



**Pathway to Engagement Initiative**

**Committee Report**

**January 20, 2018**

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## I. Introduction and Background

In the late spring of this year, Father Henry reached out to several parishioners in an effort to form a group to address stewardship issues. This came about as a result of discussions between Father Henry and the Vestry.

On forming the group, we quickly discovered that stewardship meant much more than fund raising. Based on the premise that the members of the Church represent its assets, we decided to focus on these assets and the goals that the Church has for its members. As Father Henry defined it, we want our members to become fully engaged disciples of Christ. While the details of this goal differ from member to member, we found a central definition (aspirational) that we adopted as follows:

A fully engaged disciple of Christ is someone:

- a. who has made a personal commitment to be a contributing member of the ChristChurch family,
- b. who is growing in prayer and the study of Scripture,
- c. who is developing an understanding of their own gifts and talents and employs them in ministry that builds up the Body of Christ,
- d. who regularly participates in worship with the parish family, and
- e. who is involved in outreach and mission as a Christian witness.

At its essence, we determined that stewardship involved the cultivation and management of the time, talent and treasure of each member of ChristChurch in order to progress along the road to becoming a fully engaged disciple of Christ. So that we could approach these broader goals, the team (Pathway to Engagement) divided into five sub teams with two Pathway members on each sub team (as Chair and Vice-Chair). These sub teams recruited additional members for a total of 34 parishioners (see Attachment 1 for a list Pathway team members as well as a list of sub teams and members) (see Attachment 2 for a list of sub team goals/assignments made by the Pathway team).

After months of work, we have something to report. As often happens, themes developed in the process of getting to this stage. We have structured this report along those themes, but without discussing which sub team(s) raised/discussed the issue. Instead, we have accumulated the work of all contributors to address specific topics in order of importance and depth on interest in the parish. In this report, we will provide a brief topic overview (necessary in order to understand our recommendations) followed by our recommendations. Often, you will see that we recommend further work pursuant to very specific guidance. This sort of recommendation reflects the conclusion that, though we worked a lot, discovered a lot and resolved a lot, there remains much to do. This report includes a summary of what our committee discovered, along with our proposed actions to address these items.

## II. The Involvement Sub-Team Summary

The Involvement Sub-Team identified that there are approximately 37 active groups within the parish, with nine of them made up of twenty or more members. A little more than half of the group leaders indicated they were in need of more participants. Group leaders routinely agreed that an annual ministry fair or similar opportunity to present their ministry or small group to the general congregation would be prime opportunities for engaging and recruiting more members.

However, opportunities for involvement need to be ever-present, so the Involvement Sub-Committee recommended a Ministries/Small Group bi-fold or tri-fold be created that would offer a group's name, a one-sentence summary statement, time and place of meetings, and leader's name and phone number. These would be placed in pew backs and in Welcome Kits, and would be regularly mentioned in Sunday Announcements with reminders to pick one up and take it to look over. These brochures should be regularly updated, quarterly or perhaps semi-annually, to allow for the addition of newly created groups and group leadership changes.

Similarly, a postcard-style card would be available in the pew backs listing all the ministries and groups with check boxes next to the names, and a place for the interested person to give their name and phone number. The clergy would regularly encourage the congregation to fill one out during announcements. These would be placed in the offering plate, and early the next week the office would notify the group leader of interest in their group, and the group leader would follow up with a phone call to encourage the person to participate.

Furthermore, a good use of the monitors in the atrium would be a running loop of promos of ministries and groups, with pictures of activities and contact information, particularly highlighting current groups, events, and activities. It would be essential that this loop be kept updated to provide the most up-to-date information.

Through interviewing ministry leaders about their needs and their difficulties in recruiting more members, the Involvement Sub-Committee came to the general conclusion that *personal invitation is essential to successful recruitment*. Very few newcomers will seek out a new and unfamiliar ministry, but most will give a group a try if they are made to feel welcome and needed.

Along those lines, the Involvement Sub-Committee felt a newcomers' meeting series such as the Pastor's Pow-wow is an effective way to make newcomers feel welcomed and important. These could be half newcomers and half active members, so that the newbies would have someone they know in the congregation, which is often essential in retaining newcomers. One or two group leaders would also be included each session of the series, so that they could briefly present their group or ministry hopefully to get the newcomers engaged in a group quickly.

***Summary: Engaging newcomers and current parishioners requires sharing opportunities and making them feel welcome to join. Ministry fairs, brochures detailing the various ministries***

***and groups and accompanying cards in pew backs to sign up, and atrium TVs looping ministries and groups offer the opportunities. A newcomers' small group with Fr. Henry, an equal number of newcomers and parishioners, and two team leaders would make them feel noticed and important as well as introduce them to support parishioners and a couple of potential groups to "plug in." Personal invitation and support is key.***

### **III. The Identification Sub-Team Summary**

The Identification Sub-Team examined the collection and usage of data from those attending ChristChurch. It was determined that the church collects essential contact and statistical data, such as births, deaths, baptisms, and confirmations. It does not currently collect data regarding such areas as church attendance, ministry involvement, gifts assessments, social media participation, musical talents, or child care usage. The sub-committee concluded that more information could be useful in plugging members into becoming fully-engaged disciples.

The Identification Sub-Committee recommended consistently using name tags as a way to help identify visitors. If parishioners consistently wear name tags, visitors with handwritten tags can be more readily spotted and made to feel welcome.

It also suggested using technology such as phone apps and social media would provide new avenues of collecting data.

Their recommendation is to utilize eChurch Community Engagement Solutions. Its program Planning Center People would replace the church's current program, ACS. Planning Center People would provide an upgraded system, lower cost, higher functionality, and greater security than ACS currently provides. It would also allow for better data collection. Only essential contact data would be made available to parishioners, while the clergy would have access to more sensitive data. Such capability would allow opportunities to participate and connect with the church and voluntarily share information about themselves, so that they may allow themselves opportunities to become more fully engaged in the church. A presentation on echurch is included with this report as Attachment 3.

***Summary: ChristChurch currently collects essential statistical data but nothing beyond that. The consistent use of name tags would help visually identify visitors. Technology such as phone apps and social media offers opportunities to help people become more engaged. Using eChurch in place of ACS would allow for more thorough collection of data as well as better security with that information. More thorough data would allow more opportunities to engage a person within the church.***

### **IV. The Support Sub-Team Summary**

The Support Sub-Team examined physical, spiritual, and practical support offered to parishioners and attendees through means such as small groups, educational opportunities, child care, transportation, meals, and prayer.

The committee determined that ChristChurch has numerous strengths, including its location and room to grow, and its financial stability and lack of debt. It has a strong commitment to community involvement, such as its support for The Life Center and Habitat for Humanity, and it has high profile community leaders within the congregation. Its on-going and long-term relationship with True-Lite is an important strength. The Stephen Ministry and its outreach to those in crisis is successful. Nursery and child care being available on Sundays, Wednesdays, and for events is a plus. On Sundays, quality Sunday School offerings are a draw. Well-done music has returned to the church, and it is most definitely a strength. And finally, a friendly first impression is essential, and cheerful welcomers at the door is an important strength.

The Support Sub-Committee recommended some additional offerings and activities be implemented, such as dietary education classes, exercise groups, and Advanced Cardiac Life Support / CPR training. These might be offered at various times - both mornings and evenings - for more opportunities for participation.

***Summary: ChristChurch has numerous strengths, such as location, room to grow, and lack of debt; it has strong commitment to community, numerous community leaders as members, and a strong on-going bond with True-Lite. The Stephen Ministry is successful, as are nursery/child care, Sunday School offerings, music, and a welcoming first impression. Other offerings suggested might include those related to health, such as dietary and exercise classes as well as ACLS/CPR training.***

## **V. The Parish Expectations Sub-Team Summary**

The Parish Expectations Sub-Team came up with suggestions that might make ChristChurch more consistently an engaging parish for newcomers and all to enjoy and to encourage all to become more reverently worshipful disciples.

First, they addressed fellowshiping ideas, such as having quarterly combined services followed by a potluck afterward, and continuing the “tent events” such as on the Fourth of July with patriotic singing, parish anniversary events with bluegrass music, fall “trunk or treat” party, and Christmas carols singing along with desserts.

The sub-committee also urged that the Women’s Fellowship Group continue its enthusiastic beginning, with events such as dinner at Ranchland, wreath-making, and palm cross folding. It also suggested organizing and encouraging both a women’s and a men’s retreat.

It also recommended inviting a well-known speaker in and inviting other churches and community participation.

The sub-committee also suggested small group and Sunday School opportunities, such as having an all-parish book study like was done with Rick Warren’s “Purpose Driven Life.”

They recommended using Alpha again as a tool to bring in the unchurched.

They encouraged the creating of additional small groups to allow more people to become engaged, such as book studies or video series, or activity-oriented groups such as Habitat for Humanity. They too suggested that meeting times and places should be more readily advertised, and they suggested clipboards at the Welcome Center might be an answer, as well as regular encouragement from the pulpit.

They suggested that Sunday School offerings should have participatory as well as lecture options for varying learning styles, and that three Sunday School options would be optimal. They further recommended that top-flight educators should be encouraged to teach these classes as was done to bolster the children's Sunday School program. As with small groups, strong encouragement from the pulpit to participate in Sunday School is essential.

The sub-committee also had recommendations for bolstering Wednesday WOW. They encouraged consistently good meals, and to give the cooks a break, try using a food truck or caterer once a month with publicity ahead of time what the catered meal will be. They also recommended regular encouragement to participate in fellowship through WOW activities. They suggested trying to appeal to a better mix of ages and interests through WOW activities, such as video sessions and small group discussions afterward, where people can split up by interest in varying content—parenting, young professionals, caregivers—with facilitators to lead each interest group and allow the clergy to take a break from the burden of teaching. They also stated that it is important that groups begin and end on time.

Regarding Sunday services, the sub-committee gave accolades regarding sermons, particularly having the outline in the bulletin, excellent content, and the collect coinciding with the sermon. They also praised how warmly people are greeted and made to feel welcome, and how appealing the refreshments look on the center table in the atrium.

However, they determined that there is room for improvement in some areas. We must strive for excellence in everything that we do, because whatever takes away from the reverence of the service needs to be tweaked. They suggested the creation of a worship committee to meet monthly to coordinate and fine-tune all those involved at the altar—clergy, acolytes, EMs, music, ushers, etc.

They encouraged the continued improvement of music in general, and specifically encouraging no “soloists” when the choir is singing together; printing the music in the bulletin, not just the words; teaching new songs to the congregation, or better yet, sing songs we know; and discovering what music is working at other contemporary services, such as at ChristChurch Austin.

They recommended the creation of a “Vision for 10:45 committee to decide where that service is going and how to get there. Is it to attract those who'd like a contemporary service? How do we attract all ages, but 20s and 30s in particular? Are we traditional, or a Stonegate knock-off? If the contemporary style didn't work, and the blended services don't work, how do we shape a service that works? Which music would we choose?

Finally, the Parish Expectations Sub-Committee presented some expectations for Sundays that require particular attention to make the service more worshipful for all. Reverence at the altar rail is essential. Sermons need to be uniform in length to coordinate the return of the children from children's church. Standard lighting needs to be maintained, as sometimes it's bright and other times it's half dark. Readers need to be prepared and ready to read. AV issues need to be worked out. The distribution of home communion kits needs to be streamlined and solemnized. More ushers and EMs are needed at the 8:30 service since it has doubled in size. Nursery workers need to be present and ready thirty minutes before services. More ushers are needed at funerals. And services need to begin and end on time.

***Summary: Combined worship and fellowship opportunities need to be held quarterly. Particular attention needs to be paid to the creation of small groups and the encouragement of women's and men's fellowship activities in order to engage more people. Inviting in a well-known speaker and hosting Alpha were suggested means of bringing in non-church participants. Church-wide and small group book and video studies as well as activity-oriented groups will encourage additional participation. Sunday School and WOW classes should be varied in learning style and content, and top-flight educators should lead these courses to give clergy a break. All small group, Sunday School, and WOW activities need to be publicized and participation strongly encouraged by the clergy. Sermons, welcomers, and refreshments were all mentioned as strengths. Attention needs to be paid to maintaining reverence. A worship committee needs to meet monthly to coordinate services. Music needs to continue to improve. A "Vision for 10:45" committee needs to determine what the direction of the service is and whose needs are we trying to meet there. Finally, maintaining reverence was reiterated, sermons need to be uniform in length, lighting needs to be standardized, readers need to be ready, AV issues need to be resolved, the distribution of home communion kits needs to be streamlined, additional ushers and EMs are needed with the growth of the 8:30 service, nursery workers need to be there thirty minutes early, more ushers are needed at funerals, and all services and events need to begin and end on time.***

## **VI. The New Members Sub-Team Summary**

The New Members Sub-Team explored how people found their way to ChristChurch and what kept them coming back. A survey was sent out to parishioners to ask questions about certain topics; a copy of this survey is submitted with this report as Attachment 4. Among the strengths the sub-committee identified are liturgical worship, adherence to the Bible, and the strong pastoral staff.

The area mentioned most often in need of improvement was music.

They found that new members most often cited coming to ChristChurch as a result of a relationship with someone who attended. Once here, they found that relationships, caring people, and adherence to the Bible are among our strengths.

Recognizing that we have an aging parish, they determined we need to attract new members, particularly younger members and young families, in addition to all others.

This sub-committee deemed it important that the results of the Pathways to Engagement initiative be shared with the congregation. The results would be sent out by Marty via email, sharing the results and the recommendations being made to the vestry by the varying sub-committees. They would be kept in the loop as to what actions are being taken based on the recommendations, thus making it a group commitment to improvement.

The New Members Sub-Committee recommended making the church's name "ChristChurch Anglican" uniform in all its uses, and making it visible on the building. Our signage should all match our designated logo.

They further recommended keeping the website fresh and updated, and keeping archived sermons available there. Social media should be kept updated and fresh as well. Email invitations should be sent out to the congregation to join in on blogs and social media.

They determined that we need to hold dear to our Anglican heritage. We need to make our English roots known in annual public events along the lines of the St. Ann's Family Fair and St. Luke's Pumpkin Patch. They also recommend hosting non-service offerings, such as music recitals, lectures, dinners, and picnics, as opportunities to bring people in.

The New Members Sub-Committee stressed that first impressions are essential. Music was routinely mentioned as a failed first impression. Their survey further revealed that clergy needs diversity in youth and perhaps gender, perhaps in music ministry or associate rector positions. And while we do not want to alter our liturgy, we need a program to teach why we do what we do, showing Biblical connections, to help newcomers understand. Additionally, welcoming at the front door should remain a high priority; taking that further, someone from the nursery and the children's church should be outside their area looking for children to welcome in as well. Follow-up calls by the clergy to a visitor, followed by a written note, are very important. And a newcomers' dinner is important as a bridge from curious visitor to active membership.

***Summary: Most people cited being invited by parishioners as the reason they initially came to ChristChurch. Our liturgical worship, adherence to the Bible, and strong pastoral staff were mentioned as strengths, but music was a weakness. The committee recognizes a need to attract new members, particularly but not limited to the 20s and 30s age group. They thought it important to send the results of the Pathways initiative and a detail of actions that will come of it to the parish so it becomes a full family commitment. They believe it important to make "ChristChurch Anglican" our uniform name, and to feature it prominently in front of the church. We should capitalize on our English heritage, and bring in the community through events similar to St. Ann's Family Fair, as well as music recitals, lectures, and dinners. They stressed that first impressions are essential, so music needs to continue to improve, clergy/ministry leaders need to be more diverse, and we need to teach why we do what we do through our liturgy. Welcomers at the front door are very important, but welcoming children to the children's area and to the nursery are also important. Finally, visits should be***

*followed up with a phone call from the clergy, then a written note, and eventually an invitation to perhaps dinner and conversation with the clergy.*

## **VII. Recommendations and Actions**

We have grouped our recommendations by topic, although you will find that there remains some overlap among the areas addressed. In order to provide a better understanding of each area addressed, we begin each topic with a brief discussion and have included an explanation with only those recommendations that seem in need of clarification.

You will have noticed that while many of the suggestions coming out of the sub teams are very detailed and specific, we have tried to make these recommendations more strategic in nature. We refer you to the foregoing summaries for several ideas on how to implement these recommendations.

### **I. Music**

#### **a. Discussion**

Music came up as an important issue in the work done by multiple sub teams and we believe that it is the most important issue presented to us. We cannot say that the focus on music results from the fact that it is one of the important areas of worship and that the other areas function at a high level (clergy, pastoral care, etc.) or the fact that we seem to have struggled with music for some time now. Regardless, music represents a primary focus of much of our work. In this regard, however, we recognize the significant improvements in the program made after this group began its work. In offering our recommendations, we have attempted to acknowledge where great progress has been made and identify those areas where further effort may bear fruit.

#### **b. Recommendations**

- Create ownership of the music ministry.
  - The vestry has largely done this through the hiring of a full-time music minister. We believe that other recommendations set out below, however, will further assist in creating ownership.
- Form an advisory group for the music ministry.
  - We follow the proposition that music in the Church should reflect both what the choir wants to sing and what the parish wants to hear. We also believe that the parish needs to have an established avenue for making constructive comments as well as gripes while not disturbing the control vested in the Music Minister and the Rector. We suggest that the Vestry set up an advisory group composed of both choir and non-choir members (probably more non-choir than choir members) to receive comments about the music and to work with the Music Minister in making sure that she understands what the parish would like to hear at service. This group would also prove helpful in recruiting members to join the choir and/or participate in other music events (discussed below).

- Expand music beyond Sunday services.
  - Given the importance of music to the parish, we believe that music can serve as a means to engage those outside of our membership in activities at the Church. As discussed in the narratives above, we believe that the Church would benefit from opportunities for parishioners to invite potential new members to “non-service” events. In this regard, we recommend adding two music “events” each year. Suggestions would include patriotic music on Veteran’s Day, former resident who has become successful, and English ballads (as tied in to the Church of England history of the Church). Rather than focus on a particular event, however, we recommend charging the music advisory group with the task of working with the Music Minister in coming up with something that we could do well and that fits the Church’s personality.
- Update to or obtain a user-friendly AV system.
  - Discussed below.

## **II. Uniformity and Systems**

### **a. Discussion**

We have concluded that the Church would benefit from more uniformity and systemization. As an example, is the name of the Church one word (ChristChurch), two words (ChristChurch or ChristChurch Anglican) or three words (ChristChurch Anglican)? In fact, the official name of the Church is ChristChurch Midland (Anglican Communion). Through many of the comments we received, we have concluded that improving uniformity and systems would benefit the Church mission. The church name, logo, and all marketing materials should be uniform to convey a consistent message to the community. Additionally, we determined that an upgrade of our website and consistent, regular updating of said website, our marquee, and social media accounts are all important in conveying our message to the community.

We concluded that the church is due for a number of technology and systems upgrades. We suggest upgrading to web-based technology and software systems, including a new people management system, the use of an app for increased church engagement, moving accounting to QuickBooks, and retiring our older and outdated ACS management and accounting system. Lastly, our audio/visual systems are analog and our music ministry and overall sanctuary services will benefit and improve with an upgrade to a digital audio/visual system. This will allow us to use ministry opportunities such as live streaming, in addition to correcting recurring problems.

### **b. Recommendations**

- Ask the vestry to give clarification and implement uniform usage of the Church name and logo.
  - The vestry should determine the correct, uniform, and final official name of our church, and efforts should be made to be consistent in all materials related. This includes our signage, marquee, marketing materials, website, social media

accounts, and any other public use of the name of our church. The color of our building and signage are different than our logo. It seems to reason these should be uniform and consistent as well. Perhaps a designated church employee, third party contractor such as a marketing consultant, or volunteer is needed to ensure these tasks are completed. The vestry should make a determination on how best to implement this. There will be a cost to correct this, which this committee has not explored.

- Move all Church technology and software to web-based systems.

To move forward with a systems upgrade, the priority is to move to a web-based system and not a software based system, that we currently have with ACS. This will reduce our need for expensive hardware and computer systems. We recommend People Center management software for a people management system. This system is web-based and free of charge, and will replace the current system the staff and clergy use to store information about the congregation. Additionally, we recommend eChurch engagement systems for implementation of an app. This system is fully compatible with People Center, and will have the ability to communicate with the congregation via push notifications, create and maintain groups, and allow giving through the app via bank account, credit/debit cards, and echecks, among other abilities. The goal of the app is to increase engagement and giving with the church family, and set the stage for engaging and attracting younger people in the local community.
- Our parish accountant, Bliss Foy, has reviewed and acknowledged her familiarity with QuickBooks accounting system. They have a web-based product designed for non-profits and churches, web-based, that will replace our current ACS accounting and financial reporting functions. An additional benefit, is our eChurch system is also fully compatible with QuickBooks, so giving and payment information can be downloaded into QuickBooks without manual data entry. Our contract with ACS should be terminated once our new systems are up and running.
- Upgrade and update our A/V systems.
  - The Audio/Visual team should begin evaluating what is needed to make the transition from analog to digital, including consideration for compatibility with our new people management and engagement software systems. We recommend hiring a consultant, or company, to help accomplish this transition. Consideration of new technologies, including live streaming, mp3, digital video, app usage and functions, and other social media should be priorities. The Music Minister should also be included to make sure all music ministry goals are considered and implemented in this process.

### III. Membership

#### a. Discussion

During the Pathway Group's work, we recognized a need to involve, expand and support our membership. Each sub team seemed to gravitate, in its own way, to one central theme as it touched on this area; identify what we do best and don't try to be all thing to all people. Our discussions led us away from advertising and similar outreach and toward personal relationships. At ChristChurch, we care for one another and for those around us. The central theme for membership became a focus on facilitating the building of relationships, supporting (caring for) the members thus enabling them to better care for themselves and others, and letting those outside the Church know who we are. The recommendations below mirror this theme.

#### b. Recommendations

- Increase opportunities for members to build relationships outside of a Sunday service setting.
  - We have already discussed adding opportunities to come together to enjoy non-service music together, but the effort needs to be bigger than just that. Father Jonathan has recently instituted a dinner night (dinner at someone's home with child care provided) that seems to have garnered a positive response. Frankly, any activity that will draw participants and allow attendees time to talk and get to know one another will further this goal. These events will also provide a venue to which we can invite non-members, allowing them to get to know us better. Rather than make specific event recommendations, however, we suggest adding a budget line to support these sorts of events and allowing Father Jonathan to put together an active group to exploit the opportunity.
- Focus on building membership through personal invitation and relationship.
  - Importantly, the Team concluded that the best opportunities for building membership came from personal relationships and personal invitations. Other churches may have approaches that work for them, but that would fail at ChristChurch. In building on our strengths, we believe we need to increase the opportunities to bringing people to the church in whatever way we can get them there. Certainly, inviting someone to a service is and should be important. Creating and exploiting other events should also become a focus. Adding music related events should help in this area, but we need to remember that each event also can be a recruiting event. Invite others and be prepared to introduce them to ChristChurch when they come.
    - Someone recently said "No one throws a better funeral than ChristChurch." Clearly, we make a good impression, but we do not exploit the opportunity. Something as simple as an annotated version of the service explaining why we do certain things would allow non-members to understand us better. Also, noting facts on Anglicanism rather than a simple offer to take communion if you are baptized might

help non-members to know our roots. Although we need to keep the solemnity and purpose of the service/event at the forefront, we may be able to use these events as more of an opportunity to attract new members. Accordingly, we recommend the formation of a group to look at these events and work with clergy on how we can take advantage of the good impressions we are forming without detracting from the service/event.

- Hold one combined service at least one Sunday per quarter.
  - If we seek to build a community, it is important for us to see one another. Although we are still small enough to have one combined service each Sunday, differing worship styles don't really allow that. By combining services on a regular basis, we can touch base with those attending a different service and potentially become more comfortable with a worship style that is a little different than the service we usually attend.
  - Regardless of the service attended, however, we found a strong desire to keep every worship service consistent with our Anglican tradition and respectful of the solemn occasion that it is.
- Add/improve programs that respond to the needs of parish members and the public.
  - We have recently revived our participation in a financial success program. This act reflects the direction we recommend taking. In connection with programs such as this, however, we recommend identifying coaches within the Church who can provide additional support, if needed.
  - Like identifying financial coaches for those in need, we believe that it is important to identify skills among our members and to match those skills with those in need. Although we often accomplish this goal, we believe that we can do so more effectively through use of many of the systems recommended above.

#### **IV. Stewardship**

##### **a. Discussion**

Most Churches talk only about money when it is needed (typically in the fall) and everyone (from clergy to newest parishioner) hates it. We should view money as one of the means of accomplishing our goals and report often on our progress.

##### **b. Recommendations**

- Set the Church's goals and let the budget flow from there.
  - Rather than setting a budget at what we believe we can raise, we suggest considering setting the goals we want to accomplish, establishing a prioritized budget to accomplish those goals and then see how much we can raise to accomplish those goals. If we fall short, the items on the bottom of the priority list don't happen and carry over or are dropped if we really don't believe in them. In our discussions, we have heard several comments reflective of this theme such as:

- Dream big.
  - Make a plan honoring God, and He will provide.
  - You don't know what you can do until you try.
- Report during the year on how the church spends the money it raises.
  - As an example, if we set music events as a budget item, report during the year by reminding the parish what we budgeted and how we are now planning on, or actually, spending it. We might also consider an approach along the lines of a return on your investment.
- At the annual meeting, perhaps we could review where we spent money and what we accomplished. Even a quick recitation of statistics might help remind us of what gets accomplished. Examples of statistics might be number of services, number of funerals, estimate of attendance at funerals, number of seminars sponsored (and some examples), counseling sessions, and people reached on mission trips. The bottom line is to focus a little more on what we invested (both in terms of time and money) and what return we received on that investment.
- Bottom line, think like you can raise the money, spend based on priorities, and let people know (no less than every other month) how their investment of time and money made a difference.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

During the process of doing the Team's work, we learned that group wisdom often led us down paths we had not anticipated. We do not presume to say whether it is the result of Divine intervention, the fact that combined effort often yields better results, or a combination of both. From the recommendations, however, you can see that we favor a committee approach to many of the challenges we have identified. We believe that a group addressing a problem will increase input from the parish as a whole, maintain better involvement and buy in, and will result in a more effective path forward.

We also found that keeping in touch with the agreed upon goal kept us properly focused. Accordingly, we conclude with where we started; namely the goal of the Pathway to Engagement. As we have defined it, the goal is to become a fully engaged disciple of Christ.

A fully engaged disciple of Christ is someone:

- a. who has made a personal commitment to be a contributing member of the ChristChurch family,
- b. who is growing in prayer and the study of Scripture,
- c. who has is developing an understanding of their own gifts and talents and employs them in ministry that builds up the Body of Christ,
- d. who regularly participates in worship with the parish family, and
- e. who is involved in outreach and mission as a Christian witness.