

St. Elizabeth's Church  
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The Rev. Canon John G. Hartnett, *Rector*

Email: [info@stesridgewood.org](mailto:info@stesridgewood.org)

March 6, 2015

Dear Members of St. Elizabeth's,

The second phase of the Dickinson Fund Discernment process has begun, with a committee chaired by former Senior Warden Chris Walsh. Joining Chris on the Dickinson Fund Discernment Committee, Phase II (DFDCII) are Wendy Broadbent, Rohan de Silva, Dan Etna, Tim Graham, Gaye Thurston, Karla Tombaugh, and Sharon Walker as well as *ex officio* members Mary Wynn Seiter and Don Taylor, who join as Wardens.

The charge for this committee is to present to the Vestry recommendations for how to use the Dickinson Fund, which is approximately \$1.75 million. To that end, the committee is seeking ideas from parishioners on ways the funds can be used that are in concert with St. Elizabeth's core values and our beliefs as Christians. We urge every interested member of the parish to participate in this Idea Campaign in the coming days!

***What Parameters Should Be Considered When Coming Up with Ideas for the Fund's Use?***

During the first phase, the previous Dickinson Fund Discernment Committee, chaired by Tim Graham, did some exercises to help us all better understand who we are as a congregation, what we value, how we see ourselves, and perhaps glean an insight into what is God's will for how we as a congregation should use these funds.

At the annual Vestry retreat held February 20-21, the Vestry was joined by members of the DFDCII to review the findings revealed during Phase I of the process and identify those key concepts that were shown to be important to the members of St. Elizabeth's Church.

**Key concepts identified as important to the members of St. Elizabeth's:**

- **Education – for children and adults, within St. E's and external to St. E's, religious and secular.**

- **Spirituality – growth and deepening understanding for all. The importance of music for our spiritual life was mentioned frequently.**
- **Children and Families – supporting and nurturing those within St. E's and external to St. E's. The many ways we have intergenerational engagement was mentioned as being a particularly strong and valuable characteristic of our congregation.**

Using these broad concepts, we identified the more-focused characteristics that we believe viable ideas for the use of the Dickinson Fund should have.

The way we use the funds should:

- Reflect or relate to our identity as a congregation, especially having something to do with families or children.
- Reflect the values and areas of special interest of St. Elizabeth's. Some areas identified were education, music, intergenerational encounters, fellowship gatherings, bread-breaking gatherings, and especially addressing pressing needs, both material and spiritual.
- Be consistent with, and even supportive of, Christian values as the Episcopal Church has understood them.
- Allow for face-to-face engagement and not simply check-writing.
- Have strong potential to involve members of St. Elizabeth's in projects/ programs/ministry. This involvement would provide an opportunity for the members' own spiritual growth as well as make a difference to the groups/individuals with whom they work.
- Have the strong possibility of having a lasting impact, rather like a capital investment that produces something over a period of time and is not just a short-time investment.

Not all ideas – and perhaps not any – will hit each of these “check marks” as they may not all be perfectly compatible with each other.

### ***How Can I Submit an Idea for the Use of the Dickinson Fund?***

Printed on the last page of this letter is a form that can be filled out, detailing your idea for the use of the Dickinson Fund. A separate form should be used for each idea, and you should provide enough written information about your idea or concept so that the members of the DFDCII can get a sense of the idea and how it connects with the key concepts and values outlined above. We anticipate an idea might be described in as few as 100 words and, on the other end of the scale, a one-page description would be sufficient to capture enough detail to start.

The DFDCII asks that members of the congregation submit their ideas for how to use the Dickinson Fund starting on Wednesday, March 11. In resonance with the season of Lent, submissions will be accepted for a period of forty days (and forty nights), concluding on Sunday, April 19.

We will have a Coffee Hour Forum on Sunday, April 12, while we are still receiving suggestions, and another on Sunday, May 3, after the completion of the 40-day window for suggested ideas.

You may communicate your ideas to this committee in a number of ways:

- There is a mailbox in the church office labeled “Dickinson Fund Committee.”
- You can send email to the newly-created email address [dfund@stesridgewood.org](mailto:dfund@stesridgewood.org).
- You can send email to any of the committee members. Their email addresses are listed in the parish directory.

We will be evaluating the ideas to discern which most closely fit with the concepts and characteristics specified above and show promise in terms of viability. The committee will then look into those ideas in more depth and detail, continuing this discernment process with a goal of developing a recommendation, or set of recommendations, to present to the Vestry, which is the body that will be making the final decision.

The length of the Evaluation Period will be determined, in part, by how many ideas are submitted and also by how much time it will take to evaluate the various submissions.

The committee looks forward to sharing with the congregation as this process unfolds, and we anticipate having communications at major milestone points along the way.

We look forward to hearing from you over the next 40 days and working with you over the following months as we continue the process of discerning how we can best use this generous gift we have received.

Faithfully,

The Dickinson Fund Discernment Committee, Phase II

Chris Walsh, *Chair*  
Wendy Broadbent  
Rohan de Silva  
Dan Etna  
Tim Graham

Gaye Thurston  
Karla Tombaugh  
Sharon Walker  
Mary Wynn Seiter, *Senior Warden*  
Don Taylor, *Junior Warden*

# Dickinson Fund Idea Submission

## *Forward in Faith our Blessings Flow*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Submission Title: \_\_\_\_\_

***The Dickinson Fund Discernment Committee, Phase II has identified the key concepts that are important to the congregation:***

- Education – for children and adults, within St. E’s and external to St. E’s, religious and secular.
- Spirituality – growth and deepening understanding for all. The importance of music for our spiritual life was mentioned frequently.
- Children and Families – supporting and nurturing those within St. E’s and external to St. E’s. The many ways we have intergenerational engagement was mentioned as being a particularly strong and valuable characteristic of our congregation.

***As you write your submission, please keep in mind the following questions:***

- How does this submission reflect the values and traditions of St. E’s?
- How would the work envisioned in this submission be sustained over the years/beyond the use of the Dickinson Fund?
- What opportunities do you see for St. E’s to remain physically involved in the work of your idea, both as a parish and as individuals?

Please submit your idea by April 19, 2015 either to the church office Dickinson Fund Committee mailbox or via email to a committee member or the Dickinson Fund Committee website mailbox at [dfund@stesridgewood.org](mailto:dfund@stesridgewood.org).

A member of the Dickinson Fund Committee may be contacting you to review your submission and request additional information.

We anticipate an idea might be described in as few as 100 words and, on the other end of the scale, a one-page description would be sufficient to capture enough detail to start.