

OTM Community Ministry Portfolio Final 11/28/23

NARRATIVE

In our baptism we promise to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, seeking and serving Christ in all persons. You are invited here to reflect on your ministry by responding to all of the following questions (max 1200 characters including punctuation and spaces). You may answer in more than one language, if appropriate.

1. Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

Since the end of COVID, we have committed to hosting events open to all to be a positive and welcoming force in the community.

Through experiences such as "Jazz on the Lawn", complete with food and music, we have turned our beautiful property into a place of gathering. Here, new faces and old can meet and experience community. We have held additional events such as our St. Andrew's Day Celebration, our Fall Festival, and our Easter Egg Hunt. We have participated in community events such as the annual Highland Park Yard Sale and Light-up Night. All are special events that bring food, people, and pleasure together in the shadow of God's church.

As volunteer bakers, chefs, promoters, and "stagehands", we experience the joy of breaking bread and celebrating with each other and the community. More importantly, we gain the satisfaction of knowing that we have opened our hearts and church home to the stranger in our midst. It is our greatest desire to model God's love in a world that so desperately needs to experience it.

2. Describe your liturgical style & practice. If your community provides more than one type of worship service, please describe all:

Although St. Andrew's is not a high church, our services tend toward traditional, formal, and liturgical. Generally, we worship using Rite II, with Rite I as an option at our 8:00AM Sunday Eucharist and during Morning Prayer services on the 3rd and 5th Sunday. We sing with enthusiasm from the 1982 Hymnal.

During this time of discernment, we are still offering two services each Sunday, an 8:00AM spoken Eucharist in the Lady Chapel and a 10:00AM Eucharist with choir and organ in the main Sanctuary. In the summer, we hold only one Sunday service each week at 10:00AM, which includes the celebration of the Eucharist with organ and soloists from the choir.

Lay readers participate in all services and lay chalice bearers serve at all Eucharists. We send lay ministers out once a month to visit the sick and the housebound. On the 3rd and 5th Sunday of the month, we host Morning Prayer led by lay ministers in the parish.

Members of the Vestry and leaders of key ministries often provide updates and reminders during announcements. Our church school children enter the sanctuary at the peace in order to attend communion with their parents.

3. How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

St. Andrew's welcomes all those who sit in our pews to be part of the ministry of the church. Parishioners are invited to become lay readers, chalice bearers, lay Eucharistic ministers, Sunday School teachers, members of the choir, acolytes, altar guild, flower guild, hospitality committee, Parish Cares, Vestry, and more. Without volunteers, we could not worship as we do or perform our ministries. Moreover, during this time of transition, we have largely relied on a volunteer force to run St. Andrew's.

Presently, we incorporate others in ministry through word of mouth. Invitations to join have come from the Rector, from members of Vestry, and from other parishioners already involved with those ministries.

St. Andrew's has also been encouraging active lay member participation in parish ministries through a new program, initiated earlier in 2023, called "Taste of Ministries", an opportunity to take "a small bite" of ministry before making a commitment. The objective is to introduce parishioners to the many ministry volunteer opportunities, both within the church and in outreach.

4. As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

St. Andrew's prioritizes building relationships of understanding and trust. We provide opportunities to worship, pray, learn, volunteer, serve, connect, and support each other. This contributes to our congregants' spiritual and emotional well-being.

We view the broader well-being of our community as two-fold—creating opportunities for us to connect and pray together, and serving those in need. Community care, spiritual well-being, and emotional support flow from opportunities to come together at coffee hours, Bible Study, neighborhood and musical events, and volunteer opportunities.

We serve those in need by bringing our hospitality to members of our congregation who are sick or housebound, by pastoral care visits, and by assisting those less fortunate through our seven major outreach ministries.

5. Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

The Parish has a long history of engagement in local, regional, and global service. Our Outreach Committee sets priorities, liaises with community partners, allocates monetary donations for outreach and mission, and recruits and organizes volunteers for direct

service. The Outreach Committee prioritizes initiatives that are well-matched with our outreach objectives and that allow for direct volunteer engagement.

We support two international organizations: The Mustard Seed Babies' Home, a non-profit caring for 60 orphan children in Uganda; and Five Talents International, a faith-based sponsor of micro-initiatives in the Global South.

We support many local organizations including the East End Cooperative Ministry, The Neighborhood Academy, Off the Floor, Treasure House Fashions, and Hello Neighbor (see our Parish Profile for more details).

Lastly, we participate in wider Church activities through active Diocesan Engagement. Several of our parishioners currently serve, or have served, on Pittsburgh Diocesan Committees including the Board of Trustees, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and the Committee on Ministry, and the Diocese's Beloved Community initiative.

6. How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

St. Andrew's views our community as an extension of our congregation. We recognize that people in need may never step through our doors, and so we must meet them where they are.

We engage in pastoral care beyond our worshipping community through our support and direct volunteer involvement in local and global organizations and Diocesan engagement, as described in our previous response.

In the past, our Rector was highly active in meeting neighbors who were not part of our worshipping community. Many of our parishioners who live in Highland Park have continued to engage with the neighborhood in this way. Additionally, we post all parish events to community boards, and have succeeded in reaching new people in this way.

Most importantly, we treat everyone with dignity and respect, we pray regularly for our neighbors, and we lift up community concerns.

7. Tell us about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

St. Andrew's has evolved significantly during the past five years. This has been shaped by events such as COVID and the introduction of a new rector.

We are very excited to have experienced significant growth in our Church School. We have grown from two to fourteen children registered, with an average weekly attendance of six to seven children, three to four volunteer teachers, and a paid part-time church school director. You may reach out to the Church School Director for more information.

Also new to St. Andrew's is Parish Cares, a ministry whose purpose is to identify volunteers willing to drive housebound parishioners to services, to send birthday and get-well cards, to provide meals to sick members, and to find other ways to engage elderly and housebound members of the congregation. Parish Cares has been able to include whole families with children in these activities, thus forging new connections between young and old, newcomers and old timers. You may contact our Jr. Warden for more information.

During Vacation Bible School, our children prepared 30 birthday and get-well cards for parishioners, bringing our Church School and Parish programs together in an unexpected way!

8. How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

St. Andrew's is working to ensure that we have a stable spiritual, financial, and physical foundation to prepare us to respond to whatever role God calls St. Andrew's to play in the future.

Spiritually, we seek to expand targeted ministries, building on the success of recent years. Specifically, we want to increase participation in our lay programs, in much the same way that we've witnessed our hospitality guild flourish. Another goal dear to our hearts is to grow programs for older children, teens, and young adults, building on our successes with younger children.

Financially, we manage multiple large bequests, pledges, and investment income. This requires respecting the intentions of our donors, meeting our current needs, and ensuring sustainable financial practices to ensure our future needs.

Physically, we are committed to preserving our 100+ year old church and campus—an asset to the community and a significant historic and spiritual structure. We have undertaken significant capital improvements to preserve our property.

Most importantly, we are engaged in conversations about the future, and we are ready to make course corrections necessary to our community.

9. What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

At St. Andrew's, we encourage all members to make a pledge irrespective of amount. At the same time, we believe in being transparent with our financials, so the parish understands what is necessary to provide, maintain, and grow St. Andrew's worship and beloved programs including music, church school, and community outreach.

That being said, we stress that stewardship is much more than sending in an annual pledge card. While an annual stewardship campaign is necessary for budgeting and

planning, we have found that this season is an important time for setting priorities. As parishioners reflect and pledge, they commit to being an active and engaged part of the St. Andrew's community.

In addition to our annual stewardship campaign, we also conduct supplemental fundraising activities throughout the year to support the music program and outreach. These additional activities augment our budget and provide ways for congregants to give the gifts of their time and talent to the church and the wider community.

10. What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

It has been said, with reference to our proximity to the Pittsburgh Zoo, that St. Andrew's is a collection of "all kinds of cats." This is true—we are deeply committed to being an open, inclusive place of worship where all perspectives and demographics are welcome.

Over the past years, St. Andrew's has weathered the schism in the Episcopal Diocese, the conflict surrounding the ordination and marriage of LGBTQ people, the severing of our relationship with a talented long-time choir director and organist, and the hiring of a new rector as successor to two who had served 30- and 25-year terms, respectively. These conflicts, and the resulting changes, caused some members to leave and presented difficulties for others who remained.

Through these times, the Vestry and lay leadership have leaned on open, transparent communication to keep parishioners informed and to provide a channel for members to share their concerns. But, where there are multiple viewpoints, there is often conflict. We now recognize we need to name our disagreements/differences in order to find a path forward. Our sincere hope is that our new rector will keep us focused on collaboration.

11. What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Change reminds us how to trust God and neighbor in challenging times. Change is hard, requiring us to listen broadly and to be open, with grace and humility, to trying something new.

At St. Andrew's, change has come to our doors with:

- the removal of a long-time choir-master and organist,
- the split in the Episcopal Church,
- the divisive issue of LGBTQ+ marriage and ordination,
- the loss of long-term rectors,
- COVID,
- the shift from a church that spent considerable sums to maintain our programs to one of much more grassroots efforts.

These shifts have coincided with dwindling levels of engaged parishioners.

Now, we are joyously learning during this transition that there are many passionate parishioners willing and able to help us not just maintain the status quo but grow. We are realizing that we grow in love, in strength, and in Christ when we come together as a community. It is in gathering that we discover we can nourish each other and flourish. Today, as yesterday, we come together because we love God. But today, we are stronger as a community because we have joined hands. Together we thrive.

12. Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

(Enter no more than four descriptions made up of one or two-words each. For example: administration, asset management, preaching, pastoral care. These skills are used to search community portfolios and are occasionally updated by administrators.

This section provides you with the opportunity to present key words that describe the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community. You may choose any words you like and enter them with commas separating them. The word you begin to type will offer other words with the same letters that others have submitted; you may select one of these predetermined words or continue to create your own. What you submit will be added to the "pool" of words our church is currently using to describe our individual and corporate ministries.)

Inclusive/collaborative, youth-oriented, forward-thinking and flexible, empathetic/prophetic

REFERENCES

Current Warden/Board Chair Name: Jane Parkhurst

Current Warden/Board Chair Phone Number and E-mail Address:
jparkhurst21@gmail.com 412-328-1098

Previous Warden/Board Chair Name: Marty Federowicz

Previous Warden/Board Chair Phone Number and E-mail Address:
marty.federowicz@gmail.com 412-818-8526

Search Chair Name: Jodie Moore

Search Chair Ministry: Discernment Committee Chair and Children's Ministry

Search Chair Phone Number and E-mail Address: jodie.brodhead@gmail.com
412-687-8216

Parish/Institution Leader Name: Matthew Walsh

Parish/Institution Leader Ministry: Junior Warden

Parish/Institution Leader Phone Number and E-mail Address: mmw188@gmail.com

Local Community Leader Name: Stephanie Walsh

This is a leader in your town or city (e.g. mayor, City Council member, local Food Pantry coordinator, etc.) who is familiar with your ministry.

Local Community Leader Relationship: Chair, Highland Park Community Council

Local Community Leader Phone Number and E-mail Address: hpcpgh@gmail.com