

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

**Fulfilling the Vision of St. Paul's; *Leadership through Ministry***

***Transformed by the Holy Spirit, we worship in joy and peace, loving one another as Jesus loved us and compassionately proclaim the Risen Lord to all we meet.***

**Introduction**

The vision for St. Paul's Parish Steamboat Springs is clearly communicated through the June 2011 vision statement as stated above and is endorsed by the Visioning committee and Vestry. The following information and direction is presented as a means for fulfilling the stated vision.

The health and development of St. Paul's Episcopal Church will be built upon a foundation of steady leadership of both lay members and clergy. Leadership of a congregation is always in process. Steamboat Springs is a community with many long term residents and a constant flow in and out of shorter term and part time residents. The lifestyles and rhythms of life in a rural resort town can present particular challenges, not the least of which is maintaining continuity in planning and leadership for ongoing ministries in a parish community.

After demographic and historic research into Steamboat Springs and St. Paul's Parish, it is clear both benefited from the population and economic growth from 1990 to 2008 and has suffered from the downturn since. St. Paul's was ably led by the Rev. David Henderson for 16 years, his resignation, in 2008 coincided with the beginning of the Great Recession. This along with deaths of long time parishioners, members leaving town due to the economic crisis, and ensuing struggles over staff and finances left St. Paul's with reduced membership, budget, and staff.

St. Paul's currently mails to about 212 households. Of these 212 households, about 100 are contributors of record in 2011. In order to re-engage the other households to participate in the life of the parish, systematic **pastoral contact** and **stewardship education** should be the focus to ensure a lively future for St. Paul's.

The results of the 2011 parish survey was heavily weighted by the needs, hopes, and expectations of the 100 households that contribute (87 surveys were received). As expected, the most committed and concerned will take the time to respond to surveys. It is the "**Leadership in Ministry**" that must emerge from this group if St. Paul's is to fulfill her potential. Several small focus groups contributed to endorsing results of the survey and provided specific direction for the essential element of Ministry at St. Paul's.

**Organization for Ministry**

**Ministry:** Ministry is a comprehensive term understood most broadly as any and all activities that constitute the work of the Church. It is quite clear on a pragmatic basis that the clergy of the church cannot be the only ministers if all this work is to be done well. Ministers are all those who conscientiously take on some part of the work of the Church in the name of Christ as baptized Christians. (*See section on Ministry, Book of Common Prayer pp. 855-6*)

Essential elements of ministry emerged from the survey 2011 and related discussion groups. Although prioritized within this document, they are all important and deserve equal disciplined attention as the foundation for success in fulfilling St. Paul's vision.

**Worship** is at the heart of parish life! Communal worship is the first engagement and the essential glue that holds us together. While it is the primary responsibility of the Rector and clergy, it employs a number of people in supportive roles. Worship garners a great deal of the gifts and energies of the lay members of the parish. Despite the importance of these ministries, there is not currently a coordinated team structure for planning worship.

**Current:**

- No coordinated team structure for planning worship.
- Music is being directed part of the time by Brian Harrington and part of the time by the organist, Jan Fritz. The Music Director position is unfunded and the music program is financially under-resourced given its importance to worship.

**Vision:**

- **Worship Ministry Team** that works with Clergy on planning a vibrant and engaging liturgy and expanded worship program.
- Established **evening worship** service at St. Paul's with a contemporary musical style to serve the needs of many families that for several reasons cannot regularly worship on Sunday mornings.
- New and sustainable resources and leadership for an **enhanced music program**, including special music at the 8:00 am service for Holy and Feast Days.

**Pastoral Care** is the ministry of healing, reconciling, sustaining, and guiding. Prayer is at the heart of all pastoral care. The clergy are seen as primary caregivers in the parish. Nonetheless, many lay Christians are substantially gifted to offer care to one another in the name of Christ. One on one pastoral care is a critical component of St. Paul's Parish life. These efforts have been and will continue to be an important way to bring parishioners and potential members to church and to Faith.

**Current:**

- A **Pastoral Care Team** has been formed under the guidance of Jo Anne Grace to coordinate responses to people in times of crisis, bereavement, and illness. This team is poised to become a significant ministry at St. Paul's.

**Vision:**

- Strong Pastoral Care Team built through mentoring and leadership.
- Consistent communication of Pastoral Care needs.
- Well established **Intercessory and Healing prayer** ministry

**Stewardship** is the ministry of the Vestry by Church Canons and has the most number of people involved in leadership positions. The Vestry currently has 11 voting members, 4 non-voting members, and 2 clergy. It is the board of directors of the non-profit corporation called St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

**Current:**

- **Vestry** As determined by Church Canon and by-laws of St. Paul's, the Vestry members perform their fiduciary duties to raise and expend funds in pursuit of the religious purposes of the parish. They assure the building and grounds are maintained. They are responsible for calling, contracting, compensating, and evaluating the senior pastor (Rector). The Vestry approves and provides funds to compensate staff hired by the Rector. St. Paul's By-Laws call for two Wardens (Senior and Junior) and nine elected members of the vestry plus a Treasurer, Asst. Treasurer, and Clerk. The Head of Lowell

Whiteman Primary School is an ex-officio member. The Priest in Charge currently chairs Vestry meetings.

- **Diocesan Relations**

The Vestry and Clergy are also charged with maintaining a proper relationship between the parish and the Diocese of Colorado and its Bishop. During the last three years, St. Paul's has not given the canonically mandated 10% tithe for the support of the Diocese or the canonically recommended 5% giving to support the Northwest Region. These are obligations which support the missionary work of the Diocese and demonstrate our connectedness to the Church beyond our parish.

**Vision:**

- **Vestry**

A vestry that has strong leadership and diverse gifts that assures the financial and ministry health and well-being of St. Paul's.

- **Diocesan Relations**

St. Paul's fulfills canonically mandated 10% tithe to the Diocese and recommended 5% tithe to the Northwest Deanery. (2013)

**Education** is referred to as Spiritual Formation in current religious literature. This ministry encompasses Catechesis, Youth Ministry, Bible Studies, Adult Forum, and any other study, prayer groups, or activities designed to enhance knowledge and promote spiritual growth. Spiritual Formation for all ages is a ministry that requires great skill and planning to be effective and appealing. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is an excellent formation program for younger children. It requires extensive training for and commitment from the teachers (catechists). This training is expensive and takes significant time over several years. This creates a situation where recruitment and retention of catechists is an ongoing challenge. Ministry to and by Youth (defined as young people from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade through High School) has played a definitive role in sustaining the Parish community and remains a critical component of the vision of St. Paul's

**Current:**

- **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** is currently led by Christine White and Carol Poirot. More trained catechists are essential if this program is to continue. There is informal support for this ministry by parents, but a more formal plan for growth and sustainability is needed. Many families with children in this age group are not bringing their children regularly. This indicates a need to evaluate the program and engage the uncommitted families to ascertain the reasons for their lack of participation.
- **Ministry to Youth** is currently under the direction of Henry Howard ten hours per week during the school year. There are a couple of adults who work with Henry.
- **Adult Education** currently includes Sunday forums in-between services, women's and men's bible studies and periodic special topic presentations by members of St. Paul's, lay members, clergy and individuals from the larger Steamboat community.

**Vision:**

- **A Catechesis Shepherd Ministry Team** implements plans to sustain the program and supports four trained Catechist teachers.
- **Youth Ministry Team** is engaged in a formal Youth program that is planned with intention and supports a part time Youth Ministry position.
- **Adult Forum/Education Team** plans and presents a variety of educational opportunities for Sunday forum and special study topic series such as the interfaith Series through CMC

**Evangelism** is the ministry of invitation and hospitality. It is all the formal and informal ways that faith in Christ is presented to those outside the Church by those who believe. All Christians represent Christ wherever they are. But, unless Jesus Christ is spoken of and people invited to seek faith in Him through the Church, conversion to active discipleship will happen only rarely. Church members inviting non-church people into relationships with God through St. Paul's is the single most effective means of evangelism. Formal evangelism activities are events and opportunities planned with the specific purpose of attracting the attention and interest of people who have not become Christ followers. Alpha served this purpose in the past, but seemed to have run its course. Marketing efforts that raise awareness to the larger community of Steamboat Springs about the vibrant Christian life at St. Paul's could aid in efforts to welcome newcomers. The parish survey contained many comments about reaching out, inviting people to church, and sharing Christ. This is the path to renewed vitality and growth in the number of active households at St. Paul's.

**Current:**

- No formal program or strategies for ministry of invitation and hospitality exists.
- Some Parishioners do make individual invitations to St Paul's worship service and special events.

**Vision:**

- Evangelism Ministry Team identifies strategies and implements strategies for reaching out to the people of "Routt and Moffat County.
- A culture within the parish of praying together, being disciplined in our own Christian practice, and identifying the opportunities that exist for carrying the Gospel message in the community exists.
- A significant number of members are comfortable sharing the riches of their own experience of Jesus Christ with others.
- St. Paul's has a high visibility in the larger community of Steamboat Springs through marketing efforts that feature its service and faith based programs.

**Service** is understood to mean those things done to alleviate human suffering whether locally or afar. Known by many parishioners as "outreach", service is the caring response of a congregation to the human needs of the community around it. This care is evident in parishioners individually or collectively supporting organizations that perform service work in the community such as Habitat for Humanity, The Pregnancy Resource Center, and Lift-Up of Routt County. In addition, it is shown through weekly ministry to the residents of Doak Walker Care Center. Service is also shown by mobilizing the talents and gifts of parishioners to address emergency and/or chronic manifestations of human suffering

**Current:**

- St. Paul's individually and collectively, through volunteerism and funding, support Community Services such as Habitat for Humanity, The Pregnancy Resource Center, and Lift-Up of Routt County.
- Weekly ministry to the residents of Doak Walker Care Center.
- St. Paul's provides space for Alcoholics Anonymous meetings
- Sanctuary is used by the community for music recitals, and concerts.
- Individually and collectively St. Paul's addresses emergency and/or chronic manifestations of human when these occasions arise.

**Vision:**

- Service Ministry Team identifies ongoing needs within St. Paul's parish and the larger Steamboat Springs and Routt County Communities and effectively mobilizes individual and Parish efforts to assist in meeting the particular need (s).

- Individually and collectively St. Paul's addresses an emergency or chronic manifestation of human when the occasion is communicated
- Abundant resources are available for meeting the internal and external Service Ministry needs.

### Leadership in Parish Development

**Creating a strong and effective lay leadership structure is the most important goal to be met in the next three years if St. Paul's is to realize its Vision.**

Over the last three years, for various reasons, St. Paul's has seen the departure of the Rector and spouse (who played a significant role in planning for ministry), one of two Deacons, two organists, a music director, an interim music director, a youth director, a parish administrator, two trained catechists, a treasurer, and five vestry members. The parish was being led almost entirely by paid staff that operated without much lay oversight and lacked accountability. This led to an unbalanced dependency upon paid staff and clergy to do all planning and implementation of programs. There was no overarching lay leadership structure organized and trained to continue ministry in the absence of the Rector and staff. This was the essential condition that precipitated the crisis in 2008-2009. Any organization would be struggling to cope with such a significant loss of leaders and staff.

There is much to celebrate and many to thank for the ongoing life of the parish. The Daughters of the King, the Altar Guild, the Flower Guild and the newly formed Garden Guild do much to provide order and beauty to the worship and gardens of the parish. Those who are already doing so much to build up the life of St. Paul's are to be commended for their faithful service.

A new leadership team is beginning to take shape. The Vestry is functioning at a much more informed, engaged, and proactive level. Under the guidance of the current Junior Warden the Vestry is attending to a number of previously deferred building and grounds issues. And financial affairs have been significantly reordered and regularized by the Treasurer.

The new Administrative Assistant to the Priest, works 16 hours per week. A contracted Bookkeeper, works about 4 hours per week. They are functioning at a highly competent and efficient level. Communications with the Parish have improved immensely with a regular monthly newsletter, e-mail blasts, and regular website updates.

Deacon Bain White has maintained the highest standards of collegial ministry with the Priest in Charge. He leads the Men's Bible Study. Bain, along with his wife Christine have continued their long and faithful ministry to the residents of Doak Walker Care Center. They consistently invite other members of the parish to join in that ministry. Although the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program lacks the necessary teachers, the strong leadership of Christine White and Carol Poirot is critical to growing the fledgling program. At this point, it should be noted that the Whites will be on an educational leave of absence during the fall of 2011 requiring others to continue the ministries they have so ably led. Henry Howard is growing in his role as Director of Youth Ministry. Jan Fritz continues to provide consistent musical leadership as organist. And the Nursery is ably and professionally coordinated by Sara Ruby.

## Commitment is the Key to the Future

**The future of St. Paul's is in God's hands, but God will need a number of willing followers to cooperate with His plans for the parish.** A much expanded cadre of Godly, committed leaders in ministry will need to form and work in harmony with one another. Good leaders need Godly and committed followers who are willing to pitch in and help create and sustain ministries of high quality.

**“Commitment** is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions and the actions that speak louder than words. It is making the time when there is none; coming through time after time after time, year after year after year. Commitment is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.” *Author unknown.*

## Plans to Fulfill the Vision of St. Paul's

### **Parish Development Plan**

Christian commitment can only come as a gift of the Holy Spirit. A Spirit-renewed, prayer-empowered, faith-connected congregation is the fertile ground for growth. Many members are already “feeling it”. Many more are ‘in waiting’ so to speak. **An intentional program, founded in vibrant worship and pastoral care that deepens faith and inspires a more compelling relationship with Christ among members is recommended as the first step to parish renewal.** The desired increase in membership should be realized through:

1. Each Christian is encouraged to work out of their faith, strengths, and passions for ministry. Every member is expected to pray, work, and give toward the goals of the parish. A goal of increasing attendance and commitment by engaging in compelling worship and related programs and events will assist in building the capacity for St. Paul's Parish to realize its vision.
2. The Rector provides clear leadership by setting an example of spiritual discipline, shared ministry, and humility before God. Leadership in ministry is collegial rather than hierarchical. Under the Rector's leadership, mutual discernment and decisions by consensus shall become the norm.
3. Building upon renewed commitment to Christ and His Church, people are invited into ministry teams based on gifts and interests. Spiritual formation, leadership training, and accountability to the parish as a whole become regular features of ministry teams. Staff members provide support to the lay leadership of ministry teams.
4. Each Ministry Team has a designated Vestry member as a contact point for two way communication, goal setting, and spending plan development.
5. A Council of Ministry Team Leaders meets on a regular schedule for mutual support and prayer, coordination of activities, guidance and supervision by the Rector, and discernment for future initiatives.
6. Measurable outcome based evaluations of the effectiveness of all activities for advancing St. Paul's vision shall be performed on a regular basis.

## **Financial Plan**

The Vestry will need to implement several initiatives to strengthen financial support for the ministry of St. Paul's. The prioritized initiatives are as follows:

- 1) Regular Biblical stewardship teaching that encourages all members to give generously and joyfully in support of the Church, making an annual pledge if possible. An emphasis will be made to initiate the annual pledge and commitment campaign earlier in the upcoming 2012 campaign. This should allow for a more effective campaign and timeframe 2012 spending plan development.
- 2) Explore the option of a Capital Funds Drive to retire the nearly \$370,000 Sanctuary mortgage debt carried by the Parish. This plan should be implemented once the current financial situation stabilized
- 3) Create and maintain a wish list of items and ministries in need of financial contributions to give direction to those desiring to make gifts to the Church beyond an annual pledge. Including the establishment of a Legacy Society at St. Paul's to encourage members to name St. Paul's as a beneficiary of their estate.
- 4) Establish a Memorial Fund to receive gifts in memory of the deceased or in thanksgiving for special occasions to be used for purchasing items such as vestments, altar hangings, art, musical instruments, etc.
- 5) Restructure the contracts and fees for the Memorial Garden, fund the current unfunded liabilities, and promote the availability of plots for the burial of ashes.
- 6) Establish an Endowment Fund as a hedge against changes in the economy and membership ability to contribute

To implement or rigorously follow these plans and procedures, the qualities of a grace-filled character are highly desirable in the parish and its leaders. Some of these are curiosity, gentleness, kindness, forbearance, and patience, a sense of humor, forgiveness, careful listening, trustworthiness, and perseverance. **No parish program is more important than loving one's neighbor (parishioner, staff, clergy, visitor, etc.)**

**To live St. Paul's Vision is to realize God's highest expectations of St. Paul's; *'High Expectations, High Commitment.'***

### **A Prayer for Renewal-** Written by Sally Howard

**Lord God Almighty, Living Father of Jesus the Christ,  
Send your blessed Holy Spirit to build a mighty work.  
Rule our hearts, purify our minds, shine in our souls.  
Abide in us fully that we might taste Your imperishable goodness –  
Love, Joy, Forgiveness, Patience and Peace.  
Loving each other deeply from the heart, may You  
Build your spiritual house with Jesus as cornerstone  
and us as living stones.  
For all that we are and all that we do is for Your great pleasure.  
All glory be to Thee--Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

**Drafted - July 11, 2011  
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