

A Proposal for Action



Recommendations from the Sustainability Task Force

St. John's Episcopal Church

Saugus, MA 01906



December 2013

Sustainability Task Force Members

Julia Aston

Al Coppola

Doris Kelly

Phil Littlehale

Donna Manoogian

Fr. Kevin Olds

Jean Phelps

Fritz White

Introduction

At the 2012 St. John's annual meeting we once again heard the members of the vestry warn of the anticipated loss of funding to sustain St. John's much beyond the next five to six years. Based on income and expense we expense a minimum of \$50,000.00 per year to cover operations. For the past two years money received from the sale of the St. Luke's property has covered our income gap, previously we used money from our investments and endowments. At this rate, St. John's will exhaust our existing resources in 5- 6 years if nothing were to change. The theme of budget shortfall and expenditures beyond our current budget has been heard for a number of years. In the past we have avoided active engagement or corrective action through the generosity of memorial donations that have sustained us for the short term. For a period of three years we had a part-time rector and we leased the rectory building, the proceeds of which

allowed us to conserve some funds through an essentially break-even budget. Then in 2010 we were joined by the members of St. Luke's in Malden. The diocese allocated to us a portion of the proceeds from the sale of that property and in 2011 and 2012 we sustained ourselves on that money. We returned to a full-time rector at that time as well, realizing that the community and our needs as a parish truly requires a full-time rector in-residence. In an effort to proactively plan for the use of the remainder of the funds from St. Luke's, while at the same time providing a firm foundation to sustain St. John's for as long as possible into the future, the Sustainability Task Force (STF) was convened. Chaired by the (then) Senior Warden, members were selectively asked to be on the task force to represent a broad cross-section of parish members. Each member also wears multiple hats within our community and so could speak to varying opinions and points of view. The charge of the task force was to "fact find" and make recommendations to the vestry. It was not the intention of the Task Force members to actively engage in fulfilling any of the proposed recommendations. Indeed, it will be the charge of the Vestry to take up these issues for consideration, choose to take action and assign, appoint or solicit volunteers to see the recommendations to fruition.

Activities/Resources/Meetings

The STF met as a full group seven times from March through December- (meeting minutes are included in appendix A). Whenever possible we met at a member's home allowing for a more comfortable environment and freer flow of thoughts and ideas. We held the meetings to no more than 1 ½ hours to keep our agenda focused on the task at hand.

In addition, on May 16, 2012, several members participated in a presentation to the Diocesan Council. At that time we informed them of our work plan to date and heard the council's recommendations. (See appendices B and C) On July 28, 2013 a small group of task force and Vestry members, on the advice of the Diocesan Council, traveled to visit the Church of the Good Shepherd in Watertown. They attended the service Θ and met with members of their vestry afterwards to hear their story. (Appendix D). On October 22, 2013 John Iredale came to St. John's to meet with available members of the STF, to tour our building, and make recommendations. This meeting took place also on the advice of the Diocesan Council (Appendix E).

Father Kevin met with Fr. Christian Brocato of St. Peter's in Cambridge on October 24, 2013 to discuss ways to transform worship space into a welcoming inviting place for all ages of congregants. On October 31, 2013, he met with Noah Evans, rector of Grace Church Medford. Grace Church is one of three churches in the Diocese that have their own Child Care Center or Pre-School. All of the information gathered in these visits and discussions was incorporated into the deliberations and discussions of the STF.

In the midst of the work of the STF, St. John's Vestry attended a one day retreat on September 28, 2013. Facilitated by John Woodward our Diocesan coach, the Vestry articulated a set of

goals some of which are also reflected in the work of the STF. (Appendix F) Most notably was to use a parish survey to assess and evaluate how members feel about the changes we know we will be instituting over the next several months/years.

Therefore the recommendations which follow reflect thoughtful and serious deliberations which took place using information the STF garnered through all of the methods listed above. We felt it was particularly important to include the seeking of guidance or recommendations from others who were better informed or practiced in implementing the things that are being recommended here. It is the fervent belief of the STF that there are abundant resources within the Diocesan community in terms of knowledge, information and expertise that can help assist St. John's with the implementation of any of the recommendations.

Recommendations

The Sustainability Task Force recommendations fall into 5 categories: Space, Programs, Communications, Welcome and Mission/Outreach. We offer these in no particular order of importance. It is noted that some of these recommendations are incumbent upon the successful outcomes of others.

Space

1. Rent our space (focus on downstairs/classrooms and McQuestion hall) to a commercial interest and use the proceeds to support our programs, outreach and other activities.
2. Develop a new St. John's use for the space- i.e. day care, afterschool program etc.
3. Up-grade our worship space
 - a. Create a space for families with small children to worship with the congregation on Sunday mornings where they can feel comfortable if the children are rambunctious
 - b. Consider access to God i.e. placement of the altar , seating, lighting, sound, energy efficiency
4. Do not be fearful to spend money in order to renovate to meet these goals- be sure our efforts are planned, thoughtful, strongly recommend hiring professionals and spend money wisely
5. Expand the role and function of the Sexton as a higher paid experienced position to manage the day-to-day needs of the facility and thoroughly address cleaning and preventive maintenance
6. Invest resources to manage the building (i.e. renting, setting agreements and negotiating leases managing personnel for repairs, renovations etc.) and its users so the priest and Wardens aren't acting as property managers. Ensure that the building is well managed/maintained to allow us to focus on other work.
7. Do not leave our current building, i.e. don't sell or rebuild

Programs

1. Offer worship services on other days in addition to Sunday Mornings - (attempt to provide a time that would be convenient for families who have competing obligations with their children on Sunday mornings).
2. Use parish survey to assess what interests folks

Communications

1. Use the Saugus Cable access TV site to advertise our services, programs and activities
2. Use the large sign Message Board outside on Central Street to do something different...question, comment or something provocative to pull people attention toward us
3. Keeping open multiple levels of communication , email, Facebook, twitter, Tumblr, printed newsletters, Sunday bulletins– need to assess the resources we need to have in place (parish administration) keep all those channels functional so that we reach everyone who needs/wants to be reached
4. Update the website routinely to include more pictures of St. John's people and church activities.

Welcome

1. Offer and advertise that we offer nursery care/child care (trained provider) during the 10:00am service
2. See #3 under space.
3. Explore initiating a formal Welcoming Program ministry. Including training ushers and greeters to be St. John's ambassadors.
4. Create and train an internal ministry group in a process for following up with newcomers to invite their membership and participation.

Outreach/Mission

1. Look into offering or creating a program that would meet a true community need i.e. interfaith community drug awareness event, ELL programs – we will need to assess the demographics of the community to determine what the need is.
2. Be part of or conduct a community needs assessment. Use demographic information to help guide where we might engage in an activity- Explore use of the parish survey format to survey the larger community of Saugus (outreach and programs)
3. Convene a formal Outreach Committee that has a local, national, and international focus
4. Educate the parish on what communal outreach really means. Determine what St. John's is truly willing to do- how ambitious is the parish to undertake outreach activities (not

just collect money or items- but run programs, or see the people we are helping face-to-face)

5. Encourage real, hands -on participation by parishioners, where people are rolling up their sleeves and truly connecting with the needs and then create programs to meet those needs that are integrated into our St. John's community
6. As part of our mission be aware of what we do and how, and why we do it-(be mindful of our intent)
7. Change our mind set so that we can think about accommodating change. Answer this question: Would St. John's change what we do now and how we do it in order to ensure sustainability?

Conclusion

What is important to note is that each of these recommendations has been determined by the STF to be of vital importance to the achievement of long term stability. Individually undertaking any one of these will, we believe, result in a positive outcome, but it is when they are taken in their entirety that the greatest, most beneficial impact will be felt. Only one recommendation returns a steady income stream to the church and that is in the area of SPACE. The STF feels that this area above all others should be prioritized for immediate attention as we feel that shoring up our financial position is the best course of action to move St. John's towards a position of sustainability. However it is worth noting that improving our financial bottom line will improve our *survivability* but it is only through strengthening ourselves in programs, communications, welcome, outreach and mission that we will we create sustainability by building our capacity to endure.

Throughout our deliberations members of the Sustainability Task Force reflected on the theme of creating a "church of leaders". We heard this concept when we went to the Church of the Good Shepherd. They relate their success to the willingness of every member of the parish to step into a leadership role to get done those things that need doing. Our fervent prayer for us at St. John's is that we find that the will of the Holy Spirit moves our members to make similar commitments that ensure our future is strong, healthy and vibrant.

Respectfully submitted this 2nd day of February 2014



STF- Chairperson and Senior Warden
St. John's Episcopal Church
Saugus, MA

Appendix

Appendix A- Meeting Minutes STF meetings

Sustainability Task Force: March 24, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Fr. Kevin Olds, Fritz White, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly, Julia Aston, Donna Manoogian

Absent: Steve Belyea, Phil Littlehale

The group brainstormed ideas on how to Make Money-

Fundraisers- on a schedule to keep a steady flow of cash incoming to the church: Pot of gold raffle, donations of airfare, frequent flyer miles or hotel points, vacation homes, Scrap metal drop off- fundraiser, involve youth in the activities, monthly dinners

Solicit other churches for possible mergers- Swampscott, Reading, Melrose (?), Wakefield or Malden

Move to a less costly facility

Thrift Shop- or some other retail operation

Rental of our spaces – to local businesses

Cell phone tower

Share (rent) our space with other churches

Grant for operations....

Save Money-

Something less than a full-time Rector- need to understand the difference between part-time and full time, ¾ time rector- Sept.-May –closed in the summer

Solar panels and geo thermal- green grant

Sell the rectory and invest the money – (or build a parking lot if we need it)- part-time rector

Other:

What is it we offer and why don't more people enter our door.

Any new money that comes in – where does that money go to?

Bring in new members through expanded programming- fellowship and programs- will we be able to grow the church- programs for minorities

Homecoming- inviting families who have had their children baptized back for a certain event

Communication with families on an ongoing basis

Need to address administrative areas and cleaning and maintenance

Sustainability Task Force: April 28, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Fritz White, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly, Julia Aston, Donna Manoogian, Phil Littlehale

Absent: Steve Belyea, Fr. Kevin Olds

Bring more families and individuals into the church:

130 folks in attendance this morning at church, having a special event that brings people in

Send a card to families after baptisms to welcome new “members” – 8:00 outreach group might take this on?

Follow up with families in about a year if we haven’t seen them in between

Events that the kids get involved in- 30 hour famine- walking around Saugus and picking up trash- leaf raking, snow shoveling, grass mowing etc. connection to Seniors and others who might have needs.

Growing the acolyte program has been great- more kids involved

Saturday evening church services with a family focused activity afterward to get to families who are otherwise engaged with sports or other activities on Sunday mornings

Use the roast beef dinner as a “reunion”, adult fellowship, (women’s guild, etc.)or do reunion Sundays....Christmas or Easter- need to plan it and advertise it way in advance- discussion do we want to have folks just come once a year or do we want them to re-engage.

Alpha program- connected with the Salvation Army added 17 folks to the Alpha program- making this connection has been very good. 2 of them are coming to church when they can.

Pick your hymn Sunday, as a raffle prize for someone to pick the music.....

Some kind of an event to bring people into the church...coffee house, music recital, music evening, etc. Any event that brings people in to the church. Is this something that Tanya would want to do? Group choir lessons, school department drama classes or performances. Tie to Saturday night service.

Share services- Care.com, Lynn time bank.....etc. Raffle to win a yard clean up!

Considerations:

- Our biggest expenses are personnel and facility
- We don't have a deep base to pull from to bring in new members(need 40 + pledging units)
- What size rector do we need, what size church building do we need, what kind of outreach do we need?

Next steps; have the difficult discussion about what we could do with the building

- Rebuild
- Find a new building
- Merge or acquire
- Other ideas

Sustainability Task Force; June 23, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly, Julia Aston, Donna Manoogian

Absent: Steve Belyea, Fr. Kevin Olds, Fritz White, Phil Littlehale

Diocesan Council Recommendations:

What will John Woodard do for us? Sustainability or Vestry work- retreat day in the fall- Jean will work with Fr. Kevin on the details of this- whether or not the STF will be part of that.

Reaching out and meeting with Church of the Good Shepherd Watertown. Julia will follow up on this and find out when they might be able to meet and with whom. Questions we might have- budget, number of pledging units, is the priest- full time- how did that decision get made, are

they meeting budget, new members, how do they reach out to the community, where do they get new members, are they renting their space, how is that managed?

What can John Iredale do for us? Jean will call John to set up a time for him to come out. Fritz should definitely be a part of this meeting as well. Are there things we can do now to make the building more efficient and welcoming? Are there things we can do to make the space more desirable for new ministries?

We will report out to the Vestry at the end of the year with a full report to the annual meeting in February and to the Canon for Organizational Development.

Considerations:

- Our biggest expenses are personnel and facility
 - What does a part-time priest position look like- Donna and Doris will follow-up with the diocese
 - Are there templates for a part-time priest job description
 - Do we need less priest and more administrative assistant

Sustainability Task Force: September 8, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly, Julia Aston, Donna Manoogian, Fritz White, Phil Littlehale

Absent: Steve Belyea, Fr. Kevin Olds

Reaching out and meeting with Church of the Good Shepherd Watertown

- Julia, Donna, Fritz, Doris and Lisa S. visited
- Were almost ready to close but for a last minute endowment- Grant from Diocese to fund ½ of their full-time priest. Church is taking a leap of faith to keep on paying her full-time
- Our stories are parallel
- Don't pay admin assistant- sexton 10 hours a week- may be paying a Sunday school teacher
- Advice to us "rent your building"- day care and Haitian church, other entities net \$55,000.00
 - Who is managing the building? Who is managing the users?

- How to set rents? Managing bad behaviors of tenants
- Role of the sexton
- Admin assistant
- Follow- up on collection of rents
- Full-time priest who was instructed to spend time in the community
 - Talking to parents
 - Finding out what the needs are in the community
- 100% participation of parishioners
 - Everyone is really friendly- each person has a welcoming attitude
 - Every member takes responsibility for the parish
 - People we asked, don't know who did the asking (co-wardens- and the rector do asking?)
 - Church of leaders- everyone is expected to help out
 - More organized communication effort- email, face-book, phone calls (organized group of people who are doing this)
- Go out and do things in the community
 - Have to find out what the community wants, listen and be ready to hear what the community wants
 - People who might want what we can offer won't necessarily look like us or be like us
 - Community gardens
 - 5 k community walk
- Website- the church isn't the building it's the people- have pictures of people not the building
- Good Shepherd- more urban, more diverse population
- Flexible worship space-plain space-very bright- able to use the space for church and other things- no accessibility in other parts of the building
 - Did not feel like church
- **We could stand to brighten up our space improve the lighting**
- **Handicapped accessibility options, more space, less conspicuous**
- Intern- Life Together and Missio-Engage have helped them move forward having champions for causes

Setting up a meeting with John Iredale? Jean will call John to set up a time for him to come out. Fritz will be a part of this meeting as well. Are there things we can do now to make the building more efficient and welcoming? Are there things we can do to make the space more desirable for new ministries? Jean will try to set this up in the next month. (Not the 3rd Saturday of the month.)

We will report out to the Vestry at the end of the year with a full report to the annual meeting in February and to the Canon for Organizational Development.

Sustainability Task Force: October 27, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Julia Aston, Donna Manoogian, Fritz White, Fr. Kevin Olds
Absent: Phil Littlehale, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly, Steve Belyea

Meeting with John Iredale

- He was impressed with our buildings- well maintained
- His background is as a developer- and this is what he does for the diocese
- We need to rent our building:
 - Dance school
 - Day care/preschool- someone who is already licensed to do this
 - Office space
- John felt that there have to be people in church who can do these things for us given that we have 90+ pledging “units”
- Will need to go out and find who these people are in our midst and how they can and will help us

First step will be to put together a business plan to identify the best way to rent our spaces addressing the following:

- What are our current issues-cleanliness, sextons hours , water/mold, and needed maintenance to keep the condition from happening (i.e. gutter cleaning, maintenance of the landscaping at the foundation etc..
- John felt that “ we could clean the floor in McQuestion hall and we could rent it tomorrow”
- What are the issues with the building code/ ADA/fire code
- Karate and dance classes could happen with minimal work on our part
- Office space- sales/marketing, taxes, counselors- might take more extensive renovations- build to suit tenants, charge back cost in the rents
- **We need to find out how to manage the space**
 - How much do you charge, per square foot
 - How much space are we renting?
 - How often does it need to be cleaned/maintained?
 - How do you effectively manage multiple users?
 - Are we willing to give up our use of the space- permanently?
 - What is in the old building use manual?
 - McQuestion Hall might be the easiest space to rent right now
 - Staff/personnel to manage the space
 - Contracts/lease agreements- legal advice
 - Infrastructure upgrades- electrical, internet etc....

Other: Fr. Kevin spoke with **Arrington Chambliss- who coordinates the Life Together internship program**- need a plan in place to apply for an intern- they get about 40 applications for 20 positions each year- we probably won't be ready for this by the spring application deadline this year.

Fr. Kevin has a meeting set with **Noah Evans- Grace Church Medford** – who has a pre-school (does the church run it or is their space rented by another entity?) and also a meeting with Erik Hilgast- to talk about Facebook, Twitter and a blog and other social media. Melissa Chausse is now doing a lot with the social media stuff. Diocese also had some leads about what churches have a school (or a dance school).

Fr. Kevin's visit with Christian Brocato St. Peter's Cambridge- they renovated- moved the altar down to the transept of the church- still have the high altar to distribute communion. Christian's advice- Be sure what you are doing is driven both theologically and practically. Interest and feedback on making these kinds of changes at St. John's could really be folded into the survey. Christian would help us out and do a workshop/training here on how to use space.

- Baptismal font in the middle
- Space for families to worship in comfort
- Worship as a group
- Lighting and sound

We will report out to the Vestry at the end of the year with a full report to the annual meeting in February and to the Canon for Organizational Development.

Sustainability Task Force: November 17, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Donna Manoogian, Fritz White, Fr. Kevin Olds, Phil Littlehale, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly

Absent: Julia Aston, Steve Belyea

Recommendations:

Space

1. Do not leave our current building (new boiler)

2. Rent our space to a commercial interest
3. Develop a new St. John's use for the space- i.e. day care, afterschool program etc.
4. Up-grade worship space
 - a. Space for families with small children to worship with the congregation on Sunday mornings
 - b. Theological considerations (access to God),lighting, sound, energy efficiency
5. Do not be fearful to spend money in order to renovate to meet these goals- planned, thoughtful, hire professionals and spend money wisely
6. Expand the role and function of the Sexton as a paid position to manage the facility and thoroughly address cleaning and preventive maintenance

Programs

1. Offer a non-Sunday morning worship service- use survey results to assess what interests folks

Communications

1. Use the Saugus Cable access TV site to advertise
2. Use the Message Board outside to do something different...question, comment or something provocative
3. Keeping open multiple levels of communication – need to assess the resources we need to keep all those channels functional
4. Update the website to include more pictures of St. John's people

Welcome

1. Nursery care/child care during the 10:00am service
2. Explore initiating a formal Welcoming Program ministry. Including training ushers and greeters and process for following up with new members

Outreach

1. Use the parish survey format to survey the larger community of Saugus (outreach and programs)
2. Look into a program that would meet a community need i.e. interfaith community drug awareness event, ELL programs – we will need to the assess demographics of the community to determine what the need is.

We will report out to the Vestry at the end of the year with a full report to the annual meeting in February and to the Canon for Organizational Development.

Next Meeting: December 1, 2013 @12:00pm at St. John's

Sustainability Task Force: December 1, 2013

Attendees: Jean Phelps, Julia Aston, Donna Manoogian, Fritz White, Fr. Kevin Olds
Phil Littlehale, Al Coppola, Doris Kelly

Recommendations continued:

Outreach

1. Outreach Committee (?)
2. Community needs assessment- demographic information-would be a helpful tool to help guide where we might engage in an activity- asking for community feedback
3. What is this parish willing to do- how ambitious is the parish to undertake outreach activities (not just collect money or items- but run programs, or see the people we are helping face-to-face)
4. Educate the parish on what communal outreach really means
5. How to encourage participation by parishioners where people are rolling up their sleeves and connecting with the needs
6. Can we create programs that are integrated into our St. John's community
7. Local, national, international

Mission

1. Is there a difference between outreach and mission?
2. Is mission being aware of what we do and how, and why we do it-(intent)
3. Would we change what we do and how we do it in order to ensure sustainability
4. Changing our mind set so that we can think about accommodating change

Net Steps:

1. *Jean will prepare a draft report in the next several weeks. STF members will be asked to read and comment via email.*
2. *STF will present draft recommendations at the January 14, 2014 Vestry meeting, members of the STF are welcome to attend that meeting.*
3. *Final recommendations will be readied for the annual meeting on February 1, 2014. All members of the STF should plan on attending the annual meeting.*
4. *The final report will be sent to to the Canon for Organizational Development after the annual meeting.*

Thank You to all for your thoughtful participation in the process. We are all looking forward to seeing the results of our recommendations as the process of sustainability moves forward!



St. John's Saugus is a welcoming Episcopal family seeking to grow in Christ through worship and service to others

St. John's Episcopal Church Saugus Sustainability Update- May 2013

In the spring of 2013 the St. John's Vestry had a "retreat" day facilitated by John Woodard. Our goals for the day were to focus our energies and set goals. At the February 2013 Vestry Meeting we reported on our status. Despite several significant challenges in the past year including the untimely death of our outgoing treasurer, change in our administrative office staff and Fr. Kevin's paternity leave to name a few the Vestry is pleased to report the following accomplishments:

- We have encouraged and embraced several new families to join the parish. They are active and engaged in the life of our community
- We have created a viable if small program to support our youth. We acknowledge that we could do more but we have a core group of youth and adults to work with. We have secured a Church Home Society grant to purchase a computer for this group to assist them with their program planning and outreach activities
- We have restructured church administration and successfully negotiated a change in staff despite this happening while Fr. Kevin was "on leave".
- The parish is developing a better sense of what the Vestry does and who we are. The Senior Warden provides monthly updates in the newsletter that have helped with some of that
- We completely restructured the finance functions of the church. Built a strong team with many hands to do the work while at the same time grieving the untimely loss of our Treasurer.
- We have found ways to advertise and get our message out to the wider community via newspapers, Facebook, email and a nifty web page
- The Every Child Deserves to Smile ministry is thriving in part to grant House of Mercy and Sending and Serving grants as well as the tireless dedication of Jeanne Seaboyer of St John's and the interfaith efforts of several local churches

Goals for 2013-2014

Though we won't set another retreat date until the fall, the vestry has begun some new projects to build on our past successes:

- Creation Care Grant has been submitted to the Diocese to replace our aging boiler, reduce our carbon foot -print and be more responsible stewards of God's creation and St. John's resources
- We have convened a Sustainability Task Force charged with exploring all viable options for our future (minutes of that committee's initial meetings are attached)
- We will retreat again in the fall to revisit our goals in light of our mission and to review the initial work of the Sustainability Committee

A Funding Resolution for St. John's in Saugus.

WHEREAS St. John's in Saugus has previously been granted use of proceeds funds to support the salary of a full time rector, upon receiving parishioners from the closed parish of St. Luke's in Malden, and

WHEREAS St. John's has demonstrated significant commitment to the creation of a sustainability plan for its parish into the period of time after support from the Diocese's "use of proceeds" funds ends, and

WHEREAS they have been diligent in looking at all the options for continuing their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Saugus moving forward, including less than full time clergy, different use of real-estate assets, and/or possible relocation, and

WHEREAS they have requested that the additional funds resulting from the sale of St. Luke's in Malden be released to help them finish their sustainability plan,

*BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT, the Diocesan Council grant up to \$43,077 in 2014 and \$43,077 in 2015 to St. John's in Saugus, to continue support for their full time rector as they complete their sustainability plan,

*AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that funds for 2014 will only be released when St. John's has completed the following steps, to be tracked by the Canon for Congregational Development:

- 1) Continued working with congregational consultant John Woodard in the development of a sustainability plan.
- 2) Met in person with clergy and lay representatives from Church of the Good Shepherd in Watertown to hear their story of diocesan-funded parish re-vitalization, and reported in writing to the Canon for Congregational development whether some of Watertown's tools, learning, and mission strategies might be relevant to St. John's.
- 3) Met in person with John Iredale to review the physical plant assets, develop an accurate picture of current and future maintenance costs, and discuss creative options for use of the parish's properties moving forward, and reported in writing to the Canon for Congregational Development on the Sustainability Task Force's reflections following that meeting.
- 4) Provide a 2013 year-end report on the status of the Sustainability Task Force's work, and shared a copy of that plan with the Vestry, the wider congregation (as appropriate), and the Canon for Congregational Development.

*AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT funds for 2015 will only be released when St. John's has completed the following steps,

- 1) Completed a vestry-approved final draft of their sustainability plan, and shared that plan with the congregation, Canon for Congregational Development and the Diocesan Council.
- 2) Taken meaningful steps towards the implementation of that plan.

- 3) Discerned ways for how to share their own experience of this sustainability work with other parishes in the diocese and communicated those methods to the Canon for Congregational Development and Diocesan Council in writing.

END OF RESOLUTION. *Adopted unanimously by Council on Thursday, June 6, 2013.*

Sustainability Task Force Notes—

On Sunday, July 28, 2013, Julia Aston, Doris Kelly, Donna Manoogian, Lisa Saraceno, and Fritz White attended services at the Church of the Good Shepherd (CGS) in Watertown and then met with the following: Steve Steadman, Co-Warden (responsible for the buildings & grounds), Rob Flynn, Co-Warden (responsible for the website and ad-hoc programs), church members Ann Donna (long-time member) and Andrea (member for 2 years) to discuss how they have moved forward spirituality and financially.

Purpose of the visit: The Diocese Council sent A Funding Resolution for St. John's in Saugus outlining that the remaining funds for 2014 (up to \$43,077) and 2015 (up to \$43,077) from the closed parish of St. Luke's in Malden will only be released in 2014 when St. John's has completed 4 steps with one being the following:

Meet in person with clergy and lay representatives from Church of the Good Shepherd in Watertown to hear their story of diocesan-funded parish re-vitalization, and report in writing to the Canon for Congregational Development whether some of Watertown's tools, learning, and mission strategies might be relevant to St. John's.

Church of the Good Shepherd (CGS) belongs to the Alewife Deanery with Rev. Amy McCreath as Rector.

Physical plant: Stone building built in 1887, sanctuary had no pews (and no kneelers) but instead was set up with 8 rows of chairs (which are very similar to those in our Hurl Room) with 6 seats on either side of a center isle for a total of 96 seats. More seats can be brought in. There was no air conditioning. Choir would sit on right side front and move to center of platform for service.

After a fire in 1959, the sanctuary was rebuilt; and it was renovated (and reconfigured) again in 2009 thus allowing for a flexible worship space. The walls were painted a light gray with light color tile squares replacing the dark carpet. Taking out the pews and reconfiguring the sanctuary was accomplished after a few years of planning in order to obtain 'buy in' with the parishioners. Initially, the last 5 rows of pews were taken out to allow for handicap parishioners. It was noted that there are several members who have vision problems (Perkins for the Blind School is nearby).

In the original church building (which was not affected by the fire), there are two church halls and a kitchen with classrooms (which were renovated in the late 1950's). Entering that corridor gave the feeling of the old Episcopal churches we are familiar with as opposed to the modern flexible worship space.

Their annual rental income is \$55K:

- Haitian parish has used the church Sunday afternoons for the past 15 years
- Day care 5 days a week
- AA and NA pay \$25/week
- Dance lessons

- Musicians practice area
- Rectory is rented to a supply priest from the diocese

Note: There has been friction with neighbors over loud music when the Haitian services are going on.

There is a cost for heat, etc. when building is being used. They feel it is worth it.

They do not pay for secretarial help; sexton is paid for 10 hours/week

They had a ½ time rector that did not work—there was no capacity for growth.

Rev. Amy McCreath has been a priest in charge for the last 3 years. They have just called her to be rector. In the beginning she spent 60% of her time in the community (i.e. sitting in Starbucks with her laptop wearing her collar) with 40% of her time at the church. Her mission was to find out what the needs were in the community. She did outreach to parents (not necessarily members of their church) to figure out what they can do together. Now she spends 60% of her time at the church & 40% in the community.

We told them about our Stainability Task Force

Every Sunday at 2:00 Rob Flynn, Co-Warden, leads a 5K road race/walk with parishioners.

- Julia Aston told them that St. Luke's in Malden was down to 10 parishioners when they merged with St. John's. CGS told us that St. Andrews in Belmont merged with them (along with a grant which will be finished in 3 years).
- CGS talked about closing for over 25 years. When they were planning their last vestry meeting, they were informed that a former parishioner in Florida died and bequeathed \$250,000.
- We told them that we have 92 pledges; they had 35 which increased to 65 after Rev. Amy McCreath joined them 3 years ago.
- Their attendance was down to 25 people on Sundays; now up to 50 people.
- Their Sunday school (children's formation) went from 0 children to 50 over the last 3 years
- Missio: engage – CGS participates in a partnership in the Episcopal Church. CGS is one of about forty parishes re-rooting themselves in their community and learning how to live more fully into their call to partner with people and groups around them by learning to listen well, tell their life and faith stories, and respond to the real needs of their real neighbors. There is financial help from the Diocese. This program starts up again in the fall.
- MICA program – CGS applied to the Diocese (website: Life Together).
 - Year-long training program
 - 20 interns participate in communal living throughout the Diocese
 - Community organizing
 - Interns work 2 days in a parish
 - Projects are sustainable
 - Child care projects
- Communication is the key.
 - Transparency
 - Face to face
 - E-mails, Facebook

- Monthly newsletters
- Phone calls for activities (and calls to people who have not been there for a while)
- Pictures in the paper
- Community gardens
- Keep the doors open
- “Glass doors” bring people in
- “Radical” welcome
- Community service
- Regular activities (i.e. pot luck dinners)
- Find out what parishioners do and what do they know
- Parishioners are waiting to be asked
- Keep it to short term tasks
- CGS is a church of leaders

CGS would love to be in our position with our endowments, pledges, and membership.

To: Members of St. Johns Vestry & Sustainability Task Force

From: Lisa Saraceno

Re: Notes from visit to the Church of the Good Shepherd 7/28/13

❖ **OBSERVATIONS OF SETTING & MEMBERS**

- Open space
- No pews
- No book of common prayer
- Modern
- Coffee hour in same area
- Bright/sunny
- Clean/new paint
- Space is dually used as a stage for concerts

- Enthusiastic
- Mostly all stayed for coffee hour
- Many stayed for post-mass happenings
- Openness ---vestry round table

- Mass overview:
- 1-mass per Sunday all year round
- 9:30 start of service
- Followed by coffee hour
- Followed by meetings/guest speakers/bible study

❖ **FEEDBACK/QUESTIONS FROM WARDENS**

- What are needs of St. Johns?
- What are our accomplishments?
- What are our goals?
- What are the needs of our community & how can we help?

- What can we offer with our space?
- What can our members offer?

❖ OUTREACH/ADVERTISING

- Pastor goes to local coffee shops & engages with locals
- Holds a bi-monthly community-wide mothers group
- Missio Engage Project
 - www.5marks.org/missio
 - web seminars that teach how to:
 - reach out to the community
 - achieve sustainability
- Facebook
 - Page is continuously updated
 - Members use it
 - Purchase advertisements for the church
- Phone calls
 - Member(s) make calls to members who haven't come in a while/baptisms/weddings
- Signs
 - Have signs hanging in local establishments advertising upcoming events
 - Signs out front of building
- Newspaper
 - Articles and pictures of upcoming/previous events
- Community gardens & summer garden program
 - Open to all members of the community
- Website
 - *see notes below*

❖ INCOME

- Appx. 55k/annually from rental
- Have specific contract/forms for rentals
- Have spaces for parties/classes/meetings/etc
- *see donations info in website notes below*

❖ YOUNG ADULT INTERN PROGRAMS



Life Together is a strategic ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and an affiliate program of Episcopal Service Corps. Rooted in a practicing faith community, staff and fellows at Life Together are committed to following the Jesus Way, working with young adults in vocational discernment, leadership development and intentional community through 10-month, post-graduate fellowships: the Micah Project

and the Relational Evangelism Pilot Project. Learn more about Life Together initiatives [here](#). Life Together is currently accepting applications for the [Micah Project](#). The Micah Project focuses on leadership development and social change. It matches emerging young adult leaders (21-35 years of age) with mission-based non-profit organizations and churches throughout the greater Boston area.

Visit www.lifetogethercommunity.org for more information. [Our Initiatives](#)

Life Together sponsors two young adult fellowships: the [Micah Project](#) and the [Relational Evangelism Pilot](#). Both fellowships provide 10-month frameworks for 21-35 year-olds to serve as activists, community organizers and meaningful helpers within [missional organizations throughout greater-Boston](#). The Micah Project is currently [accepting applications](#).

❖ WITHIN THE CHURCH COMMUNITY

- **Round Table Vestry Meetings** to discuss the ongoings within the vestry with the parish members
- **Pastoral Response Team:** Every Tuesday from 11:00 am to noon in the parish office, starting May 28th. Join with Pastor Amy for noonday prayer and share with her in strengthening our response to challenges, crises, celebrations, and changes in our CGS community and beyond. Each week's work will differ, but might include sending birthday cards, delivering flowers, calling someone who visited the parish for the first time, or representing CGS at a civic event. Come as often as you are able. Those who are at work will be welcome to join in via conference call (we'll publish info on how to do that ahead of time).
- **The Living Stones ministry is the Church of the Good Shepherd's attempt to:**
 - stand with Christians in the holy land
 - share our experiences in the region with others in the local community
 - raise awareness about the Israeli/Palestine conflict and its effect
 - on the Palestinian Christians and their neighbors by hosting speakers
 - and groups working for peace
 - directly support our sister parishes in Ramallah and Zababdeh with
 - scholarships, supplies, prayer, and moral support
 - The name, "Living Stones", was chosen for this ministry because "Living Stones " is the name of the Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land who have been present in Palestine since the first Pentacost.

Major activities

- Traveled on witness trip to Israel/Palestine in October - Ann, Elly, Rob, Sharon, and Sandy met with a number of NGO's and peace groups
- Members developed a daily bible study program used by trip participants - Met with our sister parish, [St. Andrews](#), Ramallah and made a new linakge with the [St. Matthew's](#) church in Zababdeh. For both churches we brought school supplies and scolarships from our outreach and sales efforts during the year.

- Purchased goods for sale at future sales
- Ran Jerusalem Marketplace on successive Sundays around Easter and Christmas selling Fair Trade goods (olive oil, coffee, Palestine handcrafts, bring and buy item, etc.) to raise money for our sister parishes
- Hosted a Christmas sale of Palestinian embroidery, olive oil and other Fair Trade goods with the Folk Art Mavens and other groups
- Hosted a talk by Noam Chomsky and Nancy Murraray on the situation in Gaza
- Prepared presentation on Nazareth and Bethlehem for bible study groups at Christmas.
We have adapted and expanded the Bethlehem presentation for use with other churches.

❖ WEBSITE

- Front page
 - Inviting
 - Pictures of events
 - Pictures of key members
 - “This week at...”
 - Welcome statement
 - Click here to suppor through amazon shopping
 - Blog for parents frompastor amy
 - Collection non perishables
 - About us tab
 - About our worship/childrens formation/ministry/documents for nursery & safety
 - News tab
 - News with pictures
 - Events tab
 - Contact us tab
 - Driving directions tab
 - People tab
 - Pictures of key people with info
 - Worship tab
 - What will service be like?
 - Can I take communion?
 - Before & after services
 - You will not be embarassed
 - Living stones tab
 - *see above*
 - Baptisms & Weddings
 - *see below*
 - Giving & Stewardship
 - *see below*

Baptisms and Weddings at CGS

Holy Baptism is full initiation into the Body of Christ. All baptized Christians share in the work of Christ in the world, and so baptism is not just a special moment in time but a commitment to a way of life and the community of the Church universal.

Baptism is a sacrament – an outward sign of something God is doing which is beyond our ability to see. In the Episcopal Church, it is our joy to baptize infants, children, and adults. Generally, baptisms are held on major feast days of the church year, including Easter, Pentecost (late spring), All Saints Day (early November), and the Baptism of our Lord (in January).

At Good Shepherd, parents of infants and children meet with our priest several times before the baptism to prepare not just for the event itself but for the journey ahead as a family. Because parents make the promises of baptism on behalf of their child, the preparation will involve examining their own faith and practices, considering how they will support their child in his or her life in Christ, and learning how the resources of the church can help them in this work. When possible, the godparents of the child to be baptized participate in at least one session of preparation.

Adults considering baptism are encouraged to meet with the priest a few times to learn more about the meaning of the rite and reflect on their spiritual journey. If a person then decides to prepare for baptism, a plan for preparation will be set out, which will include the selection of sponsors within the parish – members of the church who can serve as companions on the journey ahead and share some of their own experience as Christians.

If you would like to learn more about baptism at Good Shepherd, please contact the Priest-in-Charge, the [Rev. Amy McCreath](#).

Holy Matrimony is a life-long commitment between two consenting adults, made before God and the community. The Church understands marriage as a sacramental rite that establishes a particular pathway into the future. On this pathway, those who marry grow into their capacity to love as Christ loves, offer one another comfort in times of need, and find mutual joy.

Deciding to be married by the Church means that you are inviting God to be present in your relationship and you intend to find strength and hope through participation in the life of the Church. If you would like to be married at Good Shepherd but are not yet a member, please in touch with us so that we may help you to begin that process. If you are members of another church or are unsure about your spiritual path, an initial conversation with our Priest will help you sort out possibilities and make a decision that has integrity for you.

The canons of the Episcopal Church require that at least one of the two persons being married is a baptized Christian (in any denomination/tradition). Also, the couple is required to meet with the clergy person who will preside at the marriage four or five times before the ceremony for pre-marital preparation, so that when they make their vows, they have a deeper understanding of the commitment they are making and stronger resources for living into their vows.

If you would like to discuss marriage at Good Shepherd, please call the Priest, the [Rev. Amy McCreath](#).

Our church facility is also available for rent for wedding receptions after civil ceremonies. For more information about rates and available dates, please contact the church office.

Giving and Stewardship

We will be adding information about new ways to give to CGS, including making payment using online banking services like "BillPay" and the online payment service PayPal. Soon, you'll see more information and PayPal "Donate" buttons on this page.

Online Banking Bill Pay

One way to give is to set up a one-time or recurring online payment using your bank's web site or mobile service. When you set up an online payment to CGS, your bank will mail a check on your behalf directly to the church. Most banks do not charge for this service so your entire gift will go directly to the Church of the Good Shepherd.

Use this address when you are completing your bank's online account setup:

Church of the Good Shepherd

Treasurer

9 Russell Avenue

Watertown, MA 02472

You can use the memo line to indicate a specific mission or focus for your contribution, like "Landscaping" or "Memorial gift".

Links to Online Payment Help Pages:

[Bank of America](#)

[Capital One](#)

[Chase](#)

[Citibank](#)

[HSBC](#)

[Independence Bank](#)

[Signature Bank](#)

[TD Bank](#)

Make a Donation using our PayPal account

Click on the Donate button to give using your Credit Card or PayPal account:

Top of Form



Bottom of Form

Forwarded message -----

From: **John Iredale** <john@karstenco.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 23, 2013 at 12:08 PM

Subject: Re: Walkthrough of St. John's

To: Fatherkevinolds@gmail.com, "mallyl@diomass.org" <mallyl@diomass.org>

Kevin,

It was a pleasure meeting with you and your team last night. I am writing down what we talked about and discussed because if I don't now I will forget...it's the age thing.

The goal is to grow your parish and become fully sustainable.

- We identified that we need to close the gap between the income which is approximately \$120,000 and expenses which run at \$160,000. We added \$10,000 and arrived at a figure of \$170,000. **We all agreed that the goal is to earn an additional \$50,000.**
- Remember your the fire captain...it's not about keeping the fire house clean for being prepared and for safety **it's about giving people things to do so that they don't start bickering amongst themselves.** People want things to do, they want to feel a part of something and most of all they want to be appreciated and recognized.
- Average pledge is \$1,000...90 Parishioners...how do we bring this average up? Action item; Send email to Robert Dorn RWdorn@gmail.com and Bill Carlson Bill@vistcg.com Bob is a professional fundraiser and Bill is the senior warden and a business owner both men have helped to raise St Mary's in N. Attleboro from the dead. They are rock stars and you need to go down and soak every bit of information and learn all you can from them. Don't go alone...take the people you want to help with fund raising and stewardship with you. They created office space and receive a good rent every month and run a killer fundraiser every year that raises a lot of money, Also take someone that can help manifest and change physical space. I have to believe that within those 90 pledges somebody has these skills.
- Face book...is bringing in pledges...talk to Eric Hillegas at St. Chrysostom's...another rock star eric.hillegas@gmail.com Eric understands webpages and he knows what is working and what isn't. His parish is growing...suck everything you can out of him...great guy.
- You need support and help...work your magic and take Arrington Chambliss arrington@diomassintern.org to lunch...you want to get on the list for an intern (they know fb). Talk to EDS and push hard for a candidate..get help...can't do it alone and young people provide energy that will spark others.
- We looked at your space and determined that you have excellent space for a Dance studio and a Day Care/nursery school...find out who has them in the Diocese. Libby Berman Lberman@diomass.org might have this information and another person I know that might is Lynn Smith lynn@diomass.org Your job is to find out and then develop a business plan. This is twofold...you need to find out where the dance studios are in the surrounding area..google them...get your intelligence gathering hat on...do the same for the nursery school...really do your homework on this ...learn everything you possibly can about these businesses, these two areas are real potential game changers.

- Finally, you need to do all of this and then be able to **coherently put it into a plan**. With dates, action items and people assigned to task. Why...because you are **going to come before the council and they are going to want to know what your game plan is** and how it's going and ultimately we want to celebrate your new status as a bona fide rock star!
- Once you have assembled your team and moved the needle on some of these items lets get together and review where you are (sometime after Thanksgiving but before the madness of the Christmas)...In the meantime, keep in touch by email and let me know how you are doing and where I can be of assistance.

God speed and know you have lots of support,

Sincerely,

John

St John's Episcopal Church- Saugus, MA

Parish Goals for 2013/2014



Sustainability:

Goal: Conduct a parish survey

- *Electronic and paper versions*
- *Share and discuss outcomes- small groups*

Goal: Leadership development

- *Explore ways to improve communications*
- *Vestry as the clearinghouse for information and communication about change*
- *Invite and engage new Vestry members*

Formation:

Goal: Assess how we use all our spaces

- *Address current issues of cleanliness, do we need professionals?*
- *Assess what the impact of new activities will be(use, resources, management , renovations needed)*
- *Plan a sanctuary cleaning day in the spring (before Easter)*
- *Budget, plan and pay for and routine maintenance and repairs in a timely manner so as to reduce dependence on volunteers whose time is limited*

Goal: Explore changing church school format

Mission:

Goals: Explore options for Partnership/Collaboration

- *Local partnerships- use parish survey to query interest, possibly the Drug Coalition*
- *Expanding participation in ECDtS- which needs an infusion of energy*
- *International Partnership- to solidify our place in wider world- possible partnership with another church in another country (St. John's/St. Luke's in Jerusalem?)*

Worship:

Goals: Plan to Reconfigure worship space,

Goal: Experiment with other worship times (based on survey outcomes)

- *Saturday nights 5:30, family service, music, videos, other options, bell choir*