

Vestry Meeting Minutes
November 30, 2011, 6:30pm-8:55pm Polycarp Hall

Attending: Susan+, Sharon Dalrymple, Brenda Roubal , Carol Risch, Sandra Rasmussen, Dennis Irwin, Trish Shaffery, Michael Iafrato, Dick Hileman, Judy Peterson.

	Item	Action Item / Notes
1.	Opening prayer	Meeting was opened with prayer at 6:30pm
2.	Approval of minutes from the October meeting.	Motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Roubal/Risch. Passed.
3.	Candidate form 7 for discussion and signing	No discussion; unanimous agreement for Dalrymple deacon formation. All signed for her to move forward as a candidate for Holy Orders.
4.	Treasurer's report	Pastor Susan left during the discussion of the salary portion of the budget. Motion was made for pastor salary increase Iafrato/Hileman. Passed unanimously. Budget will be close to being balanced. Pledges are up for 2012. Vote on the final budget to be presented at annual meeting in January will be made at December vestry meeting.
5.	Junior Warden's Report	Discussion of roof repair-re-roofing for back of Polycarp Hall and Wiley Hall. It is expensive for three reasons: Ice shield on north side; 30 year shingles; new vents up top-30 year warranty for all three. Motion to approve the bid by Liberty Roofing: Hileman/Risch. Passed unanimously.
6.	Planning: Bible study and discussion	See Attached for Details: Based on Acts 2:38-47 discussion was on faithfully living into God's will, holistic living. Prayer is important for the vestry. Prayer and hospitality are gifts of this parish. Discussion on the current health of the parish, the vision and direction of the parish, and how to improve the parish's direction and use of talents within the congregation. Discussion of immediate need of a communication director. Discussion of outreach for bringing in the youth. One idea is for Vestry Hosts: Vestry members take turns at greeting people and serving at the hospitality table. Recommendation was to have badges for vestry members to wear during their hosting turn. Vestry felt this was a positive idea. Participation is a key issue: Rasmussen and Risch will prepare a list of those who seem to participate in much, with a view to encouraging wider participation in order to avoid burn out. Hileman will check with LaMars about the possibility of a cell tower contract as an income booster.
7.	December meeting and Annual Meeting	The December meeting will be December 21st at 6:30pm (3 rd Wednesday). Annual Meeting is January 29, 2012 with a focus on cap fund raising presented by Dick Hileman.
8.	Closing prayer	The meeting closed with the Prayer of St.Francis at 8:55pm

Vestry Planning Meeting – November 30, 2011

Bible Study & Discussion

Acts 2:38-47

³⁸ Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." ⁴⁰ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

1. In terms of faithfully living into God's will for Our Saviour, what do you believe is the promise of God:
 - a) for you?
 - b) for your children?
 - c) and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord calls to him?

Eternal life. Gift of the Holy Spirit. Peace, love, compassion, life everlasting. All God's children.

2. As a community of faith, how are the members of Our Saviour called to be different, set apart from "this corrupt generation"? (i.e., What does it look like to be counter-cultural, yet compassionate, loving and mission-focused?)

Deep joy. Witnessing. Mission/outreach. Tolerant and non-judgmental.

3. What is the role of prayer:
 - a) in your personal discernment?
 - b) for parish leadership as we discern God's will for this community?

To help us. Vital. Lifelong. Pray often. Remember to give thanks.

4. Hospitality is a gift of this parish. How do you think God may wish us to extend our hospitality and fellowship in 2012 and beyond by exercising and extending this gift in new ways, along with the other spiritual gifts of this parish, and the spiritual gifts of your rector?

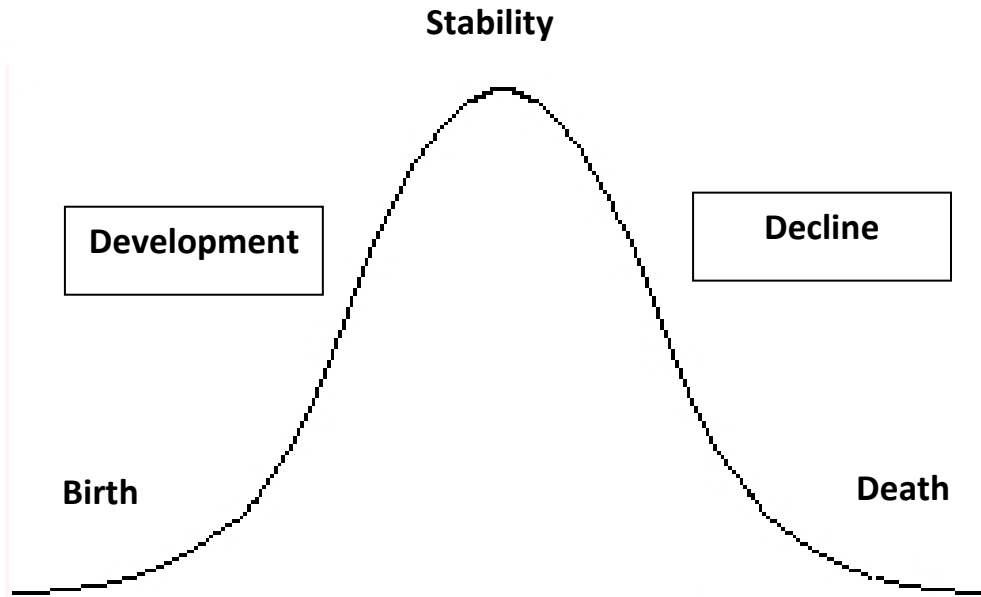
More outreach. Advertise – advertise – advertise! Worship in the park – bring a canned item. NPC connection. Contemporary service possibilities. Invitations to summer visitors – Venture-In etc. Definite need for a communications director/officer.

5. What signs of the movement of the Holy Spirit do you see, hear or otherwise feel at Our Saviour?
Outreach. We care about one another. Togetherness. Hospitality.
6. In the Scripture we read, what is the response of those who are awed by the presence of the Holy Spirit?
Giving and sharing.
7. Do you believe that the people of Our Saviour can and will respond with the same kind of Spirit-filled generosity? Why? Or why not?
Hope so. Not sure. Yes.
8. What do you believe is the best way to communicate our 2012 plans?
Talk it up @ fellowship time and at other events. Have a vestry host for the day. Communications director/officer.

Church Growth Factors and Congregational Lifecycles

*To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven. (Ecclesiastes 3:1)*

Churches are not static entities. They are living and dynamic organisms. All things have life cycles, people, animals, plants, as well as groups like vestry, Bible study groups and so on. Churches also have life cycles that follow this similar pattern of birth, growth, stability, decline and death. This is what it looks like:

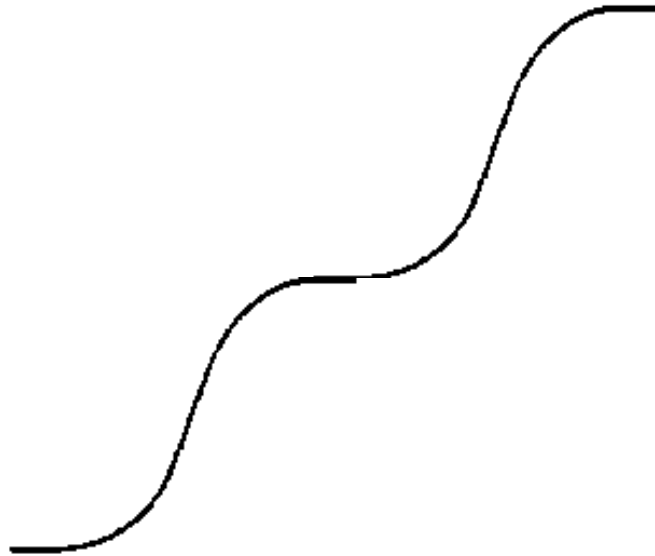


Here's a description of each phase:

- **Birth:** A new congregation emerges from the vision of certain persons. Birth is the culmination of the planning and dreaming stages. Resources are brought together and a new entity emerges.
- **Development:** As the church grows, new people come. New ideas, new programs, an air of expectancy are all part of the congregation at this stage.
- **Stability:** Things are running smoothly now. The congregation knows what to expect. Minor corrections are in order, but the sense is "Let's just keep on doing what we're doing."
- **Decline:** One day, folks look around and notice that things are getting "long in the tooth". The neighborhood may have changed, deferred maintenance begins to be an issue, people may be reminiscing about the way things used to be.
- **Death:** Decline is the point where the congregation is focused on surviving for its own preservation. It loses its sense of mission and starts to believe that it would be happy to just stay where it has been. The best years are behind it.

The S-Curve

Before the eventuality of death (yes, it can and does happen), churches can renew or prolong their life by giving birth before the active dying phase sets in. It is called intervening at the S-Curve. Graphically it looks like this:



A typical S-curve has an exponential portion in which the slope, representing growth, increases. At some point the slope begins to decrease, and the curve rounds off. Unless there is an intervention, the natural course of life is to reach a peak, decline, and die. The only way to prolong the life phase, in this case of the church, is to start a new S-curve. Thus, the church must continually reinvent itself in order to avoid the natural consequence of decline and death.

The challenge is knowing when to catch the next S-curve. When things are going well there seems to be no reason to change; life is stable. The attitude of “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” prevails. However, this is the paradox of success: start the new S-curve at the very point that things are still on their way up. The reason is found in the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

The Second Law of Thermodynamics

This is commonly known as the law of increased entropy. It states that in a closed system, the quantity of energy remains the same while the quality of matter and energy deteriorates gradually over time. Entropy tells us that matter and energy in a system always deteriorate.

What the Second Law of Thermodynamics means for the church and the normal life cycle is that unless we pour new energy into the church’s system, eventually the system will deteriorate. Pouring new energy in should be for the purpose of starting a new S-curve, not simply working harder in maintaining what had once been successful. Strategic design is required!

The best time to pour energy in is just before the period of stability sets in. There is a simply truth here: the later we start to plan and energize the congregation, the more energy it will take to overcome the forces of entropy/decline. We cannot wait until attendance is in decline, people are discouraged, morale is low, and resources are scarcer. Charles Handy calls this the paradox of change – the time to start a new growth curve is when things are going well. The challenge for the church is to develop a new growth stream, while maintaining the current stream. Complacency and “comfortableness” are signs that decline is just around the corner!

Leadership Needs at the Various Life-Cycle Phases

With different phases in congregational life, it follows that the church will need different leaders with different skills depending on the phase of the church's life. Here's a summary of the type of leaders needed.

Phase	Leadership Needed
Birth	<p>Vision caster and catalyst: Ability to cast a vision that people will want to commit to, sacrifice for, and get passionate about. One who gets things done.</p>
Formation	<p>Organizer: Planning, coordinating, and implementation are all needed at this stage. Leaders need to develop resources, as well as lead others.</p>
Stability	<p>Operator and innovator: For the church to grow it must continue doing what it already does well (operator), while at the same time developing a new S-curve (innovator).</p>
Decline	<p>Healer and innovator: Churches in decline may be in grief. People are remembering the days when the church was vital, and full. The congregation needs a healer who can walk the people through their grief. Often a church that has had major conflict will enter a period of decline. The church also needs an innovator to intervene and re-energize the parish, and begin new birth, new growth, and new life.</p>
Death	<p>Chaplain: If the church is entering the death phase it will need a loving chaplain who can sensitively guide the congregation through the closing of the church.</p>

Reflection: Where are we as a Parish? Where is God leading us?

- Given all that we have learned, what is your honest assessment of what phase Our Saviour is in the natural church life-cycle of a church?
Most agreed that COS is in the stable phase.
- What type of leader do you have in your Parish pastor/rector at this time?
Healer, motivator, visionary, organizer, spiritual leader, teacher.
- Do you think that the rector's skills and gifts match the phase? Why? Or why not?
Yes.
- Given the history of this parish and the skills and gifts of its rectors past and present what kind of growth/change can we anticipate at Our Saviour at this time?
Positive growth and change. Passion. Babies. Older people. Outreach. Hospitality. Jubilee!
- Do you think we are at the point where innovative change and growth can and should be introduced to this parish? Why or why not?
Yes. Need broader involvement/participation. Spiritual gifts inventory of whole parish. Communications director/officer.
- The work of the Horizon Team Steering Committee was very thorough and detailed. Do you have questions about that work or the recommendations? Please expand...
None.
- What role do you see for the Vestry as we plan for 2012 and beyond?
Finalize mission statement and goals for growth.
- What are the benefits of growth and change? 9. What are the costs of growth & change?

Benefits	Costs
More members	Lost members
More outreach	Uncontrolled growth
More money	Loss of 'stability'
More warm bodies (worship, ministry & leadership)	Loss of 'predictability'
More balance (participation by all)	\$
God's blessings	Burn-out
More reflective of the broader community	

- What are the benefits of maintaining a "status quo"? 10. And the costs?

Benefits	Costs
Comfortable	Comfortable
	Decline.
	Death.