Saint Mark's Cathedral

October 23, 2019 Community Forum

1. Where are we now? What are we doing that inspires you?

- Completion of the exterior cladding was a turning point
- Children's programs, especially the choir school, which provides "blessing, community outside of school, and continuity in their peer group."
- Sharing an evening meal together (Wednesday nights)
- Scope of the music ministry is amazing
- Breadth of spiritual life evident in the congregation (our faith is front and center)
- Inspired by the Wisdom School and the meaningful offerings
- Variety and depth of liturgical experiences
- Age diversity
- "Walking the walk" in ministry, especially in the area of Social Justice, and in particular the Sanctuary Movement, which raises our visibility in the community.
- Our outreach programs to Lowell Elementary, Noel House, and Global Earth Day
- Our doors are open to other faith communities and collaborates with them
- Good pastoral care
- An "active" governance model- we truly do the work of the church, both as paid staff and volunteers
- Newcomer's outreach is incredible
- Welcoming people where they are
- Stewardship is a celebration of what we're doing
- Great preaching! (sermons are appropriate and relevant)
- There is a deep intimacy in the preaching
- Kelly Moody: focused energy, great coordination from this ministry. The Sunday school program is much stronger, more robust.
- Our growth is evidence of our evangelism, and shows a responsiveness to the needs in our culture
- We are able to be vulnerable with each other in small groups and as a larger community
- We express our faith authentically to our roots- with each other and with the community. (We are living our baptismal vows.)
- LGBTQ inclusion

#2 Where do we want to grow? How would you like to inspire St. Mark's?

- Future financing/capital challenges/deferred maintenance (2)
- Increasing cultural, racial, and economic diversity (2)
- Deepening and expanding relationships with other churches outside our tradition (we can go to them, too!) (2)
- Make more room for cross-cultural conversations about difficult topics (2)
- Support a collective response to climate change as a congregation (4)
- More kids in Sunday School
- Further development of Middle School and High School youth programs (4)
- Improved communication between ministries/break silo effect (2)
- More intergenerational events that draw the community together, such as Eat, Pray, Love (1)
- Continue emphasis on year-round stewardship (1)
- More opportunities for Bible study (1)
- Increase awareness and participation in Sunday Forums.

#3 What do we need to do to get where we want to go?

- Involve youth in governance (1)
- "Get to know your neighbor." Who are the St. Marksians living in our own neighborhood? Gratitude gatherings and carpooling were mentioned in support of this idea. (5)
- Full-time youth minister (2)
- "Ministry Symposium" – "Second Saturday Seminar" – where we gather together to support each other's work in ministry.
- Increase communication about opportunities for ministry service, whether for St. Marks or for outside groups.
- Increase communication and awareness about youth ministry and formation (1)
- Events promoting racial and cultural diversity (2)
- Bible study during forum time
- Multiple offerings during forum times