

Ever-present God, you call us on a journey. We have not reached our destination. Be among us, we pray. Calm our fears and save us from discouragement and help us stay on course. Open our hearts to your guidance so that our journey to this unknown place continues as a journey of trust. Amen.

Good Morning

Over the past 2 and a half months the discernment committee has met with the goal of getting a clearer picture of the church and the community. We are trying to engage our members in planning our vision for the direction God is calling us in our ministry in Barre. We began by outlining the diocesan expectations and possible ways for the church to thrive and accomplish its goals. We set up a discernment tab on the website. Here the discernment manuals and all the agendas and the minutes of the meetings are posted. I encourage you to read them.

Next we gathered and presented data. We looked at the demographics of Barre and Washington County. How have numbers changed and what can this tell us?

Then we looked at the physical plant. The church building and the rectory were considered. The task was to assess the condition of the buildings. We tried, critically to assess how the buildings had been maintained. Are there any immediate concerns and what needs do we see 5 years hence.

When considering the community and how to become more involved in it. We looked at Barre City and how it has changed for the better and the worse. What needs exist in the community and how can we fit it? What positive things are occurring and how can we fit in.

People resources considered both financial support and the congregation's commitment to the outreach mission work. We looked at the past 10 years of financial support as well as attendance, age demographics, involvement in the church mission.

Also, we considered the mission statement. Does it accurately reflect our mission and our capabilities?

Starting September 18 and continuing until September 22 we will be holding a series of small group discussions to present the findings. Also, we will be presenting some of the options for the future look of the church. Hopefully this will help you to give some insight into where you see the future of COGS.