

Senior Warden's Report

Our Covenant of Ministry with Rev. JoAnne establishes a spirit of relationship between the congregation, the elected Vestry and the Rector. The Vestry solemnly agrees to provide for five elements of parish life. This report summarizes our work this year.

I. The Vestry covenants to provide an ongoing vision for St. George's Episcopal Church, and to keep this vision before the parish. This has been our most important work. After a long exploration of our core values and core purpose, we resolved our core identity: ***Through scripture, tradition, reason and experience, we bless, thank forgive, break and share.*** This understanding led to our three-part vision:

We are a joyful, Spirit led people who—in Christ—are forgiven, healed, and renewed. We welcome families, individuals, seniors, seekers, those who have been abandoned, and those who dream, to cast their lot with us.

We are a community-oriented church. From downtown Roseburg and surrounding area, the Diocese of Oregon and beyond, we bring new blood, new ideas and deeply held beliefs that it CAN be done!

As a church, we are alive, robust, and grateful for our abundance. As stewards for the Kingdom of God we set our focus, direction, and balance towards respecting the dignity of every human being and following in Jesus' ministry.

II. The Vestry covenants to provide financial, emotional, and spiritual support inasmuch as lies within our means. This has been our most challenging work. For many years, St. George's has struggled financially and lacked consistent, forward-moving spiritual leadership. The Vestry began its term by identifying our responsibilities as lay leaders and then learning how other churches and other organizations were able to turn themselves around and begin moving forward deliberately.

We found St. George's to be stuck in the mud. Through study, discussion and prayerful reflection, we committed to become unstuck, to rewrite our financial future, and to create a new environment in which Rev. JoAnne was more able to provide spiritual leadership. The success of this work is beginning to build.

Financially, we are beginning to stabilize the church. Through new pledges and activities, our total income for 2011 is planned to increase by 17.9%, and expenditures are scaled back by 0.5%. For 2010, 34.9% of our total budget was based on using reserves (The actual was 21.3%--\$46,639.36). For 2011, 19.0% of our budget relies on reserves.

Make no mistake. More is needed. At this time we have 72 pledges for 2011 so during the year we need to invite new members to pledge at an appropriate time rather than waiting until November. We need to strive to reach 110 pledges in 2012 and 135 in 2013. Worth stretch goals are 250 pledges by 2016 and 400 pledges by 2021.

Also required is crafting a thoughtful set of financial policies. Today there are no written financial policies and that contributes greatly to confusion and misunderstanding. Other future activities are these.

1. Initiate an endowment program including enabling resolution, gift acceptance policy, disposition of bequest policy, designated fund policy, spending rule, and investment guidelines.
2. Schedule training workshops from time-to-time on wills, planned giving, personal/family budgeting, estate planning.

3. Explore opportunities to use advertising and sponsorships to partially or fully fund selected programs and activities.
4. As general economic conditions improve, encourage growth in the level of giving by pledging units.
5. Establish a long-term goal that our undesignated investments be maintained at a specific level. Then, in the event undesignated investments exceed our goal, spend the excess to advance new ministries.

III. The Vestry covenants to provide direction in the form of ongoing visioning and goal-setting. For the last several weeks, teams of parishioners and guests have developed specific goals, approaches and performance measures to advance each of the three elements of our vision.

Current plans call for mutual ministry reviews three times annually. But that will not be sufficient. Keep in mind that “ongoing visioning and goal-setting” is another term for “continuous improvement.” For each of the goals, teams will need to meet monthly (or close to monthly) to examine how the approaches are working, analyze performance data, and devise ways to refine our efforts.

At first, teams were challenged to focus on a single, focused goal. Over time, as it becomes a routine way of doing business, goals, approaches and measures will become more complex. Learning from successes will breed more success.

IV. The Vestry covenants to provide regular opportunities for Mutual Ministry Review. The current Vestry has established the sequence, but it will be next year’s Vestry that is responsible for establishing the “regular opportunities.”

Projected at this time is for performance measures and parish surveys to be conducted on or before Trinity Sunday and on or before All Saints Day. The next Vestry will establish the practice of prayerfully reflecting on our Mutual Ministry. During Epiphany next year, the Mutual Ministry Teams will meet as they did this year to develop their 2012 goals, approaches and performance measures. Mutual Ministry Review as established by the national church sustains itself indefinitely into the future. It is what safeguards against ever getting stuck again and the widespread damage that results.

V. The Vestry covenants to provide necessary links to diocesan bodies. They say you’ve got to be tough to live in the west! We westerners like doing things on our own. The downside is, that when we lose direction, we tend to tread water and go nowhere.

The Episcopal Church is structured with an extraordinary array of resources at the diocesan and national levels. In the future, the Vestry needs to be quicker to pick up the phone or email these sources. This year’s Vestry has done tremendous work but with a modest use of all that is available. Much more is possible in the future—and it will be needed to serve our 250 members in 2016.

Thanks to everyone for your many kind sentiments and support during this year. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as Senior Warden.

Respectfully submitted

Jon Hill, Senior Warden