



SAINT PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

Friday, March 22, 2024

Beloveds,

Your presence and engagement at the Capital Campaign Discernment Listening Sessions in February (Cottage Meetings) brought forth a wealth of beautiful and insightful ideas, shaping a landscape of dreams that inspire and resonate with the vision of our Cathedral community. It is through the collective sharing of perspectives, aspirations, and wisdom that we are able to navigate toward a future filled with purpose and possibility.

Your thoughtful reflections and imaginative dreaming have provided us with a rich tapestry of concepts and priorities. These ideas will serve as the foundation for our efforts in compiling a list of capital projects that align harmoniously with our cathedral's ethos and mission.

Attached to this message is the culmination of our collective dreaming—a reflection of the passion and creativity that flourished within our discussions. We encourage you to peruse these ideas and insights, as they represent the collective voice of our community. They have not been edited, and all ideas and thoughts have been included. These comments will aid in creating a formalized list of projects to be potentially be funded through a future capital campaign.

Once again, thank you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to our Cathedral family. Your contributions are deeply appreciated and instrumental in shaping the path forward as we continue to strive for excellence and fulfillment in our shared endeavors. Keep your eyes open for the next step concerning a capital campaign at St. Paul's.

With gratitude,

The Very Reverend Katie Churchwell

The Very Reverend Katie Churchwell
Dean, St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral

AT THE DISCERNMENT MEETINGS CONDUCTED IN FEBRUARY, RESPONSES TO INQUIRIES WERE COLLATED AND CATEGORIZED TO HIGHLIGHT KEY AREAS OF INTEREST AND RECURRING THEMES ACROSS THE TEN SESSIONS. NOTABLY, 65 INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN THESE MEETINGS FACILITATED BY 10 VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTED BY 10 NOTE-TAKERS, TOTALING 85 PARTICIPANTS.

WELCOMING TO ALL:

- Most comments expressed gratitude for our inclusive and friendly atmosphere. While there is a sense of pride in our openness, some suggestions for enhancement were made, particularly regarding accessibility concerns.
- Concerns were raised about the rough paving stones in the courtyard, posing challenges for wheelchair users accessing the wilderness ramp to the chapter room.
- Challenges were noted in engaging with newcomers in the congregation due to the size of the church, impacting opportunities to connect with both friends and strangers during brief Sunday visits.
- Suggestions were offered for enhancing the accessibility of the altar and the church's East side ramp to accommodate individuals with mobility devices more effectively.
- Creating a more inviting space was proposed, with ideas such as reconfiguring the seating arrangement to allow for more flexible seating angles, fostering a visually welcoming environment.
- Concerns were raised about the limitations faced by individuals with mobility impairments in participating as readers, deacons, priests, or choir members due to accessibility constraints.

PROPERTY

- **EXPANSION:** The property at the end on 7th & Broadway (Amelia Building is for sale next door, listed at \$3.2 million) and it would be nice to purchase it to help with the kitchen and homeless outreach, purchased and made part of the Cathedral property – Could be made into a shelter with showers and washing machines, café for the homeless, counseling centers for the homeless, etc.; shower trailers? Washer dryer; Cry room for babies; Look at acquiring property for ministry expansion; Senior Housing in Midtown, buy property and build housing.
- **GENERAL:** Needs a deep clean; Many areas need fixing up; Nice having an adaptive space where we can move things around to meet the needs of what we are doing; A sign

for chapel at 8 AM would be helpful; Coffee & food should be downstairs in reception area with programming upstairs.

- **KITCHEN:** We need more of a catering kitchen, and less of a cooking kitchen; upgrade/improve kitchen (for more outreach), new kitchen floor, the kitchen is not set up right. Needs face lift. Designed oddly, and not working now for way we use it. Need catering kitchen, open, sinks & countertops where you need them. Maybe don't need cooking kitchen anymore.
- **CATHEDRAL BUILDING:** Lighting in the Cathedral needs to be fixed. Acoustical expert for whole Cathedral building; better sound on live stream; Upgrades to the sound system to provide opportunities for livestream services. Make church a little larger, narthex, a way to get from chapter room to narthex for choir without going outside, Give Cathedral tours, better sound system in SPC, especially for live streaming. The lighting/darkness of the 5:00 service with only one usher and concern of the securing the Cathedral for that service.
- **ENERGY USE:** Need education on energy units that could help those at the Cathedral during the week conserve energy; Invest in programmable thermostats to ensure we aren't running climate control where it's not needed; Check out Solar Power of Oklahoma to help with energy costs.
- **BOOKSTORE:** Keep the bookstore open; opening the bookstore more often.
- **ACCESSIBILITY:** Accessibility issues; Ideas/discussion about how the altar could be made accessible; Easier access for the handicapped.
- **BATHROOMS:** Improving facilities/bathrooms to better handle things like emergency shelter, have space for lock-ins, other churches to use, etc.; Functional bathrooms behind the kitchen; A dedicated bathroom for children in the nursery would be a safer option than having them go down the hall to a bathroom used by people of all ages; Repair all the bathrooms; Toilets and the old infrastructure of the building that should be addressed.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE/PIPES:** replacing pipes; infrastructure issues; Air conditioning and boiler issues; Fix leaks.
- **CHILDREN'S SPACES:** Refresh the Undercroft/space for children; A playground "to protect our landscaping."

FELLOWSHIP, CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY, WORSHIP

- Coffee hours and meeting with people in church, whether in or out of church campus. Clergy came and visited during recovery and in the hospital, and that meant more than I thought it would.
- St Paul's does a good job of making me feel safe and secure. I know my kid will be loved no matter how she turns out.

- Love of fellowship at the Cathedral and life transitions with parishioners that are like family.
- Love that leadership leads about what is best for the Cathedral.
- Pastoral Care.
- Serving during worship.
- Being a part of an inclusive environment.
- Liturgy.
- Ministries, i.e. verger, LEM makes me feel a real part – blessing in my life; keeps me up to date – such a part of my life. Lay ministry & LEM (from acolyting); Lay reading helps with disability.
- Our clergy and their ministry. Clergy are very welcoming.
- Sacramental Ministry.
- Serving at the altar.
- Being an acolyte.
- Vital Ministries: Oblation and Usher, Caregiver Group.
- Vital Social Circles: Dinner foyer groups.
- Garden Guild.
- Pastoral Outreach.
- Banner “All are Welcome.”
- Gay Pride with float decorating and evening support.
- ‘Wine, Chocolate, & Jazz’ counts big!
- Pipescreams and Trunk or Treat.
- Volunteer at the welcome group.
- I really love the evening services.
- Oakerhater Sunday.
- Food Suggestions: Juice & Cookies; Would love to see the coffee hour include hot tea! Changing the coffee and pastries to the downstairs again.
- Forefront of the LGBTQ community.
- Everyone walks through doors and feels welcome and included in this environment.
- Small group sessions for the ‘elders. Ways for those that are retired without children to bond.
- Having the older choristers attend the children’s chapel is deterring younger kids from attending that are in church.
- Things scheduled other than evening: A lot of things that people who work until 6 can’t make; could we change some things to maybe Sunday afternoon.
- Would love square dancing!
- More cultural diversity and more with Native American events other than annual service.
- Security at the church on Sundays- Child care beepers to alert to any emergency or other activity.
- I feel very happy that St. Paul’s has an emphasis on spirituality – offerings like the Labyrinth, Lectio Divina and lighting of candles in the Chapel.
- Youth Group and Choir: My kids love it!
- Ministry Minutes were mentioned to help older members with technology.
- Would love to see once a month or once a quarter Saturday night dinner.

- Evening services where 95% of the people were up on the altar- people with mobility issues are left out of that intimacy.
- Continue Lenten Supper Series.
- Create a community garden with fresh vegetables that could be given to people who are in need (parishioners or others) or improving health for people who live in food deserts.
- Having a Spanish service sometime down the road.
- Growing programs that connect younger/single people (20s age group). Pub Theology.
- Kids upfront for the message.
- Making pollinator gardens. We could plant milkweed for Monarch butterflies which are struggling to find habitat during their migration.
- Part of downtown church tours?
- Counseling and prayerful listening services.
- Opportunities for cross generational interactions.
- For those willing, could we have a “Visitors or Newcomers’ Corner.”
- Advertise events in the East Garden.
- 11:15 service not well attended.
- Sunday afternoon activities.
- Taizé service.
- Ministry Fair does not work in the East Garden. Hard to get folks to the booth near the Columbarium.

STAFF

- Would like to hire/see: More Clergy (full-time second priest) and more permanent clergy to assist, A paid social worker.
- There was some discussion about how much the Cathedral relies on volunteers and concern that this manpower base may not be able to handle much more new programming.
- Ministry for home bound/shut-ins to visit, call, fix smart phone, or run errands. Minister with experience facing death, and other issues facing seniors. Retired clergy for these issues and team of people to ask if need help to transport to doctor appointment, needs a visit, just pick up for church.
- We need to fulfill our existing needs, such as more clergy.

MUSIC

- Music has brought people back to the Cathedral.
- Music Ministry/Choristers/Church Music Program/Choir universally loved and thriving.
- Choristers bring families to church.
- Being in the Choir is wonderful.
- Campanologist to bring bells to church.
- Connect OCU musicians & music professors with Joey.

OUTREACH

- Outreach important to those attending (we’re in a unique position being downtown).
- Being in downtown OKC, interested in inner-city issues.
- Keeping the church open during cold days.

- Outreach – Hope for the Future.
- Backpacks for homeless.
- Working at the food bank and infant crisis center.
- Helping people.
- Mobile Meals
- Environmental and Creation Care Work – add a forest and garden to property, feed and serve animals and people. Add solar/wind power to building, add charging stations.
- Ministry assistance for the Lakota.
- Outreach programs.
- Emergency warming shelter.
- Watonga mission presents for children.
- Outreach like we have with mobile meals.
- Opening our doors to the homeless community; Housing the homeless.
- People organizing monthly outreach is so well done.
- Transportation of ministry to get those who are unable to transport to church, getting people to and from the hospital, etc.
- Time to make blessing bags with food and accommodations for those in need (in-between the 9 and 11:15 services).
- Bringing music to the shut-ins.
- Offer a Diocesan special event.
- Open Dean Willey Hall to community for different speakers, etc.
- Ask other churches to help with temporary shelter in the winter.
- Music school for the entire community.
- Make certain we are legal, i.e. too many people in the choir loft, when the homeless are staying here, are there liabilities.
- Participate with other churches to look at inner-city needs.
- Ministry to the homeless is great- mentioned many times over meetings.
- Habitat for Humanity.
- Doing something with our hands.
- Expand homeless ministry but need education on safety issues.
- Episcopal Church could team up with the First American Museum to do a pow wow with mention of honoring Blue Clark.
- Homeless shelter and food program.
- Revitalize a guild to do more community outreach and be more present in the community.
- Outreach for women getting out of prison.
- More money for camps would be helpful.
- More outreach to help mothers - work with downtown clinics to figure out the best way to revitalize this ministry.
- Blizzard meals were mentioned to make ahead for bad weather.
- Once a month rice and beans ministry. Come in and eat and take two pounds of rice and two pounds of beans.
- Engage downtown residents- Discussion lunch, Dean's Book Club, open mic lunch hour - Bishop's Lecture Series was a good way to bring people in - Open the East Garden during lunch hour.

- How can the Cathedral partner with other metro Episcopal churches to increase programming to help people? This can help us lean into our mission of being the spiritual center of the diocese.
- More collaboration with other churches; Conversations with other downtown clergy.
- Soup kitchen.
- St. Georges type outreach for assistance with utilities, ID, day care.
- Hot weather sheltering?
- Transportation for those who cannot drive to services.
- A haven.
- Transportation- to and from service for our homebound members.
- Outreach to surrounding community-there has been a lot of apartments and neighborhoods being built around the Cathedral that have started attending events.
- More interfaith outreach.
- Improve facility for homeless shelter and services. Collaborate with area churches for bathrooms, showers, a gym, etc.
- Ongoing homeless outreach. Social justice oriented. SPC is actively doing the work, not just talking talk.
- Draw the young people. Reignite a YOUNG ADULTS group.
- Buy a whole bunch of medical debt and forgive it.

FORMATION

- St. Ignatius got me closer to God – Centering Prayer, Lectio Divina.
- Additional lecture series like the Lenten/Advent series throughout the year.
- Children’s Ministry/Children’s Education and Programs.
- Something to engage youth that do not participate in music program.
- Variety of the formation classes.
- Special speakers.
- Women in the Bible.
- Bible study groups.
- Do more “Truth.”
- Spiritual Direction and Ministry/Retreat in Daily Life.
- Adult formation seems disorganized and choppy – Would like to see an adult bible study – Adult formation is fighting against each other. Collaborate to organize.
- Enjoyed an event Sherry Sullivan hosted with women of other faiths.
- Online content for spiritual outreach.
- Evening Prayer daily with volunteer groups involved.