

**St. James Vestry Retreat Minutes**  
**Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009**  
**Presentation Center, Los Gatos**

In attendance: Charlie Paratore, Scott Kennedy, Dean Valentine, Greg Scheufele, Mary Casas, Janet Fischer, Sylvia Ma, Jan Scrutton, Jim McConnell, Molly Lubwama, Jan Brandt, David Abernethy-Deppe, Kathy Crary and Connie Rux.

Absent: Penny Trant, Tim Young and Elizabeth Hart.

The meeting was called to order and opened with morning prayer, with Kathy leading a reflection on the need to be connected, especially in hard times. Prayers were offered for those in need, with special prayers being asked for by Molly for her father, Connie for a friend who just died, Jan for her 95-year-old grandmother who is ill, and for Pam and Tim Young as Pam recovers from surgery, Penny who is recovering from surgery and Elizabeth, whose mother is seriously ill.

Kathy led a discussion of the book, "Let Your Life Speak," by Parker J. Palmer, which vestry members and clergy had read in preparation for the retreat. The discussion focused on gifts that we have, some that are obvious and others that may be less visible. The group took a spiritual gifts inventory test, rating their responses to questions. The test responses were turned in to be tallied and discussed later in the day.

The group compiled a list of words describing their reactions to the book and reflections on what the book meant to individuals as well as St. James in general:

- 1) introspective --made you think for yourself
- 2) community
- 3) defining self
- 4) consciousness
- 5) vocation
- 6) light + dark
- 7) "To thine own self be true"
- 8) paradigm shift regarding things/life in general
- 9) variety of dances (Life is the teacher)
- 10) acute self awareness
- 11) acceptance of reality
- 12) way closed/way open
- 13) Life's plan for you (Living out life's plan for you rather than living out expectations of others)

Everyone broke into smaller groups to talk about what is the impact of the spiritual gifts test and the book. Following the small group discussions, the ideas and thoughts were shared. Kathy noted that the congregation will have extra light on the Vestry when the search committee hands over the names of the candidates to the Vestry. Besides dealing with who you are in the congregation, you will have the responsibility to decide on who will be leading St. James in its future. Discussion focused on potential barriers that could stall any conversation or action:

**Hungry**  
**Angry**  
**Lonely**  
**Tired**

The topic of HALT relates to self-care, Kathy told the group. Janet gave the example of how when you're training with a horse you have to be totally present with your horse, the animal will reflect your mood back at you -- if you're hungry, angry, lonely, tired, that mood will be reflected back through the horse. The same reaction can be seen with people in the parish, co-workers, our own children. The Vestry members need to be aware of the other person's needs or issues, keep a "mindfulness of now," thinking of what has to be done here now and not thinking about

what needs be done tomorrow. David concluded that the words in HALT are neutral terms, with positive as well as negative meanings. While it's easy to focus on the negative connotations, we can't forget the positive meanings too: i.e, the negative of Anger is bitterness, but Anger also can be a creative incentive to do something.

After a break, some Vestry business was conducted. Assignments for dinner and closing prayer for the coming year were handed out, and contact information sheet for Vestry members were distributed.

### **Cluster assignments**

The proposed Vestry cluster assignments were handed out: Social Ministry & Congregational Care, Tim Young and Mary Casas; Parish Life, Penny Trant and Dean Valentine; Facilities, Charlie Paratore and Scott Kennedy; Communications & Evangelism, Jim McConnell and Greg Scheuffele; Worship & Christian Formation, Jan Scrutton and Molly Lubwama; Lead Team, Sylvia Ma, Janet Fischer, Jan Brandt, David and Kathy. The wardens will oversee the clusters: Sylvia will oversee social ministry & congregational care and parish life; Janet will oversee facilities, communications & evangelism and worship and Christian Formation.

### **Called to Right Relationship**

Janet gave a status report on Call to Right Relationship. Vestry members were urged to take the test, which includes a background check and completion of an online course. The background check results go to Human Resources at the Dioceses, not to St. James, and the test/background check will be free to anyone wanting to take it until the end of February. After that, the fee is \$20. The test is required before keys to St. James can be issued to anyone.

### **Ducks for Bucks**

Motion was made to approve Brad Hoffman and Tom Blalock as the point persons at St. James for the annual Kiwanis Ducks for Bucks. Moved and seconded. Motion passed.

### **Outreach request**

Motion was made for a request by Greg Vlastelica for \$270 for emergency outreach, to be taken out of the Special Interest Outreach Fund. Moved and seconded. Motion passed.

### **House equity update**

Sylvia sent a letter to Bob Honeychurch, the Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe and Jim Forsyth, director of finance for the diocese, regarding the differences between the estimates of what is owed to St. James from the sale of the Honeychurch home on Hayes Street. (See attached letter).

### **Upcoming meetings**

Michael Barlowe will meet with the transition and search teams and the Vestry on March 11, 6-8:30 p.m. to begin training for the search process. Kathy and David plan on preparing the meal for the training session, but it has not been determined yet if they will be a part of the evening session.

St. James is not only doing a parish profile, but also doing a very serious community profile, going beyond just gathering statistics to look at the community to see if St. James reflects the area it is serving, and if it doesn't, why not.

The Vestry's contribution will be to help people understand that we need to take the time to do the search process. It is important to identify who we are as a parish and a community.

Following the lunch break Kathy handed the tests sheets back, with the individual ratings tallied. Kathy told the group that the scores can help in determining how you perceive yourself as a spiritual person, and can be helpful in development of the Vestry clusters. She said the Vestry, without knowing individual names, ranked very high in service and giving (stewardship area) and

hospitality. And there were remarkably high scores in craftsmanship.

### Business

Janet went over the calendar for the year, adding the March 15 meeting at Holy Cross for area ministry. The Vestry was asked to be available to support the young people who will be serving and clearing tables at the Pancake Supper on Feb. 24. The emphasis was on supporting the young people, but letting them do the work they've been asked to do.

The clusters met for 20 minutes to go over three areas of discussion: 1) Name three good things that happened in your cluster in 2008; 2) Name three challenges that your cluster faces; 3) What would you like to do in 2009

The clusters came back with the following results:

<b>3 Good things in 2008</b>	<b>3 challenges</b>	<b>Goals for 2009</b>
<b>Lead team:</b> 1 Navigated the departure of clergy 2 Led the parish into the Interim Process 3 Navigated through the re-keying and C2RR process	1 Getting out of Vestry member's way 2 Redirecting parish queries to the proper cluster people so the cluster can make the decisions 3	1 Employee manual 2 Inventory of possessions belonging to the parish 3 Revise rules for Endowment Board
<b>Worship &amp; Christian Formation:</b> 1 Continuation of Godly Play and start youth services 2		1 Acolyte training 2 Need to contact all the leaders in the cluster 3 Development of youth space
<b>Facilities:</b> 1 Bathroom renovation 2 Concrete project 3 Bell tower 4 Rekeying project	1 Becoming more green 2 Developing and improving communication with Sexton and work party	1 Kitchen renovation 2 lighting projects 3 Remodeling EB1 & 6 4 Little Church renovations
<b>Parish Life:</b> 1 Children's service 2 Fun activities – ice cream socials, etc. 3	1 Bulletin Board needs more substance & photos	1 Plan a Winter event 2 Tour of Grace Cathedral 3 Possible tour led by David, In the Footsteps of Paul and John
<b>Social Ministry &amp; Congregational Care:</b> 1 Winter Relief 2 Blood Drive	1 Healing Ministry & Circle of Prayer needs more "advertisement" 2 Need more outreach programs 3 Need to train more people as Eucharistic Visitors	1 Keep Hillside Manor in our care 2 Re-start Loss Support Group 3 Cancer survivors' group
** Jan Scrutton suggested perhaps an open house month, outreach to let everyone know what's available, opportunities to sit in or visit various groups and ministries without having to make a commitment, see how they work, what they do and meet the people doing the outreach work. ***David suggested commissioning such groups involved in outreach and other ministries, as was done with search/transition teams		

<p><b>Communications &amp; Evangelism:</b></p> <p>1 New updated directory  2 Email list updated and kept current  3 Great web site – addition of audio files, local area info</p>	<p>1 Have much more to do on the “welcoming” side  2 Evangelism in general</p>	<p>1 Use the Parish Profile to market StJ to the local community  2 Create a group of Greeters to welcome and assist newcomers  3 Update list of ministries and contacts  4. Produce new picture directory</p>
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**Finances**

Went over the 2009 Budget, Special Interest Balances Sheets and 2009 Building Budget (Capital Expenses)

The retreat and meeting concluded at 4 p.m. following Eucharist led by Kathy Crary and David Abernethy-Deppe.

Respectfully submitted.

Connie Rux, Secretary Pro-tem