

History and background:

The discernment process began in December 2013, with daily contemplative morning prayer, that continued through 2014, and runs like a river flowing beneath our parish life.

The discernment committee met from March - September 2014. The members included Co-chairs Bruce La Fetra and Jeffrey Pugh, Kris Austin, Carolyn Bowker, Carlos Estrada, Ian Greensides, Margo Jacobsen, Lauren Minkel, Mason Razavi, Becky Smith, Steve Stolarik, Sherry Snow. Other major contributors to the discernment process were Sue Bryson, Mike Landis and Carlos Estrada, with the parish survey, review of parish profile, and ministry roundtables, respectively.

Much grateful thanks to the committee members and organizers of the events above, whose dedicated work made this discernment process possible and as widely participatory as it has been. The number and level of contributions by the parish were thoughtful and insightful, and reflect the commitment to St Jude's by its members. The information gathered is a remarkable kaleidoscope of the parish and its people.

The Discernment Process:

Discernment is a combination of information gathering and prayerful pondering, listening to the Spirit and discerning where and how the Spirit was at work.

Gathering of information and opinion from the vestry and parish:

Weeknight discussions, information meetings and report backs

Vestry retreat, February 2014

Parish Day Fri/Sat in March 2014

Parish Forums

Parish Survey, Double Clicks

Round Table Ministry discussions

Advent prayers

Detailed review of Parish Profile.

Regular report backs to vestry and in the monthly View newsletter.

Prayerful pondering and listening: How has the Spirit revealed itself and moved us during this time of discernment? Who, or what experiences, impacted or transformed us during this time of discernment? The process of paying attention to these questions continues. This is an exercise that is best done in a context of quiet and listening, and should be one of the follow up steps taken by vestry.

These are the tributaries that flowed into the river of discernment since Advent and December 2013, as part of our parish life:

1. Contemplative Morning Prayer with a Celtic flavor, began on weekdays in advent and continued since then, and is now a regular, sustaining part of our life.
2. The advent prayers written on blue strips of paper reflected similar thoughts coming out of the parish day and the survey.

3. Kaleidoscope training: a small group of parishioners attended four workshops as part of this diocesan training. They learned some tools for parishes that help build inclusion, sustainable relationships, and leadership, which we have used in our discernment process and in some of our meetings and groups. This training continues in 2014/15.
4. During the year, four quiet days were held with Canon Jesus Reyes facilitating. These included methods of prayer and neighborhood walks.
5. Michael Lapsley's visits in 2013 and 2014 produced good fruit. Michael has asked us if he can hold a Healing of Memories weekend at St Jude's in May 2015 that would be open to people from St Jude's, from our diocese, and the diocese of California.
6. De Anza College: Michael Lapsley's visit included an event at the college, attended by some parishioners, and an event at church, attended by a few students. The pilot wifi project has begun and has had good support of volunteers and participants thus far.
7. Gina Pond and the Between the Worlds Church: The request to rent space was a catalyst for an important conversation about what it means to say 'Whoever you are, wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome here.' That conversation continues to be crucial importance for us.
8. West Valley Community services: WVCS approached us and asked us to host their weekly youth summer program on Fridays. We hosted this for ten weeks during the summer.
9. South African connections: In addition to Michael Lapsley's visit, this summer we had 3 events involving South Africans, the Desmond Tutu documentary preview, the visit of Maurice Dyer to preach, and the visit of Bishop Margaret Vertue.
10. Our adult education program has begun to integrate their program with the youth education program, which focuses their Christian education through the lens of other faith traditions. The adult forum program will be coordinated with the youth multi-faith program and visits to places of worship.
11. Green Business certification: Over the past year, St Jude's has been working towards certification as a green business in Cupertino. The final steps for this took place in July. We are the first faith congregation in Cupertino to be certified, and this commits us to ongoing environmentally friendly practices.
12. Haiti connections: in February, Fr Amiroid visited St Jude's and we signed a 5 year covenant to continue our partnership with St Patrick's School.

Next steps:

The Mission Covenant is not our final step. It is intended to provide the direction that forms the basis for our actions, through concrete goal setting by the vestry. The next steps following parish feedback will be concrete goal setting coordinated by the vestry.

November 2014