

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Vestry Minutes

October 20, 2020

Conducted as an on-line meeting via ZOOM platform due to COVID-19 Social Distancing Restrictions

Present: Fr. Bailey Norman, Nancy Anderson, Bonnie Bautz, Barbara Bovee, Judith Delaney, Lew Felton, Judy DiGregorio, Liz Herbes, Jo Kelley, Cyril Meredith, Jr., John Murphy, Sandi Robertson, Brent Sigmon

Guests: Cameron Ellis, Rachel Kirk, Cyril Meredith III, James Rousey, Barbara Steele

Call to Order:

Fr. Norman opened the meeting with a prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Fr. Norman

The agenda was unanimously approved (Felton/Robertson).

Approval of Minutes: Fr. Norman

Approval of the September 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes was deferred until November.

Approval of Annual Meeting Voting Procedure: Fr. Norman

Approval of the Annual Meeting voting procedure was unanimously approved (Bovee\Sigmon).

Book Discussion: Fr. Norman

Fr. Norman began the discussion of Chapter 4 of The Agile Church by Dwight Zscheile. He drew attention to the four points concerning innovation listed on page 65 and asked the vestry to think about the following questions:

- What have we tried that succeeded?
- What have we tried that failed?
- What type of resistance have we encountered?

What we tried that worked - WOW, Clearfork, Communications upgrades/innovations, Bread upon the waters new video, Zoom opportunities, changes in Eucharist during interim (stand to receive the elements, Fr. Bailey hands out bread).

What we tried that failed – 1st rector search.

What type of resistance have we encountered - Diocese's search process during the last search, rearranging the front of the sanctuary, air conditioning, mission outreach in the Hillside area, service times, reducing the number of services

Fr. Norman ended the discussion with a quote at top of page 66 about innovation – not change for sake of change but listening and come to consensus.

WARDENS REPORTS

Senior Warden: Brent Sigmon

Mr. Sigmon had nothing to add other than the report already submitted

Junior Warden: Judith Delaney

Mrs. Delaney had nothing to add other than the report already submitted

Priest-in-Charge: Bailey Norman

Father Norman thanked everyone who supported the Annual Meeting effort: Lew – working with Diocese on procedure; Communications team with meeting logistics; Courtney for taking notes. There is a local call-in number that can be used for parishioners who do not have the internet.

At the December meeting, assignments will be made for committees. Fr. Norman asked for input about preference from each member. Returning members will be given preference. Fr. Norman and the Wardens will reach out to the new members. Officers will be elected in December – Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary. Anyone interested in being a Warden should have a conversation with Fr. Norman beforehand so that he can go over the time commitment and responsibilities.

Three delegates for Diocesan Convention must be chosen by mid-December. The 2021 convention will be virtual.

Services: Fr. Norman is not ready to come inside with in-person services and the Vestry seems to feel the same way. He wants to keep the outside worship going as long as possible. For the month of November, the service times will be flip-flopped with the streaming service at 9:00 and the outside service at 10:30. When it gets too cold to be outside, we will go to the streaming service only. This is in line with what other churches in the dioceses are doing. An alternative was suggested of recording the service on Saturday but that raised issues concerning availability of people needed to record the service. The idea was raised of starting a mid-week service on Tuesday AM as trial for a larger Sunday service. Other churches in the diocese are meeting outside as long as possible. Flip-flopping the services raised an issue about coffee hour. The feeling was that it is important for parishioners who attend the streamed service to have the opportunity to interact. Having the coffee hour after the 10:30 service as it is now does not appear conducive to participation by the parishioners who attend the streamed service. Suggestions were to have two opportunities for parishioners to interact on-line by moving the time of the current “coffee hour” to 10am. Alternatives for another “coffee hour” were later Sunday or another day of the week. Fr. Norman will send out specific recommendations for thoughts and feedback from the Vestry by Thursday.

Fr. Norman reached out to the Ray Evans who was the fifth parishioner on the slate of Vestry candidates. Fr. Norman would like to engage him in long-term strategic planning for which Ray has much experience. Ray is interested in that as well.

Items for Action

Approval of September Financial Report: Cyril Meredith, Jr.

Cyril explained the finance report for new Vestry members. The financial report was approved unanimously.

Approval of 2019 Audit: Cyril Meredith, Jr.

Vestry was provided a copy of audit. Cameron presented the results of the audit. Overall, the audit results were clean. The new auditor appears to be more rigorous than the previous auditor. The auditor noted that the books are kept on a cash basis rather than an accrual basis. The auditor notes this every year since this practice is outside standard accounting procedures. Keeping books on a cash basis is common among churches, and the Diocese has never had an issue with this practice. Cameron noted that \$62,000 was earned as interest in 2019. Several ideas were provided for tightening up the finances which Bailey discussed with the Wardens and Treasurer. Cameron left at the end of the audit discussion.

Items for Information

Nothing to report

Committee Reports

Program Committees

Christian Education: Nancy Anderson

There is a correction to the submitted report. Trunk or Treat is scrapped for this year but will return in 2021. EYF attendance from 2-5. Caroline has been very diligent in planning. Fr. Norman would like to have Children's Christian Ed coordinator. It is becoming more evident that C.E. Committee would benefit from someone to take its ideas and develop them. Paul and Barbara Shearer are new members in the last year. Paul has expressed interest in doing Adult Education, especially with young families and couples.

Evangelism: Judith Delaney

Judith had an idea based on reading the chapter in the Agile Church, "Who are our neighbors?" We have families to whom we provide food baskets people. We could consider increasing our interaction with them in a more personal front, such as a Christmas party. Another idea is to focus on the community right behind church.

Liturgics: Jo Kelley

Nothing to report

Outreach: John Murphy

Fr. Norman reported that he connected with David Allred and will talk with John about that conversation tomorrow.

Pastoral Care: Liz Herbes

Nothing new to report. Fr. Norman has started printing some items related to Pastoral Care.

Administrative or Support Committees

Buildings and Grounds: Lew Felton

Lew has met with Cameron and Volunteer Mechanical about upgrading HVAC system in church with initial focus on the Nave. Units in the Nave could be replaced gradually with more modern units resulting in better control of temperature. There are other units in the church that need attention. He is working on estimate. He had an estimate, but looking at details, he felt there is not enough room to upgrade. Two other contractors were approached but did not want to deal with a system like ours. Volunteer is familiar with the system in the church.

Bylaws and Policies: Lew Felton

Lew established the temporary rule for voting in the annual meeting. There may be a need for by-law change soon.

Communications: Sandi Robertson

A new computer has been ordered for Elizabeth who is giving hers to streaming. There is a need for a drone to use with the new video system. Lew has a drone and will get with Adam who is the point of contact.

Finance: Cyril Meredith, Jr.

Work on the 2021 budget continues. Simon has requested an additional \$5k for music. Simon also needs an equity adjustment for hours he is working and an Episcopal report on compensation for Music Directors. A 2% staff salary increase is also desired. There are 46 pledges turned in to date with the average pledge increased over 2020. However, there is only one new pledge. So far, funding is about half of 2020: \$16K in increased pledges and \$5K in decreased pledges. It is time to start contacting people who have not pledged to date.

Gifts and Memorials: Barbara Bovee

There was no meeting since last Vestry meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2.

Memorial Garden: Brent Sigmon

Nothing to report.

Nominating: Brent Sigmon
Activities are complete.

Parish Life: Bonnie Bautz
Parish Life is working on a project for Advent. With 10 envelopes returned from the summer mailing that Parish Life did, Bonnie asked if the mailing list has been updated the mailing list. Elizabeth updates it regularly.

Personnel: Judith Delaney
A 2018 compensation survey of Anglican musicians was done across the US. The desire is to get Simon's compensation closer to values in the report. The Letter Agreement of each staff member is being reviewed. Fr. Norman is talking to each one to bring their job descriptions into line.

Stewardship: Judy DiGregorio
Nothing new to report. Fr. Norman asked Alan Liby to reach out to people who have not sent back pledge cards. The 46 returned pledges amounted to \$223,342 from 46 pledges. This is less than half the pledges expected.

Old Business:
Nothing to report

New Business:
Nothing to report

The meeting adjourned at 8:33pm

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth D. Ellis
Standing in for Courtney A. Manrod, Secretary

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.