

## **Vestry Retreat Summary**

By Vestry Clerk Craig Anderson

This year's vestry retreat took place Friday evening, March 9, and Saturday, March 10. The wardens, and eleven elected members, one youth representative, the rector and curate convened with the overall goals of achieving relationship- and consensus-building, further development of the 2012 leadership model, affirmation of commitments, and identification of next steps for committees and individuals. Some additional retreat details and information about vestry leadership commitments and priorities may be found later by reading more.



### **Summary of March 9-10 Vestry Retreat, continued ...**

Friday evening (March 9) at the Raymond home included fellowship and dinner, followed by review and discussion of the Sunday ministry at St. Michael's. The conversation focused on worship and music, children's and youth ministries, adult spiritual and fellowship opportunities, and opportunities and limitations associated with parish facilities. New vestry member Mike Savage shared a brief report related to the human resources component of daily operations (all issues related to personnel) at St. Michael's. The evening concluded with Compline.



Saturday's session was held at the Barrington headquarters of Pepper Construction, thanks to the hospitality of the Pepper family. After Morning Prayer and some community-building activities, the agenda focused on presentation of several reports and solicitation of feedback from those present. Items included Vestry operating principles, committee assignments, and tasks for the Governance and Nominating Committee, as well as status reports concerning the work of and/or objectives for the Little Angels Christian Preschool, 2012 Stewardship Plan, Youth Group, Finance and Investment Committee, and Building and Grounds Committee. A presentation and discussion regarding Mission and Outreach focused on new efforts to provide a clearer mission and more collaborative leadership structure for all of our many parish outreach efforts. The morning ended with a look at and brief reflection on 54 years of Sunday worship attendance trends at St. Michael's. (Look for the chart in an upcoming *Sword*.)

Following Noonday Prayer and lunch, the agenda topics for presentation and discussion were Communications and Technology, Strategic Plan development, and an initial conversation related to the topic of same-sex unions. This final matter has come to the vestry's attention due to trends and changes in the national Episcopal Church, related Illinois law that became effective in June 2011, and the pastoral response and options provided to congregations in our diocese by Bishop Lee. After an introduction to and clarification of the issues, the vestry focused on matters of how to inform and engage members of St. Michael's, with primary aims of creating a respectful

atmosphere, in light of members' diverse views, and outcomes that will be consistent with our overall faith, identity and mission.

Please watch future issues of The Sword for additional information and updates regarding matters given attention at the Vestry Retreat, other activities of the Vestry, and the ongoing work of the several committees.

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With contributions from the Wardens and Rector