

Discernment Committee Annual Report 2006

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on the Church of the Holy Trinity, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our journey towards the discernment of a permanent rector called to pastor us began early in the year when an initial six of us were called to serve in this ministry. We attended a diocesan workshop in February on Support for the Search Process from which we gathered valuable information and direction. Bill Zahn and Cathy Stout were asked to convene the committee to facilitate the beginning of our work. In the months that followed, the eleven Discernment Committee members were finalized.

Some highlights of this year's ministry:

- Meetings of the committee began in June, first as a committee of 12, now as a committee of 11, having accepted the resignations of two original members, and welcomed our 11th. In 2006 we gathered as a committee 10 times, with one additional subcommittee meeting. Each of our meetings is grounded in prayer and study, acknowledging our essential dependence on the Lord for guidance and direction.
- At the committee's recommendation, the Vestry hired the Rev. Richard L. Ullman, retired, as our Discernment Consultant. Dick's experience and gifts enrich the gifts of each of the committee members. He is an able teacher, discerning listener and coach, with a delightful sense of humor. We learn much from him and appreciate his solid guidance.
- The committee developed and adopted our Covenant that declares our commitment to the ministry of discernment and states our intentions in how we will carry out that ministry with respect to our relationships with each other, the Vestry and the parish. The Covenant is published in the February, 2007 *Narthex News*.
- Communications: monthly reports to the Vestry; monthly reports to the parish in the *Narthex News*; "live" updates on three Sundays; information on the updated Holy Trinity website.
- *Conversations! : Sharing Our Stories*: On Sunday, November 19th, 92 parishioners came together to discuss how we came to Holy Trinity, how we see ourselves now and where we see us going. The conversations were lively, loud and revealing! More attended than had signed up, but loaves and fishes, chili and more pizza prevailed. It was a full time of sharing.
- The committee is now working toward the culmination of the self-study phase of this process:
 - Distilling the information gained from the Conversations event.
 - Distilling the information gained from the Vestry's Visioning process.
 - Preparing this information for presentation to the Vestry and parish for their further response and comment in the first quarter of 2007.
 - Compiling the information needed for our Parish Profile document, and our search request for the Church Deployment Office.

At our first meeting of 2007, the committee set out an ambitious plan with calendar targets where feasible. These targets will guide us toward the Easter season (second quarter of 2007) when we hope to have our documentation together. From there we will move into the next phase of the discernment process.

To summarize, there are five main elements of that process:

- ❖ Formation: *bringing together, instructing and building community within the group entrusted with this ministry;*
- ❖ Self Study: *exploring the varied aspects, history, strengths, weaknesses and vision of our lives together as a community of Christ; preparation of the Parish Profile and Church Deployment Office Search Request;*
- ❖ Discernment: *determining which clergy have the gifts of skill and experience to join us in living out our vision as a community of Christ;*
- ❖ Call: *Discernment Committee makes recommendation to the Vestry who is responsible for issuing the call if the recommendation is approved. The Bishop must issue final approval.*
- ❖ Incorporation: *The new rector, accepting the call, moves, settles in and joins the parish in its mission and ministry.*

The Discernment Committee is grateful for the blessing and support of the Vestry and the parish membership. We are grateful for the blessing and support of our current Interim Rector, Ted Rice, and Assistant Rector, Pat Stelz. We ask your continued prayers as we continue our work in 2007 toward the discernment of a permanent rector.

In Christ's service,
Cathy Stout, Chair

Members: Ann Barbarin, Bob Burkholder, Fran Curtin, Jim Hemphill, Lars Knutsen, Mary Letzkus, Pat Platt, Heather Robino, Corinne Spangler, Bill Zahn; Rev. Richard L. Ullman, Consultant.