**Annual General Meeting**

February 25, 2018

**Rector’s Charge to Vestry**

What if? Two little words that take us by the hand to the place of imagination. Of hopes, and dreams, and visions. Of wind, and fire, and Spirit. Of grace.

Come with me, will you?, to the place of imagination.

🙢

Imagine a Cathedral with a strong and vibrant core community, who feel honoured to welcome visitors, tourists and seekers, and who are curious to know what news they bring from afar.

Imagine a Church that hungers for knowledge and thirsts for communion with God, where people pray, and study;

where people are deeply intentional about following the way of Jesus, and are able to give a reason for the hope that is in them.

Imagine a Church where people know for themselves what’s what and who’s who in the Bible;[[1]](#endnote-1)

where every baptized person knows the six questions of the baptismal covenant by heart, and can describe how they are putting the baptismal covenant into practice.

Imagine a Church that attracts people of intellect and heart, high and low, rich and poor, one with another;

where everyone’s name is known, and every story honoured - a church where people are missed if they are away.

Imagine a Church where children are not just seen, but heard;

and where no one ever describes the Church as “they:” only “we.”

🙢

This is who we are, but what are we about?

Imagine a Church where everyone is crew, and no one a passenger;

Imagine a Church that thinks of itself as a ministering community, rather than a community gathered around a minister;[[2]](#endnote-2)

whose doors open *in* for those seeking quiet and wisdom and solace;

whose doors, equally, open out – and whose members understand that they have come in only to be equipped in order to go back out and be the voice and hands and mind and heart of Christ in the world;

Imagine a Church who measures its success not by Sunday attendance, but by the difference it makes in the world, and its maturity of faith.

Imagine a Church that can see what needs “saving” in the world, and that is committed to the work of reconciliation, healing, and peace-making.

Imagine a Church that sees its space less as a monument to be maintained than as a God-given haven for all, a touchstone for gathering, a space for equipping, and a platform for ministry.

Imagine a Church that has the will to create such space.

Imagine a Church where no one ever has to ask for money, because everyone already gives freely and generously to a mission they believe in.

🙢

This Church is a Cathedral.

Imagine a Cathedral that relishes its role as a leader and pace-setter not only in the diocese, but in the Canadian Church;

that looks forward to welcoming the diocesan family as to the shared home of all parishes.

Imagine a Cathedral who sees one its principal responsibilities as testing, refining and showcasing the priorities of the diocese.

Imagine a Cathedral willing and unafraid to offer its name and reputation to those worthy secular or multi-faith initiatives and causes that align with its own values.

Imagine a Cathedral to which other parishes want to turn for help, advice, or resources.

Imagine a Cathedral that goes out of its way to build relationships by inviting others to speak, preach, and participate in its life and worship.

Imagine a Cathedral that patronizes arts of all kinds – music, visual arts, dance, theatre – with a particular view to connecting the arts and theology.

Imagine a Cathedral with adequate space and staff to do these things well.

🙢

And how shall we be?

Imagine a Church that isn’t afraid to try something new, and never rejects any idea out of hand because it didn’t work the last time.

Imagine a Church that refuses to content itself with mediocrity, half-heartedness or shabbiness.

Imagine a Church strong enough to fail, and resilient enough to rise up and try something else, without recrimination or blame.

Imagine a Church that repudiates the idolatry of certainty, and honours every question as a path to truth;

where law and rules are known to be a good servant, but a poor master.[[3]](#endnote-3)

Imagine a church that is imaginative – that values everything “the box” is good for, but also knows how to think outside that box, and how to colour outside the lines.

🙢

Imagine that Church, and ask yourself, What if?

Glory to God,

whose power working in us

can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

Glory to God from generation to generation,

in the Church and in Christ Jesus

for ever and ever.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Ansley Tucker, Rector & Dean

1. This wording borrowed from Wesley Frensdorff, “The Dream.” [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. *Idem*. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. *Idem*. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)