

Vestry Retreat

February 27-28, 2026

In attendance:

L. Agan, A. Cook, S. Davis, K. Dial, A. Dyer, E. Newton III, G. Parmenter, L. Twyford, S. Wilhoite

Clerk: J. Cunningham

Take aways from this weekend:

- Developing a local mission program is a priority.
- Thinking about the long-term needs of our buildings and infrastructure.
- Thinking about the budget and how to be good stewards of the current finances without focusing on the status quo.

Supports:

- A vestry leadership willing to change
- A focus on the future
- Outside of the box thinking
- A Local Missions chair with full vestry support

Barriers:

- Traditionalist
- Nay-sayers
- Dragging feet

Day 1 2/27/26

Discussed our Enneagram Types and how we can work together.

Understanding how we think and work together.

4-5/6/7

3-2/3/4

2-1/8/9

Group Work:

Type Based Dynamics

Groups discussed their answers to the following questions:

1. What strengths does your center bring to vestry leadership?
2. What predictable challenges arise under stress?
3. In church conflict, what is your center most tempted to do?
4. What do you need from other types to function well?

5. How does each group deal with conflict?

Discussed The Tools for Mutuality Guidelines
Discussed Triangulation

Day 2 2/28/26

Morning Prayer

Session 1 Where Are We Relying on Trust?

Answer the following questions:

1. What ministries or structure do we protect because people love them?
 - a. Pastoral Care
 - b. Worship
 - c. Music
 - d. Flower Guild
 - e. Altar Guild
 - f. Idea of Outreach
 - g. The Sanctuary
2. What do we assume is untouchable?
 - a. Diocesan Commitment
 - b. Music
 - c. Worship
 - d. Altar Guild
 - e. The Sanctuary
3. What do we fund automatically without asking about impact?
 - a. Diocesan Commitment
 - b. Staff salary
4. Where does nostalgia influence our decision-making?
 - a. Evangelism
 - b. Outreach
 - c. Building and Grounds
 - d. Everything is “tainted” with nostalgia.

Post under the following headings:

- Preserving Trust
 - Pastoral Care
 - Diocesan Commitment
 - Worship and Lit
 - Music
 - Flower Guild
 - Altar Guild
 - Sanctuary
 - Staff Salaries

- Idea of Outreach
 - Both
 - Christian Transformation
 - Investing in Transformation
 - Communications
 - Building and Grounds
 - Stewardship
 - Outreach
 - Evangelism
 - Everything
 - Ascension House
1. What themes do you see?
 - a. Funding without question
 - b. Operating out of a mode of sacristy
 2. What surprised you?
 3. Where do we appear risk-averse?
 - a. Operate in what we know

Discussed the former system of liaisons and ministries and the decision to change the system.

Session 2: Name the Real Challenge

Discussed the difference between technical problem and an adaptive problem.

Fixed vs. Growth mindset, expertise vs. learning, problem solving with new ideas, values and behaviors in mind.

Loss is a part of change and growth.

Complete the following the sentence:

The real adaptive challenge facing our church is....

- Building Community
 - Engaging People
- Moving Beyond Sunday
- Difference in those wanting engagement and those seeking Spirit
- Barrier
- Tradition of how can serve on a committee
- Religious Trauma
- Developing New Outreach
- Time and money
- Shift to growth mindset

- Align with our “Why”
- Moving from scarcity mindset to abundance mindset

If we solved this, what would change about how we operate?

- Richly enhance our committees with new ideas
- Change our priorities
 - What isn't important to us anymore?

Who would experience loss?

- Traditionalist

What behaviors must shift?

- Old ideas
- Use our investment gains to fund these new programs
- Stay on budget
- Move beyond our comfort
- Learn to fail
- Accountability
 - Church vs individual idea of what the ministry is

Technical Fix

- Sponsorship for new members

Which challenge is our biggest? In order of importance as voted on by the Vestry Members

1. Developing New Outreach/Local Mission
 - a. Developing a local mission that adequately meets the church's needs that lives into our why statement
2. Move from scarcity to abundance mindset
3. Building Community
4. Living into our core values
 - a. How do we live into our “why” statement?

Session 3 What Will We Have to Let Go?

What traditions might change?

- Top-down impression for what local mission
- Everyone needs to get an opportunity to voice what idea might be our mission
- Tradition of effecting the wider outside community

What comfort would be disrupted?

What power dynamics might shift?

What cherished identity narratives might evolve?

- That everything we do has to be big
- That everything we do has to be successful
- That everything we do doesn't have to be radical
- That we can work with other groups/churches
- ***What are we willing to lose?***
- ***How can we lead people through loss?***
- ***What can we do to lead them through the loss?***

Session 4: Anticipating Resistance and Sabotage

All adaptive change produces resistance

Sabotage often comes from the most invested

Leadership requires stamina and clarity of mission

Why do people resist?

- Loss of autonomy
- Anxiety
- Loss of influence

Where Will Resistance Come From?

- Who might resist?
 - Those afraid of a local mission snowballing out of our control
 - Those who put forward an idea and it was reject
- What arguments will be used?
 - Not argument, but buy in
 - Budget constraints
- How will anxiety show up?
 - Passive resistance
- How might we be tempted to retreat?

How do we lead?

- We engage
- We participate
- Live in our "why" statement
- We stay at the table and not retreat from the ideas
- Cross section of the Parish supports and participates in the local missions
- Give Sarah White the autonomy to lead local missions

Discussed the long-term plan of the building campaign and what that might look like.

Discussed the Operating Structure of the Church

Role of the Bishop- Head of the church, decision, hire the priest

Role of the rector- spiritual head, director/coordinator of worship/liturgy, hiring and firing all staff, Christian formation, work in partnership with vestry, use of building and grounds

Role of vestry- temporal things, budget, building maintenance, ask the bishop to hire

How do we make the Vestry accountable and transparent?

- Have the minutes posted to the website
- Announce the ¾ important points that were achieved/covered at the monthly meeting
- Lead by example for our ministries

Our biggest challenge will be our building project

- How do you build that trust
- How do we prove we are moving forward
- How do we build trust?

Next Steps to go forward

1. Contact Sarah White by Erle Newton III within 5 days (business)
2. Tell her about how we identify local mission as a priority
3. She has our support
4. Invite her to the next vestry meeting with a given block of time
5. Schedule a mutual ministry review by Kelley Dial

Closing Prayer