

◆ THE MISSION ◆

ST. MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS

SEPTEMBER ~ 2005

"The Purpose of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church is to help people be transformed, gifted, called, equipped and sent into ministry by Christ in the context of a caring community of celebration."

Dear Friends,

Every time I pick up a newspaper or magazine, in one way or another they have the latest news on how to be healthy. "Eat seven servings of fruit and vegetables a day. No, don't eat carbs. Well, maybe good carbs. Walk 10,000 steps a day. Well, exercise 3 times a week, no, exercise every day. Well, maybe 10 minutes a day. Drink green tea." Etc. Etc. What are we to believe?

How do we stay healthy?
How do we get healthy?
What is "health" anyway?

Actually, those are questions we're looking at as a result of our task force reports and our meeting on Saturday. Please take the time to read the report in this issue of the Mission. We came up with a number of qualities we find to be core values – and they could be summarized under "healthy congregation," or as Rev. Lou put it, "healthy faith community."

Congregational health has one profound difference from other kinds of organizational health, because it is founded on and grounded in our relationship with God. Peter Steinke, in his book Healthy Congregations, says we have to begin from an understanding that we are stewards of what God has given us at St. Martin's – that our life together is about our stewardship of our congregation – how we care for, respond to, and manage our lives together. It is about holding our communal well-being in trust. It is about being intentional about the things we need to do to be healthy. It is about each one of us knowing what our particular part is and being willing to do it. (This is not about guilt, but about listening to God's nudge, God's strong word, or God's outright shove!)

In fact, we might begin by taking Paul's words to the church at Colossae to heart: "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Col. 3. 12-17)

God gives us the gifts of love, forgiveness, peace, gratitude – but notice that it is we who have to take the action – we are stewards, responsible for loving, forgiving, being grateful, praising – all in the name of Jesus.

Continued

Each one of us can be compassionate, kind, humble, meek and patient. Each one of us can forgive each other when necessary. Each one of us can put on the love which binds us together. And so each one of us is an important part of making this a healthy and whole congregational family.

God’s word is the authority about wholeness in community. Now we are responsible to learn how to be what he calls us to be. One major learning for us is that we are only responsible for ourselves. Therefore we are not to blame, point fingers, or criticize others. We are to look at ourselves, do what we know to be right, forgive and respect each other as children of God, and work on making our whole system more healthy and more like Jesus. And we are to continue to listen and discern just how God wants us to follow him in these next weeks and months.

I am grateful to God for all of you and your commitment and your prayers and your love for one another and for the Lord. My hope is that we will continue to do those things that grow us in love and that we will welcome all who enter our doors, even as we work on Reaching Out and Revitalizing!

Peace and Grace to you,

Mother Marilyn+

Please notice these upcoming activities:

- Sept. 4 – Brown Bag Breakfast for everyone in the Conference Room
- Sept. 6 – Open Vestry Meeting with Rev. Lou.
- Sept. 11 – Rally Sunday – Kick-off for the new school year.
- Sept. 16 – Newcomer Dessert at the Schneider’s, 7:00 p.m.
- Sept. 18 – Sunday School begins after the 9:30 service.
- Sept. 25 - Oct. 1 – Mother Marilyn on vacation.

St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church Financials — July, 2005				
	July	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference (+/-)
Income	6,910.05	51,827.86	58,625.00	- 6,797.00
Expense	8,882.31	59,111.67	61,920.00	3,988.00
Differ- ence	-1,971.81	- 7,283.81		
Checking Savings	10,686.55			

Report on “Looking to the Future” meeting on August 13th

Heartfelt thanks to the Rev. Lou Blanchard, who has recently been appointed Canon Missioner for the Diocese, for her time and expertise and care for us.. And thanks for the dedication and love of the 19 people who spent their day sharing, analyzing, praying and discerning (and enjoying the fellowship), as well as to Kristi Koltiska and Rachael Obermeyer who provided child care.

A basic question underlying the ROAR project has to do with St. Martin’s place in the life cycle of our congregation. Every congregation goes from birth to growth to stability to decline to death – unless there is appropriate and timely intervention at some point in the decline. Ideally there is on-going revitalization in the stability phase, but when that doesn’t happen, decisions have to be discerned about what the congregation wants to do, what we can do, what we’re actually willing to do – and especially about what God is calling us to do. Because St. Martin’s has been in that place of decline, we have been seeking the answers from God and from each other about our future.

On Saturday, we talked about the ways we have seen – the signs of grace – that make us believe God intends St. Martin’s to continue, from the man who came to say he believed God had given him a message for us that it was time to turn from the past and turn toward the future with hope and faith (in April) to the donation of 2000 pounds of frozen chicken for St. Clare’s Table just last week, and all the large and small and precious other graces in between. The people on Sat, as well as the Vestry, concurred that we are being called to redevelopment (the Lutherans call this phase in congregations “transformation”!)

By choosing redevelopment, we are choosing to use the information we’ve gathered as a basis for both discernment and action. By choosing redevelopment we are acknowledging our need to change, and to undertake the work change calls for.

We reviewed our task force reports in the context of the three foundational questions: who are we as a faith community? Who are our neighbors? What is God calling us to be – what is our purpose, our vision? Our history showed that we have been committed to outreach; we have struggled financially; we have had 6 clergy in 26 years – lots of leadership change; we have been a family; we have been committed to survival when there were conflicts that led to people leaving, and we have been committed to thriving when ours was the largest Sunday School in the area; we have encouraged people into Holy Orders; we have had lively, joyful worship.

We have been a praying community.

Our name reflects our call: St. Martin gave half of his cloak to a man in need. He was committed to living the gospel and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, in community and in his world – “in the fields.”

The Internal Audit committee report is on-line or available in the narthex, and they are in the process of compiling the results of the essay answers on the survey. One result was the desire of the majority to continue having one service on Sunday mornings, which we will do.

The External Audit committee did not identify particular neighborhood needs, though found that we are surrounded mostly by younger families. Our neighborhood has changed from being mostly undeveloped fields to being a fully developed and still growing urban area. We are also needing to make our church look cared for, and to that end one member has generously donated money to pay for paint, and two others are beginning a fund to weed, feed, and groom our lawn.

With this background review, we began to look at core values. The first question was, what are your times of feeling most alive and fulfilled at St. Martin’s? Some comments were: working at St. Clare’s Table, celebrat-

ing our 25 year anniversary, praise music, enthusiastic leadership, being cared for and caring for others in times of pain and need, joy and the presence of the Holy Spirit in worship.

As you read this, try to answer the question for yourself. And then answer the second question: what is the most important thing St. Martin's has contributed to your life? Some of our answers Saturday were: community, consistency; small group fellowship and learning; grounding – a sense of being home; Vestry retreat – God's presence, love; being involved, having a sense of belonging.

Then Lou read us the scripture about the Canaanite woman, desperately seeking healing for her daughter from Jesus – and Jesus' initial response of "It's not fair to give the children's bread to the dogs. Then Jesus was stretched to expand his sense of his mission by her determined answer, "Even the dogs eat the crumbs under the table." Lou asked us to pray silently in the church for 15 minutes, listening for our sense of our own most desperate need at St. Martin's and listening where God is asking us to stretch beyond our current comfort level.

Our prayer responses took us deeper. Our desperate needs were to end negativity, to heal our wounds, for peace, for more people to be involved and share the load, for direction and knowledge about next steps, to embrace the journey now, to help our unbelief, to be kind, and to focus on God, to be part of the solution.

We may be being asked to stretch beyond our local focus, to let go of our assumptions about what ought to be and how we ought to achieve our goals (to be open to new and creative solutions), to focus on the needs of others, to find the money we need, to make God and the church relevant and "cool" to our neighbors, to find unity around our core values.

In summarizing, Lou noted that there seem to be two recurrent themes:

Healthy Faith Community, which would involve avoiding burn out, welcoming and incorporating newcomers, good communication, conflict resolution, organizing ministries based on the spiritual gifts of those whom God has brought to St. Martin's, leadership suited to redevelopment tasks.

Outreach, currently especially St. Clare's Table and Operation Love. (Lou's question: is there anything more local, more ecumenical, more specific to our neighborhood?)

Several people felt it is highly important that we have clear steps to follow leading to clear actions.

1. We will continue to communicate the process on Sunday mornings and through the "Mission."
2. We will have Brown Bag Breakfasts at 8:30 on first Sundays for anyone who wants to discuss these things further or just to get to know each other better.
3. We will continue to pray, pray, pray!
4. We will have an open Vestry meeting on Sept. 6 to hear your response to this report, your concerns, your hopes and desires and suggestions – and/or to inform you about what's going on.
5. Vestry will continue to gather information and discern and work to articulate a vision statement and strategies.
6. Rev. Lou will be with us again on Sunday, October 16, to preach and to celebrate.

It is important to repeat that a redevelopment process is not like finding new programs or better strategies or quick fixes, though that may happen as we go along. It must begin with a commitment to discern God's direction, a reliance on God, and a willingness to change whatever needs to change in order to follow God in this new way and new time in our lives. It can be a bit unsettling and anxiety-producing to use this process – but it also allows us to get out of the boat and trust God to keep us walking on the water or to pull us up if we forget to keep our eyes on him. Every one of us needs to be part of the process in whatever way we can. Let us hear from you!

To be continued, by and in God's grace!

Vestry Highlights for August

The first meeting of the month consisted of final preparations for our Core Values meeting with Lou Blanchard. We discussed what handouts we would like her to give folks and she reviewed what she felt the process would entail.

Our second meeting had a late start but got going and did have a quorum. We reviewed the Core Values meeting with Lou Blanchard briefly, and agreed that it was apparent that we have two things that stood out:

- 1) We need and want to be a healthy congregation and
- 2) We need and want to continue doing outreach.

Other things will most likely surface as we continue to examine ourselves and process the information. Our next meeting with Lou is September 6, and we encourage parishioners to attend.

From our information gathered in the survey, most folks wanted 1 service to continue. This makes sense. It will help us to achieve a couple of goals

1. Become a healthy congregation, (more interactions)
2. Save energy (human and building)
3. Better communication of important information

The vestry agreed to this by consensus. We also agreed there will be “blended” music, and the service time will remain 9:30 AM. We agreed to keep to one service until we have consistent attendance of 100 people.

We discussed incorporation of newcomers. Not a new topic, but a continuing one. Various ideas including dessert at Marilyn’s and a “parish partner” program will be looked at in the near future.

**new nametags were also discussed. We will be considering something less time consuming to make (considering that some visitors come a few times and do not stay), yet special enough for folks not to feel like they are “disposable”.

Rally Sunday will be September 11. This will be a kick off of our Fall season. Children’s Chapel will resume and most likely Sunday School as well. (Marilyn will be “firming up” plans with the teachers soon) We will be looking for something for Adults as well. Keep watching the bulletin for updates.

The worship committee has ceased to exist in that name since various folks have left the congregation. At this point Marilyn and the Vestry are doing worship planning with input from the Ministries that are involved in worship.

Marilyn will be meeting with Bishop Rob O’Neill to discuss whether he has some thoughts, or a plan, in his mind for St. Martin’s in regard to a search process. Marilyn’s contract is up in February of 2006 and we need some direction. We need to know what type of money situation we need in order to consider a search. We need to know if he has a plan for us to do an abbreviated search, or what options we have. She will keep us posted.

We discussed asking if folks would like to “Adopt a Bulletin Board”. Our hallway boards are in need of a bit of sprucing up, and we would love a creative person to help create a design, get pictures/drawings or whatever you need and do something with them!! Volunteers can let Marilyn know which board they would like to begin with!!

Marilyn is reading (and has read pieces from, this book for a devotional) Healthy Congregations by Peter Steinke. Good information to consider while we are going through this process of re-vitalization.

We closed the meeting in prayer, as is our tradition.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Richardson

FAITH
HOPE
& LOVE

September Ministry Schedule

	Torch Bearer	Crucifer	Chalice Minister	Lector	Intercessor	Greeter	Usher
Sep-04-2005 9:30 am	Becca Richardson Andrew Nelson	Bryan Shallanberger	Martha Libby Randy Hoidahl	Chuck Tice	Mike Shallanberger	Bill Eldred	Tom Keables Jordan Hendrickson
Sep-11-2005 9:30 am	Rachael Obermeyer Vincent Graeber	Natalie Graeber	Tom Rothgeb Thor Nelson	Sharon Armstrong	Lorna Mayfield	Jo Cunningham	John Cunningham Jo Cunningham
Sep-18-2005 9:30 am	Garrett Revell Jocelyn Whipp	Jordan Hendrickson	Chuck Tice Judy Tice	Thor Nelson	Sharon Armstrong	Joohn Shepard	Bill Schneider Sharon Armstrong
Sep-25-2005 9:30 am	Sarah Raymond Brandon Kern	Nate Raymond	Lorna Mayfield Lee Mayfield	Lorna Mayfield	Chuck Tice	Bill Eldred	Ann Shallanberger Mike Shallanberger
Oct-02-2005 9:30 am	Caitlin Shepard Becca Richardson	Michael Shepard	Mike Shallanberger Bryan Shallanberger	John Shepard	Martha Libby	Jo Cunningham	Sue Gilbert Kira Gilbert

	Altar Guild	Flowers	CCRV	LEM	M&Ms	Teller
Sep-04-2005	Ann Shallanberger Patty Juhl		Mary Louise Gradwohl	Lorna Mayfield	Ed & Heather Paprocki	Bryan Shallanberger Sue Richardson
Sep-11-2005	Judy Tice Susan Shepard		Lorna Mayfield		Randy Hoidahl	Sue Richardson Rick Whipp
Sep-18-2005	Cynthia Obermeyer Patty Juhl		Tom Keables		Jo Cunningham	Rick Whipp Cynthia Obermeyer
Sep-25-2005	Ann Shallanberger Judy Tice		Mike Shallanberger		Ed & Heather Paprocki	Cynthia Obermeyer Martha Libby
Oct-02-2005	Susan Shepard Cynthia Obermeyer		Mary Louise Gradwohl	Mike Shallanberger	Randy Hoidahl	Martha Libby Stephen Hull

St. Martin-in-the-Fields

Activities and Events for September, 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
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Sept. 25 Mother Marilyn - vacation thru Oct. 1																																																																																																								

Check www.st-martins.net for updated Calendar events!



**IMPORTANT
ANNOUNCEMENT !!**

**The Entertainment Books
For 2005-2006 Are Now Available. . .**

Bargains galore to save \$ \$ \$ by using the discount card and coupons. Proceeds to the Danny Shewey Memorial Scholarship fund for St. Martin youth. These books are thoughtful gifts for Anniversary, Birthday, or Christmas.

Contact Randy Hoidahl following the Sunday service, or call him at 303-690-7376 to purchase a book or two (or more!). The price is only \$25.00.



September Birthdays

Caitlin Shepard	1
Devin Hall-Humphrey	2
Joe Owens	12
Barbara Thomas	17
Cass Strotheide	19
Bruce Raymond	22
Mary London	23
Dana Nelson	25
Mikayla Kern	26
Virginia Whipp	28

“Sailing into the Horizon: Navigating a Smooth Journey into the Elder Years — *A seminar and Resource Fair for older adults and caretivins of older adults*” will take place on Saturday, September 10 from 8:30 am—2:30 pm. It will be held at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, 11500 E. Iliff, Aurora. Topics include: “Caregiving and what you need to know and how to find the resources to help” / “Spirituality for the Journey” / “Time to Move?” / and “Medicare changes that will affect you.” Go home relaxed after a free massage and with a wealth of information. To register, please call Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 303-755-9123, or register by mail at address shown. The registration deadline is **Friday, Sept. 2**. The only cost is \$8 for a box lunch and mail registration should include the \$8 check, made out to Aging Seminar—Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Registration forms are on table in the Narthex.



September Anniversaries

Terry & Louise Barbour	1
Mike & Sherry Blaser	6
Ron & Patty Juhl	25

A large-anonymous donation has been received, designated for a paint fund from which to draw as supplies are purchased. Any contributions towards crediting this fund for reimbursement would be a true blessing!



Can you help?

St. Peter & St. Mary church in Denver opens its doors each Tuesday evening to feed the homeless and poor at St. Clare’s Kitchen. There is a dire need of white socks and t-shirts. (Shirts do not have to be new.) It would be very much appreciated if members of the churches could donate these items.

Information for Birthdays & Anniversaries, is included on the Membership Information form. Please contact the office If you need to receive a form.
www.office@st-martins.net

Vestry Members :

Martha Libby, Sr. Warden
Cynthia Obermeyer, Jr. Warden
Michelle Mayfield, Treasurer
Sue Richardson, Clerk
Stephen Hull
Jane Owens
Bryan Shallenberger
Rick Whipp
Bob Williams

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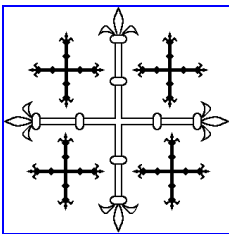
St. Martin Staff:

Priest-in-Charge,
Pastor Marilyn Schneider
Deacon, Shirley O'Halloran
Secretary, Margie Reck

Office Hours

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Tuesday - Friday

*St. Martin-in-the-Fields
Episcopal Church
4740 S. Buckley Road
Aurora, Colorado 80015
303-693-8872*



Holy Eucharist Service

9:30 a.m.

e-mail:

office@st-martins.net

Parish Web Site:

www.st-martins.net

St. Martin Prayer Chain:

prayer@st-martins.net



Prayer Chain requests may be placed at:
prayer@st-martins.net, or pick-up a prayer chain
information sheet in the Narthex.



REMINDER

**Shop & Support
St. Martin at
The Tattered Cover Bookstore
or Amazon.com
through the St. Martin website.**



St. Martin will receive a referral fee for each item purchased. Tattered Cover is your local source for books. The books can be delivered to your door - or packaged and ready for your pickup at either Tattered Cover store. At Amazon.com **books, music, electronics, software, etc.** are **ALL** eligible for supporting St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Suggestions for reading by other members of our parish are on the site, along with Bibles and the BCP.

Take a look at **www.st-martins.net** - Click on Bookstore then select either of the stores where you would like to shop.

Welcome to this electronic edition of *The Mission*. If you know of someone who you believe should be added for this on-line service, please notify office@st-martins.net