

St. Thomas: A Transforming Community



September 2015

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect. [Romans 12:1-2](#)

The Apostle Paul wrote these words to the little community of Roman Christians at a time when they were under great pressure. Suffering state persecution, they were also reviled by their pagan neighbors and forced to meet and worship in secret. Yet, they were filled with joy. How could this be? It was because, as Paul told them, a new world was being born. Their suffering was the suffering of the whole world groaning in labor. They were being *transformed in Christ* as this new world came into being. Their community became a model for other Christians. They understood that their transformation meant a new way of seeing and a new way of being. And, this transformed life proved so attractive to the surrounding pagan culture that eventually Christianity became Rome's preferred faith.

Fast forward to 2015 and this community of St Thomas. While we are not under a cloud of persecution, we are certainly living in changing times; times that are, at best, indifferent to, and certainly not supportive of, faith. As Christians, we are being called to stand against the tide of materialism, violence and polarization that dominate the world around us. Like those early Christians in Rome, we are called to be witnesses to and examples of another way of living. We are being called to transformation in Christ, called into a new way of seeing and a new way of being.

The new strategic plan document you are holding, *St Thomas: A Transforming Community*, seeks to provide a roadmap for our community towards the kind of transformation that St Paul commended to the church in Rome. It is the product of many hours of conversation, discernment, and hard work among the Vestry, clergy and staff, and neighborhood, affinity and ministry groups. Input from the entire community has been received at two all-parish gatherings. Out of that deep discernment has emerged statements of vision and mission and an expression of Core Values that guide and inform the goals, objectives and initiatives that seek to actuate our understanding of God's call on our lives today and into the near future. My hope is that what we have outlined in this document, along with Scripture, the Book of Common Prayer and the Holy Spirit living among us, will move us forward towards our goals of deepening our faith, building a community of healing and transformation, giving, caring, and serving generously, and practicing the Hospitality of God.

St Thomas will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its founding in 2018. From its modest beginnings in a Medina boathouse to the contemporary, vibrant, and beautiful campus we know today, there has been a constant motivator of the gathered community: Love of God and Service to God's people. As we look towards that milestone anniversary, let us renew our commitment to this Love and Service and let us continue to praise God with joyful and thankful hearts for the abundant grace with which we have been blessed. Let us be transformed in Christ.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Lex' written in a cursive, flowing style.

2015 Strategic Planning Team

Planning Committee

- ❖ Clodagh Ash
- ❖ Lex Breckinridge
- ❖ Karen Haig
- ❖ Arne Hendrickson
- ❖ Greg Murray

Vestry

- ❖ Arne Hendrickson, Senior Warden
- ❖ Tia Mikols, Junior Warden
- ❖ Curt Young, Junior Warden
- ❖ Clodagh Ash
- ❖ Bill Cahill
- ❖ Anne Corley
- ❖ Jennifer Eichenberger
- ❖ Peter Farr
- ❖ Molly McConkey
- ❖ Bill McSherry
- ❖ Tammy Waddell
- ❖ Fred Williams
- ❖ Andrea Sato-Borgmann, Chancellor
- ❖ Fred Barkman, Treasurer
- ❖ Linda Hendrickson, Clerk

Staff

- ❖ The Rev. Lex Breckinridge, Rector
- ❖ The Rev. Karen Haig, Associate Rector
- ❖ The Rev. Steve Best, Associate for Couples and Family Life
- ❖ The Rev. Kathryn Ballinger, Associate for Spiritual Direction
- ❖ Tim Blok, Assistant for Liturgy and Music and Director of Youth Choirs
- ❖ Laura Gregg, Executive Assistant
- ❖ Brian Gregory, Associates for Youth
- ❖ Greg Murray, Chief Operating Officer
- ❖ Bonnie Palevich, IT Coordinator
- ❖ Charles Rus, Associate for Liturgy and Music
- ❖ Zonnie Breckinridge, Volunteer Coordinator

Why Plan Now?

You may be asking yourselves why we chose to undertake a strategic planning process when things are going well at St. Thomas. We chose to plan at this time because...

- Things are going well (the optimal time to plan for the future)!
- God calls us to be good stewards of the gifts we've been given.
- The Ebsworth Life Center has given us a significant new tool for ministry that has changed the nature of the ways we serve, both operationally and administratively.
- We have a desire to review and renew our ministry, operational goals and strategies.
- We have a desire to prioritize the use of our resources.

Plan Contents

The plan elements that follow are designed to guide us, with God's help, to achieve our mission and vision of sharing the good news of God in Jesus Christ. Specifically the plan includes:

- Our Statement of Core Values
- Our Mission Statement
- Our Vision Statement
- Executive Summary
- Summary of Internal Strengths, Areas for Growth, and External Opportunities and Challenges
- Our Path: Goals and Objectives
- How do we know how we are doing?
- Plan Milestones
- Reporting
- Appendix of Related Planning Materials



Core Values, Mission & Vision

We believe that our statement of core values, mission statement and vision statement that follow are expressions of our faith in God through Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we continue prayerfully to discern God's will for St. Thomas; our values, vision and mission are the results of that discernment.



Our Core Values

At St. Thomas Episcopal Church, we hold as our highest values:

Welcoming All

- We respect the dignity of all people, and welcome them wherever they are on their faith journey.

Seeking God's Presence in Our Lives

- We celebrate the transforming power of faith in God through Jesus Christ and encourage all who seek God's presence.

Serving Faithfully

- We faithfully and joyfully serve God, God's people and all of creation.

Following Christ

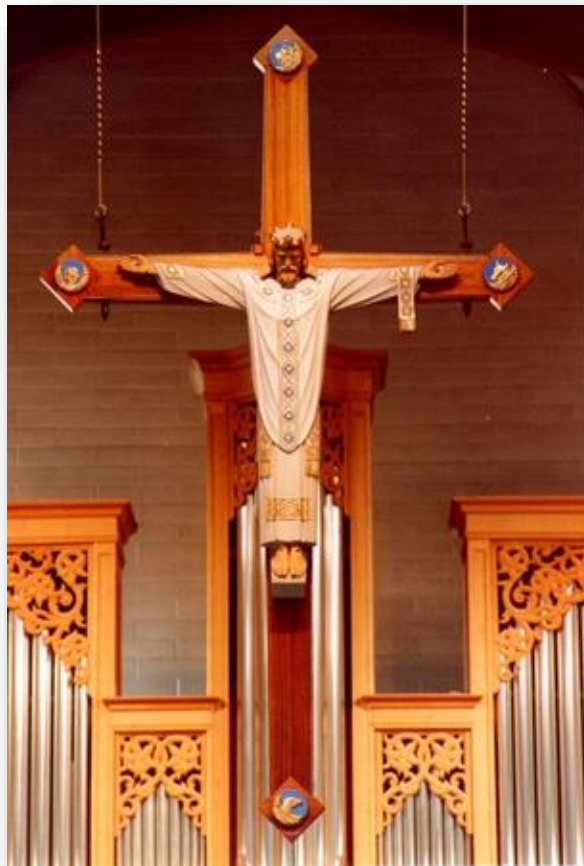
- We are committed to following Jesus Christ, sharing Christ's love, and working for Christ's justice and peace in the world.



Our Mission

At St. Thomas Episcopal Church, our mission is to know Jesus Christ and make Christ's transforming love known to our community and beyond, through...

- Beautiful worship and music
- Thoughtful teaching and preaching
- Gracious fellowship
- Joyful service



Our Vision

At St. Thomas Episcopal Church, faith, community, service and hospitality are at the core of everything we do. Living fully and joyfully into relationship with Christ, one another and the world, our vision is to...

Deepen Our Faith

- By recognizing and embracing the transformative power of life lived in relationship with God, with each other and with our planet Earth, and by embracing the transformative power of our sacramental and liturgical tradition

Build Community

- By being a diverse, thriving and growing multi-generational community that seeks an ever deepening faith in God
- By offering teaching, programs, events and services to support people at all stages of faith and life
- By being adaptive, nimble and outwardly focused as we share our faith in Jesus Christ and Christ's transforming love

Give, Care & Serve Generously

- By equipping and empowering servant leaders
- By sharing God's love with one another and the wider community
- By joyfully caring for and sharing the abundance of God's creation

Practice the Hospitality of God

- By being a place of laughter, love, joy, comfort, healing and nurture
- By offering gracious hospitality and activities that welcome all
- By building relationships with one another and with the wider community



Executive Summary

When we moved into the Ebsworth Life Center (ELC) in the fall of 2014, the Vestry, clergy and staff began discussions regarding new ministry possibilities and potential strategic directions made possible by the ELC. These discussions and the desire to faithfully discern God's call to St. Thomas prompted the Vestry, Rector and staff to undertake a strategic planning process.

Greg Murray, the parish's Chief Operating Officer, led the planning process. Greg and the members of the Planning Committee, Lex Breckinridge, Karen Haig, Arne Hendrickson and Clodagh Ash, developed an inclusive process to gather feedback from all segments of the parish while encouraging prayerful discernment. The goals of the committee and Vestry for the planning process were to...

- Discern God's call to St. Thomas
- Revise our values and mission
- Renew and revitalize our vision
- Seek out and prioritize the ministries and activities that will allow us, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to best share God's transforming love through Jesus Christ with one another, our community, our environment and the world
- Strengthen our clergy and staff
- Build lay leadership and volunteer resources
- Grow and align the use of our resources with our mission and goals for living into that mission

Parish engagement in the strategic planning process began at the 2015 Annual Meeting where members were invited to share their dreams and hopes for the future of St. Thomas. This meeting set the stage for more than a dozen additional small group sessions to solicit thoughts and opinions about what makes St. Thomas unique, what we do well, where we have room for growth, and what our dreams and hopes are for the future. The passionate feedback from the more than 200 parishioners who attended these sessions informed and shaped the subsequent work of the Vestry, clergy and staff in renewing the core values, mission and vision for the parish.

The renewed Statement of Core Values as well as the Mission and Vision Statements appear above. The Vestry, clergy and staff believe that these statements center on God, capture the essence of St. Thomas, and create an exciting new vision for the future of St. Thomas.

In the sections that follow, there are detailed descriptions of our organizational strength, areas for growth, external/cultural opportunities and challenges facing us, goals and objectives, and additional related information.

In summary, the plan's goals and objectives are divided into the four areas of our Vision Statement: Faith, Community, Service and Hospitality to align with our Mission Statement. There are eight broad goals grouped as follows:

Summary of Goals

Faith

- Weave our mission, vision and values throughout all aspects of the life of the parish
- Share the message of faith in Jesus Christ and his transforming love
- Be fully engaged and faithfully present

Community

- Build community
- Love our neighbors and care for one another

Service

- Foster a culture of joyful volunteer service
- Be good and faithful stewards of God's abundant gifts

Hospitality

- Deepen our relationships with one another

Summary of Strategies

The strategies that support achievement of the goals listed above follow in summary form below. (The detailed objectives and plans are contained later in the document.)

Faith

- Worship and formation expansion that includes:
 - Expanding worship opportunities with an additional weekend worship service that focuses on young families
 - Providing additional opportunities for large and small group adult formation
 - Providing family and multi-generational retreat and camp opportunities
 - Adding formation elements for all ages to the Wednesday night program
 - Expanding opportunities for contemplative prayer and reflective introspection experiences
 - Increasing our musical repertoire to enhance our liturgical and worship experience
 - Developing formation podcasts and on-line educational and devotional materials
- Implementation of a sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ evangelism campaign
- Communication initiatives to help us better share message of faith in Jesus Christ and the power of his transforming love, as well as the details of the life and activities of the parish that includes:
 - Developing new email and newsletter formats with content guidelines to better share the activities of the parish and the milestones and activities of our parishioners
 - Increasing and diversifying our efforts to promote special events and concerts to members of the parish and the wider community
 - Refreshing the graphic and visual branding of St. Thomas
 - Refreshing the parish website to better portray who we are and what we offer to parishioners, visitors and the community
 - Implementing consistent and effective communications to better inform parishioners about the governance, operation, ministries and activities of the parish
 - Improving our social media strategy, including providing on-line content and devotional materials

Community

- Outreach @ St. Thomas initiative
 - New vision and goals for outreach as we live out God's command to love our neighbor
 - New outreach coordination committee
 - More volunteer service opportunities
 - New approach to outreach funding
- Increase mission-related use of the Ebsworth Life Center by non-profit organizations
- Foster diversity in our parish community
- More fully incorporate youth, "solos" and seniors into all aspects of parish life
- Continue to develop our pastoral care network
- Implement a regular calendar of community-wide fellowship events

Service

- Implement a program of year-round stewardship
- Cultivate, prepare and empower volunteers and lay leaders
- Implement a “gifts, skills and vocations” database to connect volunteers with service opportunities
- Implement a staff growth, care and development plan
- Implement a long-term capital facility improvement plan for the church and the grounds
- “Green” our operations to serve as a model for stewardship of the environment

Hospitality

- Increase the number and types of fellowship events
- Increase neighborhood programs and interaction
- Implement a regular calendar of community-wide fellowship events



Internal Strengths

As we look to the future, we have sought to understand and examine our strengths and where we have opportunities for growth and improvement through programmatic and operational reviews and parishioner feedback. We have also looked at our community and the society at large to determine the broader external opportunities and challenges that we will face as we move into the future.

Overall

- God is at our center, and we actively seek to recognize the Holy Spirit in all that we do.
- We give our best in all that we do, and we have the faith, initiative and persistence to accomplish big goals and projects.

Worship, Formation & Ministry Programs

- We are committed to the Episcopal tradition.
- We are blessed with inspired, scripture-based preaching, as well as beautiful liturgy and music.
- We offer a variety of spiritually and intellectually engaging Wednesday evening adult formation programs that include a valued component of table fellowship.
- The Bible Challenge offers an important opportunity to deepen our faith through reading, studying and discussing the Bible.
- We are blessed with great teaching, both from our clergy and lay leaders, and we celebrate learning from each other.
- Prayer is an integral part of our pastoral care and adult formation programs.
- Significant planning and effort has been devoted to growing and developing our formation programs for children and youth, resulting in quality programming that has served more children.
- We offer rich Baptism and marriage preparation classes.

Clergy & Staff

- The clergy and staff of St. Thomas are a diverse and talented group of people who bring deep faith, a love of God's people and creation, significant professional experience and knowledge, and a commitment to St. Thomas that infuses all of their work and ministry.

Volunteer & Lay Leaders

- We are blessed with strong, capable and visionary lay leadership, and we have a pool of talented and willing ministry and program volunteers.

Parish Governance & Leadership

- St. Thomas has exceptionally capable and highly functional leadership at all levels.

Pastoral Care

- St. Thomas is a caring and welcoming community.

Fellowship

- Fellowship is at the heart of who we are.

Outreach

- We are a parish committed to feeding people. Through our Thanksgiving @ St. Thomas, Congregations for the Homeless, Neighbors In Need, Sandwich Makers, Sophia Way meals, and Loaves and Fishes, among others, we are making a difference in the lives of the people in the greater Bellevue area.

Resources

- Our parishioners are generous with the gifts God has given them. Our average annual pledge amount continues to grow and compare very favorably with national averages.
- We are beginning to put endowments in place, which, as they grow, will help support the ministries and the operation of the parish.
- We have a proven capacity to raise funds to support well-planned and necessary capital needs of the parish.
- We have certain consistent sources of non-contributed income, which help support the ministries and operation of the parish.

Parishioners

- Our parishioners are generous and highly educated. They freely offer to the parish their many professional skills and share a deep hunger for faith, understanding and transformation.
- We are a multi-generational community that welcomes and appreciates people of all ages and at all stages of life.

Involvement with Outside Organizations

- We are involved in the wider community. Our relationship with and support of AA, Boy Scouts and St. Thomas School are examples of our commitment to the world beyond our walls.

Building & Campus

- We value the beauty of holiness. Our campus and buildings are beautiful, and the church, chapel and Ebsworth Life Center are extraordinary facilities for worship, learning and fellowship. We value music and the arts and enjoy a wide variety of musical instruments, library resources and liturgical art.



Areas for Growth

Overall

- We are a very busy place and we sometimes spread ourselves too thin.
- Some of what we take on is not fully aligned with our mission.
- We would like to more regularly involve young people, “solos” and seniors in all aspects of parish life.
- We can do a better job of telling our stories, particularly stories of transformation.

Planning

- We need a more systematic approach for prioritizing the way we employ financial and people resources.
- We have a profusion of program ideas, and we need a clear mechanism for prioritizing and developing them.
- Our committees do not fully and consistently communicate with one another around issues and activities that cross committee boundaries.

Worship, Formation & Ministry Programs

- We want more variety of adult education and formation opportunities for both large and small groups.
- Young families have expressed a desire for an additional worship service with a more contemporary family-focus.
- Our special musical events and concerts can be better promoted and publicized.
- We want to expand opportunities for discussions of challenging topics in ways that welcome sacred listening, openness, honesty, vulnerability and respect.
- We can add more variety to our programs to ensure that we better address the needs and desires of people in all stages of their faith and life journeys.
- Our parishioners have a desire for more contemplative activities and programs.
- We can do a better job of understanding and addressing the needs of older parishioners.

Clergy & Staff

- The number of clergy and staff members is insufficient to support the activities and plans for the future of the parish.
- Our clergy and staff are not compensated at levels that reflect their professional achievement or at which those in similar positions in similar-sized parishes are compensated.
- We need more staff with technology and social media skills.
- Much is asked of our clergy and staff members, and there is a danger of burnout if they are not provided adequate opportunities for professional development and retreat.

Volunteer & Lay Leaders

- We want to cultivate and train more lay leaders.
- We want to continue to build a culture of volunteering our time, talent and treasure, and do a better job of inviting all parishioners to participate.
- We need to develop clear job descriptions and expectations for volunteer positions.

Fellowship

- We want a regular program of community fellowship opportunities that invite and welcome the broader community into St. Thomas.

- We want more activities to connect us to one another and to encourage us to share our stories with each other.

Outreach

- We have not had a clear, unified vision for overall outreach goals. Outreach programs need to be a component of the operating budget.

Resources

- We want to cultivate a culture of sacrificial giving that has begun to emerge in the recent past.
- Our operating budget does not fully meet the ministry, personnel, operational and maintenance needs of the parish.
- We want to encourage more planned and endowment giving.
- Our operating reserves are low for a parish of our size.
- We have a relatively small number of families and individuals making annual pledges for a parish of our size.
- Debt on the Ebsworth Life Center needs to be eliminated before it encumbers our operating budget.
- We want to provide additional educational opportunities regarding the stewardship of time, talent and treasure, the spirituality of money, and financial planning from a Christian perspective.

Parishioners

- We can do more to encourage deepening faith and greater engagement in all aspects of parish life.
- Evangelism has a negative connotation for many in the Episcopal Church. We want to have a new, vital and authentic experience of evangelizing.
- We can do more to encourage diversity in our membership.
- We can do more to encourage parishioners to care for one another, and to be willing to ask for help and support.

Involvement with Outside Organizations

- The perception of the relationship with St. Thomas School by those who are not directly involved often draws on history rather than recognizing the presently healthy and open relationship.

Building & Campus

- We have historically had a significant number of unaddressed deferred maintenance issues that continue into the present. Of greatest significance is the maintenance, repair and updating of the interior of the church.

Opportunities

Geographically Specific Opportunities

- St. Thomas is the only church in Medina. This can be both an enviable and a challenging position.
- Our proximity to Downtown Bellevue and Highway 520, as well as our location on a major bus route offer significant opportunities to serve the Eastside and Seattle.
- The growing population of the Eastside and the more than 35,000 residents of Downtown Bellevue offer excellent opportunities for evangelism.
- Our long association and support of AA is greatly appreciated in the community and gives us additional opportunities for evangelism.
- There are many religious, cultural and educational resources in the area. These can be excellent sources for additional programs and events and can provide the opportunity to share activities and experiences and to learn from each other.

Cultural Opportunities

- Social media has changed the way people relate to one another. The community and small group activities we offer are more important than ever in bringing people together.
- Social media means we have many new ways of connecting with people. We want to become adept and nimble in our use of social media, maximizing the opportunities it offers to connect with people, particularly those under 40.
- There is a need for well-managed affordable housing, job training, daycare, ESL classes and health care programs very near to St. Thomas. We want to become more engaged with efforts that provide services that are needed in our community.
- There is a deep desire to cultivate our spiritual lives, especially those of our young parishioners.



Challenges

Geographically Specific Challenges

- The Eastside, Seattle and the greater Northwest are often viewed as the epicenter of the “Great Unchurched.” We live in a culture that is spiritual, but not religious.
- The “Northwest Lifestyle” is characterized by very active and busy people (including children and youth), many of whom have over-scheduled lives. There is also a real desire to enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds us. These two factors combine to make church membership and active participation a challenge.
- St. Thomas is often labelled as “that church in Medina,” which translates to snobby, unwelcoming, and only for the Medina “upper-crust.”
- We are a football crazy community, and our Pacific Time Zone location often puts games at a time that conflict with our Sunday worship schedule. This creates real competition for time and attention.
- The Eastside is becoming an increasingly diverse community. Addressing this diversity in a meaningful way is a challenge.

Cultural Challenges


- “Church” is no longer viewed as culturally or morally necessary, and the perception of Christianity today is often negative.
- 1/3 of American adults under 30 state they have no religious affiliation.
- One of our society’s greatest challenges is to chart new paths for civil and social engagement and to find points of agreement in the face of partisan politics and divisive religious beliefs. The Gospel mandate to love God and love our neighbor has profound societal implications. Heeding the Gospel means that health care, poverty, gun violence and other important issues of our time must be addressed.
- The climate crisis is fast becoming one of the gravest threats to justice, peace and human flourishing worldwide. Many missions and relief agencies are reporting that climate disruption is increasingly challenging the Church to refocus its efforts around the world on ways to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Churches are facing the “greying of America.” Making meaningful worship in the context of the varied needs of all generations will be challenging.
- The Great Recession has made many people more cautious and less generous. They have less confidence in or optimism about the future. People also know that consumerism has not kept its promises of fulfillment, security and happiness.
- Most people do not live in one place for an extended period of time. Changing communities are often diverse in their beliefs, values and social identities and consequently have differing needs.

A Transforming Community: Our Path

The framework and path for living out our vision of deepening our faith, building community, giving, caring and serving generously, and practicing the hospitality of God is outlined in the goals and objectives that follow. Much prayer and thought has gone into the discernment of these goals and objectives. However, we also want to allow room for the movement of the Holy Spirit at St. Thomas, and over time our goals and objectives may be transformed as God leads us forward into the future.

To provide context, our goals are broad statements of our intentions, and our objectives are specific, measurable statements that reflect the actions, strategies and intentions for achieving our goals.





*For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to you.*

Psalm 26:3

Knowing Christ and making known Christ's transforming love are at the heart of our mission. Fully living into the mission, inviting and welcoming others into the joy of knowing God in Christ Jesus, and being fully engaged in the work of God's Kingdom, both at St. Thomas and in the wider community, is our vision of faith.

Faith

Goal 1

Weave our mission, vision and values throughout all aspects of the life of the parish

Objective 1.1

Share the mission, vision and values renewal process and results of the strategic plan with the parish.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Clergy, Staff and Communications Task Force

Achievement Marker(s)

- Completion and implementation of the Mission, Vision and Values Presentation Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Mission, Vision and Values Presentation Plan
- Poster-style presentations of the Mission, Vision and Values with appropriate framing and hardware for display
- Print versions of the Mission, Vision and Values Statements
- Electronic media versions of the Mission, Vision and Values Statements
- Locations and plan for display
- List of print media and inclusion schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- September 2015

Objective 1.2

Provide additional worship and formation opportunities to meet the diverse needs of our growing multi-generational congregation in a sustainable manner consistent with our mission and vision.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Completion and implementation of the Worship and Formation Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Written Worship and Formation Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- January 2016

Objective 1.3

Implement an annual evaluation process to review the activities, programs and ministries of the parish for alignment with the mission and vision, overall effectiveness, resource use, parish engagement and support, lay leadership and volunteer involvement, and the requirements on clergy and staff and make recommendations for changes.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the review process

Deliverable(s)

- Review of process outline
- Review of data and summary report
- Program recommendations

Attainment/Completion Date

- November 2015

Objective 1.4

Further develop our annual planning processes for worship, formation, outreach, pastoral care, neighborhood programs, fellowship, community programs and activities to be a more holistic, integrated and coordinated process that will ensure best use of resources, provide better integration and coordination of activities, and be fully aligned with our goals, mission and vision.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Outreach @ St. Thomas, Community Life Team, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the revised planning process

Deliverable(s)

- Written planning process guidelines
- Implementation schedule
- Planning process participation list

Attainment/Completion Date

- January 2016

Objective 1.5

Provide regular reports on the parish's governance, operation, ministries and service activities to all parishioners.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the reporting process

Deliverable(s)

- Reporting format and schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- November 2015

Objective 1.6

Review and revise the strategic plan every other year.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Completion of the Revised Strategic Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Revised Strategic Plan document

Attainment/Completion Date

- January 2017

Goal 2

Share the message of faith in Jesus Christ and his transforming love

Objective 2.1

Develop and implement a communications plan to reach all segments of our parish family and the broader community with the message of faith in Jesus Christ and the power of his transforming love, as well as the details of the life and activities of the parish through print, electronic and on-line media.

Responsible Group(s)

- Communication Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the Communications Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Communications Plan
- Messaging and audience guidelines
- Branding guidelines (with renewed parish logo and graphic standards)
- Renewed website
- Social media program
- Renewed print media format and content
- Promotion plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- February 2016

Objective 2.2

Develop and implement a plan to invite and welcome those seeking a place to begin or continue their faith journey to discover St. Thomas.

Responsible Group(s)

- Newcomer's Committee, Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the Invitation to Discover St. Thomas Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Invitation to Discover St. Thomas Plan
- Messaging and promotion guidelines
- Social media and on-line components
- Print media components
- Promotion schedule
- Parishioner information and training
- Visitor welcoming and follow-up program

Attainment/Completion Date

- January 2016

Objective 2.3

Review the communications and evangelism strategies and activities of the parish annually.

Responsible Group(s)

- Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Revised Communication and Evangelism Plans

Deliverable(s)

- Revised Communication and Evangelism Plans

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 2.4

To develop and implement programs that seek to ground all in the Christian faith and invite them into a transformative relationship with Jesus Christ.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of incorporation program

Deliverable(s)

- Incorporation Program Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Goal 3

Be fully engaged and faithfully present

Objective 3.1

As a part of our year-round stewardship program, implement a “Worship + 2” campaign to promote regular worship attendance and participation in one formation program and one outreach activity throughout the year.

Responsible Group(s)

- Communication Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Worship + 2 Campaign

Deliverable(s)

- Campaign materials and promotional schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- Fall 2015

Objective 3.2

Begin an intentional Gospel centered movement to promote living our faith every day and regularly sharing its transforming power with those in our lives.

Responsible Group(s)

- Communication Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a campaign to share the Good News of Jesus Christ

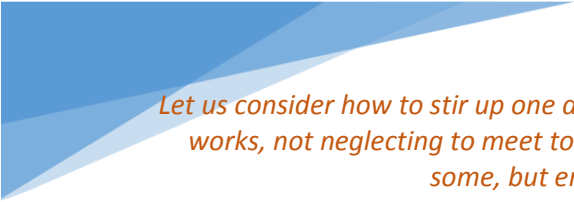
Deliverable(s)

- Campaign materials and promotional schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- Spring 2016





Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.

Hebrews 10:24-25

We experience God's love most fully in community. In loving and supporting one another and by joining together in prayer, worship, friendship, fellowship, care, nurture and service, we share God's love. This is our vision for community.

Community

Goal 4

Build community

Objective 4.1

Develop and support small group ministries, programs and activities that invite us to more fully know one another and lead us into deeper relationship.

Responsible Group(s)

- Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Small groups activity count and participation numbers

Deliverable(s)

- Small Group Activity Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- Spring 2016

Objective 4.2

Plan and implement an annual series of community events that invite and welcome the broader community with music and fellowship.

Responsible Group(s)

- Community Life Team, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the Community Life Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Community Life Plan and events schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- November 2015

Objective 4.3

Build a culture of diversity through welcoming invitations, acts of reconciliation, open dialogue, respectful listening, and sharing the love of Christ.

Responsible Group(s)

- Communications Task Force, Newcomer's Committee, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Newcomer and welcoming activities
- Community conversations and programs

Deliverable(s)

- Plan for extending invitations and welcoming minority communities
- Reconciliation Discussions and Program Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- Spring 2016

Objective 4.4

More fully incorporate youth, seniors and "solos" into all aspects of the life of the parish.

Responsible Group(s)

- Ministry Leaders, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Youth, "Solos" and Senior Participation and Inclusion Program

Deliverable(s)

- Participation and Inclusion Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- September 2016

Goal 5

Love our neighbors and care for one another

Objective 5.1

Develop and articulate a clear vision and goals for the parish's outreach ministries and services, including those provided through direct parishioner volunteer service and leadership, service partnerships with other agencies and organizations, and donated financial support.

Responsible Group(s)

- Outreach @ St. Thomas Committee, Vestry, Outreach Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Outreach Vision and Goals

Deliverable(s)

- Outreach @ St. Thomas Vision and Goals document

Attainment/Completion Date

- Fall 2015

Objective 5.2

Plan and implement an ongoing program of outreach services and activities to achieve the parish's outreach vision and goals.

Responsible Group(s)

- Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the Outreach Ministry Plan

Deliverable(s)

- 2015 -2016 Outreach Plan with service goals
- 2015 – 2016 Outreach Ministry Budget (Incorporated into the operating budget)

Attainment/Completion Date

- Fall 2015

Objective 5.3

Provide free or low-cost access to the Ebsworth Life Center for other non-profit service organizations and service projects that are aligned with and support our outreach vision and goals whenever possible.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- ELC usage

Deliverable(s)

- ELC Use Policy

Attainment/Completion Date

- 2016

Objective 5.4

Continue to foster healthy, supportive partnerships with St. Thomas School, AA and the Boy Scouts.

Responsible Group(s)

- Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Partner feedback

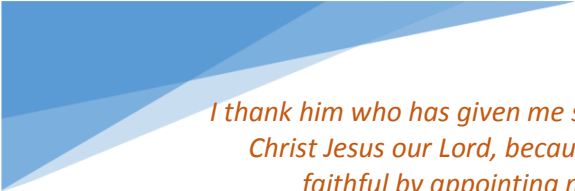
Deliverable(s)

- Guidelines and procedures for supporting partner relations

Attainment/Completion Date

- Ongoing





*I thank him who has given me strength for this,
Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me
faithful by appointing me to his service.*

1 Timothy 1:12

God has richly blessed us! We work to be good and faithful stewards of all that we have been given, and to joyfully share our, time, talent and treasure to build the kingdom of God where ever we find ourselves. This is our vision for service.

Service

Goal 6

Foster a culture of joyful volunteer service

Objective 6.1

Maintain a database of parishioner's talents, skills, spiritual gifts and vocational abilities to better support the volunteer, spiritual, service and leadership needs of the parish.

Responsible Group(s)

- People Resources Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Database implementation

Deliverable(s)

- Data collection forms
- Data Input and Maintenance Plan
- Information Sharing Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- Spring 2016

Objective 6.2

Create detailed job descriptions with clear expectations for all volunteer and lay leadership positions.

Responsible Group(s)

- People Resources Committee, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of volunteer job descriptions

Deliverable(s)

- Written volunteer job descriptions with performance expectations

Attainment/Completion Date

- Winter 2015

Objective 6.3

Regularly thank, recognize and celebrate volunteers and lay leaders.

Responsible Group(s)

- People Resources Committee, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Volunteer Recognition Program

Deliverable(s)

- Volunteer Recognition Program Plan and Schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- Winter 2015

Objective 6.4

Cultivate, train and empower lay leaders for ministry and governance roles.

Responsible Group(s)

- People Resources Committee, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the Lay Leader Development Program

Deliverable(s)

- Lay Leader Recruiting Program document
- Lay Leader Training Program document
- Job Matching Program document

Attainment/Completion Date

- September 2016

Objective 6.5

Develop and share a set of basic “ground rules” to guide committee work and volunteer interactions.

Responsible Group(s)

- People Resources Committee, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Availability of a set of basic volunteer committee ground rules

Deliverable(s)

- Volunteer and Committee Ground Rules and Expectations document

Attainment/Completion Date

- January 2016

Goal 7

Be good and faithful stewards of God's abundant gifts

Objective 7.1

Develop and implement a year-round program of stewardship focused on discipleship and deepening our faith and trust in God.

Responsible Group(s)

- Stewardship Committee, Finance Committee, Legacy Steering Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of the 2015 – 2016 Year Round Stewardship Plan

Deliverable(s)

- 2015 – 2016 Stewardship Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- September 2015

Objective 7.2

Encourage a culture of sharing and interaction between parish committees, ministry leaders and activity coordinators to promote good program management and coordination of activities, as well as efficient use of people and financial resources.

Responsible Group(s)

- Committee Chairs, Ministry Leaders, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Committee interaction and reporting

Deliverable(s)

- Plan to promote committee and Vestry interaction

Attainment/Completion Date

- Fall 2015

Objective 7.3

Sustainably grow and support the clergy and lay staff to more fully meet the needs of our growing parish.

Responsible Group(s)

- People Resources Committee, Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Personnel Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Personnel Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 7.4

Develop and implement a long-term plan and strategies to preserve, maintain and improve the parish buildings and campus grounds.

Responsible Group(s)

- Facilities Committee, Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Capital Facility Maintenance and Improvement Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Capital Facility Maintenance and Improvement Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 7.5

Use green practices, wherever feasible, in the operation and maintenance of the parish's buildings and grounds.

Responsible Group(s)

- Facilities Committee, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Green Practices Plan


Deliverable(s)

- Green Practices Plan and Procedures

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016





And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 2:42

Jesus knew the power of fellowship and time spent together over food. Gracious hospitality, table fellowship and celebrations of the life of our parish, build community and deepen relationships. This is our vision of hospitality.

Hospitality

Goal 8

Develop and deepen our relationships with friends and neighbors

Objective 8.1

Foster activities and events that encourage relationship building and provide opportunities for us to fully know and care for our friends and neighbors.

Responsible Group(s)

- Community Life Team, Vestry, Ministry Leaders, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Community Life Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Community Life Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 8.2

Conduct a regular schedule of table fellowship events that celebrate our milestones, refresh our spirits, educate our minds and deepen our faith.

Responsible Group(s)

- Community Life Team, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Community Life Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Community Life Plan and Events Schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 8.3

Continue to host and grow events for children and families in our parish and beyond around Christmas, Easter, Mardi Gras, Halloween and other appropriate holiday celebrations.

Responsible Group(s)

- Community Life Team, Vestry, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Community Life Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Community Life Plan and Events Schedule

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 8.4

Promote activities and events that strengthen neighborhood bonds between parishioners and their neighbors and encourage caring relationships.

Responsible Group(s)

- Ministry Leaders, Neighborhood Groups, Pastoral Care Network, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Neighborhood activity count

Deliverable(s)

- Neighborhood Activity Promotion Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016

Objective 8.5

Grow our network of pastoral care programs and providers.

Responsible Group(s)

- Ministry Leaders, Pastoral Care Network, Clergy and Staff

Achievement Marker(s)

- Implementation of a Pastoral Care Plan

Deliverable(s)

- Pastoral Care Plan

Attainment/Completion Date

- May 2016



How will we know how we are doing?

Spiritual Transformation & Engagement

The primary measure of success for most churches continues to be growth gauged by worship attendance and pledge revenue. Although attendance and pledge giving can be indicators of a church's health, they do not measure the "spiritual bottom line" that is the church's true mission and desired outcome.

As we live out our new mission and vision, and we walk the path of loving God and loving our neighbors, God will use our efforts to change lives. We believe that we will experience deeper faith; a stronger, more caring community; abundant, generous living; reconciled relationships; and lives lived in the joy of faith in Jesus Christ and his transforming love. This kind of transformation is not measured with attendance and giving statistics.

As a part of the implementation of our strategic plan, we are committed to developing and implementing a new assessment model based on the premise that spiritual transformation is directly proportional to the depth and breadth of one's engagement.

As we begin the transition to this new paradigm, we will be soliciting stories of transformation, surveying parishioners about their faith and life journeys, and looking at the impact of our service and outreach ministries. We will also be working on a system to quantify engagement through a weighted scale of participation in worship, formation activities, volunteer and leadership service, and fellowship activities. This will be paired with a regular review of key financial performance indicators to give us a snapshot of how we are using God's gifts of time, resources and energy. These two assessment tools will provide a measure of both our spiritual and temporal bottom lines. (A sample of the current version of the assessment tools can be found in the appendix at the end of the plan document.)



Plan Milestones

There are several major items that constitute milestone achievements in our vision. These items relate to the worship and formation activities of the parish, volunteers and staff, and stewardship of our facilities and resources. The list of milestones includes...

- Ministry Review Process
- Outreach Goals and Plan
- Addition of Staff
- New Worship Services
- New Small Group Programs
- Community Fellowship Programs
- Volunteer Job Descriptions
- Lay Leader Training Programs
- New Website and Communication Plan
- Year-round Wednesday Night Programs
- ELC Debt Retirement
- Campus Improvements
- Endowment Level
- Communications Plan



Reporting

The Vestry, clergy and staff will regularly review the stories of transformation, responses to the annual surveys, achievement of the milestones and progress toward meeting the objectives for each of the plan's goals. The Vestry will share this information as a part of the Annual Report and in other forms as appropriate.



Appendix

Supplemental Plan Detail

Mission, Vision & Values Presentation Plan

Print, web and social media promotion program to inform the parish about our new core values, mission and vision, planned and implemented over the next month.

- Design and produce graphic presentations of the renewed mission, vision and values statements for inclusion in the printed material and display in the parish facilities. (Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and share messages describing the mission, vision and values renewal process and outcome in parish-wide presentations and in print and electronic media. (Clergy and Staff)
- Include the renewed mission, vision and values in sermon(s) and teaching. (Clergy)
- Develop poster-style presentations of the Mission, Vision and Values with appropriate framing and hardware for display with locations. (Communication Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop print versions of the Mission, Vision and Values. (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop electronic media versions of the Mission, Vision and Values for inclusion in the website and other electronic media as appropriate. (Staff)

Communications Plan

New communication plan and strategy to improve our print, web and social media communications and promotions, developed and implemented over the next 12 months.

- Appoint a Communications Task Force. (Vestry and Clergy)
- Create a list of our gifts, unique attributes and ministry priorities. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Define and understand the needs of our target audiences. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Determine the best media to reach each of our target audience. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and test messages for each audience. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop a list of messages with their specific media avenue and an inclusion schedule. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop new email and newsletter formats with content guidelines to better share the activities of the parish and the milestones and activities of our parishioners. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop a mechanism to track the impact of our messages on the target audiences. (Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Promote parish special events and concerts to members of the parish and community. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Refresh the graphic and visual branding of St. Thomas. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)

- Refresh the parish website to better portray who we are and what we offer to parishioners, visitors and the community. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Implement new reporting procedures to better inform parishioners about the governance, operation, ministries and activities of the parish. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Further develop our social media strategy. (Communications Task Force, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop on-line content and devotional materials. (Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Collect Transformation Stories. (Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)

Worship & Formation Plan

Planning and implementation effort to broaden and deepen our worship and formation programs and activities, conducted over the next 18 months.

- Expand corporate worship opportunities with an additional weekend worship service focused on young families. (Clergy and Staff)
- Provide additional opportunities for adult formation. (Clergy and Staff)
 - Large group
 - Small group
- Regularly review the programs and ministries of the parish to ensure that people in different stages of their life and faith journeys have entry points and next steps as they continue their journeys. (Clergy and Staff)
- Provide family and multi-generational retreat and camp opportunities. (Clergy and Staff)
- Add formation elements for all ages to the Wednesday night programs. (Clergy and Staff)
- Expand opportunities for contemplative prayer and reflective introspection. (Clergy and Staff)
- Introduce new songs, hymns and other worship music to enhance our liturgy and worship experience. (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop podcasts and on-line educational/devotional materials. (Clergy and Staff)
Begin offering life skills classes (parenting, financial management, reconciliation) from a Christian perspective. (Clergy and Staff)

Program & Resources Review

An evaluation process to review the activities, programs and ministries of the parish for alignment with the mission and vision, overall effectiveness, resource use, parishioner engagement and support, lay leadership and volunteer involvement, and the requirements on clergy and staff, conducted over the next three months.

- Develop a process and assessment criteria for program review and resource use. (Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop a list of programs and activities to be included in the review process. (Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop program recommendations based on findings. (Vestry, Clergy and Staff)

Discover St. Thomas

Print, web and social media promotion program to invite and welcome people seeking a faith community to try St. Thomas, implemented over the next 12 months.

- Develop print materials and website/social media messaging and content to inform people about the faith development opportunities for seekers at St. Thomas. (Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop postcards and mailers for targeted distribution and mailing. (Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)

- Develop and promote a “Seekers Series.” (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and promote community events that invite and welcome the community to the campus and church. (Community Life Team, Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and implement welcoming and follow-up procedures. (Newcomer’s Committee, Community Life Team, Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Coordinate activities with Share the Good News Campaign. (Newcomer’s Committee, Community Life Team, Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)

Share the Good News

Campaign to encourage parishioners to invite a friend to attend a worship service, formation program and/or fellowship event, implemented over the next 12 months.

- Begin teaching and preaching about evangelism. (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop a schedule of “focus” Sundays and events. (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop a children’s and youth component. (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop invitation materials and website information. (Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and promote community events that invite and welcome the community to the campus and church. (Community Life Team, Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and implement welcoming and follow-up procedures. (Newcomer’s Committee, Community Life Team, Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)
- Coordinate activities with the Discover St. Thomas Campaign. (Newcomer’s Committee, Community Life Team, Communications Task Force, Clergy and Staff)

Community Life Plan

Planning and implementation effort to develop a regular series of community fellowship events to invite the broader community to St. Thomas, conducted over the next 12 months.

- Develop and plan an annual series of events with general community appeal (Caroling, New Year’s Eve Gala, Concerts, Speakers, Life Skills Classes (Parenting, Marriage and Relationships, Financial Management, etc.)) by November 2015. (Community Life Team, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and implement a plan for web, social media and print promotion by November 2015. (Community Life Team, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop and recommend a program budget by November 2015. (Community Life Team, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop a plan to provide onsite information about St. Thomas and our programs and activities, gather names and contact information and provide follow-up for attendees by November 2015. (Community Life Team, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)

Volunteer Recognition Program

Planning and implementation effort to celebrate, recognize and thank volunteers and lay leaders for their efforts, developed and implemented over the next 12 months.

- Plan and implement an annual celebration event to recognize and thank volunteers and lay leaders. (Community Life Team, People Resources Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)

- Develop a program for regularly sending thank you notes and acknowledgments to volunteers and lay leaders. (People Resources Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop volunteer and lay leader spotlights, articles and web content for regular inclusion in newsletters and website. (Communications Task Force, People Resources Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)
- Develop social media posts to spotlight volunteer and lay leader activities. (Communications Task Force, People Resources Committee, Vestry, Clergy and Staff)



Outreach @ St. Thomas Plan

Vision & Recommendation

In Matthew's Gospel we hear Jesus being asked which commandment in the law is the greatest. He answers, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,' and 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Later in Matthew we hear Jesus share the Parable of Judgment, and we are presented these familiar words, 'For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' As the parable continues, we hear the righteous ask, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And Jesus responds, 'I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Loving our neighbors and caring for one another -- these simple, but profound concepts are the foundation for Christian community and serve to underpin our values and vision for service and outreach at St. Thomas. We are committed to living our faith and sharing Christ's love in our community and beyond through regular and ongoing prayer, hands-on service, community action, financial support and good stewardship of all of creation. Based on these values the Outreach @ St. Thomas Committee recommends that the Vestry approve and adopt the following vision and goals for outreach service and ministry.

The vision for outreach is divided into four elements as follows:

- Providing hands on service through one-time and ongoing local projects which further and build on the foundation established with Thanksgiving @ St. Thomas, Congregations for the Homeless, and Neighbors in Need;
- Developing and supporting partnerships with local non-profit social service organizations whose programs and services align with our mission and vision through volunteer service and financial support;
- Donating the undesignated loose cash plate offering to a different local non-profit social service agency selected by the Outreach @ St. Thomas Committee each month to support projects and activities that share's the love of Christ with others and help to build and strengthen our community;
- Providing financial and volunteer support to Episcopal Relief and Development, Safe Passage and/or other similar organizations that provide national and international programs to alleviate hunger, create economic opportunities, strengthen communities, fight disease and respond to disasters

This vision move us away from outreach through grant making towards greater hands on service that builds relationships and encourages us to live our Christian values daily. A part of our new recommended vision, includes the formal dissolution of Project Outreach. Current members of the Project Outreach Steering Committee will be invited to serve on the Outreach @ St. Thomas Committee and asked to assist developing service partnerships and opportunities. Current Project Outreach funds and the proceeds of the Project Outreach Endowment will be returned to the parish and used to support outreach activities as described in the vision.

Goals

For 2016, Outreach @ St. Thomas Committee the Vestry of St. Thomas is recommending that the Vestry establish the following goals for outreach service and funding:

- Encourage every parishioner to actively volunteer and serve regularly in at least one outreach ministry program throughout the year,

- Provide 10% of the operating budget for the support of outreach ministries as described in the vision above to be used as follows:
 - 80% to be used to support parish outreach ministries that provide food, shelter and aid and comfort in our local area,
 - 10% to be used to support partnerships with local nonprofit organizations,
 - 10% to be used to support national and international organizations.
- Donate the undesignated loose cash plate offering to local non-profit social service agencies as described above.

Outreach Oversight

Outreach @ St. Thomas will be a standing committee of the Vestry that is made up of the leaders of our outreach ministries as well as other dedicated lay leaders. This committee will supersede Project Outreach, and in accordance with the Vestry charge will:

- Assist the Vestry in shaping the vision and goals for service in our community and beyond
- Understand the scope and underlying causes of our community's social service needs
- Develop familiarity with the landscape of organizations and governmental agencies providing social services and assistance in our community
- Understand and promotes the use of best service practices
- Encourage parishioners to share their desired directions for outreach service and opportunities, as well as their connections with service organizations and providers
- Foster and promote partnerships with other religious, social service and /or governmental agencies and organizations to maximize the reach of our programs and activities, ensure the best use of our people and financial resources, and provide best, most appropriate services
- Vet and recommend funding for projects and distribution to other organizations and relief efforts
- Develop and recommend annual outreach operating budgets to the Vestry
- Promote volunteer service and leadership for children, youth adults and seniors
- Develop, implement and coordinate ongoing and onetime outreach service programs, community service activities, outreach ministries and special projects that use prayer, direct service, material assistance, financial support, community advocacy and good stewardship to achieve our vision and goals for outreach service
- Regularly evaluate programs and activities for effectiveness in meeting the changing community needs, alignment with the mission and vision of St. Thomas, and parishioner's support and involvement
- Communicate the stories of lives changed and invites our community into loving service



Personnel Plan

Planning and implementation effort to develop a plan for sustainably growing the parish staff and reviewing their compensation, as well as reviewing our current personnel policies, job descriptions and organizational structure conducted over the next 12 months.

- Review and revise the parish employment manual and policies.
- Establish appropriate compensation and benefit packages for the clergy and staff.
- Develop and regularly review job descriptions for all professional and volunteer positions in the parish.
- Assess the best organizational structure to achieve the vision of the parish, including professional staff, volunteers and committees.
- Develop and maintain a skills database for all parishioners.
- Assist the clergy and staff in developing a volunteer resource pool to support the ministries and activities of the parish.
- Assist the clergy and staff in developing a program to help recruit and train lay leaders for the parish.
- Assist the Vestry in providing appropriate and necessary professional development opportunities for clergy and staff.
- Ensure that Safeguarding God's Children and Safeguarding God's People training is regularly offered and that those required to be trained have attended the training.
- Ensure that appropriate background screening is performed for all appropriate employee and volunteer categories.
- Ensure that other relevant harassment prevention training is provided for staff and volunteers.
- Assist the Finance and Stewardship Committees in developing budgets and expense forecasts related to the people resources of the parish.
- Assist the Finance and Stewardship Committees in developing plans to provide the financial resources necessary to meet the long-term professional staffing needs of the parish.



Capital Maintenance & Improvement Plan

Planning and implementation effort to develop a plan for overseeing of the maintenance, preservation, protection and improvement of the parish's buildings, grounds and equipment.

- Prepare an assessment of the parish's facilities' earthquake-worthiness, overall condition and maintenance and repair needs.
- Develop a scope of work with priorities and repair/improvement costs based on the results of the assessment.
- Develop a plan to improve the acoustics for singing and vocal performance in the church and to upgrade the capabilities and performance of the audio/visual system.
- Ensure that the parish buildings and ground are regularly maintained in a professional and appropriate manner.
- Review and recommend maintenance agreements and maintenance vendor selection.
- Develop a prioritized list, budget and plan to complete deferred maintenance on the church. Work with the Stewardship and Finance Committees, Vestry and St. Thomas Legacy Foundation to develop a funding plan to accomplish this work in a timely manner.
- Review the landscaping, and develop a plan for necessary long-term improvements.
- Develop a master plan for campus renovations and improvements with priorities and costs.
- Review energy and water use. Oversee the implementation of "green practices" as feasible.
- Review and make recommendations regarding the annual operating expenses related to the buildings and grounds to the Finance Committee and Vestry.
- Annually review facility use policies and procedures. Recommend changes as appropriate.
- Annually review facility use fees. Recommend changes as appropriate.
- Oversee the preparation and regular review of an emergency preparedness plan for the parish. Coordinate with St. Thomas School and the City of Medina as appropriate.
- Present the plan to the parish and provide training and information as necessary.
- Oversee an annual inventory of the furniture, fixtures and equipment of the parish.
- Annually review property and casualty insurance coverages for the parish buildings and equipment with the Finance Committee and Vestry.
- Regularly review campus and physical plant safety and ADA compliance implementation/policies. Recommend and implement changes as appropriate.
- Develop and prioritize a list of capital equipment needs with costs and priorities.

2015 Stewardship Program Activities

Commitment Activities

- Neighborhood Gatherings

These gatherings would use our existing Neighborhood Groups. Each meeting will include social time, biblical reflection and prayer, gratitude discussion and questions and answer time. Each meeting will be used to set the tone of the campaign and focus on faith, commitment, abundance and stewardship of all God has entrusted to us.

- Blessing of Work Event – September 13th

Parishioners are invited to bring an item that represents their life and work outside of church. The items are brought to the altar at the Offertory and blessed. The theme for the day is “Living our Faith Daily.”

- Jesus and Money Series (5 weeks beginning September 13th)

This is a multi-part educational series exploring our relationship to faith and money.

- Children’s and Youth Stewardship Programs

Components of the Stewardship Program developed specifically for our children and youth. This may also have a family component exploring “who inspires you to generosity”.

- In-Gathering Sunday Celebration and Service Event (Outreach)

Single worship service (“One Body Gathered”) with a celebratory luncheon and afternoon service project.

- Commitment Follow-Up

Program to follow-up after In-Gathering Sunday.

- Gratitude Project

Parishioners are provided a Gratitude Card during a worship service that asks them to share in writing why they are grateful to God for St. Thomas. The cards are collected and posted in a prominent location. This gives us a chance to reflect on gratitude for God’s gifts to us, and it provides great conversation starters about stewardship.

- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People

This is a monthly special time at the Offertory and Prayers of the People to express special thanks and gratitude for the gifts of God and the abundance of our blessings.

- Worship + 2

This is a drive to encourage a commitment to regular worship attendance, participation in a formation program and volunteer service in an outreach ministry by the adults, youth and children of the parish.

Stewardship of the Earth Activities

- Stewardship of the Earth
 - Mass on the Grass
 - Blessing of the Animals
 - Earth Day Celebration
 - Sustainable Living Workshop and Service Project

This is a series of events about being good and faithful stewards of the earth.

Stewardship of Time & Talent

- Spiritual Gift Series

This is a multi-part educational series exploring our spiritual gifts through an assessment and exploration of opportunities.

- Ministry Fair

Gathering and presentation of the ministry and service opportunities available to parishioners, presented in a fair setting between services and at Coffee Hour. This event will be tied to the Spiritual Gift Series.

- Time and Talent Survey

Survey of parishioners to develop a database of their professional/work affiliations, vocational skills and aspects of their lives that can help us match parishioners to ministries and parish needs. (Database update)

Sharing God's Blessings

- 40 Acts of Generosity

This program involves creating a list of 40 small acts of generosity for both youth and adults that are done daily for each of the 40 days of Lent.

- Plate Offering Campaign

This is a program of donating the plate offering to a different non-profit organization each month. Non-profit organizations would be chosen based on their program's alignment with the outreach goals and mission of St. Thomas. Organizations would be invited to the 10:15 service to be recognized and to receive their gifts.

Telling Our Stories

- Mission Minute

This is a monthly presentation at announcements that would highlight the activities and progress of one of our mission and/or outreach programs each month.

- Engagement Minute

This is a monthly presentation at announcements by a parishioner about his or her St. Thomas experience and faith journey/story.

- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)

This is a short written article to highlight one of our ministries and/or outreach projects in both the newsletter and wrapper.

- Financial Update Presentations

Quarterly presentations about the financial health and position of the parish.

Stewardship Education

- Wills and Planned Giving Seminar

This is a presentation about estate planning and planned giving from a Christian perspective.

- Annual Meeting February 28th (Appreciative Interview)

This is part of the Annual Meeting activities that would allow parishioners the opportunity to share with one another their experiences at St. Thomas as a follow up on the Gratitude Project.

- Newcomer Education Program

This builds on our existing Newcomer's program to grow and deepen incorporation and set clearer expectations for membership (worship attendance, educational program attendance, giving and participation in service projects).

- Quarterly Stewardship Sermons

This is a quarterly schedule of sermons on stewardship topics.

Celebration & Appreciation

- Thank You Campaign

A year-round program of thanking donors for their gifts of time, talent and treasure.

- Volunteer and Lay Leader Appreciation Reception

This event would include blessing and prayers for all parish volunteers and lay leaders and a celebratory luncheon with a program on ministry and volunteer service opportunities. This could be linked to the Ministry Fair, Spiritual Gift Series, Time and Talent Survey and/or Stewardship of Time Series. (Party after the Spiritual Gifts Seminar)

Activity Calendar

Blue = Stewardship Activities

Orange = Strategic Plan Activities

August 2015

- Develop campaign theme and materials
- Finalize Stewardship Calendar
- Schedule the Neighborhood Group Gatherings
- Invitation to write reflection for Stewardship Reflection Book
- Ministry and resource review
- 2015 – 2016 program planning
- 2016 Operating Budget development
- Finalize Stewardship Campaign Plan
- Develop a reflection and Bible study for the Neighborhood Group Gatherings

September 2015

- Core Values, Mission and Vision roll out (Objective 1.1)
- Strategic Plan roll out (Objective 1.1)
- Year Round Stewardship Program (Objective 7.1)
- Blessing of Work and Stewardship Committee Commissioning– September 13th
- All Parish Luncheon/Strategic Plan Roll Out – September 13th
- Stewardship Reflection Book distribution – September 13th
- Email reminders for Neighborhood Group Gatherings
- Neighborhood Group Gatherings begin – September 27th
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Spirituality of Money Series
- 2016 Financial Plan for Mission Mailing
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)

October 2015

- Worship + 2 (Objective 3.1)
- Outreach @ St. Thomas Vision and Plan (Objective 5.1 & 5.2)
- Distribute Quarterly Giving Statements
- Neighborhood Group Gatherings continue
- Blessing of the Animals - October 4th
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Pledge Follow-Up
- Newcomer Education Series
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Newcomer Education Series

November 2015

- Program, ministry and resource review (Objective 1.3)
- Updated reporting (Objective 1.5)
- Committee Interaction Program (Objective 7.2)

- Community Fellowship Event Plan (Objective 4.2)
- Single Worship Service, In-Gathering Luncheon and Service Event – November 1st
- Gratitude Project
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)
- Stewardship sermon
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Finance/Mission update
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)

December 2015

- Volunteer job descriptions (Objective 6.2)
- Volunteer Recognition Program (Objective 6.3)
- Campaign results announcements
- Advent Giving Challenge Program
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- 2016 Budget approval
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)

January 2016

- Worship and Formation Plan development (Objective 1.2)
- Revised program, budget and operations planning process begins (Objective 1.4)
- Discover St. Thomas (Objective 2.2)
- ELC Outreach Usage (Objective 5.3)
- Volunteer Ground Rules (Objective 6.5)
- Distribute Quarterly Giving Statements
- Planned Giving Seminar
- Time and Talent Survey
- Vocation & Passion Series
- Volunteer and Lay Leader Sunday – Celebration at Coffee Hour
- Ministry Fair
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)

February 2016

- Communications Plan (Objective 2.1)
- 40 Acts of Generosity - Lent
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Annual Meeting February 28th (Appreciative Interview)
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)

March 2016

- Share the Good News (Objective 3.2)
- Small Group Program launch (Objective 4.1)
- Time and Talent Database (Objective 6.1)
- Newcomer Education Series continues
- Strategic Plan update
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Finance/Mission update
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)

April 2016

- Diversity Campaign (Objective 4.3)
- Distribute Quarterly Giving Statements
- Earth Day Celebration - April 24th
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)

May 2016

- Communication/Evangelism Strategy review (Objective 2.3)
- Incorporation Plan (Objective 2.4)
- Personnel Plan (Objective 7.3)
- Capital Facilities Plan (Objective 7.4)
- Green Practices Program (Objective 7.5)
- Small Group Relationship Program (Objective 8.1)
- Table Fellowship Program (Objective 8.2)
- Family Event Fellowship Plan (Objective 8.3)
- Neighborhood Program (Objective 8.4)
- Pastoral Care Network (Objective 8.5)
- Monthly Engagement Minute
- Strategic Plan review
- Monthly Special Offertory and Prayers of the People
- Monthly Ministry Spotlight (Wrapper and Newsletter)
- Thank You Campaign (Continuing Monthly)

June 2016

- Monthly Engagement Minute

July 2016

- Monthly Engagement Minute

August 2016

- Monthly Engagement Minute

September 2016

- Youth, Solos and Seniors Inclusion Program (Objective 4.4)
- Lay Leader Development Program (Objective 6.4)
- Monthly Engagement Minute

October 2016

- Monthly Engagement Minute

November 2016

- Monthly Engagement Minute

December 2016

- Monthly Engagement Minute

January 2017

- Strategic Plan review and revision (Objective 1.6)



Engagement & Financial Performance Assessment

As a part of the strategic plan implementation, we are beginning to use a system to quantify engagement through a weighted scale of participation in worship, formation activities, volunteer and leadership service, and participation in fellowship activities. This will be paired with a regular review of key financial performance indicators to give us a snapshot of how we are using God's gifts of time, resources and energy. These two assessment tools will provide a measure of both our spiritual and temporal bottom lines. The forms below are the preliminary templates for this assessment process and the included numbers are for illustration purposes only.

The summary page contains the rating for each mission engagement area and financial indicator. These ratings are derived from a ranking based on a numerical performance total multiplied by a weighting factor. The ranking scale and weighting factors have been established by the Vestry, clergy and staff after examining historic trends and future goals. The percentile is the rating for the month divided by the possible total score.



St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Engagement & Financial Metrics Summary

June-15

Mission Engagement Indicators

Worship	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Sunday Worship Attendance	50	30	60	5	10
Total Wednesday Eucharist Attendance	50	35	70	15	30
Average Sunday Attendance	50	20	40	20	40
% of Active Members Attending Worship	50	25	50	25	50
Total Visitors	50	50	100	50	100
	250	160	64	115	46
Formation	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Adult Formation Attendance	50	50	100	20	40
% of Active Members Attending Formation Activities	50	25	50	25	50
Number of Monthly Formation Opportunities	50	50	100	50	100
Total Children's & Youth Formation Attendance	50	20	40	15	30
	200	145	73	73	36
Outreach & Pastoral Care	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Number of Volunteers - Outreach	30	21	70	9	30
Total Number of Volunteers - Pastoral Care	30	21	70	9	30
% of Active Members Serving Outreach & Pastoral Care	30	15	50	15	50
	90	57	63	33	37
Volunteerism	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Number of Volunteers	20	14	70	6	30
% of Active Members Volunteering	20	10	50	10	50
	40	24	60	16	40
Financial Commitment	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Number of Pledge & Contributor Gifts	40	24	60	4	10
Average Number of Pledge & Contribution Gifts/Week	30	18	60	3	10
% of Active Members Pledging or Contributing	50	25	50	25	50
	120	67	56	32	27
Fellowship & Small Group Participation	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Fellowship Attendance	20	12	60	2	10
Average Fellowship Attendance	20	12	60	2	10
Total Small Group Attendance	20	12	60	2	10
Average Small Group Attendance	20	12	60	2	10
	60	36	60	6	10
Social Media Engagement	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Total Blog Hits	10	6	60	1	10
Total Facebook Likes	10	6	60	1	10
Total Twitter Followers	10	6	60	1	10
	20	12	60	2	10

Mission Engagement Rating (730) **277**

Percentile **38%**

FinancialHealth/Sustainability Indicators

	Total Possible	May Total	May Percentile	June Total	June Percentile
Expense to Income	50	50	100	25	50
Operating Capital	40	40	100	8	20
Ministry Expense to Total Expense	50	40	80	40	80
Outreach Expense to Total Expense	50	8	16	40	80
Administrative Expense to Total Expense	40	40	100	8	20
Facility Expense to Total Expense	30	4	13	36	120
Expense to Worship Attendance	30	36	120	4	13
Contributed Income to Total Expense	40	40	100	8	20
Contributed Income to Worship Attendance	40	36	90	36	90
Budget to Actual - Total Income	50	40	80	4	8
Budget to Actual - Total Expenses	50	36	72	4	8
Contributed to Non-Contributed Income	30	36	120	16	53
Debt to Annual Income	20	4	20	4	20
Month to Month Contributed Revenue Comparison	10	4	40	4	40
	530	414	78	237	45

Financial Health/Sustainability Indicators Rating (530) **237**

Percentile **45%**

