



# The Grapevine

A Publication of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Methuen, MA

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church  
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November & December 2003 | Issue

## FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

Dear Friends of St. Andrew's,

By the time you receive this, Thanksgiving will be over, and we'll be busy getting ready for Christmas. This is the season of Advent- of preparations and new beginnings. With thankful hearts, we prepare for and re-experience the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

I'd like to think that St. Andrew's in a state of Advent as well. The Vestry has re-focused its attention on "How can we be a more inviting church?" We want to be a place that people are drawn not only to visit, but to return and become members. This is the first step in the re-birth of St. Andrew's. I trust that everyone will be involved in welcoming newcomers and making them feel at home.

2003 has been a year of introspection not only for St. Andrews but for the Episcopal Church as well. Regardless of the news and headlines surrounding the Episcopal Church, it is important for all members and guests of St. Andrews to feel welcomed, comfortable and inspired. It is important to understand that we are not a rubber stamped franchise of the Episcopal Diocese, rather a unique home of worship and sharing for individuals and families throughout the Merrimack Valley.

We come to find God. To worship Him, and to receive spiritual nourishment that keeps us going and believing. To find the common love we share for our Lord, to worship Him in our own way, and share His body at the Eucharistic table.

If St. Andrew's is to have a reputation in Methuen, let it be one of Christian living. Let's pray together for the things we all believe in- Love, Forgiveness, the Needs of Others, and lastly for Ourselves. That we have hearts and lives full of the Holy Spirit and worthy of Christ's presence. After all, this is Advent. Let us all prepare for the coming of our Lord.

Peace and love to all,  
Laura

### CONTACTING THE GRAPEVINE

You can contact us in the following ways:

**Mail to:** The Grapevine  
c/o St Andrews Church  
90 Broadway  
Methuen, MA 01844

**Phone:** 978-689-0463 for our Parish  
Administrator Gloria Schwarz

**E-Mail:** [admin@standrewsmethuen.org](mailto:admin@standrewsmethuen.org)



### NOVEMBER

James Sulesky 11/9  
Erin Hill 11/26

### DECEMBER

Frank Worthy 12/8  
Christopher O'Keefe 12/8  
Reginald Weisenborn 12/9  
Dora Atkinson 12/11  
Jennifer Barbin 12/11  
Kathleen Hill 12/17  
Sarah Regan 12/28  
George Driscoll 12/31  
Dorothy Archambault 12/31



**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**First Communion Requirements**

First Communion at Saint Andrew's Church is a full year Sunday School program meeting during the Sunday School hour. The class meets from 9:00-10:00 AM every Sunday during the school year. There is a 75% attendance requirement with a 50% church attendance requirement. Many Sundays we will go to church as a group. The students will have homework, prayer journals, and memorization of Bible passages, prayers, and other information most weeks. This program is open to all school age children from Second grade on. Your child must be baptized before the spring of next year to participate in the First Communion Service on Pentacost Sunday.

***Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and Classroom Aids needed***

If you are interested please contact  
Valerie Carey  
At 978-682-6465

The Sunday School program is only as good as the people who volunteer!!

**ST. ANDREW'S BITS & PEICES**

**The Merrimack Valley Deanery will be having its meeting at St. Andrew's Church**

There will be a meeting of the Merrimack Valley Deanery here at the church on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. We need to prepare a light supper for the group. Would you PLEASE call Laura at 978-686-6824 if you can make a soup, a casserole, salad, dessert, provide bread, or drinks OR if you would help serve, clean up. We really need your help. If I don't hear from you, I'll have to call you, and I have so little time as it is! So PLEASE step up to this one!

Thanks Laura

My thanks to Len Brown, David Marsh and Tom Baker for hanging the greens and making the church look so festive. Although this was supposed to be a parish event, there was no initiative this year, so the guys stepped up to the job. THANKS

If you are submitting a name to be put on our prayer list, please include along with the name of the individual, the relation to you or parish family and your name.

Thank you

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

**December 14, 2003 - Methuen Memorial Hall**

**St. Matthew's Choir presents**

**"Gloria In Excelsis"**

**Tickets available at**

**Neighbors In Need at 978-685-8321**

**Between 8:00 am and 12 noon**

**95 East Haverhill St., Lawrence, MA**

**\$10.00 (seating limited)**

**VOLUNTEERS**

It seems as though the list of requests for volunteers is steadily growing. As with all organizations volunteers are extremely important to help keep the many projects running smoothly. So again we ask for help for the following projects:

- Sunday Coffee Hour (Bulletin Board in Parish Hall)
  - Donations for our food pantry (Len Brown)
  - Altar Guild members (Elaine Morissette)
  - Vestry members (Laura RuizdeLuzuriaga)
  - Paint crew for the Parish Hall (Jim Carey)
  - Teachers for Sunday School Classes (Valerie Carey)
- Should any of the above requests for help is of interest to you please speak with the above listed members.

**PLEDGES**

The Pledge Drive for 2004 has produced only 39 pledges to date. We cannot remain open for 2004 if this is all the support we can get! PLEASE get your pledges for 2003 up to date, and send in your pledge sheet for 2004. If you need a copy, call Gloria at the office 978-689-0463.

**SUPPLY**

I am happy to announce that Rev. Roy Benjamin has agreed to begin a long-term supply on January 18<sup>th</sup> and will continue with us while we wait for a Priest-in-Charge. Fr. Roy has 40 years in the ministry and will be helping us celebrate the love of God every Sunday. Please plan to join us! Laura



St. Andrew's Church  
will again be  
joyfully resounding  
with music at the  
9:30 service.

**ELEVATOR LIFT**

Should you find it difficult to climb the stairs to the sanctuary or Parish Hall, the elevator/lift is available for your convenience. Please contact an usher or member of the vestry and they will assist you.

**OPEN VESTRY SEAT**

THERE REMAINS ONE 3 YEAR VESTRY SEAT  
IF YOU OR ANYONE WOULD LIKE MORE  
INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT  
LAURA RUIZDELUZURIAGA  
AT 978-686-6824

**NOTARY**

**Our Parish Administrator is a Notary  
and is offering her services free to Church members  
Please call in advance  
Required signatures are to be signed  
in front of Notary  
Picture identification and witness required  
Office hours are  
Monday through Friday - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm**

***BISHOP'S STATEMENT ON  
SAME-SEX MARRIAGE RULING***

**Boston, Nov. 18, 2003**—We, the bishops of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, are encouraged by the State Supreme Court's ruling today in the case of the same-sex couples who challenged Massachusetts laws denying them the right to marry. The decision is a crucial step toward guaranteeing for same-sex couples the rights and privileges otherwise denied them. It is our fervent hope that the State Legislature will now act to secure for all couples who seek union the legal, financial and social benefits that are due them.

Today's decision opens further the discussion for people of faith about the church's understanding of marriage and the blessing of same-sex unions. We encourage this ongoing dialogue, but believe that our engagement in that process should not deter us from acknowledging, here and now, the importance of securing for all who seek them the fundamental rights and privileges of legally recognized unions. Same-sex couples who seek to legalize their commitments to each other strengthen the foundation of our society as they form and care for their families and contribute in diverse ways to their communities. We know of the contributions these couples and their families make in many of our congregations across eastern Massachusetts, and we give thanks for their witness among us.

The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE, Bishop  
The Rt. Rev. Bud Cederholm, Bishop Suffragan  
The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris, Bishop Suffragan

***MEMORIAL FUNDS***

***IN MEMORY OF:***

***MEMORIAL FUND***  
**Amy Beth Bergeron**  
**Paul Bergeron**  
**Morgan & June Cox**  
**Janet R. Heath**  
**Ed & Elizabeth St. Clair**  
**Frank J. Worthy, Jr.**

***ORGAN MEMORIAL FUND***  
**Amy Beth Bergeron**  
**Priscella L. Aro**  
**Paul Bergeron**  
**Frank J. Worthy, Jr.**

***GARDEN MEMORIAL FUND***  
**Linda S. Kennedy**  
**Frank J. Worthy, Jr.**

***MUSIC MEMORIAL FUND***  
**Amy Beth Bergeron**

***BUILDING PRESERVATION  
MEMORIAL FUND***  
**Frank J. Worthy, Jr.**

### A Special Dance for Special Needs

Any first or third Friday from September through June, you can come down to St. Andrew's hall and lift your spirits with the *Friday Night Specials*. This usually involves great big hugs; yards of smiles; dance music from the 50's through present day; lots of laughter; and really good snacks. Conversations mix with music as people meet and greet one another. While some embraces appear to be between long-lost friends, many folks saw each other just that afternoon at work or school. This is the ongoing legacy of the *Friday Night Specials*.

The dances began in 1974 at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in South Lawrence, organized by Mrs. Gertrude "Gert" Bowes, her daughter Jody and Jody's friend Beverly Blouin. Gert's son John attended special needs' classes at Methuen High and had many friends who needed a safe and fun place to socialize. The dances were and are alcohol-free and include refreshments and occasional surprises.

The girls provided the music and shopped for the goodies and prizes. When they left for college and started their adult lives, Mrs. Bowes kept the tradition going, welcoming those with disabilities twice each month from September through June. Attendance ranged from 40 – 100 people. The big event was always the last dance of the season: "The Prom." This is a sit-down meal where everyone gets to dress-up and feel "extra" special.

In 1999 Mrs. Bowes retired and she and John moved to Florida. Jody resumed running the dances and was thrilled to find more family members wanting to help with the organizational responsibilities: her sister and brother-in-law, Trudi and George Driscoll. Trudi and George were instrumental in securing a new sponsor, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Thus St. Andrew's became the twice-monthly gathering spot for many of the community's disabled teens and adults.

St. Andrew's made it possible to welcome those in wheelchairs (the old hall had stairs). The dance floor is larger, and the full kitchen is great at snack time and on Prom Night! Many church members volunteer regularly to setup and cleanup. Most will tell you it's the highlight of their week to come down and receive so many hugs and good wishes, to sit and socialize with attendees, or to dance the night away.

The two-hour dance flies by. There's as much laughter and conversation at the tables as there is boogying and twisting on the floor. On a typical night, folks arrive just before the 7 PM start. Jim Fraas, official DJ since 1989, fires-up the music and instantly people take to the floor. Jim mixes new music with old and creates special "theme nights" like disco, Motown, Beatles' and movie tributes, sock hops, pop music and holiday events

including Valentine's, St. Patty's, the Annual Birthday Dance (a giant cake celebrates everyone's birthday), Halloween Party, Turkey Trot, the Holiday Party, and the Prom. Joe Spinella, who with his wife Lelo have been assisting since "Day One," collects the \$1.50 admission fee. The money is used to replenish snacks and buy Halloween prizes, extra Holiday gifts (to make sure there's something for everyone at the annual Holiday Swap), and special treats for Prom Night. Attendees come from Methuen, Lawrence, Andover, Salem NH, Haverhill, Georgetown, and Lowell, and include people from private homes, group homes like Fidelity House, work programs like C.L.A.S.S., Inc., local high schools, churches, and other community groups. Word-of-mouth has been the only advertising – so far, so good! You may also have noticed some great photos from the 2003 Prom in this past July's issue of *Methuen Life*. The theme was "Endless Summer" – everyone received flowers and Frisbees, and limbo contest winners were awarded giant beach balls and hula hoops.

St. Andrew's hopes to get more support from community organizations and businesses, so eventually they can lessen or drop the admission fee or offer free sodas instead of the current 50-cent charge. The prom, with its full-course sit-down meal, is the most expensive undertaking. The usual donation is \$5.50 or \$6.00 per person. For some people with special needs even small amounts of cash are hard to come by, so the goal to reduce costs is important to all concerned. But for now, the crowds and volunteers are happy, and everyone is smiling on the first and third Friday nights at St. Andrew's hall.

For more information you can contact Trudi Driscoll (978-682-8857) or Jody Bowes (978-683-7525). *Volunteers are always welcome, as are donations of snacks, cookies, cupcakes, juice, soda, etc.*



### ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD CHRISTMAS FAMILY GIFT LIST GIFTS NEEDED BY DEC. 21<sup>st</sup>

**CHECK LIST IN PARISH HALL FOR THE  
CHILDREN WHO ARE IN NEED OF A SANTA  
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CHECK WITH  
LEN BROWN**

# Vestry

Laura RuizdeLuzuriaga, Senior Warden 978-857-0624  
[srwarden@StAndrewsMethuen.org](mailto:srwarden@StAndrewsMethuen.org)

*Please do not hesitate to call Laura at any time at the above number, especially with pastoral emergencies. Be sure to inform her if you or anyone you know in the parish is ill and/or in the hospital.*

Gloria Schwarz, Parish Administrator 978-689-0463  
[admin@standrewsmethuen.org](mailto:admin@standrewsmethuen.org)

Office Hours: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, Monday through Friday

Leonard Brown, Junior Warden 978-686-7770  
 Richard Falk, Treasurer 978-794-0704  
 Paula Campbell, Clerk of the Vestry 978-794-1000

Building & Grounds Dan Sulesky 978-686-0840  
 Jim Carey 978-682-6165

Membership & Fellowship Jim Wagner  
 Worship Beth Regan 978-687-1340

Communication Paula Campbell 978-794-1000

Pastoral Care Len Brown 978-686-7770  
 Jim Beagan 978-688-0171

Education Linda Pacheco 978-688-4215

Music Elaine Morrisette 978-683-8841  
 Trudi Driscoll 978-682-8857

Community Service Peggy Baker 978-475-8844  
 Stewardship Jim Beagan 978-557-9007

Finance & Budget Richard Falk 978-794-0704  
 Jim Elliot 603-893-6369

Valerie Carey, Director  
 of Religious Education 978-682-6165  
[carey.james@comcast.net](mailto:carey.james@comcast.net)

David Marsh, Sexton 978-685-8473

Elaine Morissette, Pledge Clerk 978-683-8841  
[Remor20@aol.com](mailto:Remor20@aol.com)

Huib Walta, Webmaster 978-686-6824  
[Webmaster@StAndrewsMethuen.org](mailto:Webmaster@StAndrewsMethuen.org)

## SUNDAY NIGHT WORSHIP UPDATE

### Sunday Night Worship and Discernment

#### Can Our Church Live?

#### Update Part 3

The group continued to meet into the fall. A summary of our discussions follows:

#### Aug 24

Chapter 4 looks at options. But it starts out with a cautionary note:

*“Unless a congregation reconnects faith with context in a fresh and powerful way, no strategy, structure, or program will make much difference in its long term viability.”*

IF this is done, the church can decide on:

#### 1. Relocation

This option has only been discussed in hypothetical terms, Fr. Tom had ideas that nobody grabbed onto.

#### 2. Merger

This was done between St. John’s and All Saints, but hasn’t really been considered since. There is really no one to merge with, besides a different denomination with shared use of the building.

#### 3. Dramatic Transformation

a) change style

b) change size

c) change makeup of membership/leadership

d) adopt new model of ministry/leadership

Most efforts at any type of change have been rejected soundly and quickly dropped.

#### 1. Parallel Development

IF the church cannot reconnect faith with context, the choices are limited to:

1. Part time clergy- no growth, tread water

2. Yoked or cluster ministry

3. Hospice- plan a holy death

All of these options are then discussed in detail as we progress through the chapter.

#### 1. Which of these options has your church considered so far?

Some feeble efforts at change. An aborted effort at a music program. We’ve pretty much settled on a part-time priest. No real discussion of change.

We did discuss potential changes: removing the pews, using cathedral chairs, putting the alter along one of the side walls, putting the choir where the alter is now, using the “other” front door- anything that wouldn’t compromise the integrity of the underlying historical architecture.

#### 2. Which have been ruled out? Why?

None, although merger opportunities are nil, and there is no real desire to re-locate. Many people are as attached to the building as they are to the “church.”

#### 3. What support might your congregation need in order to make a careful study of all the options before making a choice?

We’d need professional guidance; FT Spanish-speaking clergy experienced in redevelopment efforts and willing to live in Methuen; a core group of impassioned people.

#### Relocation:

#### 4. Has your church ever talked about relocating?

**What were the pros and cons identified in the discussion? Why did or didn’t the relocation occur?**

We’ve really never discussed. Seems pro-active- you’d relocate to be nearer the population you want to attract or the people you want to serve. There is a ministry waiting for us right in our own back-yard.

#### 5. Does your congregation have a “journey story” that might make relocation seem congruent with

**your faith identity? If so, where might that journey take you next?**

Not really.

**6. Does your congregation have a “rooted story” - a sense of sacramental connection to its particular environment? If so, how could you become more deeply familiar with, and involved in, the lives of your neighbors and the major struggles of your community?**

We seem very rooted in the building itself. Not so much in the community- we'd go wherever the building went! We should speak Spanish and become more a part of our neighborhood. Meet with them. Find out their needs.

### **Sept 7**

We continued our study of Chapter 4, noting that with a merger, the resulting congregation is usually no larger than that of the largest church in the merger. So merger doesn't immediately lead to growth. Another important note: retaining either of the two pastors impedes a fresh start.

**1) Has your congregation ever talked about merger? What were the pros and cons? Why did or didn't the merger occur?**

There was some talk of a merger between Grace, St. Andrew's and St. Augustine's. All have been impacted by the change in the environment. All have too few members to support themselves. But it was perceived as Diocese initiated/promoted but “there were too many areas of disagreement” that it never got off the table.

**2) Instead of merger, think about the option of closing several churches and making a combined new start on a different site. Do you think this idea might generate interest, either in your church or in one or more neighboring congregations? How might this idea be interpreted and explored?**

Not likely to happen as Grace has a large Spanish ministry in its present location, and St. Andrew's is optimally located for ministry in the Methuen Arlington Neighborhood. If we were to discuss it, we should talk to Dave Edwards at the Greater Lawrence Council of Churches. But a merger with another denomination would include fundamental differences such as liturgy and beliefs, and apostolic vs. reformation. Also a question of succession. Perhaps a discussion with the rector of the local Lutheran church would be possible.

**3) What hopes, values, and dreams of your congregation might become possible to realize, if only you could combine resources and start over?**

Depth of Program	Variety of Program
FT clergy	Expansion of Ministry
Program Manager	Youth programs

### **Dramatic Transformation**

Highlights of this section:

“Instead of focusing on attracting new people, ask how much change this congregation will support, how much change it will tolerate, and what level of change will

arouse immobilizing opposition.” Tolerance is a gage of hope. An orderly plan of change is possible, but requires assertive leadership by the pastor, and a core group of people to implement the plan. The strategists need to step back. If we do, who is left that is interested and invested enough to implement the changes? Beware- the attempt to keep everybody happy will prevent anything new from happening!

St. Andrew's has too many ministries owned by individuals, not by the church. When that person gets sick/moves/dies the ministry ends. The church as a whole needs to adopt and its ministries. Many congregations have an unwritten rule: “Go along with the leader during formal discussion, then complain to others about the results.” This cannot be tolerated- it drains the energy of everyone involved. This happens a lot at St. Andrew's. It is important but difficult to transform worship to reconnect a congregation with its context. Seriously consider adding a new worship service rather than trying to blend the old and the new. “Offering another major worship opportunity at a different time and in a somewhat different style, guarantees that more kinds of people can participate in our church life without disrupting the patterns that have proved meaningful for many current members.” Focus attention on those that are not here yet, and convey the core message in fresh ways.

**4) If your congregation were to transform its worship to connect better with people in your context today, what might new worship look like?**

Spanish service  
More youth- more youth focused  
New layout of floor/altar  
New music/instruments  
Different times

**5) Has your congregation ever had more than one worship service? If so, what differing needs were filled by the two services (even if they were rather similar in style)?**

Yes. 8:00 Rite 1, no music. 9:30 Rite 2 for families with music and Sunday School. We used to have Morning Prayer on 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month. More services would allow us to address the needs of newcomers, the un-churched, and non-belongers. Get away from the “family church size” boundaries.

### **Sept 21**

We continued exploring re-development options as we completed Chapter 4:

#### **Size change as Dramatic Transformation:**

We learned that there are four sizes of churches- each corresponds to a certain mindset and behavior patterns:

0-50 Family Size Resembles a family; we all know each other, rector functions as chaplain while anchor families have leadership and authority

- 51-150 Pastoral Size Several overlapping family/friendship networks revolving around the pastor; church is more dependent on the rector, who is often part-time, and who may burn-out trying to keep everybody happy.
- 151-350 Program Size Diverse membership with a critical mass of people of different ages and interest groups; staff is added to support programs; rector becomes more a manager.
- 351-500+ Corporate Size A significant institutional presence in the community with a sizeable staff of highly skilled professionals. Rector has sufficient symbolic presence to focus worship service, head extensive staff, a

Churches in between sizes often experience problems as they outgrow the old size but are not prepared to offer the benefits of the next size. This results in confusion, anxiety, and indecision. People have the fantasy of growth without change, and of change without conflict.

Most churches seeking redevelopment have slipped down to Family Size. Unless the congregation takes a dramatic transformation in its self-concept, its “way of being a church”, it will not continue to grow.

**1. Which of the four size descriptions sounds most like your congregation? Why?**

We may be slightly larger than family size, but we behave like family size, perhaps because we haven’t had much in the way of pastors to create a pastor-focus.

**2. What other sizes has your congregation been in the past? Are there any “ghost structures” from those previous sizes still hanging around your church? (e.g., by laws that specify a quorum bigger than your current congregation)**

Under Frs. Argyle and Phelps we were pastoral size in both attendance and behavior. Required quorum and vestry sizes are holdovers from a larger church.

**3. If your worship attendance grew by 30 percent, would it put you into a new size category? For this to occur, your congregation’s self-image will probably have to shift. How do you feel about such a shift?**

It would barely push us into Pastoral size, but we would need a strong full time pastor to take advantage. It would be a healthy change.

**Racial and Cultural Transformation**

“We speak passionately about inclusiveness but remain remarkable homogeneous.”

Rich spiritual exchange across cultures is a radical aspiration.

**4. To what extent is there a racial and cultural gap between your congregation (membership) and the community you serve?**

There is a large gap. The Methuen Arlington Neighborhood is largely economically disadvantaged and Hispanic while St. As is predominantly middle class and white.

**5. How do you feel about that gap?**

We are not sure. We’d like to be a “parish” church, but that may not be realistic. While we would welcome anyone into our congregation, I don’t think we’re willing to try to meld two cultures into one service. We also wonder whether the neighborhood residents need St As for worship- many already go to Grace or other Spanish speaking churches in the area. Three seems to be a stereotype that the poor, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised are the un-churched. We don’t see this as necessarily true. They may need our help in other ways, but there is a high level of spirituality and church attendance in this group. In fact, we see far lower attendance in our own wealthier, middle class neighborhoods where Sunday mornings are spent on golf courses, ski slopes, at soccer games and dance lessons. So who do we need to reach out to?

**6. What help might be available to your church if you decided to explore the possibility of dramatic racial or cultural transformation?**

We’d need diocesan help. Grace could provide some guidance. We’d certainly need financial assistance.

**Transformation of Model of Ministry and Leadership**

“The tacit authority of matriarchs and patriarchs- which can function as a loving anchor for many creative member ministries- can also stand as a barrier to the kind of adaptation called for throughout the book.”

Tacit is the key- congregations generally cannot change any dynamic they cannot name, discuss, and negotiate, especially around issues of authority.

Something called “total ministry” is used in geographically remote areas. It is based on the idea that baptism, not ordination, provides authority for Christian ministry and that the congregation is a ministering community rather than a community gathered around a minister. It sounds simple, but is harder to implement and requires significant diocesan support.

**7. What, if any, aspects of “total ministry” seem relevant to the situation of your own congregation?**

In many ways, we have been doing this for the past decade

A core group does most everything to keep the church going

We have received very little support from the diocese in the past

It has been our only means of survival

**8. Who in your denominational structure might be able to discuss with you some similar models?**

Helen Nitos specializes in Lay Ministry

**9. If you feel further study of this option would be helpful, who might join you in some reading and discussion about it?**

To become a truly functioning model that will survive, there needs to be a larger commitment on the part of the membership- the core group needs to be larger and the congregation has to appreciate how much work is involved. We'd also need better support, coordination and organization from the diocese.

**Parallel Development**

Some churches decide to pursue a new era of ministry on two tracks- each with its own worship service. In order to remain a single church, there must be a unifying vocation big enough to encompass both tracks of development. The new ministry has claim to "prime time" and two thirds of the time and energy of the clergy. The chaplaincy ministry provides worship and pastoral care focused on the longer term members. This group gets no more than one-third of the pastor's time and attention and they must not demand that others worship with them. The style they evolve must be one they can realistically implement at the size they actually are.

This model is frequently used to develop Spanish ministries within an Anglo congregation.

**10. What advantages might parallel development provide to your congregation's redevelopment effort?**

Could allow change train to leave the station without everyone aboard. Provides pastoral care for those who choose not to join us. Still allows them to join the change effort at a later date.

**11. What costs and difficulties would parallel development involve?**

Need full time rector; might be a distraction for him/her; inevitable time conflicts with worship services- old group may still not be happy; we'd probably lose some members though we might gain some also

**12. How long will your congregation exist if you do not make a strong new connection with your community? If your timeline is 15 years or less, do you think that parallel development might offer a better chance of success than incremental change?**

We're on a short time line- one to two years max. Incremental change is NOT going to work. This might be better. We need to look at all options and make some decisions. At this point we need to know are we living or dying. THEN we'll figure out how.

**Sept 28**

Chapter 5 begins with a warning: *The worst thing you can do right now is grab hold of an "answer" and try to sell it to your members.* We will heed that warning!

We recognize that NOTHING will make a difference in the long-term viability of St. Andrew's until we answer

the question: *How will we connect our deepest faith identity to the realities of our context today?*

One comment struck us- Alice Mann writes "What our souls actually crave, deeper down, is human and divine companionship on this mysterious journey of our lives." We have to agree. We all know where we will end up- what counts is what we did on the journey to get there. Life is here and now. Redevelopment = New Life. Sounds like a good name for a church!

**1. What difficult choices has your congregation made in the past? What themes and patterns characterize your church's way of grappling with tough questions?**

Going from full time to a part-time rector. We were unwilling to come up with the money to get what we needed. Excuses included "we can't afford it," "we are too poor" "we'll just have to do without"- typical New England attitude. We decided it was acceptable but complained about it all the while.

**2. Think of a hymn, story, or symbol that might sum up:**

**a) Who/what your church was that you are no more.**

The Good Samaritan- reaching out, isolated  
"The Church's One Foundation"

**b) Who/what your church is today**

Moses and the Israelites in the desert  
A big "?"

**c) Who/what your church is called to be that you are not yet**

A multi-cultural congregation

Partnering

A forum for formation and learning

Doing more follow-up on people

A generous, giving congregation

"Jesus Calls Us"

"Go Now in Peace"

**3. How might you invite the congregation into a season of reflection on these issues?**

Have a forum every Sunday after church

Somehow Personalize the Baptismal Covenant

Involve the Vestry in these discussions

Get clergy support- maybe a series of sermons

The chapter goes on to describe a process to engage the Diocese and identify strategies and resources. We are happy to see that we followed that process and that it is working.

**4. In what ways have members of your denominational staff assisted your congregation in the past?**

We've received an abatement on our assessment to try to build a music program.

They provided resources for a healing service

They provided Pat and Alden to work through a healing/visioning process

They meet with us and talk to us

They listen

**5. What frustrations have you experienced as you have sought help from your denominational office? How have you and other leaders behaved when you are frustrated?**

There has not been a lot of support in the past and basically the church just shut them out and went along on its own.

Recently, although they will help when asked for specific resources (NOT \$) they have no guidance to offer, no strategy, no ideas. Very hard for a Sr. Warden. We've been trying to figure it out ourselves and then ask for what we need.

**6. What kinds of help would you like from your denomination today? What steps could improve the chances that you will find the resources you need for effective ministry?**

More guidance. More people experienced with these kinds of situations. Precept reports will help. Trained interviewers in the Ridley-Logan protocol. Someone to work with the church on a weekly type basis with the leadership/clergy (if it exists).

The chapter continues with a discussion of funding for declining churches. It doesn't exist any more!

**7. How has your congregation funded its ministry over the years? To what extent do you rely on endowment income to balance your annual budget? To what extent do you rely on grants, loans, or abatements from your denomination?**

We've pretty much self-funded and only done what we could afford. We used to do a lot of fund-raisers, but they became a burden on the members and most of the money generated came from parishioners. We stopped invading the endowment about 15 years ago, and reinvested what was left to build it back. For a while we were taking the interest to support the budget, but there has been no income over the past two years. We do not get grants, and have one old construction loan we are paying back. We have had an abatement over the past two years to help support a music program that has gone poorly. We are re-focused now on remedying that situation and re-introducing music into the service.

**8. If you continue your present funding practices, where will you be in five years?**

In order to get a priest-in-charge, we will have to invade the endowment. It should last 2 or 3 years and then we'll be broke and close, unless something changes.

**9. Suppose that denominational support were cut off. Suppose that your endowments stopped producing any income. What would you do?**

Like always, we'll do with less, until they shut off the electricity. Until now, we've become less with less. We need to be more. Even if it means we die sooner- at least we'll have accomplished something.

## Oct 5

This was our last meeting and we completed the book. Chapter 5 continues with a discussion of a comprehensive denominational strategy that offers intervention to congregations at risk that have not yet slipped below a particular benchmark in the decline cycle. The resources are focused on churches that can still support a full-time minister and have average Sunday attendance of 50-70.

**1. What appeals to you about this approach? What bothers you?**

Appeals: Seems realistic - sounds like us  
Progressive timeline - 5 distinct steps  
Good assessment

Bothers: Lot of responsibility on core group  
What they consider "at risk" is still pretty wealthy - \$40/wk avg.  
Depends on a tithing attitude

**2. How closely do you fit its definition of an "at risk" congregation?**

We are poorer, but otherwise there

Looking for how to best use what's left to guarantee a future

**3. How willing would you be to accept the requirements, especially delegation of pastoral screening to diocesan staff and participation in an assessment of the human system using a team of outside professionals?**

We're probably not willing to give up control or at least input to the selection process, although the results may be better as we haven't done well for ourselves.

Assessment would be good for us - could be surprising results

**4. How might you form a partnership with the Diocesan staff to find or create some of these resources?**

Create a protocol that defines or formalizes the process to be used

Diocese needs to offer support and not just wait to see what we want

Encourage growth and participation of youth programs

Request 3<sup>rd</sup> party assistance

Learn from experiences of other churches formerly in decline

The chapter concludes with a section of pastoral leadership for redevelopment ministry, noting that only about 5% of professional church leaders have skills for the role. It seems mission development is missing from the clerical curriculum. She recommends the use of a behavioral interview that analyzes the actual skills needed to be effective and then develops questions that will provide a candidate with opportunities to describe the use of these relevant skills in past situations.

A team named Ridley and Logan has developed a resource called "training for selection interviewing" that describes 13 competencies considered critical. The list

has been used with a high degree of success in selecting and predicting effective church planters:

We would like the diocese to use this list in selecting our priest-in-charge:

1. Visioning capacity
2. Personal motivation
3. **Creating ownership of ministry (church-wide not individual)**
4. Reaching the unchurched
5. Spousal cooperation
6. **Relationship building (healthy)**
7. Commitment to church growth
8. **Responsiveness to community (live in community)**
9. Utilizes giftedness of others
10. Flexibility and adaptability
11. Building group cohesiveness
12. Resilience
13. Exercising faith

We would also like the diocese to use the Ridley-Logan method for interviewing potential candidates, and to facilitate our interview process.

It seems to us that the timing is perfect, as we are already in transition. We wonder if we might be able to partner with a healthy suburban church like Christ Church to share resources and obtain support for our urban ministry. We would need diocesan assistance in this effort.

In summary, it appears that there are many things St. Andrew's could do if it wants to live. But they will all involve celebrating the death of the old church and the birth of a fundamentally new church. All require the involvement of a good number of people to make them work. We are more than willing to explore anything God puts on the table and to make whatever changes necessary to make it work. But we are not willing to do it alone. Much of the "core" is ready to walk out the door if there is not more involvement on the part of the membership. In that case, it may be better for St. Andrew's to plan a holy death and turn the keys over to the diocese. They can start a new mission church at the site, and another group will form their own church and ministry.

Can our Church Live? Yes. Will our church live? Remains to be seen....

This group has agreed that

- This has been a labor of love and we're glad we did it. We learned a lot.
- We will share all of this with the Diocese.
- We will share it with the congregation.
- We should have a meeting with the congregation in January before the annual meeting.
- We need to get more information to make some strategic decisions.
- The vestry needs to get more involved as they will be making the final decisions.

- We need to wait for our priest-in-charge to be involved.
- **We can start by being an inviting church. There are many things we can do now to make that happen.**

We apologize for the length of this transcription, but felt it important to share the context of our discussions as well as the content. We appreciate the thoughts and ideas of anyone who reads it. Please feel free to contact Laura at 978-686-6824. Respectfully submitted, Laura RuizdeLuzuriaga, For the Discernment Group

**PLEDGE REMINDER** By Jim Elliot  
**PLEASE SEND IN YOUR PLEDGE CARDS, THEY ARE CRITICAL FOR OUR CHURCH BUDGET FOR 2004. IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE A FORM, EXTRAS ARE IN THE UPSTAIRS PARLOR OR YOU CAN ASK A VESTRY MEMBER OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 978-689-0463.**

### **GOD'S Miracles - Along With Your Prayers**

By Gloria Schwarz, Parish Administrator

Little Aidan who was born five months prematurely, just entered his ninth month and is now weighing nine pounds. In his short life, Aidan has undergone 4 brain surgeries for massive bleeding and fluid buildup, 2 corrective heart surgeries, 3 intestinal surgeries, and because of a calcium deficiency has had 3 broken bones, has had several serious infections and is fed through a tube in his stomach. He is fed every 20 minutes 24 hours a day.

As of the end of November he is finally at home but has to be periodically kept on oxygen. The feeding tube and the colostomy bag has been removed. He goes to the hospital every day for therapy and check ups. He is able to sleep and rest for three hours at a time after all the poking and prodding needed for his survival is completed.

Needless to say his devoted, loving parents, Kim and Abe, are exhausted but happy he is growing strong, and welcome the time he is resting and so much to be thankful for. I cannot express how much we appreciate your prayers for without them this miracle may not have been possible. Aidan still has a long way to go and I hope you will find it in your hearts to continue to say a prayer for him. The Doctors had predicted that he would be completely helpless (paralyzed, blind, no brain function or speech). As of the latest report he is very active, his sight is excellent, and he certainly can show his voice. Aidan is surely a special child of God. Thank you again. Gloria

# Merry Christmas