

Journal of Proceedings



**“Moving with the Winds of God”
Parish Retreat November 2024**

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Connection with larger community and use of our spaces for this

St. George's Parish Retreat: "Moving With the Winds of God"

November 22-23, 2024



CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: **Connection with Larger Community and use of our spaces
for this**

CONVENER / HOST: **Signi Murgatroyd**

PARTICIPANTS: Signi _____ Angela _____ John O _____
Lynn _____ Penny _____ Ros _____
Martha _____ Barbara _____ Fran _____
Eric _____ Terry _____ Marion _____
Lillian _____ Jeanette _____

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

**We discussed our opportunity to use our beautiful spaces to connect more
with the wider community. Especially, how much loneliness is out there. Some
suggestions: a monthly lunch, Wonderful Wednesdays with speakers on
general interest topics, puzzle sale, games night. We agreed MUSIC is a
wonderful way to reach out. We can start by inviting family, friends,
neighbours. Men's Breakfasts and Women's coffee & Conversation could
"open up" somewhat to others?**

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Parish Buildings & Grounds

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: Parish Buildings & Grounds

CONVENER / HOST: Gary Fisher

PARTICIPANTS: Marilyn Pattison Sheila Hofmeyr John Sager
Michael Murgatroyd Colin Millar Brenda Sorley
Jennifer Handley Bruce Winter Daniel von Kanel
Carmen Stansberry Evan Hazel Eric Partridge
Leslie Glazier Don Walls Steve Koning
Lawrence Syracuse Terry Carroll Deb Koning

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

1. Form 2 committees:

a) Review depreciation report for Hall/Offic with a view to determining parish needs / desire for space. Investigate possibilities for rentals; possibilities for community development. Recommend path forward.

b) Review depreciation report for church building and grounds, and recommend work to be done to enable future use for spaces and grounds.

2. Need to consider Diocesan requirements and capabilities.

3. Need a market analysis of rental and development opportunities.

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Social Justice – Faith into Action

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: Social Justice - Faith into Action

CONVENER / HOST: David Stuart

PARTICIPANTS: Margaret Smart Jeannette Muzio
 Anita Horgan David Stuart
 Michael M Joy W
 Fran

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

1. St. George's has a long history of involvement in Social Justice issues like refugees, Rainbow Kitchen
2. We need to do a better job on communicating what we do, bringing in groups to talk about their activities (Shelbourne Kitchen)
3. We need to get our hands dirty in select opportunities eg. Inn From the Cold. Set priorities.
4. Clear rationale as to why we select these priorities, and what resources we have to apply.
5. Link social justice to the Gospels.

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

What can we do to be more welcoming of younger folks?
Can we create a more meaningful service?

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: **What can we do to be more welcoming to younger folks?**
Can we create a more meaningful service?

CONVENER / HOST: **Sara Partridge**

<u>PARTICIPANTS:</u>	Marion S	Signi
	Marion P	Lillian
	Moirra M	Fran
	Sara	Gary
	Marni	Bruce
	Marilyn	

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

It is part of all our responsibility to support these kids, to redirect them if they are running off

Could we find a place to go be quiet to calm a child. The Playground is lovely but we need somewhere to take kids, nurse a baby, etc.

Make the collect more child friendly, the "essence" but in words they understand

Maybe bring back rhythm instruments

A holy light

Maybe we need a new form, let's ask our kids, what do you want? What do you need? Why aren't they here? What can we provide?

Small circles, address parenting issues

Have someone like Andrew Murgatroyd to take walking groups through mystic vale

Where do we find our spiritual food?

Messy church? AM, early evening, with supper, 4-6?

A pageant advertised in the community?

Maybe carry the cross, find ways to be part of things

Bring up the gifts

Help with communion

Bring children up to have a teaching communion

The language is off-putting sometimes, is it triggering? More inclusive

Young people are finding spiritual connection in nature

Hot chocolate & oranges during soccer in the morning on Saturdays

Church provides an opportunity to connect with community of all ages (James & Kathleen) passing on wisdom

Music as connection - Tell me the stories of Jesus, This little light of mine - Have kids lead everyone out waving banners, a hymn as opposed to magic penny

Holistic healing like Reiki, healing service

Bringing in people who aren't maybe a little suspicious of "church". It might make people uncomfortable. Pull back on the churchy stuff

Does everything have to be a service? Can we be community in other ways?

Use readings, silence – maybe something like Rumi or Brene Brown type discussions

This doesn't mean not having traditional services, but other things

Having coffee & conversation that doesn't have a religious component

Bring in speaker on parenting, aging, etc.

Bring coffee & tea to the soccer field – don't try to do anything else

Halloween night type events

Do our kids equate the church with more work because they grew up with us working at church things?

We need to make it easier and more accessible

Cultivating friendships that last in a way that soccer friendships which come & go

Youth leadership – we need it – create leadership programs. We have failed the youth and young adults – Sorrento type programs

Let's have a beer, watch a video on theology & talk about it. Could do at church on a variety of topics

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

St. George's Parish Retreat: "Moving With the Winds of God"

TOPIC Title: **How do we spread the gospel when the stories & words we use as Christians are so off-putting to so many non-Christians**

PARTICIPANTS: _____

Kingship, Lord

Texts of terror (Phyllis Tickle) murder, genocide, rape, etc.

Breaking down walls of disbelief – “you lied to me”

Gender identity, misogyny, “we-they”

Only WE get saved

SIN

God the Father → “they” not “HE”?

Many hear Christian and think Southern US nationalist, hateful, judgmental

Questions:

How clear are WE about what we mean when we say “The Gospel” or “Good News”?

Response to others who say “your faith is a cop-out, or just fantasy, etc.”

Response:

-Their space in nature

-Sharing something bigger than them/us

-Just being good people so people want to “be like us” -ask about our faith

“Sin” replace this with “life affirming as opposed to life denying” -failure to love

My faith ---> community of support and love

My faith is simply – be loving – all the rest is just stuff

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

How to move forward? – Consider words in liturgy that exclude some.

“Elevator Speech” – know what to say when asked in words that don’t offend but encourage.

Future Finances

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CONVERSATION REPORT



TOPIC Title: Future Finances

CONVENER / HOST: Lawrence Saracuse

<u>PARTICIPANTS:</u>	<u>Evan Hazel</u>	<u>Carmen Stansberry</u>
	<u>Brenda Sorley</u>	<u>Daniel von Kanel</u>
	<u>Terry Carroll</u>	<u>Michael Marriott</u>
	<u>John Oldale</u>	<u>Lawrence Saracuse</u>

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

We need to know what our taxation implications are for our church visive renter income.

Question: Could we use our parking lots for income?

Set up a program for legacy: Speaker? A.E.C. Resources? Wills?

Accept payments by electronic means.

What opportunities for "misc" income? Revise: -Christmas Fair -Spring Fair -Book sales

Post COVID resurrection

Why has there been such a reduced use of the hall for programs? (Sunday school, youth, UVic ministries and/or other community events)

We must Advertise more: -For retirement "prospects" moving to victoria. - For Cadboro Bay residents. -For UVic Students & Faculty -Wonderful Wednesdays & other educational outreach. -Choral events.

New opportunities? Ask the Parish for ideas

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Language

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CONVERSATION REPORT



TOPIC Title: Language

CONVENER / HOST: John Sager

PARTICIPANTS:	<u>Daniel von Kanel</u>	<u>Sheila Hofmeyr</u>
	<u>Steve Koning</u>	<u>Colin Millar</u>
	<u>Deb Koning</u>	<u>Joy Warkentin</u>
	<u>Michael Marriott</u>	<u>Fran Pollet</u>
	<u>Barbara Colebrook Peace</u>	<u>Eric Partridge</u>
	<u>Margaret Smart</u>	

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

1. Language shapes us. We must be cognizant of this
2. We can Select liturgy and music from all churches we are in communication with. There is a wealth of choices to find more inclusive, non-hierarchical, non-colonial music
3. Sometimes we have music with wonderful tunes (heart and soul) and inappropriate words (heed)
4. Our women grew up in a man's world. It's changing but we focus on maintaining this change. Be vigilant.
5. The language of our Territorial Acknowledgement should vary. Tell a story (like today's)
6. Music can be martial, colonial in structure (upward melodies) or less angular like new music of the last few decades (E.g. Holden Prayer)

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Establish a language group for 6-8 months to work with Christine in an advisory supportive role, regarding liturgy language.
She has done so much already.

Where will I be going to church in 2032? Will St. G parishioners disperse to other churches or will we thrive and attract others from churches that close? How can we be proactive to take some control of how this process unfolds?

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TOPIC Title: Where will I be going to church in 2032? Will St. G parishioners disperse to other churches or will we thrive and attract others from churches that close? How can we be proactive to take some control of how this process unfolds?

CONVENER / HOST: John Oldale

PARTICIPANTS: Jeanette Muzio Daniel von Kanel
 Patty Freeman Christine Conkin

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

Discussion regarding the demographic realities leading to the inevitable "shrinking" of the Anglican community in our city, our Diocese

Medium-term – will there be another wave of disestablishment of parishes within the next 5-8 years? Might this mean that a smaller core of parishioners will be sustainable for longer term? OR have we already hit the iceberg (i.e. Titanic) and only have the option to deploy the lifeboats? What purpose would the lifeboats serve?

In the meantime, how would this process impact peoples' willingness to give money to the church (i.e. legacy giving)?

How many of us would be willing to move to other churches if St. George's is disestablished? Alternatively, how can we ensure that St. George's can become a sustainable church longer term?

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Pastoral Care / Connecting those on the fringe

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: Pastoral Care / Connecting those on the Fringe

CONVENER / HOST: Jennifer H.

PARTICIPANTS: Barbara C-P Penny C Signi M Don W
 Margaret S Marilyn P Eric P Ros S
 David S Anita H Marion S Sarah P
 Lynn A Brenda S Jeanette M Terry C
 Patty F Martha SM Angela B Michael M
 Sheila H Lawrence S

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

- group discussed their general disappointment / sense of frustration that the creation of a Pastoral Care Team back in March has resulted in no action, despite members completing criminal record checks, etc...
- Newcomers have found it difficult to "find their way in," would appreciate something that says who we are, what we have...
- Discussion to answer "how do we get to know who needs help, is sick, etc..." lead to the suggestion that our Covid-era cottage groups be re-established
- Calling the office is NOT ideal; office is closed 3 days / wk, open limited hours, leaving voicemail awkward, there is no relationship with Admin or answering machine
- Pastoral care much more than Christine visiting - prayer chain, shawls, soup, healing prayers, prayer basket, etc...

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

1. **Need for communication / education re: pastoral care ministries *access to formal care (Christine)**

- 2. Need clarification re: pastoral care - what it is and what it entails both formally and informally, and clarity re: privacy policies**
- 3. Refresher / education for Greeters re: expression of greeting, inserts, encouragement re: name tags, minimizing conversations. Possible sharing methods of greeting**
- 4. Creation of “cottage groups” based on geography as much as possible, to facilitate regular communications with everyone on parish list (with consent). Group “hosts” to determine # of people they wish to have in a group. Need a way of ensuring newcomers have opportunity to join a group. Group hosts would like ideally to have a “training session”**

Rationalizing Capacity

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: Rationalizing Capacity

CONVENER / HOST: Gary Fisher

PARTICIPANTS:	<u>Colin Millar</u>	<u>David Stuart</u>
	<u>Steve Koning</u>	<u>Bruce Winter</u>
	<u>Angela Buckingham</u>	<u>Joy Warkentin</u>
	<u>Daniel von Kanel</u>	<u>John Oldale</u>
	<u>Leslie Glazier</u>	<u>Evan</u>
	<u>Michael Murgatroyd</u>	<u>Margaret Smart</u>
	<u>Lawrence Saracuse</u>	

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

Defining roles & training

Ask people

Priest take back some readings

Advertise and extol roles in service

Greeting is a good

List of jobs on Setting Sail and description on website

1 or 2 more people in key areas

Offering once per month

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Excellent suggestions proposed

The Creative Arts at St. George's

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: The Creative Arts at St. George's

CONVENER / HOST: Fran Pollet

<u>PARTICIPANTS:</u> <u>Barbara Colebrook Peace</u>	<u>Carmen Stansberry</u>
<u>Kathleen von Kanel</u>	<u>Brenda Sorley</u>
<u>Eric Partridge</u>	

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

We did a quick review of past events at St. George's

We considered music and theatre as an opportunity for outreach, particularly with University/CCPA/Camosun students.

Considered coming up with 4 events in the year that we could host; for example creative writing / poetry, music, drama. BUT advertising / communication is SO important.

How would you like to follow up this conversation?

Richard Rohr's "Falling Upwards" & two halves of life, St.
George's has many gifts and we need to be thankful

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CONVERSATION REPORT

TOPIC Title: **Richard Rohr's Falling Upwards & two halves of life St.
George's has many gifts, and we need to be thankful.**

CONVENER / HOST: Michael Marriott

PARTICIPANTS: Martha & Michael Joy W.

Summary of discussion (3-4 sentences):

Be aware, but don't worry.

**Focus on who we are, sharing our gifts, deepening our faith, and continue to
reach out to others.**

**St. George's is not a failing institution, it is an evolving faith community
guided by God.**

Inclusive but not necessarily all-encompassing.

**We sometimes want/wish that church could be like it was 20-30 years ago. We
think of small community churches that had to meet the needs of everyone.
Suggest that is an unrealistic expectation.**

**Our faith journeys can move us from one community to another, and that is a
good thing.**

How would you like to follow up this conversation?
