

## ST. MICHAEL'S TIME, TALENT AND TREASURES EVENING REPORT

**November 13, 2017**

Below you will see that we (Tony Teare, Sandy Jolliffe and I) have collated the information collected during our small table discussion at the Time, Talent and Treasures evening on November 14. We have made every effort to list each suggestion made, but haven't included how many times a particular point was made. Comments in brackets are editorial comments from me or a member of the committee. There was a good turnout and lively discussion that evening for which we are grateful. I wish to give some points that I have taken from the feedback and the discussion.

We had three categories

- 1) **Parish Life.** This was to deal with our life inside the parish, taking on such areas as, worship, parish fellowship, education.
- 2) **Mission and Outreach.** This was about our giving and service to the community beyond the parish list.
- 3) **Evangelism.** This was about being an inviting congregation and the ability of the membership to share aspects of their faith with others.

For each category the table groups were asked to discuss and list ways in which the parish is doing these things well. Then they were to discuss and list ways in which the parish could expand or improve.

The people very much value the sense of community that exists at St. Michaels. They see themselves as a friendly, caring place. Many would say this is one of the key reasons they attend.

The parish has a good sense of itself in terms of mission and outreach. This showed itself in every area, not just under that particular heading. It was suggested by more than one person, and I would concur, that the weakest area is Evangelism. However, there was a genuine interest and desire to learn more. It was interesting to note the progression of the conversation around this matter. There was a concern about attracting young families. At first the usual suggestions were made, such as introducing a rock band or finding out what the mega churches are doing to attract people. My concern with ideas such as these is that we aren't necessarily building on what we have or who we are. Also, we are assuming that something like a rock band would attract people, when maybe that isn't the case. Also, rather than trying to attract the same people the mega churches are, perhaps we should be looking to the vast group of young people and families who are *not* attracted to the mega churches – a different field. A very good conversation arose about communicating people around the area of evangelism. It was realized that perhaps we need to be asking questions and *listening*. We talked about inviting without being concerned with the outcome. In other words being inviting, rather than driven by agenda or outcome. This seems to me to be the starting point. Out of this came the subject of getting to know millennials. One important point was that they like to discuss, not be

lectured to. When some said they didn't know any millennials, it was suggested to pay attention to the person serving your coffee, etc. It was pointed out that we need to meet people where they are, not expect them to come to us. Also, assuming that they will like a specific type of music, for example can be a mistake. I have 3 millennial children and a rock band wouldn't attract any of them to church. My sense is they are concerned about content, authenticity, and things being done well. So the idea of engaging and listening is a great one!! As a side note. If there is a real desire to attract young families, we need to be aware that this will be an expense line, not income on a budget. Families, particularly in Canmore don't tend to have disposable income.

The idea of listening, rather than telling people what they need also was discussed in our mission and outreach discussion. The idea of becoming a congregation who asks and listens before acting is a very good thing and, in my mind, worthy of developing.

It was also noted that we also need to build on what we have and do well which is continue to develop our core of retired, active people who have time, talents and treasure to share. Good point!

There were also ideas about trying different Service times and days.

The idea of Morley being a place where the parish could be more involved came up several times, which pleased this Deacon very much!

It is good to see that people value Christian growth and education in a variety of ways. Alpha was seen as an aspect of parish life, a way to do outreach, and an evangelism tool. People are looking for further training of lay people and lay readers, more home groups and deeper discussions and study.

There is a perception that a strong point at St. Michael's is their group of volunteers. While I strongly agree that we have a core of incredibly dedicated and talented volunteers, you tend to see the same people across the board. I think they would agree that they are a strong, but *small* group. In order to build in some of the areas suggested, such as children and youth programming, home groups and further outreach, more volunteers will be crucial.

There was a suggestion for a fulltime Priest. I believe this was meant as a Priest (one person) fulltime in Canmore. Again, there would have to be resources for this to happen. Even if this would be the case, there are some interesting and ambitious ideas for the parish and all this responsibility could not rest solely on the Priest's shoulders. See above the comment about volunteers!

I have very much appreciated the opportunity to take part in this important conversation and would like to thank participants for their honesty and sincere concern for this wonderful Parish.

The Rev. Deacon Elizabeth Short

## Parish Life

### What we do well:

- Worship
- Inclusivity
- Welcome, particularly of 65+
- Prayer
- Variety of Worship (2 Services)
- Willing to try different approaches (?)
- Social
- Home groups
- Enabling lay ministry and participation
- Do peace well
- Alpha
- Recognize important comings and goings
- Good energy from leaders
- Intentional in our faith – we want to hear
- We are a family
- Known for what we do for others, we genuinely care
- We know it's beyond the walls
- Bible study groups – excellent learning and sharing
- Love one another and others
- Opportunities to bring people into our space (building)
- Minister sincerity
- Music
- Organizing events
- Volunteers are strong (small group of strong volunteers??)
- Healing team
- Non-judgmental
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday joint service and lunch

### Where we could expand/improve:

- Present bible story for children/ Children's talk
- Messy church
- Present bible stories for children after sports or school (depending on availability)
- Teach meditation to the you
- Overcome fear of correctness
- Be more inviting
- Expand on invitation

- Need more volunteers to fill gaps
- Be more forward looking when it comes to millennials and make a difference in there lives (and they in ours???)
- Thinking about changing the timing of when we do things;
- More interesting service for young people to attract them (?)
- Thinking about changing the timing of when we do things
- Midweek, Friday, Saturday Service
- Life streaming services on the internet
- More positive outreach to community instead of expecting them to come to us (evangelism?)
- More advanced study, deeper
- Full time priest
- Education re lay ministry; needs to be completed
- Find a way to get more small groups going
- Find a way to let people come into St. Michael's to know more about us in a not scary way
- Supporting young families with action and work
- Bring in more seniors – build on what we have
- Post sermons online and consider taping sermons (evangelism?)
- Visits and home communion
- Evensong

### **Mission and Outreach**

#### **What we do well:**

- Food and Friends
- Da Guys outreach
- Ecumenical services
- Participate in services at the hospital
- Meditation group
- Home groups
- ACW
- Women's Shelter in Banff (through ACW)
- Easter, senior services
- Alpha
- Turkey Dinner, pancake supper
- Hall available to non-profits
- Hospital visits
- Identify needs - like PWRDF

**Where we could expand/improve:**

- Morley support
- Adopt a grandparent (grandkid?) – support families
- Provide services/visits at Bow River Lodge, Origen – ecumenical
- Expand outreach by contacting FCSS and other agencies to explore what gaps exist (Howard and Sean explored this a few years ago – is it time to revisit?)
- Inviting people to church dinners
- Exchanges with Morley (Services?)
- Constantly pray – discernment

**Evangelism****What we do well:**

- Time to Be
- Inviting to Coffee (9 o'clock? Not sure this is Evangelism)
- Alpha
- Cursillo (I would put this under Parish Life)
- Social media (??)
- Ecumenical (Not really evangelism)
- Home groups (potential)

**Where we can expand/improve**

- Understanding what Evangelism is
- Making faith part of our conversation
- Asking - answer is irrelevant; listening
- Making it more about them and less about us; meeting people where they are
- Sustainability comes from the ability to listen to others – millennials
- Millennials want to discuss ideas, not be lectured to