

STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT

May 25, 2016

Background

The Vestry charge to the Strategic Planning Task Force¹ directed us to develop, first, a draft mission statement and set of focus areas for St. Alban's for the next five years and, second, a strategic plan and governance policy that included ways to evaluate progress toward agreed-upon goals and to reassess and adjust the plan.

The Task Force accomplished the first in its report to the Vestry of February 20, 2016, and the Vestry approved (as amended) the proposed mission statement and the five areas of strategic focus (integration, diversity, children and youth, mission and outreach, and visibility without/transparency within). The rector, Rev. Deborah Meister, shared this with the congregation in a sermon on March 13, 2016, and sermons on five Sundays during the Easter season were each dedicated to one of the five areas. Members of the Task Force talked with ministry leaders to share the February report with them and get them thinking about how the ministries they head can support the strategic directions outlined in the report. At a Sunday forum in May, parishioners brainstormed ideas for implementing the strategic directions.

While planning certainly needs to occur, the Task Force is not presenting a strategic plan *per se*. Not only have past strategic plans typically served only to take up shelf space, the pace of change today requires that thriving congregations be flexible to meet new challenges. What is called for is strategic *thinking*. (See chart in Attachment 1 for a comparison of strategic thinking and strategic planning.) In April the Task Force submitted a report to the Vestry on "Implementing and Monitoring of St. Alban's Strategic Thinking," and the governance process spelled out in the report was approved at the Vestry's May 2016 meeting. (See chart in Attachment 2 for a timeline for monitoring and governance.)

New Mission Statement

"To nourish an inclusive, diverse Christian community transforming lives by doing God's work inside and outside our walls."

Our current identity statement will be used in conjunction with the mission statement and remains unchanged:

"We welcome the faithful, the seeker and the doubter, for God's embrace is wide and God's good news is for all."

¹Members of the Strategic Planning Task Force: Craig Albright, Abigail Davis, Bill Edgar, Kevin Hassett, Sandy Kolb (convener), Deborah Meister, Deborah Potter, Virginia Scofield; Ray Donnelly (consultant)

Foundations for Ministry

Over and over in our conversations with parishioners we heard how St. Alban's liturgy, music and Christian formation for all ages were valued; were what drew many people to our parish; and were part of our core identity. St. Alban's strong commitment to these areas will continue. Figuring out how to build on these core strengths in ways that both honor our traditions and incorporate changes that meet the needs of a changing world is key to the success of the strategic plan.

Note, too, that the identification of strategic focus areas does not mean that St. Alban's will do nothing else for the next five years. We will continue to feed the hungry, care for the homeless, and respond to natural and human-induced disasters. We will look, however, for ways in which these ministries can further the strategic directions which we set for ourselves.

Strategic Focus Areas

The task force developed the five areas for strategic focus from conversations with the congregation, clergy and staff, and neighborhood leaders. We consulted research by the Episcopal Church on thriving congregations. A summary of key findings is found in Attachment 3.

We also solicited specific ideas for action steps in each focus area at brainstorming sessions with parishioners in May. A complete list is found at Attachment 4, and a selected few are shown below each of the focus areas. These ideas are listed merely to "prime the pump" for ministry leaders thinking about how to address the strategic areas. They are not meant to be prescriptive, and they have not been approved by the Vestry. Developing the specific goals and action steps will be part of the work of the ministry leaders during up-coming program years and budget cycles.

Integration: The move of the Spanish-language service to the morning has begun to integrate the Spanish-speakers more fully into the life of the congregation as a whole. The children and youth are participating in programs, and we are getting to know each other. To build on this progress, we must create opportunities for greater engagement in educational offerings, service, pastoral care and worship. Some suggestions from parishioners:

*All of you are one in Christ
Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)*

- Hold bilingual services, perhaps quarterly, including for major events such as baptisms or holy days like Maundy Thursday.
- Offer more opportunities to gather for joint fellowship or formation (e.g., First Wednesdays, discussions *Enrique's Journey* and joint Bible study of *Esther*).
- Offer classes for English-speakers to learn Spanish and Spanish-speakers to learn English.

Diversity: We are a welcoming parish. Yet St. Alban's could do more to reach out to young adults, people of color (especially African-Americans) and the LGBT community in order to engage them. We should develop worship, service and formation opportunities that will appeal to a variety of people. There is also a felt need to be more inclusive of the elderly within our congregation and in our neighborhood, especially the widowed. A few ideas from parishioners:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

- Increase diversity of our worship and music styles through inclusion of non-traditional liturgies or services offered at different times of the day (e.g. Sunday afternoon).
- Advertise in LGBT publications and have a visible rainbow symbol outside the church.
- Better support seniors in our congregation by providing transportation to church events and increasing opportunities for intergenerational programs.

Children and Youth: This is already a strength of our parish. Our goal is to be the “gold standard” for children’s formation and a focus on children will help us grow; families with school-age children are the fastest growing cohort in our immediate neighborhood. Continuing our strong youth program will keep families engaged as their children grow. We envision more opportunities for intergenerational service, education and formation, as well as increased connections to families and children in the community around us. Some of the suggestions parishioners made:

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” (Matthew 19:14)

- Create meaningful outreach opportunities for children of all ages.
- Provide programs during the day to help young parents in the neighborhood, as well as our congregation (e.g., parents’ day off, play groups, parenting class), including a group for parents of babies.
- Ensure scholarships are available for children and youth to attend activities like Parish weekend or ASP.

Mission and Outreach: A clear sense of purpose and mission is a key characteristic of a growing church. The grants program administered by the Workers of St. Alban's and the establishment of the God’s Work in the World Committee two years ago have laid the groundwork for creating such a focus. The emergence of the TLC initiative (Transforming the Lives of Children through Education) has generated significant

*“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”
(Matthew 25:40)*

support from the congregation, even as St. Alban’s continues to feed the hungry and help house the homeless. We will seek ways to integrate or coordinate efforts across these key mission areas and increase hands-on involvement by parishioners of all ages. Our goal is to see real impact, not just for the recipients of our assistance but in our lives, as well. Here are some ideas from parishioners:

- Continue the TLC initiative beyond its original three years and make it a hallmark of our congregation.
- Increase opportunities for hands-on involvement by parishioners of all ages, especially the youth and our Spanish-speaking members.
- Develop more partnerships for service – interfaith, with other congregations, with neighborhood leaders (including the Villages) – to strengthen our mission.

Visibility Without, Transparency Within: The best way for us to be more visible in the community is for our good works to be better known, and for community members to learn that St. Alban’s can help them make a difference too. We will improve communication, both external and internal to showcase the work we do. We will build bridges between and across our ministries so we can integrate and focus our work. And we will seek new ways to connect with our neighbors. Parishioners suggested this might include the following:

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to God. (Matthew 5:16)

- Establish a regular network for communicating and inviting participation in events through neighborhood listservs. Showcase the good work we do.
- Place small leaflets in local businesses (e.g., Starbucks, public announcement boards, etc.) advertising specific service opportunities that neighbors might join.
- Create more opportunities for parishioners to share their stories of service (e.g., venue for longer stories like those that used to appear in *The Chronicle* or brief testimonies during the service in some special season like Lent).

Implementation and Monitoring of St. Alban's Strategic Thinking

Strategic thinking requires the establishment of a culture that encourages experimentation, allows for failures, and monitors success – in other words, a culture of flexibility, fluidity, and responsiveness. It also requires an ability to constantly scan the environment to see what is changing and whether those changes will impact St. Alban’s and God’s call to us.



The process of strategic thinking in which we have engaged is a cycle as shown in the chart on the left. We have collected information from within the congregation and from our neighborhood and city. We then analyzed it to come up with a strategic direction in the context of who we have been historically, the needs of our neighbors, and our assessment of where God is calling us.

The next step in the process is to plan, then implement, action steps that will move us along the paths we have chosen. That must be followed by review and reflection, making adjustments as needed.

The process need not be complicated, and in fact we would urge that it not be. The annual budget cycle gives us a natural process for incorporating strategic thinking. The steps might be as follows:

- As part of their annual budget request, ask ministry leaders to identify what they are already doing that supports one or more of the strategic focus areas and what they would propose to change, drop or add that would further progress in these areas. This should not be a requirement only for those changes that might have a budget impact since many of the action steps might, in fact, be budget-neutral.
- Reinforce the idea of thinking strategically by asking ministry leaders to project where they want their ministry to be in five years – what vision do they have? This is important for all areas, but especially for outreach and mission, where a longer-term, more focused, and coordinated commitment might help develop a greater base of support for our external partners. In addition, ask ministry leaders how they would measure the success of what they are doing to advance St. Alban's strategic goals. (See below for suggested questions.)
- Make budget decisions that reinforce our strategic objectives, incorporating these into our discussions, while also keeping in mind the need to support St. Alban's foundation ministries of liturgy, music, and Christian formation and to provide for an unexpected call to mission.
- Incorporate some mechanism for keeping the parish informed about and engaged in changes affecting our immediate neighborhood and encourage on-going education on developing trends in all ministry areas.
- Check in with ministry leaders at the start of each calendar year to see how the new things they are trying are working and allow for shifts in activities as long as the bottom line is not impacted. The Vestry may request reports on major initiatives from the people who lead the ministries, not the Vestry liaisons, as a way of enlarging the leadership circle and reinforcing the idea that thinking strategically is every ministry's responsibility. (We may, in fact, want to refine the role of Vestry liaisons.)

- At the end of the program year, have each ministry leader submit a report for the annual meeting, currently held the first Sunday in June, assessing what went well, what could have been done differently, and begin the process of thinking about the next year's budget.
- In April and May, the Vestry should evaluate the plan, as well as the implementation process, and decide whether to modify either the strategic goals or the process for the remainder of its 5-year life-span.
- Every five years hold a more extensive review – what has changed, what remains the same – to see if St. Alban's is being called to someplace new.

A timeline showing these steps can be found in Attachment 2.

Among the questions to be asked in the decision-making process are the following:

- How many of the strategic focus areas are addressed?
- Is there a synergistic effect (e.g., multiple ministries or demographic groups working together)?
- Are there partnerships with other congregations, non-profits, or government agencies involved?
- Is St. Alban's participation integral to the work being done?
- What are the opportunities for hands-on engagement by parishioners?
- Does the approach rest on the latest knowledge of the topic (whether that is, for example, best practices in reducing homelessness, current demographics, or latest research on effective models of Christian formation)?
- Is the effort sustainable or what would it take to make it so if it were successful?
- If a ministry is not thriving, why is that the case and what should be done?
- If St. Alban's is called in a different direction, what should happen to this ministry?
- What have been the results of each ministry's action steps in advancing the strategic goals, or what has changed since those steps were taken?

Movement in the strategic directions chosen cannot be achieved unless staff, administration, resources, buildings, and other infrastructure are properly aligned. Having adopted these strategic focus areas, the Vestry must also commit to providing the budget and staffing necessary to support specific steps to meet each goal.

The work of implementing and monitoring strategic thinking at St. Alban's now rests with ministry leaders, the Vestry, Wardens and Rector. It is up to these leaders to incorporate this process into the daily working of the church, aligning budgets, staff and organizational structure to enable strategic thinking to bear fruit, not just in the near term but for years to come.

Attachment 1: Strategic Thinking vs. Strategic Planning

| | Strategic Thinking | Strategic Planning |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Expectations of the Future | Only the shape of the future can be predicted. | The future is predictable and specifiable in detail. |
| Process | Continuous and fluid, responsive to developing conditions. A journey, not a destination. | Episodic and sequential, working within established boundaries. A destination, not a journey. |
| Decision-Making | Ministry leaders and parishioners have a voice in goal-setting, as well as greater latitude to respond opportunistically to developing conditions. | Rector, wardens, and Vestry obtain the needed information from ministry leaders and use that to create a plan which is, in turn, disseminated to the ministry leaders for implementation. |
| Monitoring | Parishioners and ministry leaders have a sense of strategic direction that guides decision-making; process is often difficult to measure and monitor. | Vestry develops measurement systems, assuming that congregations can measure and monitor important variables both accurately and quickly. |
| Implementation | All ministry leaders, clergy and lay, understand their roles and those of others, as well as how they relate to each other. Decisions are made collaboratively. | Ministry leaders need only know their own roles well and can be expected to defend only their turf. Decisions are made in isolation. |
| Focus | The focus is on synthesis, like putting the pieces of a puzzle together to form a new picture. Finding new strategic options and implementing them successfully is more important than evaluating them. | The focus is on analysis and evaluation of what already exists. Looking at each action step as it fits or does not fit the plan is more important than finding new approaches. |
| Results | Strategic thinking becomes a habit. Through experimentation, failure and success, what is learned fuels more strategic thinking. | The creation of the strategic plan is the ultimate objective. |

Attachment 2: Timeline for Planning and Budgeting Cycle

| DATE | MINISTRIES | VESTRY |
|-----------|---|--|
| June | <p>Begin planning budget requests based on current strategic goals</p> <p>End-of-program year ministry reports published in conjunction with Annual Meeting</p> | |
| September | Submit initial budget requests and plans for FY beginning in January | Every five years, begin a more extensive review to see where God might be calling us now – feed information into decision process in May |
| October | | Vestry finance committee begins work on draft budget |
| November | Conduct midterm review on progress toward strategic goals | Review draft budget |
| December | If requested, provide midterm report on major initiatives to Vestry (to inform budget preparation) | Continue/complete work on draft budget |
| January | Review/adjust plans based on final budget | Approve final budget & provide details to ministry leaders |
| April | Prepare end-of-program year report | Review strategic thinking process to date; adjust as needed |
| May | Submit end-of-program year report | <p>Receive midterm report</p> <p>Adjust strategic focus areas as needed for next budget cycle</p> |

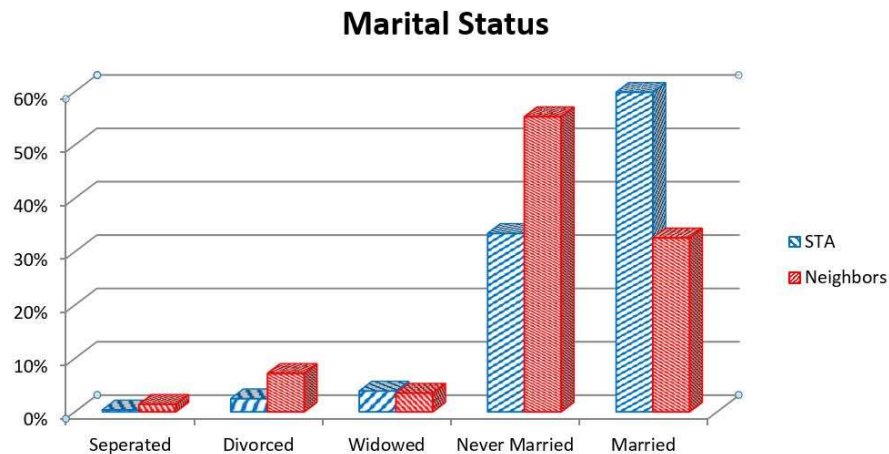
Attachment 3: Growing Congregations, Us and Our Neighborhood

Episcopal Church Data on Growing Congregations

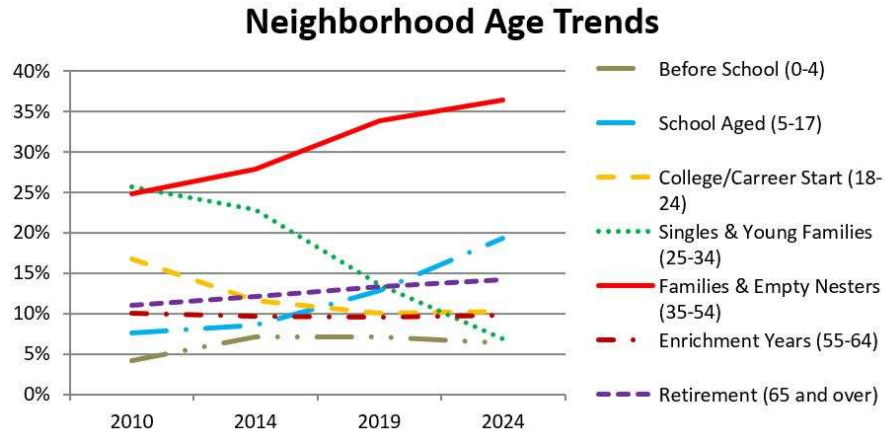
- Large proportions of younger adults
- A clear sense of mission and purpose
- Willing to change to meet new challenges
- Two or more services, including at least one regular "alternative" service (examples include Taizé, jazz, contemporary, family dinner).
- Worship that is vibrant and fun.
- Services in a language other than English (or bilingual)
- Children involved in worship leadership (beyond acolytes)
- Young adult activities (including parenting or marriage-enrichment programs).
- Coffee hours described as "chaotic."
- No significant internal conflict
- Strong emphasis on Sunday school, children and youth activities

Demographics

- The greatest concentration of our membership comes from 3 ZIP Codes – 20007 (Georgetown, Glover Park, Palisades), 20016 (Palisades, Cathedral Heights, Spring Valley, AU Park, Wesley Heights, North Cleveland Park, Friendship Heights), and 20008 (North Cleveland Park, Woodley Park, Kalorama Heights, Forest Hills).
- The neighborhood is overwhelmingly white (85%, 7% Asian, 4% Afro-American, 4% Other); 5% Hispanic (any race)
- There is poverty: 10% rate in the neighborhood, though higher among Hispanics.
- One in five of our neighbors is foreign-born. About half are now citizens. Most come from Latin America, Asia and Europe.
- The neighborhood has more singles than St. Alban's (only 39% are married; 71% of St. Alban's pledgers are married or partnered)



- The neighborhood is younger (median age is 40 compared to 47 for “active members” of St. Alban’s and 66 for “pledging members”). The median age for DC as a whole is 34.



Research done for The Episcopal Church predicts that over the next decade, these groups will increase the most in our immediate neighborhood (3 square miles): school-age children; families and empty nesters (ages 35-54); and adults over 55. There are predicted to be fewer young adults (ages 18-24) and singles and young families (25-34). This tracks with what neighborhood leaders told us – families and seniors are staying “put” because of housing costs, and young adults and families are unable to afford to move into the neighborhood.

Attachment 4: Ideas to Help Us Step Out in Faith in Our Strategic Areas (Suggestions under each focus area clustered by group which created them.)

Integration

- Outing in a park with children's activities
- Cultural classes where we share (maybe demonstrate?)
- Social events where we share food or culture through dance or other activities (not just Latino but also other backgrounds)
- Bilingual worship (some festival days, possibly: baptisms, graduations Thanksgiving, Maundy Thursday (dinner and Bishop's garden)

- Bring a memento – little girl brought something (down-played by clergy)
- Make a bigger deal of the integration points
- More information about being/working together
 - Not presented as opportunities
 - Encourage opportunities for engagement
- E.g., Baptisms – should be joint events to celebrate– was a big deal last year
- E.g., Global Mission – refugee Sunday to benefit Syrian families, but highlight story of being a refugee from our own community as well; Bring Syrian Falafel maker (one of our mustard seed sponsored families) to an event at St. Albans

- Hold joint services; Put heads together – more times sitting together
- Get 11:00 service-goers to volunteer at OpShop – need Spanish speakers
- 11:00 service-goers involved with Tubman e.g., event with drummers)
- Concern with budget discussion – need commitment to Debbie Kirk
- Gala – hard to converse because of language differences
- Offer more opportunities for people to talk about same subject (e.g., “Enrique's Journey”)
- Fellowship Sunday – write favorite hymn on name tag along with name
- Have a joint service at 11:00/11:15 with both communities once a month
 - Attendance increases the more diverse services there are
- Opportunities for older people to participate/play with their younger kids/children meeting them in coffee hour
- Engage kids in cooking for Christ House
- Have Debbie preach at 9:15 service so we can get to know her
 - Integrated (bi-lingual) clergy

- Spanish speakers want service in their own language
 - Bilingual services (Candice Brown has attended several at other churches and has some valuable insights.)
- Spanish speakers are diverse and caring
 - Together as community
- Process of integration is a gradual one
 - First Wednesdays

- Social occasions to bring us together
 - Values in their faith
 - Once a quarter bilingual service
 - Summer – merging the services (11:00 and 11:15)
 - All need to make an effort to communicate and gather together
 - When activities are for mixing children, language not a problem
 - Kids' interest in Sunday School
 - At Gala, there was integration
- Worried about idea of integration – if service partly in Spanish, several people said they would leave
 - Build on integrating the children
 - Some special events have been attended by Spanish-speaking members
 - Get a Latin band (salsa/Latin jazz event)
 - Invite Spanish-speaking members to work in OpShop
 - Put notice in OpShop that we have Spanish service here
 - Include kids in recessional with instruments
 - Have drumming for kids and young adults on the Close (not at services)
 - There are drumming groups around the city
- Announcements about activities in the Spanish speaking community to be made during other services, and vice versa
 - At the Spanish community's First Wednesday event we did not make enough of an effort to invite the Spanish speaking parishioners to sit at multiple tables, after they prepared the meal they sat together. Need to encourage parish to actively welcome people at events.
 - Bring the two services together during the summer into a single bilingual service
 - Perhaps every Sunday throughout the year have a bilingual service
 - Pot luck or other planned meals together after the bilingual service
 - Foyers group integration
 - Beginning Spanish classes for our children who do not speak Spanish
 - Spanish classes for adult parishioners
 - English classes for Spanish speakers
- Align Sunday service times with educational offerings and service opportunities so both English- and Spanish-speakers can participate.
 - Offer opportunities for joint English-Spanish worship at least quarterly, perhaps followed by fellowship, as well as small group formation.
 - Develop clergy and lay pastoral care teams that can function well in a bilingual environment.
 - Help our parishioners, clergy and volunteers, learn one another's language.

Diversity

- 4th of July selling food and water/soda/juice (connect with community and raise funds for Latino ministry)
- Flyers and new signs to introduce events and programs and engage community
- Connect with college communities (music and conversation e.g. with Latino ministry contingent at AU)
- Connections with community through participation at community events and community forums

- Need to have a visible gay person (based on Andrew Brown's talk)
- Encourage gays and others to participate in full range of ministries to be more visible
- Rainbow symbol could go in front of church

- Develop affinity groups – by actively inviting diverse people with like interests to participate in parish activities together. For example, have a committee of lay leaders interested in developing/encouraging outreach from specific groups. For example, get lay leaders actively involved in reaching out to others to diversify the Alter Guild, the Flower Guild, Children's Chapel, etc.
- Look for opportunities to develop activities and interactions in the broader D.C. community.
- Floyd Nelson works on diversity issues professionally and would be willing to help us think about diversity issues.
- Global mission – engage communities outside the church for enrichment.

Diversity/Elderly

- Elderly transportation a barrier – they stop coming to church without transportation; used to have a van to bring people, but was eliminated due to cost.
- Brought a couple today who needed a ride
- Tech people do a ZIP code search so we know who lives close to us
 - Get to know people in the neighborhood
 - Can pick them up on the way, make a visit beyond ride to church
- Carpool – reduce carbon footprint
- Jo Turner making an effort – has been forthcoming
 - Do people in parish who need the help know it's available? Might not be on-line.
 - Do people who stop coming know how to stay in touch? They didn't (?) when did they go? Hard to keep in touch?
 - We should ask them.
- How to make rides known to whole parish?
- How to make people aware this is a nice thing to do?
- Encourage people to volunteer at parish meeting?

- Comes under Jo's ministry?
- Someone needs to keep a list, like Jo.
- Advertise: if you want a ride or know someone who needs a ride – call "X" and tell them.
- What about commissioning the Eucharistic visitors? Who do they take it to? Can we build on that?
- How do we find them? Can it be expanded?

Diversity/Young Adults and Other

- Church at 16th & Connecticut – huge amount of young adults spilling out – how do we attract?
- Young adults attract other young adults.
- Location important – Glover Park – we have a good location
- Tap into a social network
- Need additional activity beyond worship to attract them – what activity is needed for them?
- 5 PM service for young people – they don't like mornings
- Tie activities to outreach like Grate Patrol, et. al.
- We have things to offer, but need other social activities
- Reaching into community of pre-school has given us diversity – how to do this with another group?
- Appalachia trips attracting young people; people from other churches
- Chaplains at AU and GWU – do we have them? Worth pursuing?
 - Maybe too transitional
 - Better to focus on working young adults
- Support groups for LGBT at universities
 - Advertise our services to them
- Service can be an additional activity that attracts undergraduates
 - Leave them with a sense of worth, of doing something
- A program like ASP for 20's and 30's that we can become part of?
- Link up with other churches to (?) young adults?
- Mission work internationally to attract young adults
- Pair ourselves with, work with other diverse churches to develop an outreach or other project to do good together
- Make the place inviting – think Starbuck's
 - Can make a convening place
 - Focus on children's wing – make bright & cheery
 - (?) in design, couches, social place
 - Do this as we reclaim Satterlee from preschool
- Consider a church-affiliated nursery school here at St. Alban's
- Our neighborhood not diverse, need ways to bring in people outside our neighborhood
- Private schools are diverse – attract those families

- Losing low rent apartments, so have to compensate for that, and focus on low rent apartments that will still be in the neighborhood
- Parents find community with each other, especially those with same-age kids
 - What needs to those parents have?
 - Turn low impact program into high impact
- Combine 9:15 and 11:15 services
 - Alternate Rite 1 and Rite 2 by week
- Look for overflow from Cathedral (they don't have children's programs)
- Another church has been stuffed with singles – but they have a contemporary service with music, et. al. that is attractive to them
- Visit other churches that are successfully attracting young adults and steal their ideas
- Start English as a second language program here at St. Alban's
 - People in group willing to volunteer
- Repurpose commercial preschool into a church-sponsored preschool (very attractive)
- If we keep 2 Sunday services, make one more contemporary – currently both are traditional)
- Use spontaneous prayers from the people in the pews

- Increase diversity of our worship and music styles through inclusion of non-traditional liturgies
- Diversify opportunities for rich Christian formation to appeal to a variety of people wherever they are in their faith journey
- Build a program of small group formation, including both short-term and long-term opportunities
- Expand and publicize intergenerational opportunities to participate in St. Alban's service ministries
- Advertise in LGBT publications and adopt signage that makes clear we are a welcoming congregation
- Add support for seniors within the congregation with such things as a volunteer ride network, etc.
- Partner with neighborhood Villages to address the social isolation of elderly in the neighborhood.

Children and Youth

- Continue participation by Spanish-speaking children and youth in Sunday School and Grate Patrol
- Extend participation of Spanish-speaking children and youth into outreach activities as appropriate (children and youth to others their ages and family to family)
- Translate Sunday School and Youth curriculum summaries into Spanish for Latino parents (include 11 am service in planning and evaluation when it occurs)

(parents said they need contact from Sunday School teachers and youth leaders or someone in the program in Spanish)

- More integration
- Problem with parents who have no background in church (let's teach them)
- Opportunities for parents to talk and learn
- Informal parents' talk – open up and integrate
- Not about children
- Occasional bigger and intergenerational conversations
- Intergenerational networking to problem-solve
- 4th Sunday fellowship – see the kids running around; let me hold your kid while you relax

- Need statistics on age ranges
- Support for Emily and Laura Weiss – Laura's teaching music for children – on the right track
- Godly Play good
- Hard to integrate older kids in Children's Chapel – buddies for children there is good
- Interest in undertaking a parenting course, maybe with Emily
- Parent burn-out must be avoided – especially for teaching Sunday school
- What brought people to St. Alban's – daughter
- Think we need to look at our J to A program now that Matthew is gone – can we sustain?
- Spanish-speaking kids don't attend Children's Chapel – logistics issue
- Spanish speakers – integration of children and parents
 - 3 King's celebration
- Matthew has left – what can we do?

- J2A and other youth might host activities for smaller kids
- Ask kids what they would like to do
- Vacation Bible School, but need whole parish support

- Offer opportunities for singing with children.
- Establish children's choirs.
- Provide space for a baby group once or twice a week during the week day, encourage young parents from the parish to form a seed group, ask them to invite others to join, and advertise in the neighborhood. Group should mostly be social/bonding with other parents opportunity, could occasionally be (at least partially) for some activity, i.e. exercise with your baby, make or listen to music with your baby. Make sure to welcome stay at home Dads as well (either with Moms or in a separate interest group). You would need a welcoming and baby/toddler proof space to use.
- Get the choirs (adult and children's and bell choirs) to make occasional visit to Children's Chapel in some interactive and engaging way.

- Once or twice a year have an instrument petting zoo for members of the community. “Come in and touch and listen to a violin, etc.”
- Actively encourage teens to invite their friends to come and join us on grate patrol nights, figure out a way to give teens community service hours for grate patrol to encourage participation.
- Publicize our children’s programs in an effective manner so that everyone in our local community seeking to broaden the Christian education of their children knows that St. Alban’s is a fantastic choice for them
- Generate more opportunities for intergenerational education and formation
- Create meaningful outreach opportunities for children of all ages
- Provide programs during the day to help the young parents in the neighborhood, as well as in our congregation (e.g., parents’ day off, play groups)
- Ensure that scholarships are available for any child/youth who participates in our children’s or youth formation program and wants to attend the parish retreat, go on the J2A pilgrimage, or participate in ASP, and make sure the availability of scholarships is publicized broadly.
- Routinely provide child care at events

Mission/Outreach

- Involve Spanish-speakers in Harriet Tubman elementary school (tutoring and mentoring and school supplies and teacher support) (with the understanding that support cannot be offered during the week due to work schedules of the congregants)
- Spanish speakers volunteer visiting to Iona House and Tercera Edad
- Spanish speakers volunteer to help Latino community connect with services needed
- Coordinate
- Problem with pruning outreach efforts – that’s not growing the church
 - More than housing, feeding, TLC
 - Add prison outreach, transition services, supporting seniors at home
 - Need leadership and money
 - What is there to prune? Nothing.
 - Geriatric services – see NYT article on Alzheimer’s
- Once a month (first Sunday) prayed for WSA/Mustard Seed/Gala
 - Make people more aware
 - More cohesive
- Mission Minutes once a month
- Because a mission does not fit into 3 categories – should not mean it should be trimmed
- Trimming a sun setting a ministry is OK, but not pruning because it doesn’t fit into 3 is wrong

- Change categories to make broader
 - St. A's is outreach
 - Object to focusing on 1 topic
 - No need to focus
 - The more outreach, the better
 - Rewrite the paragraph in Strategic Plan (ed.-push back on narrowness of statement)
 - Better job at home - a sense that our parish (internally,) does not know of the options available for them to become engaged,
 - Publicizing what we are doing with church
 - Once a month talk
 - Better – in church bulletin
 - Photo of girl who had graduated in South Sudan – a face and a story of what we are doing
 - In-reach vs. outreach
 - People in parish don't know the opportunities for ministry available in the church. No specific ideas on how to publicize our outreach.
 - Don't give up what works!
 - Know our strengths and build on them
 - Christ House, SOME, Grate Patrol – these work
 - Op Shop and WSA
 - Important each year to engage youth
 - Expand beyond Grate Patrol
 - Read to Tubman kids on Saturdays (there is an existing program)
 - Mentoring and after school programs -- can interest teens in this
 - Include more programs in Yellow Pages – can report on where St A's people are working in the community
 - Publicize everything – like Tubman – on website
 - Make volunteer opportunities easily accessible on website
 - Need story-telling articles (people's experiences in various ministries) like we used to have in the Chronicle.
 - Maybe reinstitute Chronicle
 - Maybe mail it if people specifically opt in for mail (as opposed to electronic version)
 - Try to induce people to look at website, and maybe also provide info in writing (can request by mail) and maybe also put in bulletin
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- Support priorities in the operating budget, working toward a goal of spending 10% of the budget on mission/outreach
 - Continue the TLC initiative beyond its original three years and make it a hallmark of our congregation
 - Look for ways to integrate or coordinate efforts across key mission areas: housing, feeding and TLC

- Increase opportunities for hand-on involvement by parishioners of all ages and by people in the neighborhood (serving “with” not “for”)
- Deepen commitment to interfaith engagement through more frequent opportunities including partnering in service projects and activities such as film viewings, dialogue, etc.
- Develop partnerships with police and neighborhood leaders to address the up-tick in incidents involving the homeless along the Wisconsin Ave. corridor

Transparency/Visibility

- Connect with college communities (music and conversation e.g., Latino ministry contingent to AU)
- Connections with community through participation at community events and community forums
- Flyers and new signs to introduce events and programs and engage community
- Priest and lay involvement projects like the “What are you hoping for?”
 - opportunity for the community to engage with us in a fun and personal way
- Hard to believe we are virtually unknown in neighborhood (people doubted this)
- Use community list serves
- Need to make known the “entry points” to St. Alban’s
- Need Forum on what’s on our website and how to find it
- Use the Northwest Current
 - ½ cost for advertising (Davis offers this to the church for advertising)
 - Could the St. A office get “notices” into the Current?
 - Yes, but has to be special event that’s open to the whole community
 - Maybe appoint someone to be contact person with NW Current
- Revive communications committee
- If flood people with too many communications, people ignore them
- Also should try to get some sense of whether people are receiving the communications (are emails being opened, etc.)
- Can we move the sign over in front of Nourse Hall?
- Look for more opportunities to do activities visible to the neighborhood – like the recycling event.
- Try to put lots of energy behind one or two outreach things in the City, and to do them well. Make a bigger splash with more focus. Continue to encourage a diversity of outreach but become known as a Church that does “X” through focus.
- Offer choral concerts in downtown parks during lunch in the summer.
- Ashes to go.

- Develop a Universal “business card” for St. Alban’s that Parishioners could hand out – A good short interesting statement of who we are, and the address of the web-site. D.C. is a business card city.
- Banners – facing the Cathedral and the street. Banners that move (in the wind etc., so they attract attention). Banners that change frequently. Banners that emphasize the integrity or circumstances of the person looking in (“please come and join us as long for as your integrity will allow,” “we welcome the doubter . . .”).
- Make small brochures, trifold, or one column leaflets to be posted in Starbucks, on public announcement boards, etc. These would each advertise one specific activity and would mention St. Alban's on the back, not the front. For example, a leaflet that says "Looking for a way to serve the hungry?", and then list the times when grate patrol cooking occurs or Christ house cooking. Emphasize that it is a group activity where people come together to serve. Include the rainbow symbol on the brochure.
- Schedule personal witness by parishioners about their involvement in outreach outside our walls during our worship throughout Lent. Establish a photographic display in the Narthex of the people of St. Alban's implementing these ministries
- Improve communication, both internal and external.
- Establish a regular network for communicating and inviting participation in events through neighborhood listservs. Showcase the good work we do.
- Create a meaningful line item for advertising within the parish budget, with staff support from a trained communications person (volunteer or part time) to see it through.
- Build on musical offerings to reach out to community.
- Seek new ways to connect with our neighbors through such things as community-wide events (Earth Day recycling program, health fairs, etc.)
- Design an evaluation process that looks at the impact of St. Alban’s contributions – are we truly making a difference? Are our resources being put to the best use in order to do so?