

## **Proposed Actions from Bishop's Transition Process February 17, 2011**

The following are actions that the consultants and core team have gathered, focused and refined from the many meetings related to the Bishop's Transition Process held from September, 2010 through January, 2011. These meetings included: open meetings for all at Saint Mark's held on Sunday, October 24, 2010 after each liturgy, an open meeting with Bishop Rickel on November 10, 2010, meetings with subgroups to include the staff, people under 35, parents, newcomers to Saint Mark's and the GLBT community and their allies, and an open meeting on January 19, 2011 to review and comment on proposed actions (edits from this meeting are reflected in this draft).

These actions are not meant to address all the programmatic priorities of the Cathedral (e.g. social justice, music program). Rather, the actions listed below are those that are related to strengthening the congregational culture at Saint Mark's and its functionality as an organization and as a church as it prepares for the calling of a new dean.

### **Proposed Actions**

- 1. Increase the capacity of the Cathedral to engage in its own congregational learning and development.**
  - a. Send teams to the College for Congregational Development consistently over the next three years.
  - b. Intentionally cultivate new leadership through recruitment and training of new leaders in many of the Cathedral's programs and activities. The aim is to develop the leadership skills and influence of people who have not as yet been in positions of leadership but who have potential to assist the Cathedral in its further development.
  - c. Plan for a solid process for transition of learning from the Bishop's Transition Process: from the consultants and Core Team to the 2011 Vestry and, if needed, to the Call Committee (when it is formed).
  - d. Hold open facilitated town meetings at least twice a year to deepen the sense of community at the Cathedral, to keep the congregation informed, and to allow leadership (Canon Missioner, Dean, Vestry and others) to get broad input on important subjects before making decisions or taking action.
  - e. Continue to handle conflict directly and productively.

- 2. Engage in a focused effort to create a healthier parish environment as a basis from which to be a healthy Cathedral.**
  - a. Articulate the components of what it means to be a healthy parish and decide what areas to work on and what *not* to do in order to give focus to these areas.
  - b. Strengthen the focus on spiritual formation across all ages and efforts.
  - c. Work to create or strengthen trust, including: define what we mean by “trust,” identify and work on the components of building a trusting environment, and articulate behavioral expectations in how members treat each other.
  
- 3. Focus energy on strengthening the “gathering” (inviting, greeting, orienting and incorporating) function at Saint Mark’s.**
  - a. Create a “membership growth task force” that guides and coordinates all efforts to strengthen the “gathering” function at Saint Mark’s.
  - b. Improve clergy and lay skillfulness in inviting, greeting, orienting and incorporating.
  - c. If people under 35, families with children, GLBT people and their allies, people of color and newcomers are important people to “gather” at the Cathedral, undertake concrete ways to learn about them and engage them in the gathering process.
  - d. Consider small groups (the intentional creation and nurture of small groups that people can join and be a part of on an ongoing basis) as a strategy to incorporate and retain members.
  
- 4. Continue focusing energy on a broader ownership of the stewardship of all resources at the Cathedral.**
  - a. Continue to work on the theological basis for all generosity: we are giving back and caring for what God has given to us first.
  - b. Make more progress on achieving sustainable financial stewardship to include expanding the pledging base, diversifying sources of revenue, increasing participation in the budgeting process and enhancing the volunteer component (recruitment, training, organizing, recognizing and thanking).
  - c. Continue to care for and enhance the buildings and the physical space at Saint Mark’s.
  - d. Create a way to thank volunteers and the staff at Saint Mark’s for what they do.
  
- 5. Strengthen Episcopal identity at Saint Mark’s.**
  - a. Create a description of Episcopal identity and what it means in terms of liturgy, polity and roles, spirituality, ethos, and temperament.
  - b. Train the staff on Episcopal identity.
  - c. Incorporate Episcopal identity into adult formation activities and preaching at Saint Mark’s.
  - d. Intentionally incorporate the language of Episcopal identity in printed materials and on the website.
  - e. Where appropriate, use Bishop Rickel in forums or adult formation events that focus on Episcopal identity.

6. **Create a concrete and visible pastoral care effort at Saint Mark's.**
  - a. Clarify clergy and lay roles in pastoral care.
  - b. Incorporate broad lay participation in the pastoral care effort.
  
7. **Incorporate the following into the call process for a new dean:**
  - a. The use of a consultant/consultants or call process facilitator who will continue to assist Saint Mark's in working on collaborative processes that allow the Call Committee to be productive in its work.
  - b. Clear communication about the process of the selection of a Call Committee.
  - c. A detailed and specific list of key skills and experience the new dean will need to possess in order to be successful in the role at this particular time.
  - d. Clarity about who makes what decisions in the call process and what, if any, broader listening processes will be used to inform decisions that are made.
  - e. An experience-based interview process: "Tell me about a time when (you manifested the specific skill or behavior we are looking for)."
  - f. Clear messages from Bishop Rickel about what role he will play in the calling of the new dean, including a written description of his vision for the Cathedral and the focus areas he believes are important at Saint Mark's (his point about healthy parish first, then Cathedral identity; his words about the importance of Episcopal identity at Saint Mark's).
  - g. The expectation of an advisory team for the new Dean that mitigates against his/her isolation as well as creates a sounding board for his/her ideas and actions. Do this through: building on examples in the Episcopal Church where this has been done successfully and carefully outlining a clear scope of responsibilities and norms for team.
  
8. **Incorporate the following in the new Dean's role description/letter of agreement (this is not a comprehensive list of everything to be included in the role description).**
  - a. The ability to create and develop broad ownership of the stewardship of all resources in the congregation (rather than personally being responsible for the recruitment of major donors).
  - b. The ability to create a way by which staff will be managed and supported in their work—either through a realistic method to do it himself/herself or a plan to do this effectively through the work of another staff person with whom the new dean has a close working relationship.
  - c. The ability to create greater trust among people and developing a more trusting environment.
  - d. The expectation that he/she will work with an advisory team (see action 7g above).
  - e. Specific expectations about personal communication style as well as the expectation that the new dean will outline and make public how decision making will occur (to include the use of listening processes and what role they will play in decision-making) and how decisions will be communicated to the broader parish community.
  - f. Clear decisions about the issue of "Pastor-vs-CEO" in the role description.
  - g. Clear norms/processes related to separation/resignation/ termination.

9. **Build capacity in the human resources area by establishing a personnel committee that reports to the dean and to the Vestry and which will work with the dean on these human resource processes:**
  - a. A personnel review process appropriate to Saint Mark's.
  - b. A format for role descriptions and an expectation that all employees will have role descriptions, with flexibility for those role descriptions to be modified over time.
  - c. A "performance improvement process" and broader processes related to the separation or termination of employees.
  
10. **Support the staff in healthy and productive ways of interacting with each other and with parishioners.**
  - a. Engage a facilitator for staff meetings.
  - b. Work with the staff on family systems and self-differentiation, training them in theory and practical skills.
  - c. Make a coach available to the staff for the first year of the new dean's tenure to be a resource for staff members as they work on putting their skills into practice.
  
11. **Strengthen communication across Saint Mark's.**
  - a. Clarify communication related to decision-making processes: who makes what decisions (especially when specified by canon or by-laws), who has access to what information for decision making and, where appropriate, whose input is sought before decisions are made.
  - b. Clarify how programs and people get announcements about their efforts and activities out to the Saint Mark's community.
  - c. Increase information flow and participation in the budgeting process.
  
12. **Launch a listening process as a part of exploring how Cathedral identity at Saint Mark's is understood and practiced.**

Include Bishop Rickel, parishes in the diocese and others in the broader community in this process.