



Report to St. Bart's Parishioners

Planning, Conduct & Outcomes
of the Congregational Day

October 25, 2014

The Church of St Bartholomew
The Guards' Chapel
Ottawa, Ontario



**This Report to Parishioners is
Submitted by the St. Bart's GIFT & Stewardship Committee
Rob Nelson and Bonnie Robinson (Co-Chairs),
Meriel Bradford, Carol Burrows, David Clunie,
and Tony Kellett
January 2015**

We have a new Létourneau organ which enhances worship and provides an opportunity for outreach, through music. We have a new organist and choir director.

We promote our own concerts and are a venue for other musical events (eg Ars Nova) and lectures which involve the parish and the wider community.

In 2014 we had our first “Doors Open” to coincide with the city program. About 75 visitors attended this one-day event.

We run/support many parish groups including: Sunday School, Altar Guild, Bible study, nursery, choir, pastoral care at local seniors' homes, a luncheon meals program at Cornerstone, major annual bazaar, bridge club, bales for the North.

We have been upgrading and repairing our church, organ, parish hall, gardens and rectory. These physical assets are now in good repair although we have ongoing capital needs (eg hall walls, memorial window, bathrooms).

The rectory is rented out and provides income to our operations. Our parish hall is available to community groups on a rental basis.

During the past several years we developed and carried out a program of Social Outreach and Christian Education funded mainly through bequests. We have disbursed about \$400k and have some \$130k left in the current program.

We are questioning our approach to outreach for the medium and longer term.

Currently we do not have an active youth group.

Background

~

A lot has been accomplished at St. Bart's in the last few years. Last fall, it was decided to hold a Congregational Day on Saturday, October 25th for parishioners to get together to talk about what we are doing at St. Bart's and what's important for the future. The Reverend Monique Stone agreed to work with us. She was a postulant with us a number of years ago, is an experienced facilitator and an ordained minister in the parish of Huntley in Carp.

The key findings of the Congregational Day have now been provided to the Corporation and Parish Council for consideration in making plans for St. Bart's over the longer term. At the Congregational Day, a commitment was made to communicate the key findings to parishioners. This is the purpose of this document and includes the following:

“Findings on the Congregational Day October 25, 2014”

and;

“Reflections from Monique Stone about the Congregational Day”

(current and unrevised as a result of the Congregational Day)

St. Bart's Mission

(current and unrevised as a result of the Congregational Day)

“Who are we?”

(prepared in advance of the day and distributed at services over several Sundays);

St. Bart's Congregational Day Findings

~

The Congregational Day provided a unique opportunity to: get to know each other better; share what St. Bart's means to each of us; and discuss what is working well and what we should be considering as priority areas in the next few years.

The GIFT and Stewardship Committee reviewed the summary notes of the day and has identified the following key themes. These findings will be communicated to parishioners and will be forwarded to the Corporation and Parish Council for their consideration in identifying actions in the next few years.

Themes

Outreach

- Increase parishioner understanding of what St. Bart's has done to help others in the recent past and what it is doing currently;
- Outreach priorities should be to support Diocesan community ministries, including PWDRF:
- Encourage not only a financial commitment to outreach but also the active involvement of parishioners;
- Continue to explore our relationship with the Diocese of Jerusalem and our potential partnership with their parish of St. John's and St. Luke's; and
- Recognize parishioners' considerable personal involvement in community causes beyond St. Bart's.

St Bart's is the Chapel for the GG Foot Guards, and spiritual home for many in the diplomatic service, both Canadian and foreign.

Strong clergy and professional team, including our incumbent Fr. David, who has been with us for 6 years, our honorary associate, Laurette, our music director and our parish administrator, Ruth. Committed lay members of parish give many hours in many ways, corporation members, Parish Council members, readers, sidespersons, lay administrators, intercessors, collection counters, bazaar convenors, coffee hour hosts and so forth.

We know that many parishioners also take part in the wider community through their own personal service and/or as donors.

In the past, we have successfully sponsored two refugee families from Africa who are now well established in Ottawa. We sponsored 20 high school girls in Lesotho for five years with financial support and monthly newsletters.

Our annual operating budget is in the order of \$415k, of which \$74k is our Parish Fair Share for the Diocese. We participated actively in GIFT and pledged to raise approx \$ 1.1M. This effort encouraged us to visit all members of our parish family and renew our connections. The Stewardship and GIFT Continuation Committee is carrying this effort forward.

We have a major birthday year, our 150th, approaching which offers opportunities for parish development and outreach. So far we have planned a scholarly, illustrated, special parish history as part of our celebrations.

We value worship which includes the best in music and the arts through the ages.

St. Bart's Mission Statement

~

St. Bartholomew's is a community of faith within which we: come to know and worship God;

- explore our own spirituality;
- are nurtured, educated and grow in understanding our Christian faith;
- demonstrate our faith in action, through our responsibility to the wider Church, to humankind, and to creation;
- help one another in our Christian journey; and
- together help others to know Christ and to make Him known.

Who are we?

The following "Who Are We?" was prepared to reflect a common understanding of what St. Bart's is today and was distributed in advance of the Congregational Day.

An open and welcoming Christian community, grounded in the Anglican tradition.

A parish as old as confederation, worshipping by means of both traditional and revised liturgies.

Some 230 members (families and individuals) on the parish roll who come from the immediate neighbourhood and from across the city and also from neighbouring communities in western Quebec. Average vestry attendance from 2008 -2013 is 50 parishioners.

Youth

- Establish a youth program planning team;
- Understand successful/sustaining models for youth engagement through Diocesan resources;
- Church School and Youth programs should be structured to offer graduated learning; and
- Proceed with St. Bart's Youth Choir.

Connecting Us with the World

- Utilize the website fully to make it a dynamic leading edge parish website.

Learning and Continuing Education

- Increase understanding of what we already do;
- Offer current issues-oriented scripture- based evening lecture series ; and
- Continue sermons that are founded on the Gospel and also relate to issues/challenges we all face.



**Thoughts and Reflections on the St. Bart's Day
Provided by Monique Stone**

~

Thank you again for the wonderful opportunity to be with the St. Bart's community! It was great to see everyone and work with you all. In reflection I would say that every person there had a positive, collaborative, and hopeful attitude towards the process and the desires of your committee to continue to discern and implement strategic plans and opportunities for the Parish. It was great to see such love and excitement that everyone had towards the future of the church. I offer the following aspects that stuck out for me during the day:

Youth

It is clear that there are a lot of expectations and hope for the parish to re-institute a vibrant youth ministry. This is something that quite likely needs to be explored in the immediate future.

Very-Involved Parishioners!

I was amazed when I asked people to put their hand up if they were involved as a volunteer in a not-for-profit organization that was not directly linked to the parish. Every single person had a hand up! I thought the idea of making this more known throughout the church and potentially adding the organizations and/or roles to prayers, etc. was a great idea.

Need for Better Communication

It seemed that there was a hope for more communication on activities and events throughout the church community. An updated website was discussed as a key priority. I also appreciated one parishioners comment on wanting to know about volunteer opportunities (both within and without of the church) that she might be able to help with if only she knew how to connect and learn about them.

Great Work is Already Existing!

It is clear that St. Bart's is doing some great work and that there are some fantastic ministries happening through the church. It was unclear if there are any plans in place to recruit new volunteers for the purposes of ensuring effective succession planning to help avoid volunteer burn-out and encourage newcomers to get involved. I think adding to this list of things to do should be done so with utmost caution to ensure that there is not too many things for too few to do!

Worship and Spiritual Development

A few people commented on the need for parishioners to strengthen their faith journey; some activities are clearly in place for this to happen. However I did leave that day wondering if we had talked enough about Sunday worship and the church's emphasis and dedication (via the organ investment, choir scholarships, etc.) towards the strengthening of one spiritual journey through the worship service. Might be an interesting conversation to have.

Newcomers?

I think attendance at the event was very impressive. However as I drove home I reflected on how many of the attendees seemed to be long standing members (with a few new for sure but not many). I was left wondering what St. Bart's is doing to attract new families and newcomers from the area?

I think the above are the top six things that stuck out for me throughout the day.

Blessings to you all!
Pastor Monique