



Preamble

On November 28, 2009, approximately twenty members of the Parish of the Church of Saint Andrew in Cole Harbour met to discuss their vision for the future of the parish.

This all day session was the final event in a series of workshops designed to stimulate discussion and engagement from parish members regarding our church and parish.

The previous events were held on four Tuesday evenings in October and November and dealt with the following topics:

- Community Development
- Spiritual Development
- Outreach and Evangelism
- Buildings and Grounds

A summary for each of these evening sessions was prepared and posted to our website and made available during the vision planning day.

In addition, workshop participants were given a summary of the notes and comments as collected from our parish for our "Marks of Mission" banner as well as material originally collected for the national church vision process and focused on aspirations for our church now and into the future.

The Vision Planning Day goal was to develop a vision statement which encapsulated the hopes, priorities and expectations of our parish as we consider its evolution over the next 5 to 10 years.

The vision statement produced from this important day is be presented to the Parish Council in January and, with their support, formally accepted by the parish during the Annual General Meeting ordinarily held in the latter part of February.



The Days Agenda

Approximate Time	Activity
9:00am - 9:10am	Welcome
9:10am - 9:30am	Morning Prayer (Linda Rouleau)
9:30am – 9:45am	Orientation & Review Past Events Our Goal Today – (Draft) Vision Statements
9:45am – 10:45am	Acts 2:41-47 - A Bible Study
10:45am – 11:00am	Nutrition Break
11:00am - Noon	People of God Work on Vision Statements by Activity
Noon – 12:30pm	Lunch - Pizza
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Affirming & Building Our Strengths Read and consider prayer - Teresa of Avila
1:30pm – 1:45pm	Nutrition Break
1:45pm – 3pm	Continue Work Vision Statements By Activity + (possibly) Overall Parish Vision Statement
3:00pm – 3:20pm	Summary – What is our priority?
3:20pm-3:30pm	Closing Prayers and Dismissal



The Diocesan Context

The Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island has encouraged each parish to conduct a visioning process with its membership.

A Diocesan Vision was confirmed a number of years ago:

**To be Christ centered, mission minded,
ministering communities of faith.**

In addition, the diocese is well advanced in planning for a special diocesan wide celebration for 300 years of Anglican worship and ministry in the Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Every parish is being asked to integrate this a diocesan emphasis in to their programming during 2010.

The following logo and caption has been created to highlight this special year in our history as a faithful Anglican community.



A JOURNEY JUST BEGUN

1710-2010



Bible Study

So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about 3000 persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon every one, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 2.41-47

Small group questions re Acts 2.41-47

- How would you describe this early church community?
- What are they doing to express their faith and beliefs?
- What are their attitudes and values?
- What can our parish learn from this community?

Miscellaneous Comments from workshop participants

- Devoted
- New and inspired
- Close knit
- Dedicated, passionate and Joyful
- Growing community
- Naturally evangelistic
- Loving
- Intimate group
- Worship at the core

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- Sharing and generous
- Done differently
- They lived their faith
- They lived in the love of God Versus Living in the Wrath of God
- Followers of the teachings of Jesus
- Together (spiritually, mentally)
- All things held in common
- Sacrificial (sold all their goods)
- Passionate and happy
- Convicted
- Gave them a purpose
- Well integrated at home and in the world -- They lived It
- Quantity - 3000 were added!
- Inspired leadership (setting a good example)
- Welcoming
- Obvious knowledge and awareness of the needs of the community
- Totally unselfish community

What Are They Doing to Express Their Belief?

- Teaching
- Praising
- Showing generosity
- Not selfish
- Being baptized
- Participation and engagement
- Adding to their numbers
- Breaking bread
- Close community
- Offering of service
- Prayer
- Action-packed -- not passive
- Signs and wonders



What are their attitudes and values?

- Attitudes
 - praise
 - joyful
 - caring
 - positive
 - service
 - excitement
 - devotion
 - openness
 - belief
 - curiosity
 - inclusiveness
- Values
 - God
 - community
 - service
 - faith
 - understanding
 - hope
 - change
 - solution
 - worship

What can our parish learn from this early Christian community?

- we need to be more welcoming
- we must learn to be more visible to our world
- we must be visibly passionate about our faith
- we must encourage each other in our faith development
- we need to create excitement and awe
- we need to meet people where they are
- we need to give practical and relevant help when required
- we need to do God's work regardless of numbers
- we need to encourage our membership



Demographic work offered by one of our groups during this discussion (as offered - actual numbers may differ)

There are approximately 20 Christian churches within a few kilometers of our church facility. In addition there is the active presence of a Jehovah Witness and Mormon community.

The following Christian churches were identified:

- United church congregations – 2
- Anglican – 2
- Roman Catholic – 2
- Baptist – 2
- Pentecostal - 2
- Bible Chapel – 2
- Wesleyan – 1
- Presbyterian – 1
- Lutheran – 1
- Church of God – 1
- City Heights Evangelical – 1

The group offered an estimate of 40,000 residents in our natural Cole Harbour catchment area. From this number it is estimated that only 20% attend a church during the year. And, it was further estimated that Anglicans comprise under 15% of those who attend church sometime each year. This would lead to an expectation of 1200 persons worshipping at our church during the year.

It was noted that the vision task group had analyzed our church attendance records recently. Attendance has been fairly static over the last five years or so averaging under 150 persons per Sunday. During this same period the number of envelope holders (a sign of commitment to our Parish) has increased slightly to just over 200.

There is clearly a lot of competition for the attention of church going Christians living in Cole Harbour.



People of God Discussion



The basic ways we experience ministry

- building and sustaining community
- worship and spirituality
- teaching and learning
- pastoral care
- proclamation: evangelism, outreach & social justice

Our workshops

- Community Development
- Spiritual Development
- Outreach & Evangelism
- Buildings & Grounds

During this segment of the day's program, workshop participants reviewed the summary reports from the weekly workshops and began to consider the relative importance of each of these features of congregational life.

To guide further discussion, the following questions were offered:

Small group questions re Acts 2.41-47 (cont.)

For each ministry area

- How significant is this activity in the life of our congregation? (On a scale of 1 -- 10) how much time, money, energy, and anxiety is spent on this activity in comparison to the other ministry areas?
- Has this activity made a significant difference in peoples lives? Are there any stories that tell how people have been transformed because of our ministries in this area? What happened? Why do you think it was so ineffective or meaningful?
- What are the possibilities for developing this ministry into the future? What would we need to do for this ministry to be truly vital and effective? List your ideas.
- What is your vision for this ministry? Create a short vision statement for this ministry area you



Working separately, each group was asked to rank the significance of each activity in the life of our congregation. Following significant discussion, the following results were documented:

Relative Importance (1 – Low, 10 - High)	Group 1	Group 2
Building & Sustaining Community	5	8
Worship and Spirituality	9	10
Teaching and Learning	7	4
Pastoral Care	6	2
Proclamation: evangelism, outreach & social justice	9 (outreach) 3 (social justice) 5.5 (evangelism)	6

Comments gathered during this exercise:

- worship and spirituality tower above all other aspects of our ministry life together
- all of these areas are closely connected which makes it difficult to separate them
- pastoral care is a vital aspect of sustaining our community
- we need to do a lot of community development
- we need to do a lot of proclamation especially outreach
- our pastoral care program is principally geared for those who are well-known and in obvious need
- a key element of our future development will be ongoing improvement of our pastoral care ministry



- we should assess our current situation
- perform a needs assessment
- develop and train a pastoral care team
- make pastoral care a vital cornerstone of our ministry program and a key characteristic of our parishes impact on our community

Following lunch, workshop participants were asked to consider our parishes strengths. A prayer attributed to Teresa of Avila was introduced and discussed briefly:



Affirming & Building Our Strengths

Christ has no body now on earth but ours,
no hands but ours, no feet but ours.
Ours are the eyes through which to look out
Christ's compassion to the world;
ours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good;
ours are hands with which He is to bless people now. AMEN
Teresa of Avila (adapted)

What does it mean to be Christ's hands, feet, eyes, or body in the world?

Following this reflection on how each of us is to be a conduit for Christ's activity in the world, workshop participants were asked to convene their groups again for the following discussion:



Make a short list of the Ministry activities and events that have happened over the past two years in our church that you consider successes or strengths

Looking at this list of successful ministry activities discuss the following

- **what was it about these that made them successful?**
- **what are our parish's strengths, assets and resources? What are we especially proud of?**
- **what would you say are our criteria for successful ministry activities?**
- **what three things on our list best define the mission and ministry of this parish?**

Areas of recent church activity considered to be key strengths:

- our Lenten Chowder Lunches
- dinner theater evenings
- the new baptismal font
- the dedication of our kitchen
- the children's talks each week and the way we include children and youth in our service and church activity
- the recent bishops visit and particularly her meeting with our church council
- the Parish supper held to raise funds for the Primates World Relief and Development Fund
- the Bean Supper
- the funeral for Ken James
- our Good Friday and Easter Vigil services each year
- the FOOD program
- the Shoebox program
- the care we take decorating and theming our church building
- our diverse liturgical program
- our Sunday School program
- the John Sands concert
- our "Fun in the Sun" event every summer



Why were these events so satisfying?

- they are always meaningfully presented
- where appropriate, they were a lot of fun
- where necessary, they allowed for private devotion and individual expression
- they all involve participation and enthusiasm
- they were all relevant and practical
- they inspire us
- they all involved group activity
- they were led by well organized leaders
- they were interest driven
- they all involved the pooling of the gifts and talents of our membership
- many of these activities depend on the ongoing commitment and dedication of several extremely creative people in our community
- many of these activities depend on a well organized clergy and worship team
- many of these activities while focused on other objectives, are a significant source of fellowship for us all
- they define us

What then are our parish strengths?

- our people
- inspired by our clergy
- we respond to challenges well
- we are comfortable with growth and change
- our lay ministry is strong but much of it is latent needing ongoing development (especially in the area of lay leadership)
- What three things best define the mission & ministry of the parish?
 1. sense of community
 2. willingness to respond with God's gifts
 3. the centrality and value of our worship life together



Armed with the many and varied discussions of the day, workshop participants were asked to consider a vision for our parish. The following definitions were provided:

- **Vivid idealized description of a desired outcome that inspires, energizes and helps you create a mental picture of your target**
- **A vision is defined as 'An Image of the future we seek to create'**
- **A vision statement is a brief listing of the ideals and goals that you strive for**

The following comments were made during this discussion regarding an acceptable vision statement:

- must emphasize worship and spirituality
- must emphasize Christ centered community
- must emphasize inclusion and diversity of expression
- must emphasize interest in supporting needs of the community
- must emphasize that we are living our faith through action
- must emphasize we are empowered by Word and Sacrament
- must emphasize we welcome and nurture our members and the greater community
- must emphasize we are people centered
- must convey a sense of a vibrant, vital Christ centered, Christian community
- must emphasize hospitality, openness and a welcoming church community

There was insufficient time to conclude one single vision statement. However several incomplete vision statements were suggested for further consideration by the vision task group.



Option #1

As God's body we are Christ centered and spiritually driven in our faith to

Option #2

As stewards of God we are intentionally seeking a Christ centered and spirit driven path that nurtures our faith and empowers us to serve our community by:

- upholding the diversity of our God-given gifts
- building a strong sense of community
- teaching and worship and sacraments

Option #3

the church of St. Andrew is a Christ centered community which is welcoming and nurturing...

Option #4

to be a Christ centered parish empowered by the Word and Sacrament, being concerned with social justice, outreach and that which separates the world from the love of God

With time running out, the facilitator led the workshop participants into prayer and a time of reflection on what we have accomplished this day.

Over the next two months (December and January) the Vision Task Group will work to condense all the material gathered for this and the previous four weekly evening workshops into a single package of material . They will then move to consider options for a parish vision statement which embodies the sentiment and essence of all the

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discussion which has occurred over the last couple of months of vision activity.

The product of this work will be presented to our Parish Council in January in the hope that a preferred vision statement can be introduced at our annual general meeting in late February.

Facilitator's suggestions

Option #1

We are a faith based Anglican fellowship committed to the service of our community and worship and thanksgiving to a loving God. We strive to be a welcoming, supportive community emulating the love and interest Christ showed in all. Together, we journey on confident that the Holy Spirit empowers and supports our efforts at all times.

Option #2

We are an Anglican community on a journey of faith to God supported by a fellowship of co-believers who are dedicated to finding Him by prayer, worship and service. Through our activities singularly and collectively, we hope to encounter and honour God and His creation.

Option #3

Leveraging a rich and broad history of Anglican expression, we strive to be a welcoming community whose love of God and his creation is self-evident.

Option #4

We are an Anglican community which will hold and be known for an obvious and authentic spirit of thankfulness to God for all he has done for us. As a faithful Christ centered community we relish the time we spend together and are committed to active engagement with

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the local community and in valuing the order of the church while recognizing changing times.

Option #5

We are Anglicans who share a common faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and seek to follow him through the power of the Holy Spirit. Worship and spiritual development are critical elements of our life together as a faithful Christian community. We strive to care for each other and the greater community beyond the walls of the church who so often are in need of our support.

Option #6

The Anglican church of Saint Andrew in Cole Harbour strives to be a church whose doors are open and welcoming to all, to turn our faith into action such that we are a beacon of light in the community where the Holy Spirit is alive and at work in all of our lives.

Option #7

Through worship, prayers and the building of an authentic Anglican Christian identity. we at the church of Saint Andrew strive to be an inclusive, welcoming community of faith which is constantly thankful to God for all he has done for us. Working together, leveraging the many gifts present in our parish family, we seek to serve others and to be a positive, supportive, respected contributor to our community.

Option #8

We are a distinctly Anglican Christian community which exists first and foremost to worship God and his creation. We are a welcoming church which values its members and celebrates the many gifts and talents they bring to our community. We are an active community of faith which cares naturally for each other and which strives to make a difference in the greater community beyond the church walls. We are a confident church community, proud of a lengthy history of good work in the area yet constantly aware of the need for change. We

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enjoy and relish each others company and the role we play in living the word of God.

Option #9

To grow a vibrant, vital, loving, inclusive, accepting, and forgiving Anglican church community in Cole Harbour that changes lives and impacts our world through the good news and grace of Jesus Christ

Option #10

To be a nurturing and empowering community of faith based on 200 years of Anglican tradition and dedicated to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ who unites us and challenges us onwards everyday.

Option #11

To be an Anglican community that intentionally seeks Christ to support a spirit-driven path of worship and spiritual development. This path allows us to nurture our faith and our community through traditions, and a sense of thanksgiving to God.



Conclusions

After careful, prayerful consideration, the Vision Task Group session. We believe these statements capture and summarize the contribution of those who attended the vision planning events.

VISION STATEMENT

The Anglican Church of Saint Andrew in Cole Harbour strives to be a church whose doors are open and welcoming to all. Our belief in God as Creator and Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour compels us to turn our faith into action such that we are a beacon of light in the community where the Holy Spirit is alive and at work in all of our lives.

DEFINING STATEMENTS

- We are a distinctly Anglican Christian community which exists first and foremost to worship God and to steward His creation.
- We are a welcoming church which values its members and celebrates the many gifts and talents they bring to our community.
- We are an active community of faith which cares naturally for each other and which strives to make a difference in the greater community beyond the church walls.
- We are a confident church community, proud of a lengthy history of good work in the area yet constantly aware of the need for change.
- We enjoy and relish each others company and the role we play in living the word of God.

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