

Vestry Visions

Most of you know what the Vestry is, but what is the Program Council and what does it do?

When a church is small (a pastoral-sized church), it functions well with most of the power and responsibility resting with a governing board and the minister. Fifteen years ago, our Vestry, minister, and small staff dealt with much of the nitty-gritty of the day-to-day work of the church. But as a church grows to a program-sized church, its governance and character does, too. An increase in size brings an increase in diversity of both the congregation and its needs. Today, the Vestry still has an oversight and policy-making role, but much of the responsibility for running our church is now shared with committees.

Committee members, along with our staff, are really the folks who carry out our mission and provide the many programs of our church. The Sunday Services and Music Committees work with the minister to provide our weekly services. The RE Committee provides vital support for our new RE Director. If a member is in crisis, our Caring Committee is there to bring food and to provide rides and comfort. The Social Justice Committee gives us many outlets for those of us who want to make our world a better place. There are committees that take care of our beloved Sanctuary and Churchyard, and still others that help us collect, preserve, and manage our finances. We even have a committee that preserves our history so that, at our tri-centennial, future congregants will have a window into all that we are doing now. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but you get the idea.

The Program Council meetings are the mechanism by which all of these committees, along with associated groups such as the Alliance, coordinate their

activities. It is a time and place for committee chairs to make sure we are all working together as a unit in achieving the goals of our organization. Program Council meetings provide an opportunity for communication, cross-fertilization of ideas, and sharing of goals and aspirations.

If you are not already involved, I invite you to become active in at least one of our committees or associated groups. Doing so will not only contribute to the smooth functioning of our church community, it will help you make the church your own.