

Community Engagement Town Hall

May 2, 2021



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Agenda

- Introductions
- Recap of Discernment Process
- Steering Committee Functions
- Ministry Focus Areas
- Working Groups
- Q&A

Community Engagement Discernment

What is “discernment”?

Why?

Why now?



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Community Engagement Discernment

Beliefs

God calls us to live out his reconciling love and justice as part of our baptismal identities.

God is already at work in our community, and we will join in that work.

God calls us to work WITH our community.

Goals

Formation

Inspire, equip, and providing opportunities to act.

Exploration

Examine history, explore systemic problems, and foster beloved community.

Reconciliation

Empower people, initiatives, and organizations working for racial justice and repair.

Strategies

Collaborative. So many already doing great work in community.

Transparent. Communication, process foster engagement.

Flexible. Support diversity of experience, interests, passions, talents of the congregation.

Spirit-led. "Inner work" and faith are important to achieving justice.



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Steering Committee Functions



**Goals &
Strategies**



**Process &
Planning**



Communications



Budget



Facilities



**Embedding
Justice**



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Ministry Focus Areas



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Working Groups

What are working groups?

A small group of engaged people to research, answer important questions, and generate ideas about current and future ministries

Who can be involved?

Anyone that is interested, no prior Outreach experience necessary. Each group will be 2-4 individuals.

What am I committing to?

The groups will form for 90 days to explore specific areas and report back to the steering committee

Summer 2021 Working Groups...

1. **Food & Housing Insecurity**
(Emmaus)
2. **Woodville Elementary School**
(Micah)
3. **Global Missions**
(Mwitikira, Tanzania)
4. **Allyship & Antiracism**
(Proximity, Empathy, Growth)
5. **Citizenship**
(Advocacy, Activism, Political Action)



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5. Citizenship

What is Emmaus?

- Emmaus is our lunch ministry, which takes place on Thursdays.
- St. Paul's is one of five Downtown Community Ministry (DCM) churches that provide meals each day of week
- Participating for more than 25 years.
- Serve approximately 150 guests each week.
- Through COVID, we're still providing meals but unable to host people in Scott Hall.
- Prime example of leveraging St. Paul's unique assets (space, location, finances)



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Goals for this Working Group:

1. Create a 3-person leadership team to help Lynn execute this ministry week-over-week.
2. Plan to develop a deeper partnership with the other Downtown Community Ministries (DCM) churches participating in this feeding program.
3. Plan to raise awareness of this ministry and opportunities to volunteer within and beyond the St. Paul's congregation.
4. Explore and envision partnerships with organizations working on related system issues: Shalom Farms, Urban Hope, Underground Kitchen, etc.
5. Explore and envision partnerships with organizations that could provide services and support to friends who come to Emmaus: VCU Health, ACTS, etc.



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What is Micah?

- In the 1990s, St. Paul's participated in the formation of "Big Micah" and made focused commitments to engage at Woodville.
- Now "Big Micah" in Richmond is a partnership of faith communities with Richmond Public Elementary Schools
- Mentors, tutors, and volunteers through a network of faith communities and schools.
- Today, we still provide support to Woodville Elementary School under the "Micah brand":
 - Our capacity to engage in mentoring is vastly different
 - Provide financial support to Communities In Schools (CIS) to help staff a coordinator in the school
 - Organize an annual fundraiser called "Put Happy on a Face" to help pay for Woodville kids to attend a summer camp.



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Goals for this Working Group:

1. Create a 3-person leadership team to help Lynn execute this ministry year-over-year.
2. Explore other ways to support Woodville teachers, students, families through donation drives, fundraising, raising awareness, and partnering with other organizations engaged at Woodville.
3. Evaluate our significant financial investment in the Communities In Schools partnership at Woodville.
4. Plan to raise awareness, develop partnerships, get more St. Paul's people involved in the planning and execution of our Summer Camp program.
5. Plan to raise awareness of related systemic issues and topics.

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What is Global Missions?

- The Global Missions ministry is solely focused on a relationship with the village of Mwitikira, Tanzania.
- This ministry began in 2007 when St. Paul's vestry joined the ONE Campaign in support of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDG).
- The initial focus of the ministry was on children in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- That focus shifted to a relationship developed with the people in the village of Mwitikira and their priest, Father Erasto Ndahani.



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Goals for this Working Group:

1. Raise awareness of the Global Missions work and relationships in Mwitikira and advertise opportunities to get involved.
2. Envision ways to bring more people inside and outside of St. Paul's into this ministry, participating in the planning, execution, and support of the ministry programs.
3. Explore partnerships with organizations working on related global issues and/or that could provide support, services, or people to this ministry: Episcopal Relief and Development, VCU, Armstrong Leadership, etc.
4. Plan to raise awareness of related systemic issues and topics.



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What is Allyship & Antiracism?

Ally = “Someone who experiences privilege, who works toward a more just and equitable society by working against systems of oppression”

Antiracist = “One who supports policy that reduces racial inequality”.

- Series of workshops at St. Paul’s with Dr. Keith Edwards on “Aspiring Allyship Development”.
- Pursuing social justice requires self-development and practice
- This mindset will help us in day-to-day interactions with family, friends, co-workers, etc.



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Goals for this Working Group:

1. Develop a plan to continue our learning and growth (workshops like Sacred Ground, book studies, resource lists, etc.)
2. Develop a plan to introduce the lived experiences of different groups to the congregation
3. Envision partnerships as opportunities for people to build relationships and take action. (CirclesRVA, The Giving Wall, RVA Works, etc.)



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What is Citizenship?

- In past pursuit of social justice, St. Paul's had created a ministry called "Amos" which was closely aligned with Richmonders Involved to Strengthen our Communities (RISC) and Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy.
- While the Amos ministry no longer functions at St. Paul's in specific form, the opportunities to engage in learning, advocacy, and political action are as abundant and important as ever.
- St. Paul's members are still involved in RISC and other advocacy groups



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- 5. Citizenship**

Goals for this Working Group:

1. Create resources and develop a plan to engage the congregation in understanding issues, discussing solutions, and taking action.
2. Develop a plan for covering important topics for RVA: Richmond 300, Casino plans, Public Housing, Mayor's Equity Agenda, etc.
3. Develop a plan for covering important global/national issues: voting rights, gun violence, criminal justice, equity in education, poverty, housing, etc.
4. Envision partnerships with groups like RISC, Clergy Against Racism, VA Interfaith, etc. that are involved in education, advocacy, and activism.

What's Next

Thank you! Peace be with you!

If you are interested in participating in a Working Group
or have questions:

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