

STATUS REPORT ON PROJECTS SELECTED AT THE MAY 2008 LEADERS' RETREAT

**By John Kitagawa
24 September 2009**

A pivotal moment in the Mission Discernment Process was the May 2008 Leaders' Retreat¹ facilitated by Dr. Pat Gil Webber. Preceding this Retreat was: the initial step called Dream Catching Sessions, and then the clustering of the 966 dreams shared during the Dream Catching Sessions². The clustering exercise resulted in eleven (11) themes with options³. The May 2008 Leaders' Retreat refined the eleven themes into five projects selected for further work. This Status Report is an effort to summarize where we are in relationship to these five projects. The **"bolded" material below** is the wording from Karl Yordy's summary memorandum of 12 June 2008.

1. Strengthen the outreach efforts of the church.

Elements of this project would include specifically:

- **the after school music program (for which extensive development work has already taken place) which builds on the strengths of our music and children and youth programs to extend benefits to low-income children in nearby schools;**
- The After School Music program has had one successful year. A report was given to the Vestry in August 2009⁴ detailing numbers of students, how goals were reached, etc. The second year has begun with 20 students and a waiting list. Volunteers and many forms of support from the parish and parishioners have helped the first year to succeed, and are key to year two. With funds from the Outreach Committee, a grant writer has been hired to find additional financial resources.
- **additional programs to meet the needs of the poor of the Tucson community, including feeding programs and possible other programs to meet basic needs, such as clothing and hygiene. This could include augmentation of current St. Philip's programs, such as Casa Maria.**
- The parish "Green Team" has emerged as an important initiative. The recent General Convention passed a resolution urging those addressing the Millennium Development Goals to consider environmental impact. The GC also passed legislation on environmental justice, pointing out the disproportional negative impact of environmental degradation on the poor.

- Clearly, the After School Music Program is included under this section as most of the students qualify for the free lunch program at their school.
- Following the example of the After School Music Program, Elder Care Ministry proposes to offer its programming to parishioners and to people in the immediate vicinity of the Church, which includes many poor people.
- The parish Food Pantry has seen a great increase in clientele due to the downturn in the economy. The Pantry is stocked through foods collected during the First Sunday Food Drive, and the families buying and donating extra food, often on a weekly basis.

■ **Consideration of how to create a culture of outreach that would permeate many aspects of our parish life.**

- The Outreach Commission has moved forward in considering how to create a culture of outreach that would permeate our parish life at St. Philip's. A team composed of Outreach Commission members planned the first Outreach Commission Retreat in August 2009. The inclusion of ministries not traditionally under this commission's banner—After School, Elder Care, Green Team for example—introduced new perspectives and thoughts. During the retreat the Outreach Commission updated their Mission Statement:

As an expression of Christ's love and mercy, we provide leadership and empower parishioners to address basic human needs and justice in our community and the world.

Commission members have considered why they are involved in Outreach, realizing that each one has a deep call rooted in the gospel to share our faith by serving people in need and working for justice for all. The commission is growing in their awareness of their role as leaders in the parish, leaders called to identify needs, motivate others and help St. Philipians arrive at their passion in faith and ministry. This includes inviting and mobilizing members from every corner of the congregation.

The Outreach Commission will help St. Philipians identify where they are already doing Christ's work in the world, be role models, and collaborate and connect with many ministry areas to create a contagious spirit of outreach at St. Philip's. The ultimate goal is to involve more parishioners, foster the creation of more ministry efforts, all with the expectation that we will grow in our capacity to respond to compelling needs and new opportunities for outreach.

The upcoming Ministry Development Workshop will provide the next step in supporting members at St. Philip's as they discern their passion in light of their faith and begin to create new ministries and grow continuing efforts as we strive to do God's work in the world at St. Philip's. This in-depth training event will offer hands-on practical learning as we create a culture of outreach at St. Philip's.

- **Next Steps** include supporting and strengthening the creation of a new culture of outreach that permeates greater segments of the parish. There needs to be follow-through with Elder Care developments, including a mission plan, staffing (if any), and funding. It is important

to continue and strengthen the After School Program in order to increase capacity and serve more children.

2. A greatly strengthened communication program to inform and facilitate the involvement of parish members and to spread the message of St. Philip's to the Tucson community and potential parishioners.

- **This project would specifically include an improved and professional quality web site, other uses of modern technology for reaching out and informing the parish and community, and a particular emphasis on youth-friendly means of communication (all younger parishioners who are products of the information age).**
- This project has already had several significant successes. The first is the hiring of a full-time Communications Director⁵. Among her accomplishments are a new parish e-newsletter sent electronically to parishioners, and to many in the community; support for ministry e-newsletters—Music; Children, Youth and Families; Adult Formation—ongoing support for print publications. St. Philip's has also seen increased free publicity—in print, and on television—due to an increase in press releases. Facebook has become a new tool for publicity and communications with parishioners and in the community.
- **Next steps** The Web site task force has received three design bids. The next step is to compare them exhaustively and determine the ultimate comprehensive set of features that would best meet St. Philip's needs and which firm is most qualified to provide these. Funding for the design needs to be secured. To that end, the Bishop has promised a New Growth Incentive Grant of \$3500.

There are two upcoming areas of emphasis for Communications at St. Philip's. There needs to be a way to assess, in an ongoing manner, the evolving technology needs so that these considerations can be budgeted for. This would include hardware and software updating, sound and recording equipment for the Church and for meeting rooms, electronic signage, and as-yet-unidentified future needs. A Technology Committee tasked with providing technical expertise and guidance in this process is the logical next step.

In addition, the parish needs to embrace "Web 2.0." This term refers to the fact that the Internet has evolved from being a broadcast medium, in which information is posted by someone with authority, to an interactive medium in which all participants generate content. "Faith and Facebook" forums this fall will provide education about the mechanics of using Facebook, and in addition, we hope some realization of each parishioner's empowerment in and even responsibility for taking advantage of social networking's potential as an evangelism tool. This ties into the particular emphasis on youth-friendly means of communication, even though social networking is no longer limited to young people.

Another important piece should be the installation of an up to date digital sound system in the Church, with audio and visual recording capacity. Several spaces used for formation/ education need up to date technologies such as overhead computer projectors, and in some cases better audio amplification. Many staff computers are quite old and need upgrades. As part of the evangelism process, orientation (which helps towards incorporation) would be enhanced by a few computerized information stations on campus.

3. A strengthened youth program.

- This project would include consideration of finishing La Mariposa (current youth center) as well as other facility and programmatic means of enhancing participation of our youth who are a crucial element of the parish's future. The communication effort mentioned above is also relevant to the purposes of this project, as are possible youth-oriented activities utilizing the multipurpose facility.
- The discussion above about worship for families with young children is relevant here. We have instituted Taize services that attract our youth and their families because the services are more participatory and occur later in the day, which allow our youth and families a Sunday without so much early morning rush. It is also an opportunity to offer a service that is shorter and more family friendly and gives us a jumping off point to look at more regular family friendly worship.
- This year we offered for the first time a sexuality retreat and an alcohol awareness retreat, which allowed us to more deeply address some of the real life concerns of our youth and their families and we hope got some conversations started at home.
- Mission trip, which clearly falls into our desire to make St. Philip's a more mission oriented community, has become a yearly event for our eldest youth.
- We have developed more Intergenerational programming, which has allowed the youth, through experiences in forums, outreach and retreats to become more a part of the general St. Philip's community. In many ways, our youth have been able to take the lead in "doing God's work in the world".
- We have developed and adopted a more relevant curriculum for the youth.
- *La Mariposa* Teen Center is now complete and ready for full usage—air conditioning, bathroom, etc.
- **Next Steps** include the development of designated space for Youth Ministries. The completion of *La Mariposa* is significant, but the fact is that it is not large enough to house all the youth ministries⁶. Currently two of the three youth groups are in spaces shared with a wide variety of other parish and community activities. The desire is to create some dedicated spaces for these two youth groups, perhaps dedicating the spaces they currently use, which would mean finding ways to accommodate the other parish and community groups. This must be a piece of the discussion about potential new construction.

4. Investigate benefits, nature, and cost of a new multipurpose facility that would serve many parish purposes and ministries.

Consideration of this new facility would include possible construction of a labyrinth to provide opportunities for spiritual development.

The preponderance of the energy has gone to investigating the mission and ministry possibilities and potentials for such a facility. There is not point in building a building just to have another edifice on campus.

- A survey of current facilities indicated strong usage of our buildings and grounds by parish ministries as well as community groups. At this time, for current levels of ministry and usages, there is probably no need for new construction. While it can be a nuisance, for example, to move adult formation classrooms for a series from Sunday to Sunday, it is a manageable problem. Greg Foraker has also creatively addressed the issue by scheduling classes after the 11:15 am Sunday Eucharist, and on weekdays. Of necessity, choir rehearsals are occasionally moved out of the Music Center into the Church, sometimes disturbing those who wish to pray and meditate between morning services.
- One Mission/Ministry area under discussion is **Elder Care**. This is potentially an inclusive area of ministry: Family Ministry, Pastoral Care Ministry, Formation Ministry, and Outreach Ministry. Research indicates that there is a large and growing need for many forms of Elder Care Ministry. With greater life expectancy, families are often coping with care for children as well as care for aging parents. Given the opportunity to tell their stories during two Forums this summer, parishioners exhibited the needs of the elderly and of their caregivers. Agencies like Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) strongly indicate such needs in the larger community, and the need for more care and support services (ministries) to meet those needs. Research by parishioners Brigid Waszack and Cathleen Carlton further substantiate the need, and indicate a number of potentially creative and compassionate responses by St. Philip's. There are essentially three lines of thought and action:

One line is Educational. Groups like PCOA have a great deal of very practical information to convey to the elderly and to their care givers. Sunday morning Forums have already begun with a Fall series planned and in process. A Winter series is anticipated, in part based in needs expressed during the Fall series. We can invite PCOA and other groups to offer their classes and workshops here at St. Philip's. As we learn to better communicate with the larger community, it could be possible to make some offerings during the week, perhaps to people working in local businesses. Full use of our improving communications processes would be necessary. Depending on how much this aspect of program develops, we may need more space.

A second line is Care Giver Support and Training. The need is everything from very practical tips to emotional and spiritual support. Complex questions about medical care to financial competency often mystify and frustrate the elderly and care givers alike. St. Philip's can be the place where resources and needs can be brought together in an

atmosphere of a strong and loving community. As with the previous paragraph, the need for more space depends of how much this aspect grows and expands.

A third line is on-site elder care. Initial research indicates a range of possibilities, some complex and requiring licensing, others less complex and freer of regulation. There is one local congregation that runs a two-day-a-week elder care on site program, which features regular planned activities for ambulatory elderly. At this time, St. Philip's probably has the space to offer a partial-day kind of program, perhaps once a week. The only suitable facility (accessibility and fire safety) is the Music Center, which currently houses the After School Program in the afternoons. It should be noted that there are a number of ongoing programs suitable for this demographic.

- Another Mission/Ministry area under discussion is **strengthening and growing our Children, Family and Youth Ministries** by developing worship opportunities for families with young children. To this end, a number of us have visited All Saints' Church, Phoenix, for their "Church in the Round" service in the Parish Hall, run concurrently with a more traditional service in the Church. While CITER is a model that freed some of our thinking, we would probably do something a little different, more in line with our ethos and culture. These visits did, however, convince all that there is something quite important is happening with this service focused on families with young children.

The job description of the newest priest on staff includes both pastoral responsibilities with families, and a leadership role in the development of these worship services focused on families with young children. As the Fall progresses, we can expect to learn much more about meeting needs of current families, and evangelistic opportunities for attracting new families through some trials runs. This could be a reason for seriously considering building additional space.

- Another Mission/Ministry area under discussion is the **labyrinth**. Within the concept of spiritual formation and growth, there is general agreement that a labyrinth would be a helpful addition to the campus. Site selection has been coupled with a new building, but a temporary labyrinth could be installed on fairly short notice.
- Another idea that has surfaced in the discussions about a new facility is more space **to expand what is now called "the Little Shop"**. Two summers ago, a Blue Ribbon Panel made a series of recommendations to the Vestry. Among them was a recommendation to develop new streams of income. The Little Shop now produces around \$10,000 per year, depending on the year. One parishioner familiar with retail business believes this income could be greatly increased with more space for more diverse items.
- **Next Steps** include follow through on the Family Worship concept and Elder Care Ministry. Greater clarity in the form of a proposal regarding retail space and business plan is needed. We need to discuss preliminary concepts with an architect in order to generate some very preliminary plans, including potential location and ramifications for the campus. We need to finalize a proposal for the labyrinth.

5. Strengthening mission support.

- **This project will consider means to strengthen mission support, including a full time professional administrator who could free up clergy and program staff time for their essential roles. The administrator could carry out the kinds of functions typically carried out by a chief operating officer (to use the business analogy) carrying out duties delegated by the Rector, and providing staff support to the vestry and the finance committee. The scope of this project would also include attention to efficient use of existing staff, and support volunteer involvement and lay leadership development. Other means of strengthening mission support could also be included as conceived by the task group for this project.**
- A full-time Parish Administrator joined the staff in February, and has begun to fulfill the functions noted above. He is settling in nicely. As he learning the culture, peculiarities and needs of St. Philip's ministries and community, he is more able to contribute and is able to take greater leadership in relationship to use of staff, support of volunteer and lay leadership development.
- **Next Steps** fairly organic as the Administrator works with the parish's difficult financial position, as the next year's budget development cycle takes place, and as parish leadership works to implement as best it can the parish mission vision, core values, and parish goals.

Since May 2008, many conversations have surfaced important elements for consideration in any 75th Anniversary Capital Funds Drive. Beyond what has been described and suggested above, there are several concerns we may want to address.

- A. Preservation and Maintenance of Parish Facilities and Grounds. Through the diligent work of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, there is a "Ten-Year Plan" which details many projects necessary for make sure our facilities are safe, attractive, and suited for the purposes intended. This is includes such things as replacing HVAC and other mechanical elements. At this time, neither the Preservation and Endowment Foundation nor funds under vestry control separate or combined are adequate to the task. A Capital Funds drive would seem like an opportune time to raise funds to sufficiently grow the funds of the P & E Foundation and/or the vestry to make sure the projects of the Ten-Year Plan and unforeseen emergencies can be adequate addressed without unduly and negatively affecting ministries in need of financial resources.
- B. Refurbishment of Offices and Public Areas. A quick survey of offices and public areas leaves the observer with a clear sense that much carpeting and furniture is in need of refurbishment or replacement. Functional matters need to be addressed. For example, in this

day of concerns about boundary violations and the need to feel safe, solid office doors need to be replaced with door with windows. With increased reliance on lay leadership and volunteer ministries, there are not work spaces available. The need for technology upgrades is mentioned in the communications section above. There is a chronic lack of storage space. A big question is whether, due to age, the organ is in need of refurbishment or overhaul.

- C. Gathering Space for Large Groups is limited. The Galleries and the Music Center both have occupancy limitations about 225 people at table. This limits St. Philip's ability to gather any sizable groups for fellowship events, a tried and true method for growing a sense of community, an easy venue for helping people to incorporate into the parish.

Next Steps Any lead up to a Feasibility Study must take items A through C into account , especially in relationship to the possibility of constructing a new multi-purpose building. Item A is in process. It would not take too long to quantify these projects in dollar terms. Item B has not been addressed, and would take some time to survey more closely and make priority decisions. Item C would need greater clarity about possible uses and benefits for the parish, and possibly in relationship to being an income stream through community usage.

¹ In attendance: Vestry and Officers, Program Staff, Commission Representatives.

² All dreams may be viewed in a document organized by Ministry Commission.

³ See "Discernment Committee Report to Vestry: Results of the Dream Catcher Phase", May 2008.

⁴ See full Report

⁵ Sue Agnew is the incumbent.

⁶ Rite 13, J2A, and SPY.