

ReVision Task Force Report to Vestry

Background

In January of 2006 during the annual Vestry Retreat, a goal was set to undertake long-range strategic planning. By July 2006, the Vestry elected to use a planning process called ReVision, provided by the company Percept¹. This process was also recommended by the Diocese.

To begin, the Vestry assigned 3 members, Sam Ward, Betty Le Moyne, and Laura Deitrick to manage the Parish Context survey (the first part of the ReVision Process) and to assemble a task force committee to carry out all of the duties outlined in the project.

This subcommittee organized the survey in concert with the Vestry, and then conducted it over three weeks in August to ensure that all parishioners who desired to participate were provided that opportunity. A total of 239 survey forms were sent to Percept for processing on September 1, reflecting high interest in the process by the parish. In parallel with this, a diverse group of parish leaders was identified and asked to form the Revision Task Force (RTF). All who were asked accepted.

The members of the RTF committee were:

Mark DeMichele, Chair
Mike Dabbar
Laura Deitrick
Bill Huck
Jo Hunsaker
Betty Le Moyne
Cyndi McCleary

Tami Sandke
Sarah Stump
Hal Skelly
Sam Ward
Ex Officio Members
Steve Crawford
Ron Jaynes

¹ Since its inception in 1987, Percept has supplied thousands of churches and parishes, and hundreds of regional and national denominational agencies with demographic resources to help them engage in mission within their particular context. Percept also provides the ReVision strategic planning process as a tool for congregations who are in a direction setting process.

The RTF held its first formal meeting on September 6, 2006 and elected Mark DeMichele as the task force Chair. The RTF then selected 15 additional parish members to serve as facilitators for the small group discussion/reflection portion of the process.

The ReVision Context Report, which was developed by Percept from the parish survey inputs, was received in late September. This formed the basis for the initial reflection sessions. Following a ReVision Kick-off Sunday by the Interim Rector in October, the facilitators convened weekly reflection session meetings for a period of eight weeks through early December. Nearly 100 parishioners participated in the series of reflection sessions.

The topics of the small group reflection sessions were as follows:

1. Vision

What does VISION mean to the life of the church? Session one explores the biblical role of vision and helps participants understand that without a clear vision, there is no clear direction.

2. Discovering our Context

Continuing the focus on Vision this session helps participants see their community as a place of mission.

3. Defining Our Gap

The gap between “what is” and “what ought to be” in a local community provides the call to mission for a church within that setting. Session three helps participants define this “gap” in their own particular mission context.

4. A Call to Mission

What is the impact of the local church’s ministries and programs upon the overall mission of Christ’s Church? This session emphasizes the relationship between mission and vision.

5. Visualizing our Mission

Session five guides participants through an exercise to visualize their church’s particular mission in light of the information they have been exploring in their Context Report and their insights from scripture.

6. Bring Down the Barriers

How do the traditions of the church interfere with its mission? Session six helps participants work through those things that may be preventing their church from taking advantage of mission opportunities with those in their community.

7. Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing

In church ministry we are often tempted to expand our efforts in seemingly infinite directions. Session seven reviews the primary biblical mission of the church and shows participants how it can help define our ministry activities.

8. A Question

The final reflection session poses a vital question as the church thinks about its vision for mission into the future. It may be the most reflective of the eight sessions...and how the question is answered will have the greatest impact on the outcome of the ReVision process.

At an interim point, a joint meeting was held between the RTF and the facilitators to gather feedback on the process. Several groups reported that there were some concerns about the ReVision process itself. However, there was broad consensus about the value of meeting in small groups and many cited the increased sense of fellowship resulting from that process. It was decided that ReVision process would continue with no changes.

The small groups concluded their work by the first week in December, after preparing summaries of their findings over the eight weeks. Another joint meeting between the facilitators and the RTF was held on January 7, 2007. At that meeting each facilitator presented their summaries and other notes from their eight week sessions.

The RTF summarized the 3 and 1 year initiatives developed by the ReVision small groups by allocating them to separate areas using the SWEEPS model. SWEEPS is an acronym for a program structure that is used widely in the Episcopal Church. It stands for Stewardship, Worship, Education, Evangelism, Pastoral Care, and Service. A detailed list of verbatim findings, suggestions, and comments may be found in Addendum A of this report. Building on the key SWEEPS themes emerging from Revision initiatives, the RTF held several meetings to organize and synthesize all of the information provided. Using the small group data as a foundation, the RTF then drafted a vision statement, a mission statement, and 1-year and 3-year strategic plans for the parish.

Our Key Findings

In this section we describe the key findings that the RTF distilled from the small group reflection sessions.

We live in a community that on the surface would appear to have nearly everything. Indeed, most of us enjoy a beautiful climate, safe neighborhoods, a comfortable standard of living, good schools and excellent public services. However, we recognize below the surface there are still many who are in need. Through the ReVision process, we have identified many ways in which we can reach out and be of service to others.

We desire outreach efforts that are more purposeful and effective. Specifically, we need to reach out to our local military community and work harder to include children and youth in our parish life. We also acknowledge our need to improve the coordination and evaluation of our efforts to serve others.

Children and young people are a vital part of our parish community. We must support and strengthen our Christian education programs for our children. We suggest that every effort be made to fully develop our youth Christian education programs, including Rite 13, the Journey to Adulthood, and Youth in the Church programs. These, as well as our other Christian education programs, must be fully equipped and supported by the parish through volunteers, staff, and adequate budgets.

We truly care for one another and believe that we have a wealth of support capabilities to provide to our parish. We can tap into these resources more effectively by developing organized programs to help one another during times of need (sickness, new baby, a death, deployed spouse).

We embrace our Episcopal traditions and are proud of our faith.

The RTF captured these key findings in a new vision and mission statement for Christ Church.

Our Vision

***“Christ Church~
Worshipping and serving Christ in the Episcopal tradition.”***

We worship Christ when, as a community of faith we celebrate the Sacraments, especially Baptism and Holy Communion using the Book of Common Prayer. We are a faithful part of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego.

We seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves. Such service calls us to care for those in our church family and in our response to the needs of the world.

Our Mission

In order to see our vision become a reality to any degree, we must engage in an intentional mission. With this in mind, we have developed the following mission statement:

As a welcoming community, we seek to:

- **Care for each other and serve the larger community**
- **Provide lifelong opportunities to grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord**
- **Proclaim the love of Christ for all**

We will translate this statement into intentional objectives by using it to guide all of our ministries and to evaluate our progress along the way.

Our Guiding Principles for Parish Ministries

Each parish ministry charged with implementing the parish Vision, Mission Statements, and the one/three year plans should organize their efforts and activities using the following principles of operation that emerged from the parish reflection sessions:

Equip

Each ministry will equip its leadership with the resources including training and budget to carry out its work effectively.

Planning and coordination

Each ministry will be responsible for properly planning and coordinating its efforts.

Communication

Remembering that we are all part of one body, each ministry will develop a communication and marketing plan to connect its work with other ministries, the parish, and community.

Inclusion

Each ministry will intentionally promote accessibility across demographics, especially across age groups.

Connection

Each ministry will seek to connect to a wide variety of groups within the parish, including the Day School, as well as to existing groups outside of the parish.

Fellowship

As part of their work, each ministry will develop appropriate fellowship opportunities.

Evaluation

Each ministry will be responsible for building evaluation mechanisms into all of its programs and work and for measuring itself against the mission and vision of the church.

Our Three Year Plan

To meet our mission and to strive for our vision, we believe that Christ Church must focus on several key initiatives. It is recommended that the work of the parish be grouped into the following SWEEPS model of ministries: Stewardship; Worship; Education; Evangelism; Pastoral Care and Service. Over the next three years these ministries should seek to carry out the specific objectives as listed below.

Stewardship

Establish and equip a year round stewardship ministry

- Develop plans for the use and care of property and assets (Stewardship of property and all assets)
- Develop annual programs for receiving pledges and recruiting gifts of time and talent
- Educate the parish on:
 - planned giving(legacy)
 - supporting the wider church through stewardship
- Develop transparent, “mission driven” budgets. Connect budget to strategic plan
- Acknowledge and celebrate contributions (e.g., send thank you notes)

Worship

Establish and equip worship ministry

- Provide a welcoming worship experience
- Consider a variety of worship services
- Include children and youth more fully
- Maintain liturgical integrity of Episcopal church worship

Education

Establish and equip education ministry

- Offer coordinated, intentional and well developed educational ministry for children, youth, and adults
- Enrich celebration of liturgical seasons through education
- Connect with Diocesan education programs
- Provide opportunities for spiritual renewal (e.g., Faith Alive, Cursillo, etc.)
- Ensure existing programs are promoted and made known

Evangelism (church growth)

Establish and equip church growth ministry

- Learn new ways to tell our story
- Improve the welcome process and newcomer integration
- Become a children and youth - friendly church
- Develop new programs to attract new members
- Reach out intentionally to welcome military persons and their families
- Raise awareness of Christ Church in the community

Pastoral Care (Focus is inward/on the body of the parish)

Establish and equip pastoral care ministry

- Develop staffing plan for pastoral care coordination (e.g., pastoral assistant, parish nurse, etc.)
- Continue and enhance system of pastoral visitation/care (i.e., for seniors and caregivers)
- Continue and enhance care through fellowship opportunities
- Provide pastoral care needs responses for major family transitions (e.g., birth, illness, death, etc.)
- Extend pastoral care to Christ Church Day School students and families

Service (Outreach/Focus is external to the parish body)

Establish and equip service ministry

- Focus the parish on one or two projects at a time, and do them well
- Include children and youth in service projects
- Develop “hands on” work projects
- Strengthen parish relationship with Episcopal Community Services

Our One Year Plan

Our restructured ministries now become the basis for our annual efforts. During the first year of the plan each ministry group will be formed, chaired, and will devise a plan that ensures all activities of the ministry are aligned with the mission. To derive a first year plan of action, the RTF members determined (through consensus) one primary objective from each of the categories listed in the three year-plan. In the first year, the RTF recommends that each ministry will focus a majority of its effort on this primary objective and evaluate progress annually. The recommended one-year objectives are as follows:

Stewardship

- Develop transparent, “mission-driven” budgets. Connect the budget to the strategic plan.

Worship

- Include children and youth more fully.

Education

- Coordinated, intentional and well developed educational ministry for children, youth, and adults.

Evangelism

- Improve the welcome process and newcomer integration.

Pastoral Care

- Develop a staffing plan for pastoral care coordination (e.g. pastoral asst., parish nurse, etc.)

Service

- Focus the parish on one or two projects at a time and do them well.