

**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church**  
**Vestry Minutes**  
August 10, 2021

*Conducted as a hybrid meeting via ZOOM platform or in-person due to renewed concern about COVID*

**Present:** Fr. Bailey Norman, Nancy Anderson, Bonnie Bautz, Barbara Bovee, Judith Delaney, Judy DiGregorio, Lew Felton, Rachel Kirk, Cyril Meredith III, Sandi Robertson, Jim Rousey, Barbara Steele

**Absent:** Liz Herbes

**Call to Order:**

Fr. Bailey opened the meeting with prayer. He welcomed the Bishop Brian Cole to the meeting.

**Approval of Agenda:** Fr. Bailey Norman

The agenda was approved as submitted (Rousey/Felton)

**Approval of the Consent Agenda**

**Approval of Minutes** (Steele/ DiGregorio)

**BOOK DISCUSSION:** Fr. Bailey Norman

Fr. Bailey continued the discussion of the book *The Agile Church* with Chapter 6 "Organizing for Innovation." He shared that he and Bishop Brian first met during a study with the author Dwight J. Zscheile. Bailey focused on a passage from p. 118 - "A church's hypothesis of record in trying to connect with its unchurched neighbors might be that people are struggling to find meaning and community but won't look to church to provide it. Therefore, the church must find ways to form relations with these neighbors in their spaces that bring the Christian story and community to them." Bailey asked what ministries are coming back into existence after the pandemic? Here is what was listed:

- WOW
- Tuesday morning Bible study
- Wednesday morning men's group
- Hospitality ministry running each day
- New Christian Ed director
- Streaming services and holding meetings via Zoom
- Weekly E-news that includes a video by Fr. Bailey
- CARE program started at the beginning of the pandemic
- New web site
- New curate
- Starting Sunday 5:00pm service
- Serving wine with Eucharist

Out of all those things, how do we find ways through these ministries to form relationships with our neighbors in their spaces that bring the Christian story and community to them?

- In our actions of kindness and welcoming to the community with no strings attached
- WOW – churches are always at their healthiest when they are outward focused with no expectation that if we do this it will result in that. Offering lunch to high school kids is pure hospitality with no expectation of getting anything out of it.
- Streaming services and the website also allow folks to look at what the church is doing.
- COVID has allowed everyone to be open to new ideas to do their own thing.
- The idea of 5pm service is to reach out to folks who are much less transactional in their encounter than the morning services. We don't want to overextend ourselves but diversify the ways we connect with each other.
- There are fundamental things that we don't want to lose because these communicate who we are. This would be a good exercise to determine "who we are."

To close the discussion, Bailey said that "Kindness is our mission." How do we articulate the story of the gospel that is uniquely and distinctly Episcopalian and what does that look like for us at St. Stephens? Bishop Brian shared the motto of the Episcopal House of Studies at Duke Divinity School which is "Roots down, walls down." He stated that we are at our healthiest when we hit that balance of roots down, walls down.

#### **TIME WITH THE BISHOP:** Bishop Brian Cole

Bishop Brian thanked us for partnering with the diocese by adding the curate Ashton Sims to our staff. He said we are a healthy place and will provide a good teaching place for Ashton. How we do funding of the curate at St. Stephens is through direct support plus the parish funding of the diocese. Even in the time of COVID St Stephens has continued to grow. The curate provides help to Fr. Bailey. Bishop Brian sees investing in young clergy as-a long haul investment in stewardship. This includes both Fr. Bailey and Ashton. Ashton's ordination will be August 25, 6:00pm at St John's Cathedral.

#### Questions for the Bishop:

- Can Fr. Bailey be installed as Rector now? Bishop stated that we are on track to resolution in February. We agreed to the process with some intentional work and a teaching time. The Bishop would not have offered a curate if he didn't fully endorse that here is a priest who the curate can learn from. Bailey wants to be clear that he is fully on-board with the process. Ashton is also aware of the process. Given all the issues that have been encountered during COVID, this process is going as planned. This should be communicated to the parish that there is a timeline with an end in sight.
- Months down the road, will Ashton be ordained at St. Stephens? The Bishop stated that it is important from his perspective that the deacon be ordained where he has been serving. Ashton's ordination will be close to Bailey's installment as Rector.
- How can we help the bishop? One thing that the Bishop tells every parish is the diocese is healthy if the parishes are healthy. At times there has been a feeling of distance between St. Stephens and the Bishop. We are all on the same team. In a time when

church has to be intentional because there are so many options, praying for each other is important.

**LEADERSHIP REPORTS:**

**Priest-in-Charge:** Fr. Bailey Norman

Hospitals are beginning to impose restrictions again. Park West will only allow a clergy visit if the patient has requested it. If you know of someone in the hospital, let Bailey know. As far as Christian Ed preparation, Sherry Burchfield’s new motto right now is based on Gumbly: flexibility. The new service schedule begins August 15. Fr. Bailey has been approached about a temporary outside spoken service with the COVID surge. He will consider it if there is enough demand.

**Sr Warden:** Judith Delaney

Ms. Delaney had nothing additional to report.

**Jr Warden:** Barbara Steele

Ms. Steele had nothing additional to report.

**Finance Report:** Jim Rousey

At the end of July, our receipts (\$325,517) are ahead of expenditures (\$291,302). However, there is an \$8205 coding correction needed. When the \$8205 was made available from the DW300 Special Discretionary Account, it was coded as a negative expense in salaries. These funds were earmarked for the Director of Christian Education salary. A subcommittee has been set up within the Finance Committee to determine how these transactions should be treated.

Excess funds appear to be available at this point in time. This is primarily due to increases in our investments. These are more than adequate to cover the salary of Ashton for 2021 through 2022.

**ITEMS FOR ACTION**

**Approval of the July 2021 Finance Committee Report:** Jim Rousey  
Report was accepted as submitted.

**Ashton’s Financial Package:** Fr. Norman

Ashton’s financial package is as follows for a full year of 2021:

Stipend and SECA	\$57,119.00
Pension	10,281.00
Medical benefit	<u>11,376.00</u>
	78,776.00
Diocesan share	<u>- 36,931.50</u>
	\$41,844.50

Additional costs which are still tentative:

Cell phone	\$1500.00
Travel	1500.00

Continuing Education 500.00

The cost for 2021 is these totals divided by 3. Total package approved (Rousey/Meredith)

Ashton declared a housing allowance of \$9,700.00 for the remainder of 2021. Approved unanimously (Rousey/Bovee)

Two parishioners have given donations of \$5000 and \$3000 to help pay Ashton's salary for the remainder of 2021 and another donation of \$5000 that will be given for 2022.

**ADFAC request to the Diocese of East Tennessee Opportunity Fund:** Judith Delaney

The parish must be made aware of the request that is being made for funds for school supplies for Dyllis Springs Elementary School. The acknowledgement of the request was unanimous (Delaney/Felton)

#### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**Candidates for 2022 Vestry positions:** Fr. Norman

The Annual Meeting is 7 weeks away. Nominations close 2 weeks before the Annual Meeting. To date, there are 2 candidates. Fr. Bailey is encouraging the Vestry to provide names to the Nominating Committee or to ask parishioners directly about running for Vestry. He would like at least 6 candidates on the ballot. Lew Felton will reinstitute the policy to vote while watching the meeting via Zoom that was put in place last year during COVID for this year's meeting due to the current local COVID situation.

#### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

##### **Program Committees**

**Christian Education:** Nancy Anderson

Heather Hartman has agreed to be the assistant for the third-fifth grade class. There are still unfilled position for Christian Ed.

**Evangelism:** Bonnie Bautz

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

**Liturgics:** Cyril Meredith III

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

**Outreach:** Liz Herbes

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

**Pastoral Care:** Barbara Steele

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

## **Administrative or Support Committees**

### **Buildings and Grounds:** Lew Felton

Lew extended thanks to Jim and Jeanne Kring for painting Rooms 209 and 212. Carpet will be replaced in Room 212 and the Christian Ed office. The external lights need professional attention. The ceiling tiles in the kitchen need attention.

### **Bylaws and Policies:** Lew Felton

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

### **Communications:** Sandi Robertson

The new website will go live August 20, 2021.

### **Finance:** Jim Rousey

The 2022 budget is being developed. Let Brent or Jim know if your ministry needs an increase. A narrative is being developed to show how our money is used.

### **Gifts and Memorials:** Barbara Bovee

A meeting is scheduled for August 30, 2021.

### **Memorial Garden:** Jim Rousey

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

### **Nominating:** Nancy Anderson

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

### **Parish Life:** Rachel Kirk

The sign-up sheet for coffee has no names. Fr. Bailey offered that every Vestry member might take a Sunday. He will start the coffee prior to the 7:45 service.

### **Personnel:** Bonnie Bautz

Nothing to add to the submitted report.

### **Stewardship:** Judy DiGregorio

Dan DiGregorio discussed the bullet points from the Report section of the agenda. Fr. Bailey will put a stewardship letter in the August Evangel.

### **ADJOURNMENT:** Fr. Bailey Norman

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth D. Ellis, Secretary

Next meeting September 14, 2021

