

# Christ Church Millwood Vision Statement

How do we, the parishioners of Christ Church, Millwood see the church's long-range future? What is our vision for it? What do we want the church to be, for us and for our community? What investments should we be making to make that future possible? To propose answers to these and other questions – and create touchstones for its own decision-making - the Vestry of Christ Church created in the fall of 2013 an ad hoc advisory committee and asked it to present recommendations. The parishioners who have served on this group are Wendy Clatterbuck, Daphne Dunning, Tommy Dunning, Jeff Harris, Joe Johnston, Nina Randolph, and Chuck Roberts. The rector of Christ Church, the Rev. Karin MacPhail, has participated fully as well. Underlying the group's work has been the belief that the congregation of Christ Church is committed to a strong and thriving community both within the church and with our neighbors outside the church. We believe we show our commitment by seeking out and acting upon opportunities to:

- worship God in ways that are inviting and welcoming
- nurture and strengthen the faith and understanding of each member of our community so that we may grow together
- show our love and concern for those who suffer and those in need, both within our church and within our neighborhood
- celebrate and encourage the ministries of all in our church family, so that the gifts given to each person may be used for the glory of God and the enrichment of all
- care for and use our resources, property and facilities so that they may be a blessing to ourselves and others, now and in the years to come

The practical question the group has sought to answer is: Given the strengths we have to build upon, the challenges we need to address, and the opportunities that we could pursue, how can we best act on those commitments? The group has sought to ground its suggestions in a review of Christ Church, Millwood's situation and prospects. It has reviewed the church's history, prizing our rich heritage as Episcopalians and as members of Cunningham Parish. It has reviewed our finances, membership, and buildings. It has discussed the demographics of the community and its needs. It has welcomed advice from the diocese and studied the experiences of other successful churches. Most importantly, it has benefitted from a well-attended "congregational conversation" on future directions for the church,

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held this summer. The group thanks the Vestry for the opportunity it has had to do this work. The following recommendations reflect what was learned. They represent not all the ideas suggested or considered, but those that seem to have enough support among members to be successful. It recommends them to the Vestry as a set of initiatives worthy of support and investment over the next few years.

## **Worship**

Continue improvement of the music at the 10:30 service. Enlarge and continue to improve the choir. Host guest musicians.

Provide more opportunities to those wishing to explore and express spirituality, including bible study. Establish and support a prayer group.

## **Education**

Continue provision of adult education and Sunday-school programming for children. Launch a Sunday-evening book group. Research and write a history of Christ Church.

## **Attracting New Members**

Bring new people in. Become not a large church but one that is be “right-sized” for the array of activities we need to support. As we grow, attract families. Increase the numbers of children and young people. Reach out to inactive Episcopalians in the community, including former members of the church in Boyce. Establish a Sunday afternoon concert series, possibly in collaboration with neighboring institutions like Shenandoah University, Blandy and the Barns of Berryville. Create a speaker series and/or an artist/scholar in residence program to help provide presenters.

## **Service**

Continue and expand the church’s Stephen Ministry Continue and expand the work of the Pantry, the summer lunch program and the WATTS program. Include in a new speaker series experts on the needs of the community around us. Explore additional ways of serving the needs of those around us – including a program to help winterize houses, or on-site on-occasion assistance with English as a Second Language, basic computer skills, or legal advice.

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## **Buildings and Grounds**

As growth is achieved, consider seriously an expansion of our facilities, especially the construction of a Parish Hall to accommodate larger meetings and meals and social events. Improve accessibility and connections among buildings. Upgrade the driveways and parking areas. Landscape the grounds with new walkways, beds, benches and the like, so they can be a more inviting place for contemplation and outdoor activities.