

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

in New Orleans



Parish Profile

Where we have been...

Where we are now...

Where we want to go...

6249 Canal Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70124
Phone: (504)488-3749 Fax: (504)304-8315
www.stpaulschurchno.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
MISSION AND VISION	4
WHERE WE HAVE BEEN	5
WHERE WE ARE NOW	7
<i>Our Family and Staff</i>	7
<i>Worship</i>	8
<i>Fellowship</i>	9
<i>Discipleship</i>	10
<i>At St. Paul's</i>	10
<i>Worshipping Together</i>	10
<i>Caring for Each Other</i>	11
<i>Caring for Others</i>	11
<i>Adult Education</i>	13
<i>Teaching Our Children</i>	13
<i>Administration and Maintenance</i>	14
<i>Prayer</i>	14
WHERE WE WANT TO GO	15
ROLE OF A RECTOR	16
ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL.....	17
LAGNIAPPE	18

INTRODUCTION



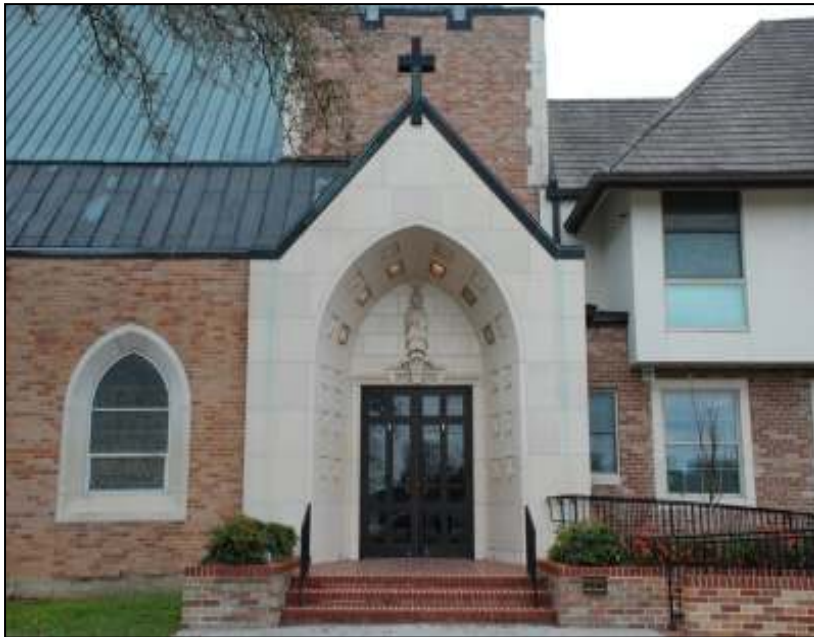
Welcome to St. Paul's! Please accept our invitation to join us in our mission to receive and share God's grace in all actions of our daily lives through *worship, fellowship, discipleship, and prayer*. These are the core capabilities with which we have to work and are the foundation of our church community as we journey together in this post Katrina era.

We have been the awed and humbled recipients of God's grace. Today, St. Paul's thrives in an environment where spiritual and personal growth is nurtured, ministry is enabled, and best of all, where hope abounds. Our commitment to sharing the hope that God's grace gives is demonstrated through the openness, compassion, and dedication with which we embrace the opportunities and challenges to meet the needs of one another, the community of Lakeview, the city of New Orleans, and the greater Church.

This Parish Profile has been created to provide an appreciation and understanding of our journey together. From it, you will learn about where we have been, where we are now, and where we want to go.

OUR MISSION

To receive and share God's grace in all actions of our daily lives through worship, fellowship, discipleship, and prayer.



OUR VISION

St. Paul's offers the hope that God's grace gives.

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN...



St. Paul's Church after the destruction from Hurricane Katrina.

Our story begins in 1836 with the work of a missionary priest from Ohio, the Rev. John Wheat, sent to New Orleans to establish a parish with a small band of communicants. With faith and hope, they gathered to worship first in a school room at Lee Circle. The Rev. Wheat was with us only six months, but his vision was made real by the Rev. Charles Goodrich who served as Rector for the next 30 years.

The parish grew and moved into a warehouse on Julia St. and then to another schoolhouse on Clio St. In 1839, the first bishop of Louisiana, Leonidas Polk, consecrated a modest building on Camp and Gaiennie streets. Fifteen years later this building was replaced at the same location by an impressive masonry structure. Less than 10 years later, when the Civil War ensued, New Orleans surrendered early on to Farragut. Following the surrender, Gen. Butler closed the church and ordered the Rev. Goodrich out of the city. The church was used to stable Union horses from 1862 to 1865.

In 1891, fire essentially destroyed the historic building. Although the church was stone, the roof was timber. It went up in flames as did the interior furnishings and historic church records. A gracious invitation from Rabbi Max Heller to hold services in Temple Sinai was accepted for a year until the building on Camp St. was restored.

The new church was exceptionally beautiful and filled with many gifts and memorials from loving parishioners. In 1903 the Ascension window, deemed "one of the most handsome and costly (\$3,800) memorial glass windows ever erected in a church in New Orleans," was installed. In the 1950's, the property on Camp St. was expropriated in order to make way for a new bridge across the Mississippi River in downtown New Orleans. A search for a new location followed and land was purchased near Lake Ponchartrain in a neighborhood called Lakeview.

The third church was erected on the corner of Canal Boulevard and Harrison Avenue with as many of the historical memorials and furnishings as could be moved from the Camp St. site. The original hand carved cypress pews and choir stalls (destroyed by Katrina), stained glass windows, the marble pulpit,

brass lectern, the angelic Baptismal font, and the Last Supper frieze placed in the new marble altar were but a few of these treasures. The magnificent Ascension window was incorporated as a focal point behind the altar. It has stayed aglow every evening to welcome and inspire passer-bys.

Seeing a need in the community and in keeping with a long history of commitment to education in the Episcopal Church, the Vestry established a day school in 1960. The school opened in 1961 with 52 students. A second story was added to the main building for classrooms. Over the years additional expansion was undertaken to build a science lab, an art center, gym, more classrooms, and the Susie Dunn Early Childhood Development Center. Thus it developed into an exceptional place for providing quality education in a loving and Christian environment for grades pre-K through eighth with an enrollment of about 270 boys and girls by 2005.

On September 9, 1965, Hurricane Betsy slammed into New Orleans. The beautiful Ascension window was shattered and strewn across adjacent properties. Neighbors and parishioners painstakingly gathered as many pieces as could be found. The head of Christ was unbroken. The recovered pieces were packed and shipped to Munich for restoration. Franz Mayer & Co. called several craftsmen out of retirement to recreate the original quality and workmanship. Two years later, the window was back over the altar where it remains today, unscathed by Katrina 40 years later.



Another remarkable milestone in St. Paul's history was the ordination of the Reverend Peggy Walker, the first female priest in the Diocese of Louisiana, in 1992. The Reverend Walker served St. Paul's as Associate Rector, and later as Rector Pro Tem. She was exceptionally gifted in incorporating the talents and work of the laity into the life of the Church.

August 29, 2005, another day that will live in infamy, certainly in the minds of New Orleanians, St. Paul's drowned when a defective levee built by the federal government collapsed on the edge of our neighborhood shortly after the passing of Hurricane Katrina. A twelve foot wall of water roared past the breach, sending a torrent through Lakeview and other areas of the city.

For three weeks the church and school marinated in eight feet of stinking, polluted water and debris. The result was the total destruction of virtually all contents and records of the Church and School on the ground floor, as well as two single story buildings used for youth programs, ArtStart for toddlers, and school admissions and development. With 80% of the city flooded and businesses ruined, the tragic scattering of our people ensued.

In October 2005, with over half having re-located, the remnants of the Vestry and the School Board of Trustees made a commitment to return to our Lakeview home and re-build. With the assistance of Bishop Charles Jenkins and the Diocese of Louisiana, our diligent and heroic staff, the calling and drive of the Reverend Will Hood, the support of churches and faith groups around the world, and our own steadfast congregation, the rebuilding and restoration has largely been accomplished.

What is remarkable about St. Paul's is her sense of place that has withstood so much... war, fire, expropriation, hurricanes, floods, and the Katrina Diaspora. It remains a place of hope and joy, of beauty, and service. It is a place that is alive with the Spirit and dwells in the hearts of the congregation and clergy. It will always be a holy place.

WHERE WE ARE NOW...



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Our Family

Our church and school family is made up of individuals, newcomers and long-time members, who come together weekly as one community to worship God and engage daily in lay ministry.

Many of us are cradle Episcopalians, and others come from varied religious backgrounds, including Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, and Lutheran. Our church family today consists of:

- 155 Family Units
- 251 Communicants
- 132 School Families (11 are also members of the church).

Presently the two Sunday Eucharist services include a choral celebration at 10 AM and a contemporary celebration at 6 PM. The average Sunday attendance is approximately 145 people; 140 of the total 155 family units are givers of record and of these, 102 units pledge.

More important than numbers is the strength of our common bond in our love for Jesus Christ, the desire for a personal relationship with him, and how we bring others into this relationship. We welcome all Christians to receive God's grace and celebrate His love for us during our Eucharist-centered Rite II liturgy.

Our Staff

St. Paul's is blessed with an exceptionally dedicated, faithful, and competent staff. Not only do these individuals perform the prescribed duties as detailed on a normal corporate job description matrix, they are adept with the unique skill sets needed in a post Katrina environment to cope with FEMA and to assist our Rector and Head of School in welcoming home and rebuilding our people's strength. The staffing positions as currently assigned include:

Church Staff

- Executive Assistant to the Rector
- Business Manager
- Assistant Business Manager

Shared Church & School

- Development Director
- Facility Maintenance
- Cafeteria Maintenance

School Staff

- Executive Assistant to the Head of School
- Business Manager
- Assistant Business Manager
- Admissions Director
- Receptionist/Registrar/Nurse

Worship

At St. Paul's our liturgical service is based on Rite II of the Book of Common Prayer. We look to the Bible for guidance, inspiration, solace, and a deeper understanding of Christ's teachings. Through common prayer, sermons, and music, we focus together on God and on Christ's teachings.

Visitors are welcome and warmly greeted with a relaxed effort to make them feel at home. Acolytes, Lay Readers, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers assist the Clergy in celebrating with our congregation. All that have been baptized are welcome to receive the Holy Eucharist.

During the school year St. Paul's students attend Chapel four mornings a week. Parents, church members, and guests are always invited to attend. Church and school families worship together on several occasions throughout the year; The Feast of Lights at Epiphany, Blessing of the Teachers, and other services during which the children lead us in song with voices, handbells, and dance, making for joyful experiences.



Fellowship

Fellowship often happens naturally among the people of St. Paul's as we spend time together, sharing ministries, and studying God's word. In truth, having been separated from one another following the Katrina diaspora, we understand and celebrate just being able to be with one another - to share a story, to support a need, or simply to have dinner together.



Informal and spontaneous, coffee hour after the Sunday Eucharist is always lively. The Hospitality Committee sees to providing great food at many gatherings and meetings, not only for ourselves, but also for the many volunteers that visit us. The Book Club meets on second Monday evenings with a potluck supper and an "in depth" review of various literary works.

The fellowship found amongst the long-standing group of the Episcopal Church Women focuses on a wonderful mix of spiritual growth, community outreach, and continued prayer for those in need. All St. Paul ladies are included in this ministry and active members enjoy a special friendship. Currently the ECW meets quarterly. Several ladies are busily involved in restoring the parlor and library of St. Paul's, once the living/reception room of the church used for meetings, reading, or for a nervous bride and her bridesmaids, or a family receiving funeral condolences.



Discipleship

At St. Paul's:

St. Paul's encourages every member of our congregation to respond to our Lord's call to discipleship, that is, to grow in a personal relationship with our Lord, to live our lives as He would have us do, and to spread the gospel by our individual and collective thoughts, words, and deeds.

We come together regularly in organized group ministries to enable and support each another in whatever Christian endeavor one finds oneself best suited. Some chair or serve on committees, some teach, some prepare food for the sick, the hungry, or for fellowship gatherings.

Others sing or play a musical instrument, prepare the altar, visit hospitals and shut-ins, or simply say a kind word to the stranger in our midst. We organize, budget, spend, and invest. Always, we pray for one another. We genuinely seek leadership and guidance as we grow in this wonder called discipleship.

Worshipping Together:

Under the oversight of our Rector, St. Paul's Liturgy and Music ministries richly enhance the spirituality of our life together in Christ. The Music Director and choir lead us in joyfully singing God's praises. The Acolytes, Lectors, Chalice and Oblation Bearers, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers are specially trained and involved in our services.

The handiwork of the Flower Guild adorns the sanctuary each Sunday as well as on special occasions. The Altar Guild lovingly sets the table for each Eucharist, and just as lovingly, washes the linens and polishes the brass and silver. The Ushers welcome us and our visitors and facilitate our participation in the worship service.



Caring for Each Other:



Especially in the post Katrina era, St. Paul's has experienced that caring for each other and those around us helps to sustain us all. Many in our family lost their homes and businesses in Katrina. We have had to rebuild not just property, but also our lives. If one of us has not suffered a personal loss, a friend's tragedy still strikes at our soul.

Whether the care arises from an organized ministry or because someone simply sees something that is to be done, we realize God's awesome grace as both givers and receivers. Under the umbrella of Congregational Care there is a multitude of ministries, some organized and structured, but many spontaneous. We strive to meet the needs of our families at joyous as well as sad and tragic occasions. Meals are

often provided to church members who need special care. Members of the Hospital and Home Visitation Ministry spread cheer, comfort, and prayer to those who are homebound, in the hospital, or just in need of a visit from a friend. It is the work of many that gladdens our hearts and we seek the shepherding of a caring rector to help us. Being cared for enables us to go forward and care for others.

Caring for Others:

St. Paul's understands what it is like to be in need, and the needs of our neighborhood and the New Orleans community are great. In this post Katrina era, our primary outreach initiative is the support of the **St. Paul's Homecoming Center**.

In 2006, St. Paul's partnered with the diocese and the national church to open the Center and assist in providing financial and material aid, as well as psychological and spiritual support to those rebuilding in Lakeview. Serving as a hub for countless volunteer organizations from all over the world, the Center's staff has organized over 35,000 volunteers aiding residents with demanding physical labor jobs such as house gutting, home renovation, landscaping, moving, debris pickup, and more.



The Center is many things for many people serving residents in ways unforeseen during its initial days. A respite for the weary, angry, and frustrated, it is many things; a place to find a case manager or Road Home representative; a local Goodwill, collecting and distributing furniture, clothing, and appliances; a place to wash clothes and a place to relax and have a cup of coffee. Residents may borrow a lawn mower, use a computer or fax, take advantage of the free notary and legal advice. Others on the brink of a mental health crisis can find hope and refuge. Over 27,000 souls have received some kind of assistance.

As the Lakeview area stabilizes, the Center's mission to restore and rebuild homes must continue. We are now relocating the Center to Gentilly, another neighborhood still largely untouched, to help those residents get back into their homes and restore their hope. St. Paul's has supported this ministry not only with the time and talent of its members, but also by tithing the contributions we have received to restoring our own properties to the Homecoming Center and to other disaster related projects.

St. Paul's Episcopal School is also a major outreach ministry of the church. More details about our school follow, but what began in 1961 as a small lower school for children with learning disabilities, has now blossomed into a full pre-K through eighth grade program that welcomes children from all over the community with a variety of skill sets. Since Katrina, environmental sustainability has been incorporated into the curriculum, a principle that we hope will meld our natural world with our spiritual being.



Camp Care-A-Lot is a very popular summer camp program on our campus for children ages four to eleven. The program integrates sports, swimming, playtime, cooking projects, a variety of music, and art classes in a relaxed and nurturing environment. Many of our young adult members participate as camp counselors. It is fun with a purpose and is sometimes a neighbor's first encounter with the St. Paul's experience.



Last year, we began a community outreach program called **Play Dates at St. Paul's**. The events are held typically one Saturday morning a month and offer a free hands-on learning experience for children and their families. We have visits from the Audubon Zoomobile, special craft projects, musicians, and outdoor playtime. During one event, the children painted a beautiful mural that St. Paul's presented to a local business for their grand opening. We have found that this has provided a wonderful opportunity for families to meet in the community and a great way to show off our campus and everything St. Paul's has to offer.



Children enjoying a reptile encounter from the Audubon Zoomobile.



"Long Live Lakeview" painted by children attending Play Dates.

Adult Education:

We understand that to be faithful disciples, we are called upon to study and increase our understanding of what God is calling us to become. The adult education programs are varied and scheduled at times to facilitate the schedules of a busy congregation.

The Wednesday night Lenten series are enlightening and challenging and also provide a chance for fellowship and sharing a meal together. The Men's Bible Study group, led by the Rector, meets on Monday evenings and is well attended. Another Bible study group meets on Thursday mornings. The Rector also teaches a class for those to be Confirmed or Received, and those in other stages of discernment.

Teaching our Children:

St. Paul's offers several youth programs for all age groups. Our hope is to grow these programs with more volunteers and many more children!

Nursery: Our well equipped nursery is available every Sunday for all of our infants, toddlers, preschoolers and Kindergarten children. We have three, regularly scheduled young adults to care for our youngest members during the 10 AM service.



Grades 1 – 5: St. Paul's offers Sunday morning values and Saturday morning fun to children in grades first through fifth. Each Sunday morning during the 10 AM service, our lessons are based on the Veggie Tales curriculum "Veggie Connections". We explore a life lesson such as honesty, kindness, and forgiveness in a fun format. The dedicated volunteers incorporate stories, music, art, and outdoor play to make this a meaningful and fun experience for our children. We begin during the 10 AM service and join the congregation for Communion.

Grades 6 – 8: Rite 13, also known as YUTS for Christ, meets regularly right after the 10 AM service on Sundays. Along with fellowship and prayer, the YUTS meet to support various service projects in the community and assist in the younger children's Sunday school program.

High School: Our high school youth meet about four times a year for fellowship and prayer. Gatherings have included team building at Laser Tag and a swim party at a parishioner's home. Several of our high school youth also participated in the Confirmation classes.

Vacation Bible School: For the first time in many years, in July 2008 St. Paul's hosted a week long, evening Vacation Bible School (VBS). In keeping with our VeggieTales theme we utilized the VeggieTales VBS, "The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything".

We had 36 children registered to come aboard and experience the stories of Bible heroes. Over 27 volunteers from the congregation participated in pirate roles such as registrars, shipmates, scientists, mysterious storytellers, and captains. Our VBS reached beyond our church walls and into the community to provide children a fun and meaningful program to reinforce their relationship with God.

Administration & Maintenance

It's not dry stuff! Especially after Katrina, we all have a deep appreciation for what it takes to keep this place on the corner of Canal Blvd. and Harrison Ave. up and running. To do this encompasses a broad range of ministries at St. Paul's. The Vestry, our elected members to whom the congregation has entrusted the business affairs of the church, has undertaken the oversight of Finances and the Buildings and Grounds ministries with the understanding that these roles of responsibility need to be expanded. Currently a Garden sub-committee is hard at work re-designing and re-claiming our Katrina devastated lawns and courtyard in tandem with the environmental ideals set within the new school curriculum.



Prayer

The Spiritual Life Committee assists our family with resources for spiritual sustenance. It is commissioned to provide for retreats, inspirational programs, and educational sessions for spiritual awakening, growth, and renewal.

One especially meaningful event was our first 24 hour Prayer Vigil held in October 2008. We are looking forward to repeating this discipline every fall as both our Stewardship and other church programs and our school begin anew.

At St. Paul's, Stewardship is an integral part of our spiritual life empowering one another to grow in grace. Beyond the canonical responsibility for temporal affairs, the Vestry at St. Paul's oversees this important aspect of our faith. For us, stewardship is more than raising dollars to meet an operating budget or the costs of a new building. It is "All that we do with all that we have all of the time." We have been truly blessed to be a blessing.



Handmade cross with a note placed in the church after Hurricane Katrina.



WHERE WE WANT TO GO...



Baptism at St. Paul's.

“The Light is on at St. Paul’s!” is a cry bursting with meaning and truth. We have experienced darkness, both physical and spiritual. When the electricity was finally restored and the glow of the Ascension window once again bathed our neighborhood, we rejoiced in the love and hope that glow represented.



Volunteers working with the Homecoming Center.

We have been so blessed with the prayer and support from the likes of the Jewish Community Group of New York, the Episcopal Church in Seoul, Korea, the Diocese of Olympia and its Suffragan Bishop Nedi Rivera, the congregations of St. Paul’s, Indianapolis, St. Mary’s, Park Ridge, IL, Christ Church, Georgetown, Holy Spirit,

Missoula, MT, and a coalition of “St. Paul’s” congregations around the country, amassed by the Reverend Hunter Huckaby of Chattanooga, and so many others.



The new St. Paul's Homecoming Center in Gentilly.



Fr. Hood and Merry Sorrells, Head of School help to build the Lakeview's first community garden.



Sketch of a proposed design for the new campus

The congregation has grown and is being very well ministered to by our Interim Rector, the Reverend Hill Riddle. The School is moving forward rapidly and excited with a new curriculum enhanced with the principles of environmentalism and sustainability. With the wise counsel, direction, leadership, and inspiration of our new Rector, our future will be as bright as ever and we will be able to pay forward the innumerable blessings and grace that have been bestowed on us.

THE ROLE OF A RECTOR



"The Good Shepherd" (John 10:1-8) in the Narthex of St. Paul's Church

We seek a shepherd to lead us in our Vision and Mission, to sustain and inspire and direct us so that, together, we can be to ourselves and others what others have been to us. We ask our Rector to join us in understanding and appreciating the grace that has been bestowed upon us and to participate with us in paying it forward.

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

An integral part of St. Paul's Episcopal Church is St. Paul's Episcopal School, which opened in 1961. The School is renowned for providing a learning climate rich in religious values as well as a strong academic program. We serve children of all socioeconomic groups, races, and religions.

Mission Statement:

St. Paul's Episcopal School is dedicated to instilling in our children strength of intellect and strength of character in a Christian environment that is positive, respectful, and familial. We encourage our students to strive to do their best, to be compassionate, and to appreciate and preserve the beauty of life.

Sustainability Statement:

St. Paul's Episcopal School commits to embrace a global understanding of the social, economic and environmental impact of the use of our resources as they relate to the sustainability of water, food, environment, and energy and the reduction of waste.

St. Paul's Seal:

The St. Paul's seal represents three fundamental components of our program: *character, intellect, and community.*



Academic Life:

A St. Paul's Episcopal School student stands apart. Our advanced curriculum gives our students the knowledge and skills to thrive in a technological and rapidly changing world. Rich in cultural literacy, this global curriculum provides the exposure and understanding necessary for our children to function in contemporary society.

Our most recent curricular initiative is to educate for sustainability. We at St. Paul's are looking to the future with a bold vision for the study of the sciences that will incorporate a comprehensive curriculum at every grade level. This concept of enhancing a solid skills based curriculum with global and sustainable thinking and an exceptional technology program sets St. Paul's apart as a leader in twenty-first century teaching practices.



What makes us unique is that we equally value the development of spiritual and moral character. Ours is a school rich with music, art, athletics, and opportunities for play. Intellectual development is not only prized, but considered vital at St. Paul's. Our vision is to provide a structure in which learning is inspired through the freedom of discovery, creativity, and curiosity.



At St. Paul's Episcopal School, we know there are many paths all students will take to reach their fullest potential. By offering a variety of learning experiences and by promoting personal achievement over competition, we inspire children to appreciate their capabilities and those of others.

LAGNIAPPE

The following are the results of a survey recently taken and responded to by 66 (about half of a normal Sunday's congregation) parishioners. This is but another tool with which to discern the personality of our church and school community. We look forward to reviewing and discussing these results as they relate to the attainment of our Mission and Vision.

St. Paul's New Orleans – Recap

Where are you now?

- theologically, slightly progressive as a whole, with a significant percentage being more conservative
- you have high morale, but lots of people on the fence about how they feel about the workings of the parish
- you value good music and worship experiences
- there is a general feeling that involvement is limited
 - one reason for this may be the lack of development of spiritual gifts

What are your goals?

- attract new individual and families
- provide tools for involvement in parish life, and opportunities for the exercise of developing gifts
- continue the path of meaningful outreach to the community
- offer healing to those with whom you have contact

More generally, what can you do to improve your situation?

- be open to new ways of doing what you already do well
 - worship
 - outreach
- provide opportunities for education and spiritual development
- involve more of the people you already have

What are the parts of “the orange”?

- shared - desired for growth, and opportunities for deeper relationships
- separate - non-traditional opportunities for the infrequent attendees, education for the frequent
 - education with a strong component of spiritual formation and life application skills

What tools do you have for this purpose?

- you are adaptable / flexible
- you have great passion / morale
- you have been through the trials of Katrina and come out stronger
- you know what it means to do things differently

What are the strengths needed in a new Rector?

- a team builder who has a history of equipping new leaders
- someone who values good worship and music
- a good teacher
- someone who people want to get behind and follow, but who does not need to be the cult leader
- a person of sound theology, without being an ideologue for either extreme
- and be careful – the system will want an enabler!