

04 September 2009

To our Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ at St. Andrew's:

For many years now, the clergy and lay leadership of St. Andrew's Church have wrestled with the increasing tension between St. Andrew's and The Episcopal Church caused by the decisions of The Episcopal Church to "walk apart" from both the biblical faith and the Anglican Communion. Throughout this time we have sought the Lord desiring to be prayerful and graceful in our response to the challenges presented to us by the actions of The Episcopal Church. And so in the late 1990's we began a process of differentiation in which we took steps that have included the cessation of funding for the national church, and, more recently recognizing that we are in a state of broken communion with The Episcopal Church. The Vestry has continually sought to discern the Lord's will for our place within the Anglican Communion, as well as our expressed relationship to The Episcopal Church. Twice in August the Vestry met for prayer, confession, repentance and conversation about this matter. The conclusion of this long, prayerful process is the unanimous sense that the entire parish of St. Andrew's, Mt. Pleasant be invited into an intentional, parish-wide discernment process called, "40 Days of Discernment." Joining the Vestry in this invitation are the Staff and former Senior Wardens of the parish dating back to 1989.

What is the problem? The most fundamental issue in conflict within The Episcopal Church is the gospel message itself. St. Paul spoke repeatedly of faithfully passing on that which he received. Great care was taken to ensure that the gospel message would be entrusted to those who would not add to nor subtract from The Story. In the three most recent General Conventions of The Episcopal Church (2003, 2006, 2009) the gospel message of a loving Father who seeks to draw all people unto Himself through the cross of His Son has been replaced. Offered instead is a therapeutic gospel which refuses to acknowledge the fallenness of our nature and our deep need for spiritual and moral transformation. While this gospel appears kind in its inclusivity, it nevertheless leaves us unchanged and enslaved to our sins and is therefore unspeakably cruel.

Addressing the actions of The Episcopal Church Bishop Mark Lawrence spoke about the "core doctrines of our faith being systematically deconstructed." He went on to say that "we face a multitude of false teachings" and specifically noted the deconstruction of the doctrines of The Trinity, The Uniqueness of Christ, the matter of scriptural authority and our baptismal theology. What has become abundantly clear is that we now have two entirely different religions trying to exist under the same name. Sadly, The Episcopal Church consistently revealed at General

Convention no longer remotely resembles The Episcopal Church some of us once knew and cherished. And, the contentiousness within The Episcopal Church over these matters has deeply wounded our gospel witness confusing many who seek a living, vital, personal relationship with the Living God.

Enclosed with this letter you will find another document explaining and outlining the "40 Days of Discernment" as well as a timetable for the discernment process. This process is an invitation to look to the God of our future as we seek His will for our corporate life. It is our hope that you will join your church family as we seek to hear from the Lord His will for our common life and future.

With thanksgiving for the privilege of serving you;

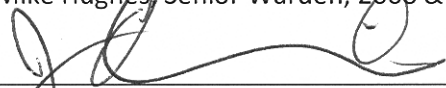
We are in Christ,



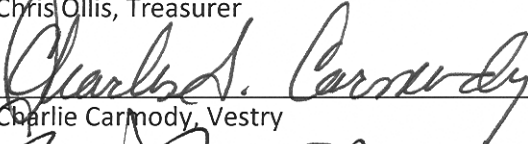
Steve Wood, Rector



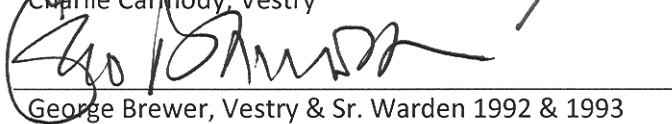
Mike Hughes, Senior Warden, 2008 & 2009



Chris Ollis, Treasurer



Charlie Carmody, Vestry



George Brewer, Vestry & Sr. Warden 1992 & 1993



Norm Allan, Vestry



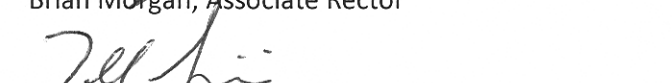
Ashley Early, Vestry



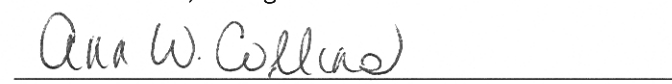
John Burley, Associate Rector



Brian Morgan, Associate Rector



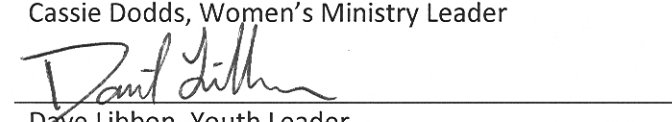
Todd Simonis, Young Adult Leader



Ann Collins, Connection Coordinator



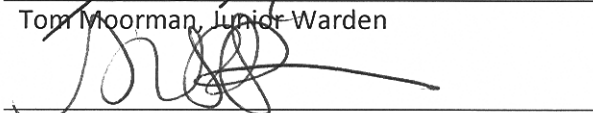
Cassie Dodds, Women's Ministry Leader



Dave Libbon, Youth Leader



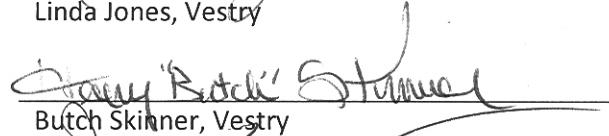
Tom Moorman, Junior Warden



Shawn DuPre, Secretary



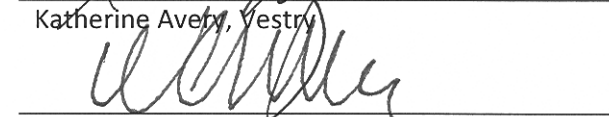
Linda Jones, Vestry



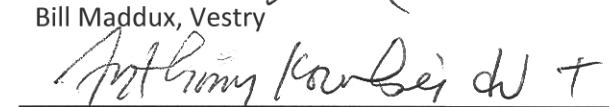
Butch Skinner, Vestry



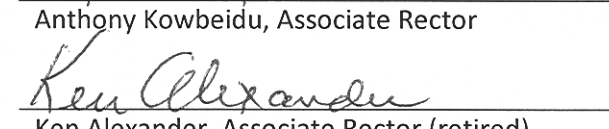
Katherine Avery, Vestry



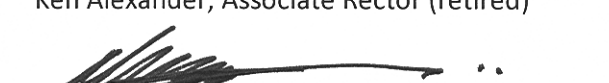
Bill Maddux, Vestry



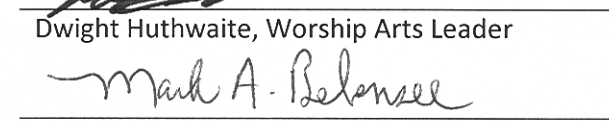
Anthony Kowbeidu, Associate Rector



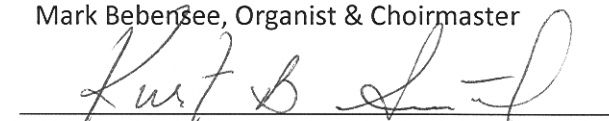
Ken Alexander, Associate Rector (retired)



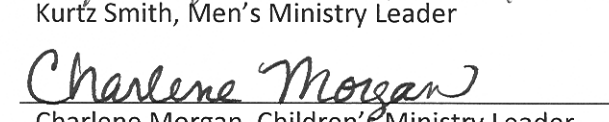
Dwight Huthwaite, Worship Arts Leader



Mark Bebensee, Organist & Choirmaster



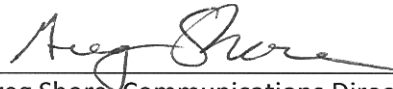
Kurtz Smith, Men's Ministry Leader



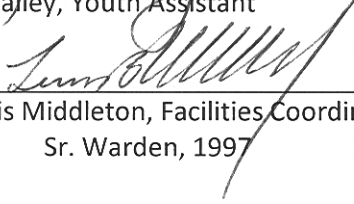
Charlene Morgan, Children's Ministry Leader



Liz Bailey, Youth Assistant

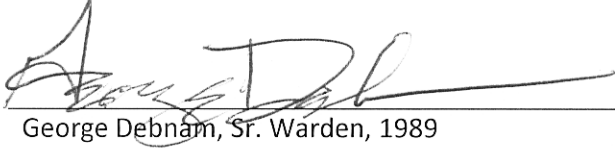


Greg Shore, Communications Director



Lewis Middleton, Facilities Coordinator &
Sr. Warden, 1997


Former Senior Wardens of St. Andrew's (1989-2009)



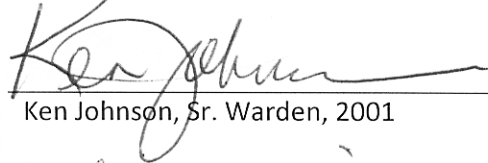
George Debnam, Sr. Warden, 1989



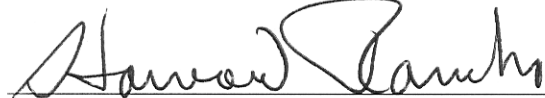
David Mellard, Sr. Warden, 1994



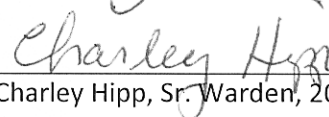
Eddie Gordon, Sr. Warden, 1995



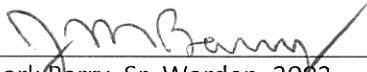
Ken Johnson, Sr. Warden, 2001



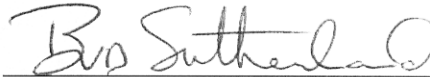
Howard Rambo, Sr. Warden 1999 & 2000



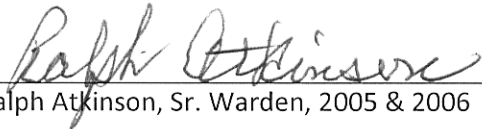
Charley Hipp, Sr. Warden, 2003 & 2004



Mark Barry, Sr. Warden, 2002



Bud Sutherland, Sr. Warden, 2007



Ralph Atkinson, Sr. Warden, 2005 & 2006