

# Senior Warden's Report

by Dave Turner

Last year at our Annual Meeting, Fr. Bill gave us a presentation on churches in decline. The message I took away from that evening was: ***“Build a new service, attract new members... or die!”***

This was how my year as Senior Warden started.

The Vestry took the task of creating a new service seriously. It was the topic of our Vestry retreat, and on our agenda every month. We had parish wide meetings to discuss this. We watched programs about how other Episcopal churches had renewed themselves. We read articles and sections of books about creating new services. At our second parish meeting, it became clear that most of our members were interested in participating in a revitalized Sunday Morning Service, and we became concerned that we would empty the pews in our predominant service as we started a new service.

After much soul searching and prayer, we decided to reinvigorate and grow our 10:00 AM service, and not make some of the more radical changes that many churches have done to bring in new members. The service will be based on the ***Team Ministry*** that has been one of the most successful ways to build strong faith communities.

Each Sunday a different team will be responsible for the key components of the service: **Liturgy** (*always lead by Fr. Bill*), **Music** (*lead by different musical teams each Sunday*), **Youth Ministry** (*Godly Play, youth group*), **Hospitality** (*ushers, snacks, name tags*), **Communications** (*newsletter, email trumpets*), and **Technical** (*power-point, sound*).

A weekly (Tuesday, noon) team meeting will plan the service for the Sunday 12 days ahead (the meeting on Tuesday Jan 27<sup>th</sup> will plan Sunday Feb 8<sup>th</sup>, the meeting on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> will plan Feb 15<sup>th</sup>; and so on). All are welcome to these meetings: lectors, EMs, ushers, musicians, altar guild, youth leaders snacks, and slide presenters for the upcoming Sunday. ***Pick a Sunday you would like to help, and join the team Tuesday, 12 days ahead. We will only succeed if we all pitch in.***

Sunday, February, 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of our new 10:00 AM service.

That's the good news. Now the bad: Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church of Fort Bragg, as of January 2009, can only afford a 3/4 rector. As our Stewardship Report and 2009 Budget on the following pages reflect, our 2009 Pledges are down to \$80, 476 . Our number of pledging members is down to 42 from 56 in 2008. Fr. Bill has made lemonade out of lemons... he has proposed, and the vestry has accepted, that he take 3 months off this Summer (2 ½ months unpaid, 2 weeks vacation). This will enable St. Michael's to pay its bills (including the good Father Bill) this year.

We can not repeat this. We must increase our membership and giving if we want a full time rector and maintain our full parish status.

As your Senior Warden I can not help but reflect that when I first got involved with St. Michael's finances, Fr. Bart was at a 3/4 rector position. We worked hard to be able to afford a full time rector, and it is sad to see us back-slide. We must all pull together in our 2009 Team Ministry. **We will turn this around. And it all starts by inviting friends and family to our first Team Ministry service, Sunday February 1<sup>st</sup>.**

May the blessings of God rest upon you. May His peace abide with you. May His presence illuminate your heart, now and forever more.