

Mission Action Plan

The Mission Act Planning Process was designed and facilitated by Canon Janet Marshall, Director of Congregational Development in the Diocese of Toronto, working with a steering team made up of the Ven. Rhonda Waters, Fome Ikohgo, Kim Jones, Terry Leversedge, Audrey Lawrence, Jean Lockett, Jeff McRae, and Debbie Tweedle. Janet joined us in person twice: first in September 2023 for a planning day with the team and an introductory presentation to the congregation and then in October 2023 for a very well attended Congregational Day of reflection, questioning, and imagining. Then, in November 2023, Janet met with the steering team via Zoom to go over what she heard us say about our sense of mission, values, and priorities for action and help launch us into the final stage of creating the Mission Action Plan presented in this document. Details and supporting documents about this process can be found on our website at <http://sthelens.ca/mission-action-planning/>.

Much of what you will read in this report will feel familiar – which is at it should be. Our core mission and the values that shape St. Helen's remain unchanged although some of the language has changed to reflect shifts in emphasis and a desire to communicate in ways that make sense in 2024. Most importantly, this MAP places the focus on the action with a staged roll out that will help keep us moving forward with our priorities. It is ambitious but it is also a document that is intended for constant revision as we continue to learn about ourselves, our community, and our vocation as the Body of Christ in this place. We can slow things down or speed things up or find new ways to fulfill our priorities as we go along – this is a plan not a contract. We will be mindful of Janet's guiding image for us: we are sailing a boat, not steering a car. Adjustments, redirections, and surprises are all to be expected.

Mission

To proclaim in word and deed the good news of God in Christ and equip one another to grow in faith as disciples of Jesus.

Vision

We seek a deep spiritual life as a people inspired by the Spirit and following Jesus, expressed through a flourishing common life and meaningful relationships with the people and communities we are called to support and serve.

Values

- Being a loving, inclusive, and accepting community
- Working together for common purpose
- Celebrating God through meaningful worship and music
- Generosity in both financial giving and service to our neighbours near and far
- Sharing a relevant and lively Christian faith with the world around us

Priorities

1. Deepen our faith and spirituality and build our sense of meaning as a community inspired by the Spirit to follow Jesus.
2. Expand our reach to meet people where they are and, in doing so, enhance our own faith development and understanding of what it means to be church.
3. Extend communications within our congregation and increase our presence in the community outside of it.
4. Improve our practices of invitation, welcome, and inclusion.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of St. Helen's needs to change slightly in order to better reflect how the parish actually operates and to better communicate what our various groups actually do. Some of these changes are simply name changes. Some rearrange various responsibilities or oversight.

"Stewardship" is restructured in order to recognize the need for (and de facto reality of) a dedicated Property Committee. Financial Stewardship already has its own team, under the leadership of the Treasurer. The stewardship of talent is assigned to the Discipleship Committee.

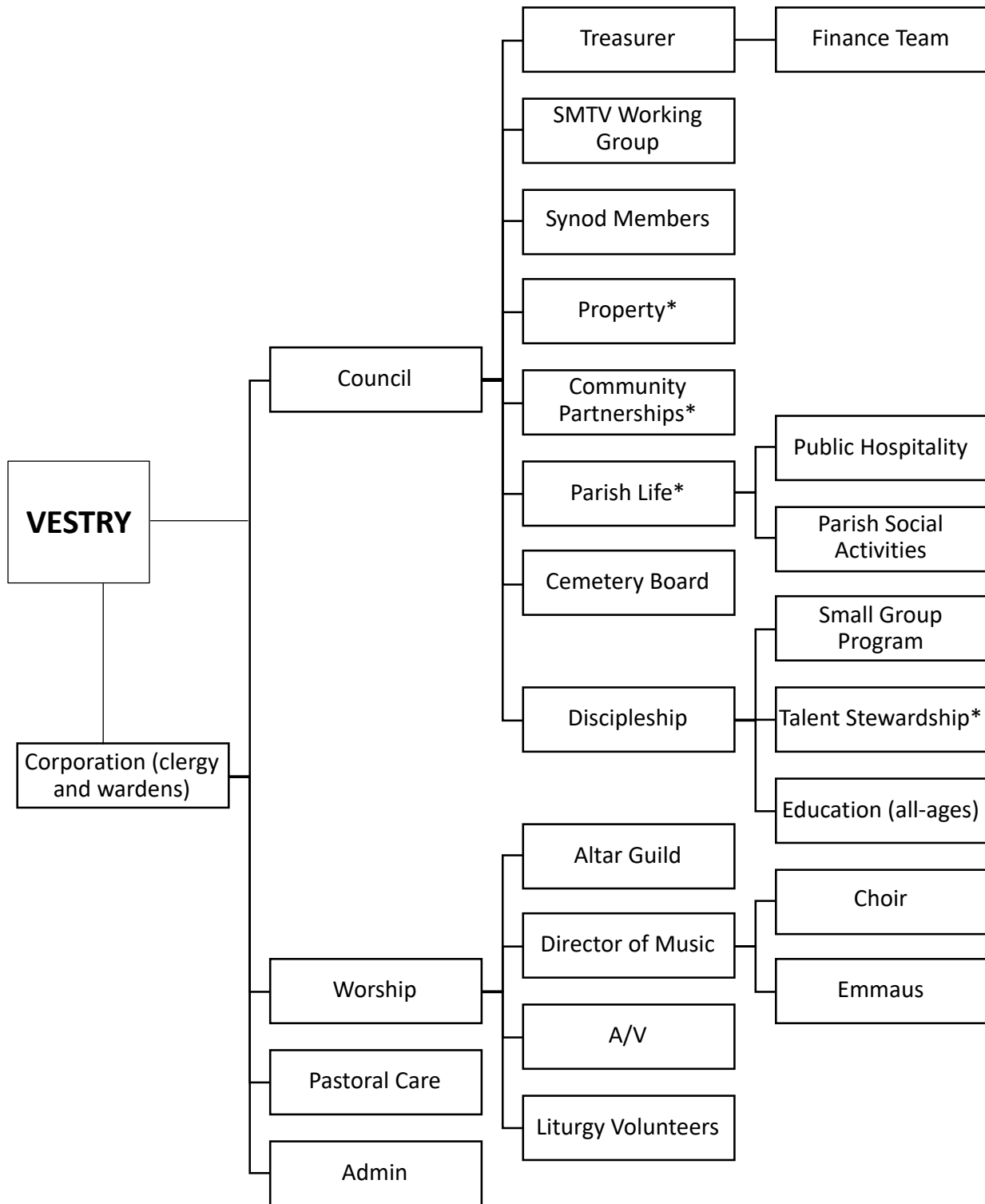
"Outreach" no longer accurately describes what we hope to do through our service in the world. This is partly simply because words change over time and partly because our goals are slightly different. Rather than seeing our role as primarily one of giving material aid from our position of comfort, we seek to build relationships of mutual respect, understanding, and support with other organizations working for the Kingdom of God (whether they would use that language or not) and with the people who live in our neighbourhoods.

"Community Partnerships" more accurately conveys this goal (while still making space for the important work of charitable giving!).

"Community" is a confusing term – do we mean the community of St. Helen's members or do we mean the community of Queenswood Heights/Orleans & Blackburn/Ottawa? **"Parish Life"** makes it clear that this committee is focused on the community building work we do inside our church through ministries of hospitality (e.g. funeral receptions, coffee hour, special public events) and parish social activities (e.g. games night, parish potlucks).

The Pastoral Care and Prayer Chain Teams used to (nominally) fall under this pillar. It has been relocated to reflect their direct relationship to the clergy, much in the same way as the groups involved in supporting our worship ministries.

The organizational chart on page 4 reflects these changes (marked with *).



Implementation Plan

1. Deepen our faith and spirituality and build our sense of meaning as a community inspired by the Spirit and following Jesus.

Goal	Steps	Launch Date	Resources	Oversight
Discern Gifts and Develop Leaders	Hold Ministry Fair	March-April 2024	volunteers; time in schedule	Parish Council
	Talent Stewardship Campaign	Apr-24	directory; volunteers; communications	new working group
	Call Lay Reader(s)	24-Mar	clergy time; willing lay reader(s)	clergy and wardens
Develop small group ministry program	Identify/create resources, leaders, and groups	Sep-24	clergy time; volunteers; communications; possibly \$	Discipleship
	train leaders	Nov-24	clergy time; volunteers; communications; possibly \$	Discipleship
	launch program	Dec-24	volunteers; communications; possibly \$	Discipleship
	initial evaluation	Jan-25	volunteers; clergy time	Discipleship
Strengthen and Support Pastoral Care Ministry	Consultations with current team members	May-24	clergy time	Clergy
	develop intentional schedule of healing services	Mar-24	clergy time; volunteers; musicians	Clergy
	explore pastoral support groups (e.g. bereavement group)	in consultation with Pastoral Care Team	clergy time; volunteers; communications; possibly \$	Clergy
Expand diversity of special liturgies	develop seasonal plans to try different kinds of services	Lent 2024	clergy, volunteers, musicians	Clergy

2. Expand our reach to meet people where they are and, in doing so, enhance our own faith development and understanding of what it means to be church.

Goal	Steps	Launch Date	Resources	Oversight
Build more robust relationships with current outreach partners	send members on site visits and schedule "report backs"		Volunteers; time in schedule; communications	Community Partnerships
	Invite guests to St. Helen's		\$ for honoraria	Community Partnerships + Clergy
	Identify next steps for supporting our partners beyond donations		volunteers	
Develop missional plan to connect with one or two target demographics	Identify target demographics	Apr-25	volunteers; research help; \$	New working group
	build mission teams to work on creating plans		volunteers	New working group
	identify worship needs and develop appropriate services		clergy, volunteers, musicians	New working group + Clergy

3. Extend communications within our congregation and increase our presence in the community outside of it

Goal	Steps	Launch Date	Resources	Oversight
Improve communications strategy and products	intra-communications (shared drives, etc.)	Mar-24	staff time; \$\$	clergy + admin
	develop external communications (signage; advertizing strategy; branding?)	Apr-24	staff time; \$\$, volunteers	Parish Council (new working group?)
	evaluate internal communications (tools and format)	Sep-24	staff time; \$\$, volunteers	

4. Improve our practices of invitation, welcome, and inclusion

Goal	Steps	Launch Date	Resources	Oversight
Develop a robust newcomer ministry	design greeting and follow-up practices	Apr-24	volunteers	Parish Life
	offer newcomers' gatherings or courses	Oct-24	volunteers, \$ (for hospitality)	Discipleship and Parish Life