

**The Church of Our Saviour**  
*Practicing God's Graciousness*

**Vestry Meeting Minutes Inc. Planning Session**  
**November 17, 2010 6:30-8:45pm**

**Present:** Pastor Susan, Sharon Dalrymple, Trish Shaffery, Heather Steiner, Brenda Roubal, Sandra Rasmussen, Dick Hileman, Jerry Nansen, Judy Peterson

The meeting was opened by Pastor Susan at 6:30pm with prayer.

There was the recommendation by the Parish Discernment Committee for vestry acceptance of Sharon Dalrymple's calling to the Diaconate. All present signed COM form 2 for her to continue the process.

**Approval of Minutes of October meeting:** Hileman/Roubal- passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Dalrymple and Shaffery presented the treasurer's report through October. There were questions regarding budget to be finalized at December vestry meeting. Suggestions were to put a wish list in the bulletin of items that the church needs for housekeeping should those items be needed. All present agreed. There will be a mid-month meeting of vestry on December 5<sup>th</sup> after the 10am service to review other budget suggestions.

**Vestry search committee for 2011:** Those leaving will put forth names on or before December 5<sup>th</sup> (Action: Roubal, Nansen, Steiner.)

**The Annual Meeting will be held January 23, 2011**

**December meeting is December 15, 2010**

**2011 Planning Session** – see appended

**Closing Prayer:** The meeting was closed with prayer at 8:45.

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### **Vestry Planning Session**

#### **Reflecting on Our Blessings**

##### **Name three things we have done well this year:**

Vacation Bible School, Outreach, staying within our expense budgets, keeping the facility looking good, good worship, getting into the community (like the parade), attracting new members, better inclusion of Lutheran liturgy, increase Bible study attendance, Sunday school for children 'open for business', rummage sale, pastoral care.

##### **Looking at our vestry goals from the spring retreat (appended see page 5) what have we accomplished?**

Horizon team working on new facility options, worship space no changes recommended yet, vestry understand need for succession planning to avoid burnout, working on appealing to younger families, working on ecumenical efforts for youth, sharing history of ELCA/ECUSA traditions, fostering acceptance of children, Love Kitchen support, block party for neighborhood, encouraging self-directed leadership.

##### **What has been accomplished that was not a stated goal?**

Attracting new members, increased community presence, income has been great with superb stewardship of monetary gifts, office re-do, facility clean up, increased Diocesan presence.

##### **What are we doing better than expected?**

All paddling in the same direction, achieving good cooperation for growth initiatives, outreach is superb, Sharon's nomination for Holy Orders, networking with other churches.

#### **Reflecting on Things Left Undone**

##### **Looking at the goals from the spring retreat (appended see page 5), what has not been accomplished?**

Labyrinth/memorial garden. Youth group and space for youth. Nursery/cry room.

##### **Did other items take priority?**

We have been working on these goals, it takes time.

##### **Why do you think that was?**

Generally older congregation with reduced capacity for participation. Economic considerations - trying to meet a tight budget with diminishing finances.

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### **What concerns you and why?**

Growth. Costs of expanding our facility.

### **Focusing on Setting Goals for 2011**

**Read and reflect on the following story from the Gospel of Luke 4:14-22, answering the questions below in reference to this story, your own story, and our parish story.**

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. <sup>15</sup> He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. <sup>16</sup> When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, <sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: <sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." <sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. <sup>21</sup> Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." <sup>22</sup> All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth.

### **How does the Holy Spirit inform our decision and goal setting process? (Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit before he states His mission).**

The Holy Spirit comes to us in different ways and our job is to listen. We can't do anything without God.

### **What is our communication process? Is it effective?**

Newsletter, announcements, parish meetings, email, floats-parade, sermons, newspaper ads, website, phone chains, parish directory, one-on-one, verbal.

### **What can we do better to share our goals and vision for COS?**

Suggestion: electronic newsletter if it does not reduce our ability to send bulk mail.

Town hall style updates on our goals either at announcements during services or at coffee hour. Also, place prominent posters with goals around the facility. Summary of vestry minutes in newsletter.

### **What's your understanding of those who are "the poor"?**

Poor physically, spiritually, financially, emotionally.

### **In what ways do we bring good news to the poor?**

Outreach programs, hospitality, welcoming, being a good listener for those who are having a hard time.

### **In what area(s) of our ministry together as a parish are we held captive?**

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Lack of direction. Same people doing everything-burnout. "Modern" views of 'Christianity' in media and wider community that really isn't Christianity. Physical facility constraints. Financial constraints. Aging congregation.

### **What can we do to release ourselves from that hold and move forward?**

Continue to increase members and increase participation of members.

Increase time between services so we are not so rushed and have time for children's family service, adult bible study and any informational meetings etc.

Be

Be advocates.

Be evangelists.

Be encouragers.

Be mentors.

Be participants.

Be generous.

Be loving.

Be faithful.

Be the change we wish to see in the parish, and in the world.

### **In retrospect, what have we been blind to?**

Broader community needs, especially for families with young children.

Gifts that others have to offer in the community.

Ways we can grow, like through small groups.

### **What do you see as God's vision for COS going forward in 2011?**

More space - especially space that is financially self-supporting through user group(s).

Outreach with no agenda - not worrying about the end result.

Family services.

Nursery and pre-school.

Youth group.

Youth Minister (shared).

Sr. center activity center - one day per week.

Charlene Frey Auction - dinner auction with money going to COS or outreach - for discussion.

Transforming the Chapel for prayer and increased usage.

Faithful optimism.

A vibrant, lively, community of faith.

### **Do you think there is anything that is holding COS back (oppressing us)? What and/or who?**

People who no longer feel connected. Age, illness, family concerns. Passive resistance to change.

### **What does freedom for mission in Christ's name at COS (what does the year of the Lord's**

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**favor):**

**Look like?** Standing room only every Sunday. Loud voices. Meet/greet and doing Bible study. Room to roam. New building with the lights on. Baskets heavy with food and goods.

**Feel like?** Buzzing, clean, exciting, vibrant, purposefully busy, exhilarating, coming home/comfortable, like puppy kisses.

**Sound like?** Noisy with laughter, jubilant, silent serenity. Children's voices, babies.

**Taste like?** Good food. Comfort food. Spaghetti.

**Smell like?** Gardenias, sweet peas, fresh herbs, coffee, baby powder, clean, fresh paint.

**Are there other ways in which we are called to *Practice God's Graciousness*?**

Living our faith. Through business. Caring for everyone. Arms of love around the whole community.

**What do you believe are the top 3 goals we should focus on as a community for 2011?**

New building for nursery and pre-school. Pastoral care. Great worship including family and children's service. Outreach. Ecumenical projects. Change service times. Care for the homeless and the lonely.

**How do you see us implementing those goals as a community of faith?**

Together, with wide participation and generous hearts.

## Appendix 1

### Extract from the Spring Vestry Retreat: Goal of Growth (April 2010)

**Knowing what we know about our congregation size and function and our GOAL OF GROWTH we might....**

- Work out a plan to install a labyrinth in the yard which could be a talking point and an invitation point.
- Assess each program with respect to participation / gains – is it worth doing?
- Horizon committee – discerning growth of the facility & looking at feasibility.
- Worship space: not just the finances of expanding, but traditional aspects as well
- Grooming succession: looking for new leaders; inspiring others; advertising / communicating / asking people to participate.
- Appealing to younger generation and families:
  - what about a Youth yurt – own dedicated space with ownership on décor etc.

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--- combined youth group with Methodist/Presbyterian/Salvation Army

--- sharing the history of the ECUSA and ELCA traditions

--- design in a cry room so families are comfortable in worship

- Foster acceptance of children
- Family service – where the focus is more on the children
- Love kitchen: less visible participation now? Newsletter articles. Bulletin articles.
- Block party for our neighborhood.
- Encouraging self-directed / empowered leadership (“Just do it”)
- Youth group exposure to other religious experiences as possible