

## Visioning Timeline

- November 2006 Fr. Michael announced an upcoming parish-wide visioning process in 2007, designed to discern God's purpose for the congregation for the foreseeable future.
- January 2007 During its annual retreat, the Vestry spent time shaping the visioning process, focusing on the vital first set of questions. We agreed that subsequent questions would be determined only after the comments from the first round of small groups had been reviewed.
- March – May 2007 Ten small groups, consisting of 118 people, gathered once a month for three months to pray, share, and listen. Questions were generated by Vestry in response to what was said in the previous flight of groups. Vestry members served as recorders, taking notes on what people said (without attribution).
- May – August 2007 The Visioning and Strategic Thinking [VAST] team met several times to organize the information collected from the small groups and to draft sense-of-the-vision statements that brought together what the congregation was saying. The VAST team consisted of the Rev. Ann Dieterle, Fred Boelt, Cleve Corlett, De Fehrenbach, Gay Forloine, Bob Gay, Mayes Mathews, David Simmons, Betty Somloi, and Bill Teale.
- September 2007 Having returned from sabbatical, Fr. Michael reviewed the VAST materials, including all of the raw data, drafted his own sense-of-the-vision statement, and met with the VAST team to confer. Upon receiving their endorsement, Fr. Michael met with the Vestry to share the vision and received their endorsement as well.
- From Here On Out Discerning a vision is difficult. Living a vision is possible only by the grace of God. However, we are the hands and feet of Christ on Earth, and it is up to us to use the gifts we receive from God to make our vision a reality.

*“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:14-16

## What is a Vision and Why Is It Important to a Parish?

A vision identifies the core purpose and identity of a Christian community and serves as the standard by which priorities are set, in terms of ministry initiatives and resource allocation. Our vision at Hickory Neck?

# We are that city on the hill.

Vision gives a clear sense of what a parish's mission should be, and some idea of how to accomplish that mission. A possible mission statement for Hickory Neck would be:

At Hickory Neck, God calls us to nurture our souls, individually and as a congregation, for the purpose of being ministers for Godly change in our community and the world, by acting as imaginative yet responsible stewards of all our God-given gifts.

We accomplish our mission statement by setting strategic goals, which are met through specific initiatives. An example of a strategic goal would be to make Hickory Neck an oasis of sanctuary, and initiatives to meet that goal might include building a labyrinth, a meditation garden, an outdoor chapel, or a combination of the three.