

Transitional Size Congregations Conference

Pre-work

Rector's Statement

I will not be able to be present at the Transitional Size Congregations Conference, so I'm going to write a few notes here.

St. Aidan's is a great church—with many long-term, faithful people who gather around God's table to be nourished for ministry in the world, and who take that for the privilege and the gift that it is. It's a wonderful place to be a priest.

And we're also a parish that is, like many others, at a crossroads. We have an aging population and have not found a secret formula for growth. Some of us are ambivalent about growth, and some of us are ambivalent about growing in faith. Both of these things make it difficult to get a critical mass of people that is committed to the work it takes to do something new, let alone keep the machine going.

It's hard for us to try new things, even ones without much risk. For example, at every Annual Meeting since I've been here, someone has raised the idea of dinner groups, and people have stood up to volunteer to organize. But this hasn't happened yet. I've ranged from communicating with those volunteers a lot (but letting it be led by them) to doing nothing, and the results are the same. This is something that is in the wider culture (as are most of our issues at St. Aidan's). It is hard to get people to agree to serve on the Vestry. The complexity of our finances leads to a really high learning curve on the Vestry, so it often feels to me like we don't have enough rigorous discussion of our common life. However, Vestry meetings are enjoyable, faithful, almost always have Bible study, and we are becoming a prayerful community.

We did take a big risk this year with the BOHO Outreach ministry, and I think we will see some fruit from that in the future; we continue to work out the kinks with that on a day-to-day basis. I'm happy they're here, even though internally I have a great deal of conflict about the best way to assist the homeless and the status of homelessness and homeless people in Boulder County.

A central core of the parish is committed to Campus Ministry, and we have significant funding for that purpose, but it has been difficult for us to see any growth—I think the most significant issue here has been limited time to simply spend with students, especially new students, first-year students, and undergrads (those aren't exclusive groups). A full-time ordained chaplain within a parish ministry hasn't been successful, but I don't think the Rector/Chaplain model is successful because my time is divided, and when I have to cut things out, I cut campus ministry time, not funerals and administrative work. The parishioners actively involved in campus ministry are usually, though not always, the same ones who are committed or overcommitted to supporting the parish and its life in general.

As Rector, I'm aware (after 13 years) of some of my liabilities. I want to talk about those because if we are going to move forward, everyone will have to change, including me. It's hard

for me to delegate; this experience is often underscored by me delegating and then a commitment not being met, which makes it harder for me to delegate, but this is something I need to work on in myself, not a complaint about parishioners. I can tend to be autocratic, and it is clear to me that I am becoming more so for the next 15-18 months because I feel like we don't have time to spend in meetings, Vestry, etc on issues where I can make a decision that doesn't have too much cost, but isn't necessarily completely vetted. Conflict management is always a struggle—a good case of this is the parishioner who had become dangerously over involved, and who left St. Aidan's in November—I feel like I could have addressed some of his over involvement earlier and his departure might not have had the impact that it did in November (though that is really a non-issue now).

I also think we suffer from having forgotten how to be neighbors and how to do community care (as opposed to pastoral care). We have many lonely, isolated people and couples. There are some exceptions, but it is more the norm for couples and households of the congregation not to get together for dinner or something outside of church. I do wonder sometimes if this is partially because of my own character—I don't do a lot of those social things. I have wondered this also in terms of our campus ministry—is it impossible for a priest who has a core of self-sufficiency to really teach and lead us to be a caring community? I hope not, but I know that congregations begin to reflect the character of the rector, so I wonder about that.

As I think through all these things—I could write a lot more—and as I've prayed for the last 18 months, I feel that the most honest path forward is to focus on our own faithfulness and growth toward God as a congregation. I don't think there's any program, event, etc. that will bring in throngs of committed people or will suddenly see us with 300 students (and would we know what to do with them??). I do think that as a congregation we can study and participate in worship and community life and ask God to transform us. This isn't a complacent response, it's just using what we do have to try to listen to God.

Along these lines, I've made some changes starting in January to see if we can draw more regular people into looking at our life together. We're offering formation on Sundays in two time slots, sometimes the same subject matter, sometimes not; I really think the church should be *teaching* as well as worshipping on Sunday. We have a prayer group to pray for St. Aidan's starting on January 20. The clergy have met and are spending time thinking about specific themes and topics for our preaching, topics which cover the basics of Christian belief—who is Jesus? What is heaven? How do we forgive in community? I am thinking very seriously about going to a two service Sunday schedule, one in the morning and one in the evening. Decisions like this are more difficult at St. Aidan's, because the history of conflict, and embedded, long-term conflict, means that some people will be unhappy with any decision and will not be willing to look at the discernment of the body and to charitably participate without agreeing. This, to me, is fundamentally an issue of poor-faith formation or immature faith formation, and a situation where we are paying for habits from decades earlier (and at the same time, I'm not trying to blame any one thing). It's hard to be the church now, and at the same time, I am really excited about what God is doing in us. I have many concerns, but I'm not anxious. That's a gift of grace that I'll accept.

A Time Line and Brief History of the Last 20 Years of the Congregation

This is most easily done by Rectors' tenures.

1983-1989 Fr. David Mustian

Became Rector after death of founding rector (emeritus) Fr. A. B. Patterson and standing rector Fr. Ron Resley in the same week in September 1983. Good pastor, because disaffected with the Episcopal Church and left in 1988 with significant membership to found St. Luke's Orthodox Church in East Boulder County. Some families had left during his time because of his stance toward women in leadership. Canterbury Campus ministry was active but not thriving. Under the leadership of Bill Bloomquist the Campus Ministry was active and members were involved and committed to serving God.

1989-1991 Fr. Steve Swift (Interim Rector)

Fr. Swift was a well-liked interim rector who came to help with the recovery after the departure of Fr. Mustian. He provided needed pastoral care and some leadership. Many of the issues of Fr. Mustian's departure and also the rector's deaths in 1983 were not addressed. Fr. Steve Swift had a lot of meetings dealing with the departure of Fr. Mustian, and had a healing service with laying on of hands by Bishop Winterrowd. Parishioners attended and responded by almost all of the congregation going up for the laying on of hands by Bishop Winterrowd. His ministry was characterized by some relief and respite from conflict, with a return to fun and enjoyment of parish life and ministry. Parishioners wanted Fr. Steve Swift to be our new Rector. This was not allowed by the Bishop because of the way he was appointed to the position of Interim.

1991-1996 Fr. Ron Albert

Fr. Albert was called in part because he agreed to continue using the 1928 BCP some times; he also came with a good track record and resume in parish ministry. His tenure is rarely spoken of positively, though under his leadership, Joycare Preschool was started, which was housed at St. Aidan's until 2005. At the end of his tenure he had a heart attack and surgery. He left in Advent of 1996, resigning from the parish and a week later was received into an Evangelical Denomination in the mid-west. His departure was difficult.

1997-2005 Fr. Don Henderson

Fr. Henderson had become campus chaplain in 1991 and became rector after the departure of Ron Albert. His tenure was stable, saw significant growth in campus ministry (especially before he became rector). In 1998, EMCUB/Canterbury was formed as a separate organization to provide funding for campus ministry (The Patterson Fund for Campus Ministry), which is why Canterbury has funds today. Approximately 1.2million was raised for this fund. In 1998-2002, the parish went through a state-supreme court level lawsuit (eventually winning) over the issues of human sexuality that devastated the parish. Many families left either because of conflict in general or because of the Rector's stance on human sexuality or both. Some families (but not many) joined because of the Rector's position as well. The first Patterson Chaplain was called in 2001 (Fr. James Cavanagh). In 2001, Fr. Henderson suffered a stroke and was debilitated for about 6 months. There was a lot of activity in the parish, almost constant activity, and also a lot of pain and transition.

2005-present M. Mary Kate (Schroeder) Réjouis

M. Rejouis was appointed in 2005 as Priest-in-Charge by Bishop Rob O'Neill, with the consents of the Vestry. The parish and Priest-in-Charge participated in a 2.5 year discernment process that ended in M. Rejouis being called as Rector in the fall of 2007. In 2005 and 2006 there was change in every staff position; EMCUB/Canterbury Chaplain James Cavanagh resigned and was received into the Roman Catholic Church within 2 weeks of his final Sunday. Since then we have seen increasing stability, some growth, and the realization of financial stress that has been present for many years and is—that pledge and plate do not meet operating expenses. Canterbury called a second chaplain, Fr. Dustin Berg, here from 2007-2009. That ministry was stable but unremarkable. Currently M. Rejouis serves as Rector and Chaplain with a part-time Priest Associate and Deacon for clergy staff. In 2008 and 2010 two small capital campaigns (\$80,000 and \$50,000, respectively) did significant work to catch up on capital repairs that had been neglected for at least 20 years.

Congregational Data (data reflects actual year, filed in next year's parochial report)

	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10*
Plate & Pledge (in thousands)	220	277	299	255	241	224	278	324	269	251	258*
Operating Expenses	273	386	354	343	301	310	323	362	390	359	329*
Members	413	358	274	249	195	201	207	223	223	241	230*
ASA	163	167	172	157	145	154	152	154	142	147	143
Easter Attendance	353	332	269	346	289	286	332	301	269	330	332
Marriages	2	4	1	1	1	1	4	0	4	10	3
Burials	8	8	7	8	3	5	11	15	14	10	17
Operating Outreach (in thousands)	4	2	0	13	21	6	11	0	159	107	129*
Non-Operating Outreach (in thousands)	0		24	12	11	1	5	57	0	0	20*

* estimated

Notes on Finances

St. Aidan's currently has income from two significant non-pledge sources. Parking revenues, for daily parking and CU football parking, for 2010 are \$80k annually. We also have a Management Agreement with EMCUB/Canterbury Colorado, by which Canterbury Colorado give St. Aidan's a designated monthly amount, and St. Aidan's manages the Campus ministry, providing staff, facilities and programming. For 2010, this amount was \$54k. In 2010, we experienced a significant and realized budget deficit, and borrowed \$40k from the Endowment to make our obligations. At the same time, we also discovered an issue of cash erosion over approximately 3 years, which has also been fixed.

Staff and Lay Leadership List

Position	Time “C”=compensated	Years in Position	Notes
Rector & Chaplain	Full-time, C	5	Mary Kate Réjouis
Priest Associate	Part-time, C	2	Kay Cook
Deacon	Part-time	1	Don Burt
Office Administrator	Full-time, C	4	Amanda Nuku
Choirmaster	Part-time, C	2	Connie Branton
Organist	Part-time, C	2	Sara Parkinson
Bookkeeper	Part-time, C	3	Connie Mackin (contract/outsource)
Nursery Coordinator	V. Part-time, C	2	Cydney Ricker
Nursery Caregivers	V. Part-time, C	Various	5 different students
Senior Warden	Volunteer	1	Grace Pierce
Junior Warden	Volunteer	2	Matt Clark
Treasurer	Volunteer	1 month	Amy Paine—assisted by two assistant treasurers, Donna Colville and Karen DeSousa
Clerk of Vestry	Volunteer	1 month	Karen DeSousa
Vestry Members	Volunteer	3 years	Lisa Autry, John Moore, Kandace Einbeck
Vestry Members	Volunteer	2 years	Anne Doyle, Joe Bowers, Diane Perry,
Vestry Members	Volunteer	1 year	Keith Murdock, Stephanie Sokolov, Barb Williams
Hospitality	Volunteer	7	Gillian Brown
Sunday School	Volunteer	Varies	*Gillian Brown (20 years), Karen DeSousa, Michelle Niemann, Mindy Zarske, Stephanie Sokolov, Gail Trenberth
Liturgy Coordinator	Volunteer	4	Greta Frohbieter

Current Worship Schedule

Sundays

8am Rite I with music (hymns/organ/piano)

10:15am Rite II with music (choir/organ/piano)

5pm Rite II with music (gospel/folk)

Healing Services

2nd Wednesday 12noon

4th Thursday 7pm (not in summer)

Holy Eucharist

7am Wednesdays and 6pm Most Holy Days

Daily Office

Morning Prayer Monday-Thursday

Evening Prayer Monday-Tuesday

Outreach Ministry Within the Congregations Main Ministry Area

Our primary outreach is Canterbury Colorado Episcopal Campus ministry. This provides students at CU-Boulder, and also faculty and staff, with a church home. The parish provides weekly dinners on Sundays. A small group leadership team meets every other week. Outreach lectures on campus are 2-3 times a semester for faculty, staff, parishioners and students (the Christos Institute). Many other activities also happen according to the students' lead—Taizé Prayer services, service projects (not many), fellowship events (movies, bowling, again, not many). Some students are involved in parish life; some students are involved only in Canterbury. All clergy participate liturgically, pastorally, and in fellowship with Canterbury, the Rector does most of it.

A new area of active outreach is providing shelter one night a week for overflow from the Boulder Homeless Shelter. We partner with an organization called Boulder Outreach for Homeless Overflow and on Monday nights 60-90 people sleep in our parish hall and meeting rooms. Deciding to do this was a big step for the vestry and not unanimously supported in the congregation.

Income from the Endowment is directed almost entirely (75%) to outreach, and a committee annually directs this, frequently giving to Joycare Pre-school (still in Boulder), international outreach, The Colorado Haiti Project, Episcopal Relief and Development, Attention Homes, and other organizations as funds are available. A Mission Support Committee, chartered by the vestry, recommends these disbursements to the Vestry annually but does not do much for active/hands-on ministry. Exceptions are a small annual Family-to-Family gift buying project for social services and occasional sales such as African Team Ministries.

Walk-ins seeking assistance are common at St. Aidan's. Our usual practice is to give \$10 in Boulder Change or a \$10 Safeway Card to each person once. Occasionally help is given via Discretionary Funds (Rector, Priest Associate, Deacon, Chaplain all hold Discretionary Accounts) for rent and other necessities. We have a minimum of 5 walk-ins per week during office hours. Because of more limited resources, we will change in 2011 to giving away \$5 Boulder Change and a small bag of non-perishable food items that are immediately consumable.

We have a consistent experience of tremendous financial outreach annually (see data). Almost all outreach is specially fundraised and not an integral part of the operating budget. We also experience generosity in daily ways that is unaccounted for, including:

- Grocery basket of non-perishable donations is filled every 2 weeks
- Sunday night dinners for Canterbury Campus Ministry
- Regular drives for socks, blankets, etc for homeless
- Refreshments for Sunday hospitality, funerals, and some weddings
- A parishioner is volunteering to launder the BOHO blankets for \$1 each with a pick up and delivery service.

A long-term mission (almost 20 years) to Navajoland with one or more mission trips was active until 2008. Dedicated leadership to this mission wasn't self-renewing, and the long-term leaders discerned through prayer that it was time to step back. The parish still has an affinity for and love of Navajoland, and some talk of mission, but this is latent right now.

In 2010 we also began another community outreach, with occasional Open Mic Nights. We have had 5 since April 2010. The parish does not participate in these to a great extent (and there is one , so they have been evenings when the church is full of people who are new. The AA community attends these well (they're advertised as "sober social events open to all"). Finally, in 2010 we constructed a beautiful double outdoor labyrinth, in part to do some outreach with our building. We have regularly had Night Labyrinth Events as outreach to the CU Campus, with small attendance, but frequent newcomers among the attendees.

Current Mission/Vision/Core Value

This Mission and Vision is from the Vestry in 2007. It needs to be updated.

MISSION:

Worshipping Christ and shining His light to the University of Colorado, Boulder, and the world.

VISION:

By the year 2017, St. Aidan's will become a "**beacon***" to the University of Colorado, Boulder, and the world, a presence marked by activity seemingly all day and all night: lights always on and doors always open. St. Aidan's would become the "**church in the marketplace***", providing both a parish home to its members and a relevant Christian presence to those who pass our doors every day. St. Aidan's would appear to be a place of "**blessed chaos***": many concurrent ministries of outreach, service, conversation, fellowship and learning, surrounding and supported by a core of Eucharistically-centered worship, pastoring and prayer.

What we might look like:

- A large congregation with substantial constituencies of students, families, and core members
 - Students might typically be in the congregation for a few months to a few years, being formed in discipleship and pastored and mentored through a hectic phase of their lives –our ambassadors in training, emphasizing outreach and prayer ministries
 - Families might typically be in the congregation for a few years to a few decades, being formed in discipleship, pastored and mentored through family years, -- our core members in training, emphasizing service and worship ministries
 - Core members might typically be both long-tenure members and deeply committed to the life and programs of St. Aidan's, providing much of the ministry leadership.
- We might also see large numbers of students and the poor whom we are serving on our campus, as well as University and city community members attending programs.

What our activities might include:

- The traditional congregation and community services of a large suburban or small-city church
- Programs to assist the students and the poor in the community
 - Basic living assistance, probably in combination with other agencies
 - Discernment, pastoral, and mentoring support
- Programs of conversational, musical, and educational dialogue between the University and city populations and among all faiths, probably in combination with other agencies

What our facilities might look like:

- Campus used more intensively, including support for ministries of service and outreach
- Sanctuary larger, reorganized and opened toward Colorado Avenue
- Chapel, hall, and most other public spaces configured for multiple and intensive uses.
- Some peaceful core facilities mirroring and supporting our worship-centered life

Annual Report of 2009 (for 2010 Annual Meeting)

Attached as .pdf

Operating Budget for 2010

Attached as .pdf

Where is St. Aidan's on the congregational life cycle?

We are at a moment of reckoning—we will either make decisions now that will ensure the future of St. Aidan's 20 and 30 and more years from now, or we will keep trying to do the same thing and we will find a gradual, inexorable decline.

I don't have the diagram, but I know we're at the point of re-negotiating, re-visioning and re-committing, or entering into a season of slow decline through which we pray for something new.