

## Strategic Plan History

### Effecting Change and Planning For It

Strategic Planning is often a misunderstood term because it sounds faddish and misplaced in the church setting; more for management “geeks” selling a panacea in the business world. But as Christians, isn’t the great commandment and commission our business? So shouldn’t we plan how we go about it?

To some, Strategic Planning is a frightening term because it implies change and change is unsettling. But isn’t change constant and doesn’t Christ call us to be agents of change?

An examination of our history clearly shows that St. Andrew’s church has been a constant agent of change in this community. If we consider even the past 40 or so years-years experienced by and with many of our current parishioners, there are wonderful examples of high impact decisions made by this parish and its members that have effected change: starting up an Episcopal School, St. Michael’s Academy, starting and supporting the Prenatal Clinic; ground level participation in Health For All; CASA; Neal School; and the decision to purchase the old savings and loan building to name just few.

In the past the St. Andrew’s community has looked at change comprehensively and has met change boldly (the decision to remain a downtown church is an example) but not until 2004 has St. Andrew’s begun to look at change **and the management** of change comprehensively.

### The Process

Shortly after Fr. Nick Dyke’s retirement in January 2004, the parish, under the direction of the Diocese, entered into a process that would serve as the guide to finding a new rector and to serve as our foundation for planning for the future.

In March of 2004, with the help of a trained facilitator assigned by the Diocese, a group of parishioners and vestry members took the first step in this process. They defined the *Core Values* of this parish. After the statement was completed the parish was polled and by an overwhelming majority confirmed the statement of *Core Values*.

In April the vestry met with the facilitator and after some modification insured that the *Mission Statement* of St. Andrew’s reflected the *Core Values*.

The next step was taken when the entire congregation was invited to the visioning event held on a Saturday in June of 2004. Over one hundred parishioners attended and recorded the characteristics they desired in the new rector and determined the vision of this parish based upon our core values and mission. From that event the *Vision* statement was drafted.

These statements became the *Foundation* upon which we as a parish began to plan for the future:

### ***Core Values Statement***

(Unique foundational currently held attributes of St. Andrew's)

*We are a community of worshippers expressing our belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through our commitment to tradition, outreach, and the family of faith.*

- *We value our connection to the traditional, sacramental life of the worldwide Anglican Communion as expressed through our teaching, liturgy and music.*
- *We value outreach to our community and our diocese by sharing our time, our knowledge and our resources to care for those in need.*
- *We value the relationships we as a family of faith, where we strengthen, learn from and support one another, and offer to all a welcoming spiritual home.*

### ***Mission Statement***

(Why we exist and our purpose)

***Our mission is to worship God through Our Lord Jesus Christ, to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all that we do and to share God's love in the world through our sacraments, outreach, education, and fellowship***

### ***Vision Statement***

(A vivid word picture of our future, large enough to challenge, clear enough to guide)

*Recognizing we are a family, we will continue to grow as a family and nurture each other, living our core values, St. Andrew's*

- *Will weave a rich tapestry of worship fulfilling a variety of needs;*
- *Will be recognized as an educational center for Christian Formation;*
- *Will be recognized for sustained, relevant impact for outreach to our larger community;*
- *Will be recognized as a model of Christian Stewardship with expanded facilities to meet our mission needs*

These statements are bold, as bold (or more so) as the decision to remain in downtown Bryan when businesses and others were migrating to the bypass. They affirm that we anticipate and embrace growth. They say we are going to successfully transition from a priest centered parish to a program centered parish. They predict our intention to expand facilities to enable increased worship opportunities and programs to minister to and with our local community.

And this is exactly why St. Andrew's began the process of strategic planning soon after we completed the Visioning Process. The Strategic Planning Committee met with Bob Schorr during the fall of 2004. Although Mr. Schorr was at the time in business as a private planning consultant, he is now the Diocesan Congregational Development Coordinator. With his assistance, the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed carefully the information developed by the two meetings that led to the Core Values and Vision Statement. From this review, the Desired Future State Descriptions emerged; otherwise known as the goals we expect and desire to reach in the next four to five years.

## **Desired Future State Descriptions**

### ***Worship:***

#### *Desired Future State Description:*

Consistent with our Episcopal liturgy, we will offer a variety of styles and expressions of worship on Sundays, weekdays, and special occasions. We will make our worship accessible to those new to the faith and our denomination. We will explore options for additional worship space.

### ***Christian Formation:***

#### *Desired Future State Description:*

As a Center for Christian Formation, St. Andrew's will assist its parishioners and the community in their life-long spiritual growth and their presence in the world, by offering to all ages a wide variety of educational offerings, spiritual gifts explorations, speakers, workshops and other forums for self awareness.

### ***Outreach:***

#### *Desired Future State Description:*

We will focus St. Andrew's time, talent, facilities, and treasure to meet specifically identified needs, so that our efforts are a catalyst for transformation in our surrounding neighborhoods and community.

### ***Model of Christian Stewardship:***

#### *Desired Future State Description:*

We are inspired to generous and faithful stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure as an outward and visible sign of our gratitude to and love of God, and progress on our spiritual journey. St. Andrew's will provide to all parishioners opportunities to exercise and increase their stewardship through ministry, outreach, worship, education, and fellowship.

### ***Evangelism and Organization:***

#### *Desired Future State Description:*

Through welcoming new members and increased attendance by current parishioners, we will achieve an average Sunday attendance of 325 by 2009. To support this growth, we will modify the organization and structure of the Parish so that we maintain a strong

sense of community with a variety of opportunities for nurturing personal spiritual growth.

## **Reinvigoration**

Since the completion of these statements in 2005, the parish has done much. Unfortunately, due to many events, what was accomplished was not done comprehensively or in accordance with a plan, as one was never completed. So when our rector returned from deployment the process was reinvigorated.

On St. Andrew's Day 2007, the Strategic Planning Committee was commissioned to bring forth a description of what our parish might be like on St. Andrew's Day 2012. Because the parish's basic planning documents—Mission Statement, Core Values, Vision Statement and Desired Future State Descriptions were developed during 2004 and 2005, the committee decided to revalidate them. Although the committee's review was not exhaustive, the committee is satisfied that these basic statements continue to reflect the mind of the parish.

## **Growth**

More families are settling in central Texas. Increasingly more are Hispanic. Bryan College Station is growing. More people of retirement age are coming to this area because of the wonderful amenities this area offers. A casual observation of demographics at St. Andrews reveals increased number of young families and new families of all ages. (We are averaging a new family per month.)

St. Andrew's is growing and will likely continue to grow, even if we sit on our hands. Admittedly, it is a bit worrisome when we first think about growing—after all, we value the intimacy and personal relationships that we have found at St. Andrew's and we don't wish to lose this aspect of the St. Andrew's community.

In the introductory statement to our Core Values we stated:

*We are a community of worshippers expressing our belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through our commitment to tradition, outreach and the family of faith.*

And in the introduction to our Vision statement, we stated:

*Celebrating that we are a family, we will continue to nurture each other and grow in numbers by living our core values.*

These statements may appear contradictory—how can we grow and remain a family or even a community? But The Great Commission commands us to "...to make disciples of all the nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you." (Matthew 28:19-20) If

we take The Great Commission seriously, we can't shut our doors to newcomers who are seeking Christ.

We are growing and managing our growth to secure the outcome we want is much preferable to letting the growth take charge of us by simply reacting to it. With growth, new program opportunities will appear, but new program proposals must be measured against our mission and vision. For those programs believed to be consistent with our mission and vision, the vestry will secure opportunities for lay leadership training and education, identify program leaders, estimate the time required for program development and estimate the resources that the program will require—staff, organizational support, budget, and physical space.

### **Strategic Planning Committee**

Wayne Etter  
Jan Faber      Chair  
Lewis Ford  
Liana Lowey  
Jason Sawyer  
Jim Stocker  
Ginny Wenger

*Ex Officio*  
Fr. Sean Cox  
Jim Petty (Vestry Liaison)