

Vestry retreat: Discernment and opening the next chapter

Our Vestry was on retreat at St. Dorothy's Rest for 2 ½ days this past weekend. We prayed together, shared meals, talked a great deal – and laughed.

During our conversations, we looked at how the role of the Vestry is primarily about discernment of where the Holy Spirit is guiding us as a parish. We asked ourselves what discernment looks like for each of us. How do we know when a decision is right? How do we listen for the Holy Spirit in each other? We listed a number of benchmarks for discernment, including being at peace with a decision, especially when it is a hard decision.

The Vestry also looked at our accomplishments for the past year, and then worked in small groups developing goals for this current year. We reached a consensus on three broad goals for 2017:

- Developing a plan for long-term financial stability that is not overly dependent on reserve funds.
- Creating a structure for inviting, welcoming and connecting new people into our parish.
- Revitalizing our structures for pastoral care for all in need in our parish.

The Vestry will be establishing task forces to begin this work, and if you are interested in participating in any of these efforts, please contact **Steve Layton**, senior warden, **Diana Ardley**, junior warden, or **Pastor Jim Richardson**, priest-in-charge.

The Vestry was briefed by consultant **Caroline McCall** about the search process for a new rector, which will take about a year. There will be two committees: one to develop a congregational profile, and the other to interview candidates and present finalists to the Vestry. The Vestry will meet soon with **The Rev. Canon Andrea McMillin** from the bishop's office, before we begin this work. More information about the search process, including how to participate, will be published in News & Notes.

We finished our time together in worship on Sunday at the St. Dorothy's Chapel. We prayed for the people we serve, and we ask for your prayers and support of the Vestry and all of our leaders in this work ahead.