

Report on Mission Council Retreat, Camp Gravett, August 24, 2019

Mission Council (MC) Members: Karen Pearson, G.C. Pundt, Genny Sharpe, Carolyn McGay, Kimberley Norris-Jones, Rob Martin, Bob Keck, Stan Dellinger, Donna Andreo, Jim Lawler (Junior Warden), John Phillips (Co-Senior Warden), Deborah Carlson (Secretary), and Debbie Marshall (Co-Senior Warden).

We met at Camp Gravett in Aiken for a full day of reflection, prayer, and asking ourselves, “Who are we now at St. Michaels’?”, and “What is God’s future for us?” We listed out what we perceived as our Church’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This was a great tool for opening our eyes and hearts. Some were known factors and others were surprising.

Strengths were easy to list because that is who most of us think we are. Our **weaknesses** were a little harder to record with realizations gained on the way. We recognized that some of our programs are on auto-pilot and that we use the same people over and over. We are not good at integrating new members into our Church, or our programs. This is difficult because we recognize that new people are important. Do we go outside of our Church to evangelize, including the Early Learning Center (ELC)?

St. Michaels’ **opportunities** are boundless and not fully taken advantage of with new families moving into the neighborhood, or possible Hispanic and military outreach. Like all organizations, we need to work on our communications. We need to add more prayer opportunities, use our members skills and recognize that our Elders have things to offer. Do we offer them enough? The **threats** were also scary but real. The Church competes with Satan, negativity and people that have other things to do on a Sunday morning. The fear of making people unhappy or losing people makes it hard to try new things that may lead us to Jesus.

With all of this information, we really looked at “Who are we now”, and “What is God’s future for us”? We learned that we are not who we thought and God has given us a direction. He wants us to welcome all and be a congregation of ministers. Therefore, Saint Michael and All Angels’ has a **new directional mission statement** for us all to aspire to:

**Saint Michael and All Angels’, we are a congregation of ministers.
We treat others as if our place in heaven depends on it.**

Think of that mission statement every time someone walks into our church, asks to be on a committee, sits alone during one of our celebrations, is home bound, could use encouragement, or needs to hear Christ’s words. After speaking to new members and visitors, they said we were always nice during the “peace”, but it mostly stopped there. Others stated that they tried to join committees and were told that they were full. A committee can always use extra people. Expect to see some “experimental” programs that may or may not work in the future to help our Church work on being a place where we all want to worship and praise God. Input is welcome, and if you have questions please ask any MC member. Thanks for all you do and God bless.

Your family in Christ,

Mission Council