

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
Discernment Team Meeting
September 6, 2022

Opening Prayer

Ever-present God, you have called us on a journey. We have not reached our destination yet but are approaching the homestretch. Be among us we pray as we face critical decisions in moving forward. Calm our fears and save us from anxiety. Help us to stay on course & discern your will for our church & community. May we follow your guidance in faith & trust to a destination that strengthens the vitality & sustainability of Good Shepherd, both now & in the years to come.

Amen.

Approval of Minutes

- August 9, 2022
- August 23, 2022

Questions to Keep in Mind throughout Our Discernment Process

- What is God calling us to do next?
- Are we focused on & faithful to our reason for being?
- Are we sustainable in mission & ministry?
- Are we connected to & expressive of our ecclesial traditions, ethos, & character?
- Are we self-renewing & responsive to the challenges and opportunities before us?
- Are we sustainable or working toward sustainability in terms of fit between vision of ministry, leadership, culture, size, property, finances, etc.?

Meeting Agenda

- Update on the Diocesan THRIVE Team
 - Experimentation Model
 - Improved Communication & Collaboration Diocese to Churches, Churches to Diocese, and Church to Church
 - Committee on Congregational Development and Formation
 - Racial Justice & Healing
 - Creation Care
 - Mission, Growth, & Stewardship
 - Ecumenical Ministries

- Discerning Our Plan for Church of the Good Shepherd for the Next Five Years
 - What is God calling us to do next?
 - Where did our discussion, data collection, & research lead us regarding ongoing sustainability & vitality for Good Shepherd?
 - Structural Models to consider as our Next Step:
 - Constellation (Shared clergy leadership and/or shared mission work, spiritual formation options, joint fellowship events, etc.)
 - Merging with another church
 - Maintaining part-time clergy as we focus on growth
 - Our own self-determined plan with congregation-based leadership
 - Other
 - What do we anticipate that our church will look like in 5 years with the model we have chosen?
 - Mission
 - Finances
 - People/Growth
 - Public Witness
 - Physical Plant

- When & how do we review our proposed plan with the congregation for their input?
 - Introduce timeline & preparation Sunday, September 11, 2022

- When & how do we want contact with our DCDC representative, Sarah Cowen, prior to final plan submission?

Closing Prayer

ITEMS OF NOTE: Below is a list of items that we wanted to consider thus far in strengthening our vitality moving forward:

- Strengthen our Zoom system for consistency & better sound
- Add opportunity for childcare during worship service
- Identify a resource to strengthen website offerings & keep information current (might share this task with other Episcopal churches)
- Assess mission options that could provide more visibility of our church in the community so more people would come to know us & potentially be interested in joining our parish
- Look at types of services & activities that would appeal to a younger population, including possible connection with Diocesan resources such as Mission Farm & Rock Point (focus on creation care, worship in nature opportunities, etc.)

- Continue upgrade of the rectory so it will be a valuable resource in attracting future clergy
- Explore ways to enhance participation of the congregation in church projects so we have broader representation & involvement
- Provide increased pastoral care options for parishioners by parishioners as desired (determine the best way to know when this outreach is desired)
- Look at rotating times of various church offerings to accommodate various work schedules of parishioners
- Review & update the current list of parishioners on record to confirm status of listings, assess if there are parishioners who might respond to outreach to return to active involvement, & if not, why so we might better understand potential barriers, and to determine if there are subgroups who might benefit from outreach by parishioners
- As we come out of the pandemic, look at options for fun church activities, community suppers, etc. to increase fellowship opportunities
- Clarify our identity as a church with our community so they do not fear that we are an extremist Christian group or an “elite church” where they would not fit in. Emphasize that Good Shepherd welcomes all.
- Strengthen Handicap Access signs (referred to the Vestry)
- Review our Mission Statement once we know our direction to see if it needs to be updated to reflect the new direction & focus.