

St Francis Church Vestry

2002 Mutual Ministry Review Summary

A mutual ministry review is a process by which the Rector and representatives of the lay leadership of a congregation evaluate the ongoing ministry of the parish. During this past summer, a working group of the vestry talked to almost 25 parishioners about the ministries in which we are engaged. As we did last year, we asked what we are proud of and what we have to celebrate as well as what needs attention, what challenges us and what offers us opportunities for growth. All of those we spoke with expressed pleasure at the opportunity to talk about the ministries at St. Francis Church. This kind of dialogue is vital to maintaining healthy communication within the congregation about the day to day ministries of the parish, the paths that are open to us and the paths we choose to explore. Thank you to those who gave us their time and energy to participate. The 2002 Mutual Ministry Review is complete and the vestry is pleased to report on the results and actions proposed in response to the findings.

Key Findings:

- Overall Direction of the Parish: Parishioners are happy with life in the parish, excited about new aspects of worship and activities which have been introduced, willing to try additional new things, and are pleased that familiar traditions remain. We are glad to have Fr. Chris as our rector and delighted with Barbara's enthusiastic involvement in the parish.
- Pastoral Care: Pastoral care is a core ethic in our parish. Parishioners are confident that loving care will be offered and available, particularly from those they know well.
- Participation in ministry: Participation in ministry and parish activities is dependent on specific invitation and encouragement by enthusiastic parishioners. In addition, training and support in ministry areas are vital to insure that newcomers continue participating.
- Parish Life and Education: Parish life events have been varied, interesting and enjoyed by many. Education offerings were very effective. We should vary the times for events, as different people are able to participate at different times.

Worship and Liturgy

- Parishioners like that traditions are maintained; they enjoy announcements, birthday, anniversary and special recognitions.
- There is a willingness to try new aspects of worship with emphasis on quality.
- Parishioners were gratified that we took action concerning the sound system.
- We should widen participation in services through invitation and training as well as recognize participants who assist in services.
- We should expand music offerings with emphasis on livelier, more joyful and exciting music.
- We should focus the family service on children but emphasize quality and ideas.

Proposed actions:

- Acolyte / server / lector training is scheduled for 24 November.
- Recruit new worship ministry participants.
- Continue to explore music from the Wonder, Love and Praise hymnal and sing St. Francis' Favorite hymns.
- Review the Family Service.

Pastoral Care

- The parish feels strongly that the rector and staff are available, accessible and responsive. Those who have first hand experience of pastoral care are grateful for, pleased with and touched by the concern expressed by the parish.
- The parish feels strongly that at St. Francis "We take care of our own." In addition, we prefer care from those whom we know (well).
- Transportation is an important element of pastoral care.
- We should encourage and normalize the use of LEM's for Sunday Eucharist to the home-bound.

Proposed actions:

- Increase awareness of pastoral care services, particularly those provided by lay individuals.
- Organize a transportation service for services and parish events.

Parish Life

- Activities through the year were the big success of the year - many people did good work in bringing interesting and appropriate activities to the parish.
- We need to continue to invite and identify additional helpers and participants.
- Newcomer events are seen as very positive.
- *The Franciscan* is OK, but has been limited in information: suggestions include adding personal information to increase interest.
- We should plan more activities which are quality adult-only events (span age groups).
- Predictable, reliable child care is critical for activities which include children.

Proposed actions:

- Childcare has been strengthened by providing an additional nursery attendant on Sundays.
- Continue to focus on recent actions to add content and information to the *Franciscan*.
- Continue to support and encourage Diners' Club groups for adult fellowship.
- Continue Newcomer events.
- Beginning in December, "Rector's Ramblings" will be offered by email for any who would like to receive periodic information, updates and commentary from the rector.

Education

- Episcopal Church 101 was outstanding. "Who Wrote the Bible" was a great offering.

- Parishioners like content oriented offerings, rather than interpretive or meditative or exploration.
- We should vary times of offerings: there is no perfect time for Adult Ed but it's OK if we repeat something and not everyone comes to any one event.

Proposed actions:

- Evaluate the possibility of recording some of our programs to be made available in the library.
- A course in parenting is scheduled to begin January 2003.
- Fall offerings will include a Labyrinth and a presentation on stress-free holidays.
- Share-A-Book club has begun meeting the first Monday of each month at noon.

Outreach

- Outreach is not a strong area for St. Francis. It is not a clearly defined ministry with a well understood direction.
- We should communicate more about who, what, when and where we are active and how much funding is involved.
- We should explain and teach about what we do and how we do it.
- Parishioners like local, visible activities, and consider the Shelter important outreach.

Proposed actions:

- Include outreach information as a regular feature of the *Franciscan*.
- Identify one additional outreach commitment that supports a local activity or need in a manner which is new to St. Francis.
- Increase involvement in community events.

Finance and Administration

Proposed Actions:

- Complete actions on comments from the 2001 audit and complete the 2002 audit.
- Identify dedicated Stewardship leadership for 2003.
- Implement education activity concerning planned giving, as part of a broader Stewardship program.

General

- The parish considers Fr. Chris Creed a terrific leader and pastor; we're lucky to have him and Barbara in our parish.
- The Web site is a great asset. We should publicize and continue to grow it.
- Parish leadership is not very visible - the vestry as well as other lay leaders should be seen and identified more.
- It's important to acknowledge and recognize individuals who participate at all levels since it increases visibility of leaders.
- Communication about ministries continues to be important. We have improved and parishioners noticed that we responded to the issue.

Proposed actions:

- Vestry "Minutes for Ministry" will be worked into Sunday services.
- Obtain and use permanent vestry name tags.
- Continue to use and improve the Time and Talent data base.
- Use email more purposefully, including "Rector's Ramblings" to communicate informally.

Diane Martin
Senior Warden

Rev. Chris Creed
Rector