

Thoughts From the Vestry:

How Are We Doing? Where To Now?

I believe most of us want a place that will provide a religious service relevant to our beliefs. We want the place to be comfortable and welcoming. We want the clergy to be friendly, caring, and approachable....and offer an occasional thoughtful, relatable, sermon. These are the basics....most of us want much more!

We want St. Philip's to provide more to our congregation and to those in the greater community than just the basics. That is why there are more than fifty ministries, led by 6 Ministry Boards, supported by your elected Vestry and our very able clergy. That is why you have financially supported, and many invested their personal time to grow St. Philip's to what it is today.

Considering what many of us have observed and lived through with St. Philip's over the last 10 years or so, it is amazing that we have been able to sustain our church, and it remains viable, let alone expand the physical campus, provide more to the congregation, and offer more to those in the community in need. We were particularly unique during this period given the frequent changes in clergy, a devastating hurricane, a capital campaign to build a much needed Parish Hall, the arrival of our current Rector and Assistant Priest, and then COVID. But we prevailed! The resilience of the congregation is amazing. Yet, we have new challenges....and always will.

Is our glass half empty or half full? As an example, some say our demographic is too old. Certainly, we want young families and children, but until our efforts bear fruit we need to soldier on. On the other hand, we have an "experienced" congregation with talents developed over years, and a little more time to contribute to their beloved church. We have a new Parish Hall that is about to be completed and will provide new opportunities and flexibility, and an energetic, well received clergy that provides much more than an occasional relatable sermon.

But to maximize all that we have to offer we need to educate our congregation about our plans, opportunities, issues, and events. Similarly, we need to better communicate to the greater community our desire to provide, our past contributions, learn of its needs, and position ourselves to react. Why? Consider our church Vision Statement: "We, at St Philip's Church, strive to love God and love others in all we do."

Once we have clarified to our membership, our opportunities and needs, how each of us can contribute will become clear. If we are successful in making St. Philip's even more visible in the community, we will attract those young families and others which will in turn allow St. Philip's to offer even more to the congregation and to the larger community we serve.

Bob Wright