

## **The vision of All Saints Pathways Project:**

- *All Saints Identity:* Solemn Worship; Social Justice; Solid Formation.
- Formation provides a bridge between worship and advocating for social justice in the world.
- When people leave All Saints after worship, they go forth and serve as mature disciples of Christ.
- Relationships in the community are deepened as we share our stories and grow together spiritually.

### **Project description:**

- Strengthen the holistic Christian formation program at All Saints that helps people connect and grow in spiritual depth.
- Meet people where they are and provide opportunities to grow deeper in faith, encouraging all to follow Jesus more closely and act radically in the world (be counter-cultural).

### **What we did:**

- Put together preliminary ideas pending collecting data to assess the congregational needs and interests.
- Got the congregation thinking about formation with presentations at the annual meeting in Feb and table conversations at a coffee hour later that month. We used the Ware spiritual inventory to stimulate discussion. 40+ people attended.
- The team selected the spiritual life inventory from Renewal Works.
- Prep work included 3 weeks of announcements to the congregation, which paid off in participation, 105 respondents against 2017 ASA of 103.
- While the survey was open the pathways team hosted a coffee hour to answer questions and offer assistance with completing the survey.
- We implemented a 3-week spiritual life inventory from Renewal Works to understand where All Saints was as a parish in terms of spiritual practices, beliefs, and adherence to Episcopalian ideas of spiritual health. Results were not totally surprising and rather promising, and showed a lack of integration of scripture into regular practice and 2 camps of parishioners: one tending towards less spiritual depth and the other tending towards much spiritual depth. Utilizing these results, we are currently in the process of rolling out programs of intermediate depth and ways of digging deeper into spirituality and Anglican practice.

### **2. What did you invest (time, research, materials, money, etc)?**

- Time: planning meetings, workshops, 3 coffee hours; meeting with renewal works
- Research: best fit options for what survey would be used]; parish profile information and community demographic information to fit survey response into a broader context
- Money: \$500 for Renewal Works survey

### **3. What were your activities?**

- Implemented a parish-wide survey of spiritual practices and beliefs
- Hosted coffee hour to present results and lead “dot exercise” of spiritual practices, desires, beliefs, &c.
- Utilizing the data, we are currently crafting a series of programs on “intermediate depth” opportunities for spiritual growth
  - These are opportunities that discuss topics in greater detail than the Basics courses (basic-level) and discipleship groups (advanced-level) currently offered
  - Conversations with renewal works team; ended up using more of their material than we anticipated.

### **4. Who participated?**

- Pathways team commissioned the survey
- Entire congregation (larger number than ASA!) took survey
- Staff at Renewal Works analyzed the data

## 5. What have been your results (learning, awareness, attitudes, skills, etc.)?

- Positive reaction from survey participants
- Creation of new intermediate depth
- Deepening congregational spiritual growth is more of cultural shift than a programmatic shift.
- Everyone on the pathways team has developed in their leadership and are going on to serve in new roles for the coming program year.
- A part of the pathways team, Mother Erin put together a view of All Saints formation offerings. Through that added a new offering for new comers, All Saints 101 and already had basics classes. At the advance level, All Saints was moving in direction of growing discipleship groups.
- Between that view and the survey results, determined to focus on something in between the basics and discipleship group.
  - Two programs under development
    - Spiritual story corps
      - Small group for 4-6 weeks where people share spiritual stories
    - Preparing for Sundays
      - Providing links to material on Sunday readings and are exploring online options for discussion, if that is successful may look at other on line options.
        - In addition, working with the adult formation team on some offerings around liturgy and the bible in context.
        - The results also indicated that embedding the Bible in all activities would help with spiritual growth. Pathways team members are well poised to led Bible reflections at the start of meetings from our practice of leading prayer at the beginning of our meetings and the worship experience in the larger pathways meetings.

## 6. What do you anticipate being the ultimate impact of your project?

- A greater focus on implementing scripture and prayer into parish meetings
- New “intermediate level” programs that are led by lay leaders
- Ongoing groups that allow congregants to explore and deepen their faith lives.

## 7. How will your project be sustained?

- Coupled with a newly-implemented leadership structure, the new intermediate-level programs will not be the sole purview of the rector, but will have greater lay leader involvement
- During her time at AS, Mother Erin worked on lay leader model, healthy hierarchy. In one of the areas is spiritual formation. The pathways ministries will fall into that area.

## 8. What worked and didn't work?

- Tensions arose over the importance of data as a metric of spiritual depth. Despite this, we learned much from the survey results that will be utilized going forward.
- Data collection, interpretation and communication of results took longer than originally anticipated in part because of renewal works timing and in part because of summer vacation schedules.
  - An interesting experiment was the “dot exercise” that was presented at the coffee hour we hosted to relay the survey results to the congregation. The dot exercise had parishioners indicate their belief in or desire to learn more about various statements of faith or spiritual practices – many of which were covered in the survey. The dot exercise was conducted in a group setting and had a results set that was quite similar to that of the survey. The results showed that different methods of gathering information are valid and can garner different results based on how the questions are posed

- Pathways team focused more on the project than developing as a team—learning from this is being taken into the new leadership structure, where the leader team is viewing itself as a small group.
- We had three people drop out over the course of the program; the team size was smaller than renewal works recommended to being with (9-25).
- Didn't engage with ministries already doing faith formation, such as adult education committee or monastic community.

**9. What has been the most important lesson learned?**

- All Saints has much to offer in regards to sacred tradition and social justice, but opportunities for growth for parishioners in the middle stages of their spiritual journey are greatly desired. Incorporating scripture into parish meetings and having more chances for growth into deeper faith are important