

St. David's Episcopal, October 22, 2017 Stewardship Talk – 9:00 a.m. Rob Feild

Looking at the future of St. David's fifty years from now is not too hard with my crystal ball. I see an eleven year old boy in a Sunday school class who says something more controversial than may be appropriate for a child of that age. I see the teacher, with a bit of a shocked look on his face, addressing the boy and his classmates to refocus them on the lesson. After the class the teacher talks to the boy to encourage him to be inquisitive about God and to assure him that the class and the church are safe places to do that. I see the boy developing a relationship with God and the Episcopal Church beyond something that he had to do because his family went to church. Maybe that kid will grow up to be St. David's senior warden at the 2117 celebration of its 150 year anniversary.

When I rub my crystal ball again I see a middle-aged man who is the midst of a marriage that is dissolving. I see him in the pews witnessing acts of marital togetherness and compassion by other parishioners that are to him both saddening and hopeful. Saddening in that they reflect the feelings of loss that he is undergoing, but hopeful in that they foreshadow what could be a part of his future. Widening out that picture I see the middle-aged man being comforted and supported by members of the congregation during this period. I see the realization on his face that they are engaging him not as member of his family but as his own person who has a church family.

One more rub on the crystal ball brings a picture of an old man in a wheelchair. The sometimes curmudgeonly, often impatient and occasionally thoughtful man is welcomed graciously by the congregation. They even provide him needed assistance so that he can worship. I can see them treating him as part of the St. David's family. God's love is reflected through the congregation to the old man. This is not the most impressive part of the picture I see. It is the rector patiently discussing issues of faith with the man in such a way as to change some of the hidebound views he picked up in the 2020's.

These scenes of caring and concern, of welcome and acceptance will be happening here at St. David's in fifty years, but it could be in twenty five, ten or even one year from now. The means to get to those scenes may include a smart phone, like the Galaxy 28 or I-phone 67, or some technology being dreamed up in Silicon Valley today, but it will be based in the human contact that draws us together and brings us closer to God.

Our stewardship campaign looks to St. David's 2067 while realizing that there are at least fifty steps along the way. I hope these scenes of the future that I have described happen many times over the next fifty years bringing many people closer to our Lord, Jesus Christ. I hope that you can picture your own visions of the future here at St. David's that make it reflect God's kingdom here on earth. Picture those visions in your mind when you prayerfully consider your

pledge to St. David's for the 2018 calendar year. Your pledge may be the one that makes the view in your crystal ball come true.