

## **Report and Recommendations of the Alternative Service Task Force and the Worship and Music Committee**

The task force and committee met together for more than five hours on December 5 and 7, 2010.

Present were: Pastor Wayne Matthias-Long, Karen Matthias-Long, Nate Andrews, Rebecca Albright (12/5 only), Annette Roth, Elise Spayd, Joanne Hariu, Melanie Werley, Dave Fatzinger (12/5 only), Ruth Kemmerer, Sharnee Cederberg (12/5 only), Peggy Duelfer, Carrie Alpage and Cheryl Fatzinger.

The group first discussed the benefits and costs of holding the Non-traditional Service in the Sanctuary compared to the Parish Hall (based on two Sundays in the Sanctuary).

### Benefits

- Acoustics better in Sanctuary
- Frees up Parish Hall/Parish Hall doesn't have to be set up every week
- Seating is easier to get up & down
- Music is uplifting
- Satisfies need of some to be in Sanctuary
- Distribution of Communion flowed better
- Aesthetics
- Closed Balcony is good
- Compromise for those who miss the space
- Gives sense of Imminence and Transcendence
- Hymnals could be used

### Costs

- Still too formal
- Not as friendly as Parish Hall
- Not using projector
- Children are lost in the pews
- Hard for sound guy to communicate
- Front of church looked cluttered
- Less space and fewer options for bands
- Less comfortable "coming as you are"
- Shifting between bulletins and songbook
- Very little interaction between people before service
- People were less likely to clap etc.

The group next focused on the fundamental question which St. John's must answer:

### **Should St. John's offer an alternative worship opportunity?**

The group discussed this question at length, considering the present practices and future prospects for mainline churches in general and St. John's in particular and especially considering St. John's mission statement, "to GROW in relationship with Christ to GO share God's love and serve others." After extensive discussion, the unanimous conclusion of the group is that the congregation and its leaders should answer this question very strongly in the affirmative.

In light of this conclusion, the group brainstormed various possibilities (regarding days, times, and places) for St. John's to offer an alternative service. The group identified 22 possibilities, 16 of which would be held on Sunday mornings and six of which would be offered at a time and/or day other than Sunday morning.

The possibilities identified for offering an alternative service are as follows:

1. Every Sunday at 8:00 am in the Parish Hall
2. Every Sunday at 8:00 am in the Sanctuary
3. Every Sunday at 10:30 am in the Parish Hall
4. Every Sunday at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary
5. Every Sunday morning at 8:00 am for one month followed by every Sunday morning the next month at 10:30 am, and continuing to alternate on that basis every month, in the Parish Hall.
6. Every Sunday morning at 8:00 am for one month followed by every Sunday morning the next month at 10:30 am, and continuing to alternate on that basis every month, in the Sanctuary.
7. Every Sunday morning at 8:00 (or 8:15) in the Parish Hall while the “Traditional” service is being held in the Sanctuary.
8. Every Sunday morning at 10:30 in the Parish Hall while the “Traditional” service is being held in the Sanctuary.
9. Every Sunday morning at about 9:15 in the Parish Hall (at the same time as Sunday School). (Variations might include cancelling Sunday School once a month so students and teachers could attend the alternative service; Sunday School students and teachers attend first part of alternative service and then be dismissed to S.S. part way through the service; move Sunday School to another day and time).
10. Every Sunday morning at about 9:15 in the Sanctuary (at the same time as Sunday School). (Variations might include cancelling Sunday School once a month so students and teachers could attend the alternative service; Sunday School students and teachers attend first part of alternative service and then be dismissed to S.S. part way through the service; move Sunday School to another day and time).
11. Hold four separate activities or “events” on Sunday mornings – three worship opportunities (two “traditional” plus one “alternative”) plus Sunday School, the alternative service being held in the Parish Hall. The schedule might be something like this: 7:30-Traditional Worship, 8:45-Sun. School, 10:00-Alternative Worship, 11:00-Traditional Worship.
12. Hold four separate activities or “events” on Sunday mornings – three worship opportunities (two “traditional” plus one “alternative”) plus Sunday School, the alternative service being held in the Sanctuary. The schedule might be something like this: 7:30-Traditional Worship, 8:45-Sun. School, 10:00-Alternative Worship, 11:00-Traditional Worship.
13. Alternative Service one Sunday morning each month at 8:00 and 10:30 in the Parish Hall
14. Alternative Service one Sunday morning each month at 8:00 and 10:30 in the Sanctuary
15. Alternative Service two Sunday mornings each month at 8:00 and 10:30 in the Parish Hall
16. Alternative Service two Sunday mornings each month at 8:00 and 10:30 in the Sanctuary
17. Alternative Service every Sunday at 5:00 or 6:00 pm in the Parish Hall (possibly with a meal)
18. Alternative Service every Sunday at 5:00 or 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary (possibly with a meal)
19. Alternative Service every Saturday at 5:00 pm in the Parish Hall
20. Alternative Service every Saturday at 5:00 pm in the Sanctuary
21. Alternative Service every Wednesday at 7:00 pm in the Parish Hall
22. Alternative Service every Wednesday at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary

Following some general discussion, including noting that most congregations in this area which are thriving offer an alternative service on a Sunday morning, each member chose up to four (or eight if the location was the only difference between some of their choices) of the 22 possibilities which they would like the group to spend more time analyzing in terms of the benefits and costs of that possibility.

The results of this forced choice were tabulated and resulted in the following four options (three of which have a variation in terms of location) being chosen for further exploration:

Option 1A - Four separate “events” on Sunday mornings (three worship opportunities plus Sunday School) with alternative service in the Parish Hall.

Option 1B - Four separate “events” on Sunday mornings (three worship opportunities plus Sunday School) with alternative service in the Sanctuary.

Option 2A – Alternative Service held every Sunday morning in the Parish Hall at 8:00 for a month alternating with 10:30 for a month.

Option 2B – Alternative Service held every Sunday morning in the Sanctuary at 8:00 for a month alternating with 10:30 for a month.

Option 3 – Alternative Service held every Sunday morning in Parish Hall at 10:30 while “Traditional” Service is also being held in Sanctuary.

Option 4A – Alternative Service held every Sunday morning in Parish Hall at 9:15 (at same time as Sunday School).

Option 4B – Alternative Service held every Sunday morning in Sanctuary at 9:15 (at same time as Sunday School).

The group then identified as many benefits and costs for each option as it could. Those results are attached to this report. The group then formulated the following recommendations which it

hereby provides to Council.

**The Non-traditional Service Task Force and the Worship & Music Committee recommend:**

- 1. that St. John's Congregation Council affirm that, for the sake of the gospel and to fulfill its mission, St. John's should offer an alternative worship opportunity on Sunday mornings beginning as soon after April 30, 2011, as practical.**
- 2. that St. John's Congregation Council provide opportunities for members of the congregation to gain an understanding of:**
  - a. the rationale for Recommendation 1 (e.g., the current condition and future prospects for the church in general and St. John's in particular), and**
  - b. the potential costs and benefits of each option (as well as of not implementing Recommendation 1).**
- 3. that St. John's Congregation Council:**
  - a. review the seven possible options for fulfilling Recommendation 1, and**
  - b. provide opportunities for members of the congregation to provide feedback on those options along with their respective costs and benefits.**
- 4. that St. John's Congregation Council lead the congregation to make a commitment to support Recommendation 1 and to use whatever financial resources are available to the congregation to implement it.**
- 5. that the Sunday morning worship format used by the congregation prior to June 1, 2010, be used on Sunday mornings beginning on January 2, 2011, and continuing until an alternative worship opportunity is planned and implemented.**

The group encourages Council to consider using written materials and one or more open "forums", perhaps on one or more Sundays in January 2011, to help accomplish Recommendations 2 and 3.