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AnnaGram November 2015

Update on the State of the Church from Fr. Bill

So where are we?

Recently I was asked to put together a brief 'advice list' for pastors who experience disasters. It was actually interesting and challenging. This list came out of a conversation that I had with the Rector of St. Stephen's Church in Wimberley, TX. It will be published by Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD). What is interesting is that ERD asked for some back ground about St. Anna's. When I developed the information I thought the data/story quite compelling. This is what was said:

Our current Average Sunday Attendance is 131. I am told that we are the only church to have grown every year since Katrina. Our growth for the past three years is 9%+ per year. For the period September -December, 2005 (Katrina years) our ASA (Average Sunday Attendance) was 20. In 2006 ASA was 40 but our Wednesday night masses which hosted mission groups and musicians as well as locals averaged 90-100 ... it was an interesting time.

We recently purged our records and **church membership** floats at about 250.

For the past five years we have **Confirmed/Received 15** adults per year. This year an all time low was still 8 adults.

The 2016 budget combined for St. Anna's is about \$400K of which about 30% is devoted to mission. That is a significant decrease. Up until and including 2014 the Church budget ranged from a high of \$1.2 million to a 2014 budget of \$600,000, the constant was operations for church, always about \$260-290K the rest for mission. Again, we are proud of these numbers. A significant source of income is derived from grants and mission donors. We are becoming more reliant on pledge income and parishioner giving.

Over half of the congregation is below the age of 58, with about 35% between 17-47.

We have a unique gift/challenge: of our 41 children about 15 do not have parents who are members they simply come to church on Sundays with no parental involvement. These same kids are involved in our after school programming.

St. Anna's currently engages about 15 College Student Volunteers for mission work called "Anna's Place NOLA" www.annaplacenola.org . In addition, the New Orleans Philharmonic (the only artist owned orchestra in America) supplies about 10 music instructors for our programming with further strong alignments with NOMA (The New Orleans Museum of Art).

St. Anna's has received the following Awards:

Citibusiness "Non Profit Entrepreneur of the Year Award" 2007 for Oportunidades NOLA.

Citibusiness "Non Profit Entrepreneur of the Year Award" 2008 St. Anna's Mobile Medical Mission

Neighborhood Partnership Network Trumpet Award for Best Community Church 2011

Forum for Equality 2014 Acclaim Award for Faith and Equality (LGBT)

Blue Cross/Blue Shield 2013 Angel of the Year Award

St. Anna's has been featured on:

NPR State of the Reunion - Murder Board

NPR Great Museums of the World Series - New Orleans - Mission to Musicians

CNN 360: August 2007 Hurricane Katrina Anniversary- Murder Board

New Yorker Magazine 2008 for Mission to Musicians

A.P., London Times, Sydney Review, and others - Murder Board

Principal Subject of Harvard University Study on Mobile Medical Units demonstrating that the down-stream savings of our particular Medical Mission provided a \$12.5 million in health care savings to the region based on an investment of \$250K a 50:1 ROI.

And yet we still have a hard time getting funding for mission! WOW. Still with all the challenges I would not change a thing and we keep hanging on trying to do Christ's work.

***Good stuff! Exciting stuff! Exhausting stuff!
Challenging stuff! God stuff!***

THIS SPRING! Foyers Groups Forming

Quite often people attend church for more than her liturgy, prayers, and centering. Some think of church as a community which is a wonderful way to think of church. St. Anna's is dynamic, it grows, it draws people and reflects the diversity of our city. FOYERS is an opportunity help get to know one another at a somewhat deeper level. It is a chance to break bread to talk and to spend a little social time apart from the Parish Hall. We first started Foyers last year and like any new program it had its ups and downs but generally most felt that it was a great chance to get to know one another in other than a casual way.

WHAT YOU DO. You first sign up for FOYERS. You will then be assigned to a group of not more than five households.

HOW IT WORKS. Each household then hosts a supper at their home or venue of choice. No restaurants and no catering. I once went to one with a bon fire and camp cooking...it was terrific. Keep the dinner simple this is not a contest and not meant to be expensive.

THE GROUP. Each Group gets together, say on a Sunday, and works out its own calendar as to who will host and when. This, ideally, shouldn't take months – weekly is the preferred sequence but its flexible. We know how socially busy life in NOLA can be.

AFTER ALL IS SAID AND DONE. It would be nice if someone would write a reflection on the positive experiences of the group but that is really not a demand just a hope that we might share a bit and therefore encourage others to join in next year.

The signup sheet will soon be posted in the Parish Hall. I will work to put together groups on a rolling basis. Give it shot and enjoy the fellowship that will surely follow.

Confirmation and Baptism--WELCOME!!!

On October 25th the rain came down in buckets. It was a dreary day yet inside of St. Anna's with a small than usual crowd it was a WONDERFUL day. We both baptized and confirmed/received new members into our church. Please, if you could not be there, welcome to the Episcopal Church and St. Anna's in particular:

Celeste Gilbert	Sponsor Allison Reid
Sarah Cherny	Sponsor Fr. Bill
Amie Davis	Sponsor Fr. Bill
Andy Kosenski	Sponsor Lola Maloof
Kirk Toups	Sponsor Lola Maloof
Stephen Estrada	Sponsor Luigi Mandile

What was interesting was the fact that Amie and Sarah having just been baptized and anointed with oil of chrisem constituted what the Bishop recognized as sufficient affirmation and reception so that Confirmation was redundant. Yes, they are for clerical reasons considered confirmed. Confirmation is an interesting sacrament and one that is not fully discussed or debated say unlike Ordination, Communion, or Baptism which we are pretty clean on. The Bishop's view is that Confirmation is an Adult 'reaffirmation' of baptism done by proxy as an infant. Reception transfers full membership from a recognized Apostolic Church into the Anglican Communion. So, there you have it. An interesting conversation might be had about what Confirmation is or should be. Never the less, welcome with joy, the newly baptized, confirmed, and received members of St. Anna's.

Now Forming -- DODWELL HOUSE

Fr. Bill and Darryl Durham are now forming a Restoration Committee drawing from strong community leadership. The task of this group will be singularly to raise and implement the full and final restoration of Dodwell House. This Committee will report and work with your Vestry. If you have a nominee who would be effective in the role of Restoration and Fund Raising please visit with Fr. Bill or Darryl. It is time to finish the job! As always, pray and pray boldly so that this work for the Kingdom of God might be finished.



Life as a Parish Administrator . . . Part 7 Luigi Mandile

At the time that I was working on the Medical Unit, the Parish Office Staff consisted of a volunteer treasurer who came in once a week to make bank deposits and a part time receptionist who only answered the telephones and door.



The layout of the office space at that time is as follows. The downstairs when you walked into the front door consisted of one very large parlor room used as storage (now the Sunday school room) and a second room that the school uses now. Staff, meaning myself and Diana, shared the very small room where the music room is now. In the winter we had to wear a coat and scarf for heat and summer time become very hot with one window unit to help cool us down. The building at this time was leaning to the back very badly. We could take a chair with wheels on it and start from one end of the office and race to the other end. (You all know me, it was entertaining.)

Father Terry was on the second floor where the current Anna's Place staff is located. The receptionist had quit and Father asked if I would be interested in the position. I came from Corporate background as a project manager and as an Admin III. How difficult could working in a small parish office be? ***(Who was I kidding? Who knew?)*** All I pictured was the lady who sits at the Parish office desk when you need to see your priest.

So my new world of Church Administrator was about to begin, as well as beginning to attend Church at St. Anna's. Trying to learn the office basics in the church was a challenge to say the least. I still did not understand the Episcopal Church. Father Terry taught me as we went along, very patiently. I also had the past Parish Administrator still here helping me once a week. Ms. Louise Bush. Ms. Bush explained very strongly the way to complete the church records for every Baptism, Wedding, Confirmation and funeral. She explained the reason and the importance of it. To this day I cannot open the church registry when placing information into it and not hear Ms. Bush in her Southern drawl explain the reason why we are doing this. Now after all these years I see that she was correct. I understand the reasons why it's so important.

About my third week or so I had my first Admin challenge. A group came to the door to ask if they could "rent" the church one evening to film. They were making a horror film about gargoyles and a priest. This was before filming around the area was the everyday sight it is now. Father gave his permission if I was willing to stay around all night to watch over everything.

I was good with that. I had never seen a film made, even an independent one. And the one star they did have was John Wesley Shipp. For me that was like **wow!** I was a fan. For me he starred in the TV Series "The Flash" in the late 80's for others it could have been Dawson's Creek. They decorated the church with candles everywhere. You know like when you see a church scene in a movie for some reason every candle has been lit. Our office was turned into the star's dressing room. So I stayed all night into the early morning hours. At one point two ladies dressed as nuns asked my opinion on their outfits, if they were in character. Well, of course, with my Roman Catholic background and being around nuns of the 1960's I knew my whipples J so I gave them some advice. One older lady and one young girl asked me a second time if they were in true character as a nun. I asked the young girl where her ring was. She asked why did she need to have a ring on, with that the older lady snapped at her and said 'Sweetie, I'm Jewish, and even I know a ring represents the "Bride Of Christ."' The younger girl stomped off. And that was my cue to go back to the office / dressing room and hide. I was not having fun as I thought I would.

Finally towards the end of filming there was to be a big fight scene between the monster gargoyle and the Priest played by the star. Mr. Shipp called me to his room and asked me if he was laying on the ground dying, could he give himself last rites. I said, 'Well I'm not a priest, but I really don't think so.' He asked for a good prayer to say out loud. Now remember I really did not even know the Book Of Common Prayer at this point. All I could think of telling him to say an Act of Contrition. 'O, my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you. I detest all my sins because of your just punishment, but most of all because they offend you..... '

I had nothing but that to give him. So I wrote out the whole prayer, he memorized it, and said it as the monster Gargoyle killed him

So at five o'clock in the morning it was a wrap, and I swore I would never be involved in another movie in any way ever again

Got Health Insurance?

As the health care law transforms health coverage for individuals and families, it's critical

that people receive the correct information so that they can make the best choices for themselves and their loved ones. The Health Insurance Marketplace gives Louisianans who are uninsured, or who buy their own coverage, a whole new way to shop for coverage. All health plans offered on the Marketplace must cover a comprehensive set of benefits, including physician visits, preventive care, hospital stays, and prescriptions. Plans must also treat everyone fairly; discrimination against pre-existing conditions will be banned



The best source for the latest and most accurate information about the Marketplace is the website, **HealthCare.gov**. This website has information on how the Marketplace works, its benefits, easy to understand language on different plans, deadlines, and milestones to help individuals, families and small businesses prepare for the Marketplace. People can contact a federally certificated, Louisiana licensed Navigator for free assistance helping understand how the marketplace works as well as free assistance with enrolling in affordable health coverage. **New rules and expanded programs mean that more people than ever before, including working families will get financial help for health insurance. The Marketplace open enrollment period is open now through January 31st, 2016.** For those who enroll before December 15th, 2015, their health coverage will begin as soon as January 1st, 2016.

Flu Shots

A huge THANK YOU to Walgreens on Elysian Fields and St. Claude for working with us to provide flu shots to our community. Tony, their pharmacist, administered 16 flu shots a few weeks ago on the mobile unit and another 10 on Friday Oct. 30 at Mag's 940. Still need your flu shot? Tony will be at the following locations with us -- if you have health insurance, bring your card and there is no out-of-pocket expense; if not the shots are free.



Thursday Nov. 5 at Friendly Bar located at 2301 Chartres St. (corner Marigny St.)

Friday Nov. 13 at Cutters Bar (may also be known at Queen's) located at 706 Franklin Ave.(corner Royal St. behind Big Daddy's Bar)

Food Safety

Our food safety series this month is about preparation and serving. With the holidays approaching here are some helpful hints to keep everyone healthy:

Thawing

- **Refrigerator**—Allows slow, safe thawing. Make sure thawing meat and poultry juices do not drip onto other food.

- **Cold Water**—For faster thawing, place food in a leak-proof plastic bag. Submerge in **cold** tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Cook immediately after thawing.

- **Microwave**—Cook meat and poultry immediately after microwave thawing.

Cooking

Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. Allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming.

Ground meats: Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160 °F as measured with a food thermometer.

Poultry: Cook all poultry to an internal temperature of 165 °F as measured with a food thermometer.



Serving

Hot food should be held at 140 °F or warmer.

Cold food should be held at 40 °F or colder.

At a buffet, keep hot food hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Keep cold food cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice or use small serving trays and replace them often.

Use a food thermometer to check hot and cold holding temperatures.

Perishable food should not be left out more than 2 hours at room temperature (1 hour when temperature is above 90 °F).

From: United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service

November Birthdays

- 1 Cate McMillan
- 3 Joseph Cocchiara Jr.
- 4 Luigi Mandile, Nicole Gottschalk
- 5 Jackie Brettner
- 6 Donald Dubay, Bryan Hambly, Sophia Hutchison
- 7 Cecilia Weems
- 8 Tom Henehan, Jean Burke, Paul Edmonds, Claire Judge-LaBiche
- 9 Harrison Watson-Gibby
- 10 Jennifer Meyers
- 11 Mary Roberts, Mary McMillan
- 12 Rachel Nicolosi, Erin Wright McQuade, Tierra Holden, Avery Springgate
- 13 James McMillan
- 15 Jennie Johnson
- 16 Gordon Springgate
- 17 Marsha Rapfogel
- 20 Dexter Smith
- 21 Darryl Durham
- 30 Hal Judge



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