

## A Word from the Wardens ....

This month we would like to bring you an update on an initiative undertaken by the Vestry, Community Awareness. Throughout the year the Vestry explores various means by which we can enhance the church life of our parishioners and help St. Philip's grow; these initiatives and strategies change as we progress, and we undertake new ones as the need arises.

We have chosen to pursue a look into Community Awareness to better communicate with the congregation and local community regarding upcoming events, and to report on items of interest. It is also important that we make it easy to access information regarding the church that may be of interest.

In November we conducted two focus group sessions in the Chapel of the Cross between services. These were attended by some of your fellow parishioners, and we greatly appreciate their participation. We sought opinions on how we could improve our communications and provide a better look into St. Philip's

During these sessions we discussed:

**Printed Internal Communications** – In this area we discussed the printed and virtual periodicals to which you are exposed over the course of the month. These include Come & See, What's Happening at St. Philip's, and the insert in the weekly service programs. Our goal is to improve these forms of communication and include useful items of interest.

**St. Philip's Website** – Website maintenance and improvement are always of interest to any organization and need to be useful to the end-user. To that end, we are trying to find ways to increase useful content that is helpful and easy to access for all visitors.

**External Communications** – Our efforts in this area are focused on the local community and the various publications that are available throughout. These include the local newspaper and periodicals circulated in Southport and local communities. This communication might focus on immediate events that would be of interest, or perhaps historical accounts. Very importantly, Facebook and other social media are valuable sources of information that might focus on a younger audience as well.

**New Parish Hall** – It goes without saying that the new Parish Hall will be a valuable asset to the congregation and perhaps the community. In this session we discussed the various ways that we can best use the assets of St. Philip's both now and in the future.

Following the sessions, we evaluated the input from the participants and formulated recommendations that have been presented to the entire Vestry. Soon we will be forwarding the findings to the appropriate parties that can affect change and incorporate useful suggestions to better communicate with St. Philip's and the community. If you missed the opportunity to attend one of the sessions and have suggestions on improving in these areas, please feel free to pass them along through your nearest Vestry member.

Dave & Steve