



December 2017

Abingdon Episcopal Church

Ministry Plan

2018-2021

Abingdon Vision: Known as a robust and growing Godly community where all people feel comfort and joy, where the needy find refuge, where young families and children are learning, where worshippers seek and celebrate the presence of God, and where leaders find ways to make us stronger.

Abingdon Mission: As a community in Christ, we strive to share God's love with all people. We seek to support one another in fellowship and pastoral care, and call each other friends as our Lord called his disciples friends. We strive to share God's love, we seek to share hope with the fearful, love with the lonely, food with the hungry, and God's grace with everyone.

Abingdon Episcopal Church 2018-2021 Ministry Plan

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Abingdon Episcopal Church

Ministry Plan 2018-2021

Introduction

In the book of Proverbs we read, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” As leaders of Abingdon Church, the Vestry has underwritten this effort to set strategic goals so that the people who are a part of our parish family may not merely avoid perishing but may flourish.

In over 360 years of ministry our parish has seen times of great flourishing as well as times of great strife. We believe that an organization that has no plan is subject to any fad or trend that comes along and may respond out of guilt, envy, or other less desirable motives. We also profess that when we are being prayerful and intentional, God will provide direction for us. This plan has been developed with a great deal of intentional prayer.

As we look at the time frame of 2018-2021 we are aware of a number of critical factors. These include the harvest of our two parcels of timber sometime between 2018 and 2023 and the need to decide how to use the land after harvest. We have stable clergy leadership and are healed from our past divisions. The upheavals of The Episcopal Church on the issue of same gender relationships in the church are behind us. The Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, is beginning his 9-year tenure and will be cultivating a radical hospitality and mission in the Church. There is likely to be positive news about our denomination in the headlines and we need to be ready to capitalize on it.

Introduction (continued)

With our heritage, our spiritual resources, our commitment to ministry, and our financial gifts, Abingdon can do almost anything. But, we cannot do everything.

This plan seeks to set out our vision for ministry and get us all on the same page. As each month passes, we will review and update this plan so that it will reflect our continued growth.

Thanks are owed to many people who dedicated numerous hours of prayer, conversation, visioning, and planning to make this plan come into being. We owe a great debt to Mary Lou Shepherd for being our guide in this process. She was our Moses correcting and cajoling us through the wilderness.

Sven vanBaars

Rector

How We Developed Our Plan

Our planning process began in earnest during our Lenten program in 2016. We used a program called “Holy Conversations” to listen to the congregation. The data gathered from these conversations was left up on the walls of the Parish House for several weeks and then formatted into a survey and sent to the entire congregation.

In June 2016 our vestry retreat focused on developing the first vision of the plan. We used the feedback from our congregation as well as Percept data to better understand the needs of our community. From this retreat, we discerned a focus in three areas—Communication; Strengthening Internal; and Enhancing External.

In the summer and fall of 2016 our work slowed as the Rector went on sabbatical.

We used the Annual meeting in January 2017 to survey and gather feedback from the congregation on the direction we were heading. A focus group was instrumental to us in drafting the survey so that we got good feedback.

During the Spring and Summer of 2017 we used some Vestry meetings as working meetings to iron our details of the plan. In October 2017, the Vestry met for a three and half hour session to finalize the draft and get clarity on how we would implement the plan. At our December 2017 meeting we approved the Ministry Plan for 2018-2021. *Looking Forward*, we will use the timeline in the plan as markers for our monthly Vestry meetings. In 2019, we will again use our Vestry retreat as a time to focus on the plan—refining the two remaining years of this plan and envisioning the immediate subsequent years.

FOCUS AREA: Communication

Goal: Broaden and strengthen Church mission to support one another in fellowship as we strive to communicate God’s love and hope with each other, our community, and the world.

Objective: Use existing and new tools to disseminate correct and timely information to the appropriate audience.

STRATEGIC ACTION

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

Appoint Communication Committee not later than January 1 2018

1. Vestry approves Communication Committee Charge not later than December 2017 Vestry meeting. Rector and Vestry identify members. Rector appoints Chair.
2. Vestry approves \$500 for start up expenses with the understanding that the amount could be more.
3. Communication Committee conducts internal and external assessment of communication strengths and weaknesses, January—May 2018.
4. Communication Committee reports results of assessment and makes recommendation for Media Plan, including funding requirements, to Vestry not later than June 2018 Vestry meeting.

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Communication Committee develops Media Plan not later than December 1, 2018

1. Implement Media Plan beginning January 1, 2019.
2. Vestry commits \$5000 to Media Plan.

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Officially update Web Site not later than June 1, 2019*

1. Rector and Communication Chair determine Web Site Manager and determine how the Web Site requirements fit into the Media Plan.
2. Web Site Manager will ensure that Web Site has separate access areas for members and the public.

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Ensure accessibility of Vestry action to the Church and to Committees

1. Continue Vestry Member of the Month completing 3 to 5 bullet points for dissemination on Sunday following Vestry meeting.
2. Continue maintaining Vestry meeting minutes in parish office.
3. When Web Site has been officially updated, ensure the minutes are placed in the Members Only area not later than June 2019.
4. Vestry Committee Liaison reports back to their Committee all pertinent Items that impact their Committee within one week of Vestry meeting.

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**Note. The current Web Site will not be dismantled while it is being officially updated. Staff and Committee will continue to input information during that period.*

FOCUS AREA: Strengthening Internal

Goal: Ensure members know the love of God in order to discern and develop their gifts to carry out God’s work in the world.

Objective: Use formal and informal structures and ministries of the Church to provide opportunities for training, development, and leadership.

STRATEGIC ACTION

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

Have people of God talk about the love of God

1. Rector provides 4 opportunities for story telling during Christian Formation in 2017 and 2018. Expands to other venues and time slots in 2019.
2. Rector and Worship Committee provide Children’s Story Times during worship beginning in March 2018.

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Restructure Christian Formation Director position

1. Vestry uses new vision of Christian Formation to appoint implementation Task Force to assess results.
2. Task Force reports assessment, with budgetary requirements, back to the Vestry.

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Strengthen Ministry Committee responsibilities

Vestry reviews, conducts assessments, and makes necessary adjustments to following Committees using this timetable:

2018: Cemetery, Parish Life, Stewardship
 2019: Buildings, Finance, Outreach
 2020: Grounds, Worship, Restoration, Pastoral Care

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Train, develop, and mentor ministry leaders*

1. Rector develops a Training, Development, and Mentoring Plan not later than February 1, 2019.
2. Plan implementation begins not later than November 1, 2019.

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Expand pool of members for ministries

Christian Formation Director determines and implements ways to identify the talents and gifts of parishioners and serves as a resource to use the parish’s talents for ministry.

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Ensure safety of Church members and others who are in attendance during an emergency

1. Executive Committee develops and completes Plan of Action in the event of natural or man-made disaster not later than June 1, 2018.
2. Coordination required with local law officials, first responders, and the Diocese of Virginia.

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**Note. Related current activities will continue, i.e., leaders will continue quarterly meeting to coordinate programs and ministries; and Vestry will review role of liaison in support of Committee Chairs.*

FOCUS AREA: STRENGTHENING INTERNAL (continued)

STRATEGIC ACTION

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

Provide opportunities specifically for Youth to use their gifts in ministry

Christian Formation Director oversees the following, assisted by the Vestry:

2018-2021: Summer Mission Trips

2018-2021: Fundraisers for future Mission Trips

2019-2021: Early Summer Mission

Late Summer Pilgrimage

Use current buildings as ministry tools

1. Not later than September 1, 2018, Building Committee develops a 4-year plan for renovation of the Parish House, scaled to both a \$100,000 renovation and a \$300,000 renovation. Uses professional architectural help, as required. Consider septic tie-in, accessibility (especially upstairs), current usage, and immediate future needs.

2. Vestry approves \$5000 for preliminary work.

FOCUS AREA: External Partnering

Goal: Engage with the world around us so that people are encouraged to join our ministries or are strengthened to participate in ministries that partner with us to share God’s love.

Objective: Partner with other community organizations and use Church resources to welcome potential members.

STRATEGIC ACTION

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

Determine how Church land usage invites external populations*

- 1. Grounds Committee develops 5-year plan, with funding requirements, for areas under their stewardship not later than May 2018 Vestry meeting.
- 2. Cemetery Committee develops 5-year plan, with funding requirements, not later than May 2018 Vestry meeting.
- 3. Vestry appoints a 3-person Task Force to assess needs not under Grounds or Cemetery Committees, e.g., forest areas, area behind Church, possible trails, dog park etc., not later than July 2018 Vestry meeting.
- 4. Develop plan to correlate with timber harvesting schedule

Strengthen partnerships with other organizations

- 1. Vestry identifies current partners not later than January 1, 2018, i.e., Building Use (Church Secretary) and GUEST (Outreach Committee).
- 2. Not later than February 1, 2018, Vestry appoints liaison to each partner to determine mutual objectives. Determination of actions needs to be completed not later than June 1, 2018.
- 3. Train groups on how to use Church Calendar (Church Secretary) as mutual schedules allow.

Identify new community partners who may help us to increase youth and children participation in Abingdon Episcopal Church.

Vestry develops strategy and incorporates information from assessment of current community partners not later than October 2018 Vestry meeting.

Increase visibility of Church from Route 17

- 1. Rector selects professional landscape architect to provide preliminary ideas on increasing visibility not later than December 31, 2017.
- 2. Grounds Committee, in conjunction with the Rector, develops a plan not later than May 2018. Plan will include budgetary requirements and may be phased in by year.
- 3. Target date for completion of work: December 31, 2020.

*Note. No long range funding will be authorized unless Vestry has approved the applicable plan.

OVERALL TIMELINE

ACTION	YEAR			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Appoint Communication Committee	Jan 1			
Communication Assessment	Jan-May			
Recommendation for Media Plan	Jun			
Develop Media Plan	Dec			
Begin implementation of Media Plan		Jan		
Officially Update Web Site		Jun 1		
Christian Formation Story Telling	Qtrly	Qtrly	Qtrly	Qtrly
Begin Children's Story Time	Mar			
Summer Mission Trips	Early	Early & Late	Early & Late	Early & Late
Mission Trip Fund Raisers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Develop Training, Development & Mentoring Plan		Feb		
Begin Implementation of Plan		Nov		
Identify Current Partnerships	Jan 1			
Appoint Partnership Liaison	Feb 1			
Determine Partnership Actions	Jun 1			
Develop Partnership Strategy	Oct			
Begin Training on Church Calendar	Jan			
Member Safety Plan Completed	Jun			
Develop Plan to Improve Visibility of Church	May			
Complete Work to Improve Visibility of Church				Dec 31
Complete 4-Year Plan to Renovate Parish House	Sep			
Develop Grounds Usage Plan	May			
Develop Cemetery Plan	May			
Develop Land Usage Plan not under Grounds or Cemetery	Jul			
Review Cemetery, Parish Life, Stewardship Committees	Yes			
Review Buildings, Finance, Outreach Committees		Yes		
Review Grounds, Worship, Restoration, Pastoral Care Committees			Yes	

Please note that preliminary work began prior to publication of this plan. The Abingdon Episcopal Church Team is postured to move forward.

ABINGDON EPISCOPAL CHURCH STRATEGIC PLANNERS

Our Lord and Savior

Sven vanBaars, Rector

Vestry

Thom Byrne

Mike Dobson

David Evans

Monica Smith

Mark Cook

Barbara Allison-Bryan

Chris Hartman

June James

Leslie Bohon-Atkinson

Rebecca Reed

Taylor Ovide

Wayne Reynolds

Youth

Reed Atkinson

Hailey Hargis

Others

David Peebles

Wendy Every

Darren Steadman

Ralph Johnson

JayeP Johnson

Gloria Williams

Jay Austin