

Christ Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2020 Meeting

Present: Janice Musselman
Geof Fuller
Delia McCormick
Jim Suit
Rob Follit
Steve McNeil
Emily Pearce
Adebayo Laniyonou
Diana Locke
Meghan Matulka

Janice brought the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Emily Pearce recited the Opening Prayer.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The minutes of April 1, May 6 were approved with a motion from Jim and a second from Delia. The minutes of May 26 were then approved with a motion from Meghan and a second from Geof.

Financial and Capital Campaign Reports

Steve McNeil provided reports (attached) and made comments.

We updated to the latest version of Quickbooks. That created some difficulty in printing checks, which were therefore a little late going out.

There was a slight loss of the month of May. We spent \$20,000 on Outreach. Pledge income was down slightly. Year to date it is down 10%. Total revenues are \$100,000 ahead of last year.

Investment income is up. Expenses are down 9% year over year. There are fewer employees to pay; no rectors to pay at present. Lisa came off the payroll 6/15. We have not had an administrative assistant.

Bishop had asked if we would fulfill our pledge to the diocese for \$59,400. We plan to fulfill our pledge. We had skipped a month but will make it up.

Janice remarked that in addition to Lisa's severance pay, we are paying her health plan for the month of June.

On the Balance Sheet, we added line items. There is \$181,000 in the PNC checking account. The Endowment has \$103,000 income for the year, and had been in a positive position through the

first eight months of the year. ???There could be distributable income for the year. The Endowment fund has bounced back.

We seeded a West Bank account. The school turned over \$100,000 from the Capital Campaign. It also turned over a \$250,000 CD. Also \$105,000 in stock was turned over. Those assets are available.

Accounts payable: We owe \$105,000 for classroom construction. Steve will cash the CD in August. Contractor will wait until then.

From the West Bank checking account, \$28,000 in legal fees will be paid.

\$250,000 is the estimated cost of keeping the school open for 2020-2021 school year. \$300,000 is available for Capital campaign projects such as the floor in the sanctuary.

The PPE Loan – provides \$362,000 in proceeds. \$250,000 of that went to the school \$102,000 went to the church. We expect this will revert from a loan to a grant.

Mortgage swap keeps getting higher; now \$700,000.

It was noted that the diocese has complimented Steve on his reporting. Vestry members also then complimented him.

Distributable income: \$86,000 is available from prior years to be allocated.

CES Report – Board Meeting May 27,2020

Janice reported on the most recent school board meeting.

Caroline retires 6/30/2020. Paul Parker, the new interim head of school will be on campus 7/1.

Fall enrollment to date is 90 contacts equaling 84.3 FTEs.

Preschool may not open right away. CES is discussing a child care facility or day care center. There is no interest in opening the preschool for the next school year. The school will be disassociated from the church one year from this month.

The deficit for next year is from \$400,000 to \$650,000.

The student teacher ration if 1 to 9.

CES is dialoguing with Grace Episcopal School as an ongoing conversation, as well as reaching out to other schools.

Bayo asked Janice to characterize the relationship between the church and school. Janice said any documents the church asks for are now forthcoming and the relationship is more cordial now.

Jr. Warden's Report

Geof reported:

- A. To fix the nursery will be \$110,000. To do it right and to code and to pass inspection. The driver on costs is insulation in the roof.
- B. Nave floor replacement. Estimated at \$150,000, no number from the contractor yet.
- C. Elevator is in place. There will be instructions on how it works. It is a lift not an elevator because when they dug down to install an elevator, they hit pipes.
- D. Leasing of Jefferson Building space. The school has turned over the leases to CEC and cooperating on this. The Realtors noticed some offices were occupied without a lease. The Realtors prefer month to month leases. We will try to get new tenants. This task has not been assigned to anyone.
- E. \$86,000 may be needed to fix the church boiler.
- F. Manuals will be stored in the storeroom near the elevator.
- G. The fire department entrance - fire department has keys to the church, so they won't have to break down the door.
- H. We need to start floor replacement soon and will need to vote on it – by zoom.

Sr. Wardens' Report

The Re-Gathering Task force has reported to the diocese. Megan Matulka, Bob James and Buzz Van Arx served on the task force. The report is attached. Michelle Craig's report is missing. Once that is incorporated, the report will go to the diocese. All churches must follow this procedure, and then wait for the diocese to make a determination.

The plan is to meet outdoors on the tennis and basketball court and for people to bring folding chairs.

Only one host will be served. Only one person will handle the host. Priest will have gloves on and drop the host in the mouth ????

Joe Thompson is our new supply priest. He will come on a weekly basis, will be present for two weeks in July and perhaps August.

Bishop Marianne has not responded to the county's going to Phase 2 re-opening of Covid-19 plan. July 19 is the goal to open up.

Janice asked who would be comfortable attending a service at this time.

Janice and Geof have spoken with Robert Phillips of the diocese. They told him that people want a priest on campus. We asked for a priest sooner rather than later. He was indicating Sept.

or Oct.; we expressed that we want one in August. He will search for candidates for an interim priest.

He wants focus groups to convey information to the interim priest. He said they will be 20 people at a time.

The interim will not be allowed to be our priest. Interim will deal with any issues of the past. Including reviewing Jason West's contract and any staff issues.

Meghan asked why an interim vs. a priest in charge. Interim is to heal. Robert is committed to this program.

Jim stated that we need a lot of communication with the interim to clarify expectations. We need to be clear. We can't expect the interim to know better, and we can't take any short cuts with that person, who is the tip of the spear to make changes. They must know we have their back.

Janice expressed appreciation to the outgoing vestry members – Delia, Meghan, Kennerly and Bayo, although Bayo will be staying on for another 2-year term. She said we have been braver than the other vestry members she has known from 3 other churches.

Janice spoke of the plan for outgoing vestry members to meet with the new vestry members. The wardens will join in to give the new members an idea of what it's like.

Annual meeting. The meeting is coming up. Voting won't be over until July 1.

On Thursday, July 2 at 7 PM via zoom, Delia, Meghan, Kennerly and Bayo and the wardens will have a planning meeting re the new vestry.

On Monday July 6 at 7 PM via zoom, the "old members" will meet with the new members. Anyone who wants to join the group can do so.

Permission to sell the three buildings- Jefferson, Thomson and Hillstrom - has been granted by the diocese. CEC wrote a letter to the diocese, which had to be addressed to two diocese committees and Bishop Marianne. Delia wrote the letter with help from Steve, Geof, Janice and Gary Correll, making the case for selling the three buildings. Geof and Steve attended the diocese Finance Committee's meeting to discuss the letter. The committee wanted back-up financial information, which Steve provided. The committee wanted to know if we really needed to do this. They asked if the church would survive without the steps of selling the buildings. They approved us moving forward with consultation at major milestones with them. The Standing committee is expected to be the next to approve the sale, followed by Bishop Marianne.

The higher potential income from selling both Hillstrom and Thompson Houses together was mentioned.

The parking lot was discussed including the concept of carving out a portion and the impact this has on the sale of the Jefferson Building, including the ease of the sale and the amount it will bring. The diocese says we must provide parking for the church.

There have been two letters from families leaving the church due to the Bishop's stand on Black Lives Matter.

- Vince and Martha Patterson. He was a paid singer, not a regular attendee. The letter was kind, and mentioned they had had issues for a few years and were concerned about where we were being led. Janice spoke with Martha.
- Dan Stafford. He is a single parent with young daughter and had issues in the past over same sex marriage. He also took issue with some writings of Bill Thompson's interpretation of scripture which mentioned white privilege. He wrote some angry emails and has left the church. A picture of Dan will be given to the ushers and vestry members so they can recognize him if he comes to church. Janice also consulted with our emergency planner regarding what to do if someone who is angry with the church, shows up.

Office assistant Tiffany Koeski has been terminated. This action was done in cooperation with the diocese human resource person, Katherine Hall.

Committee Reports

Environmental – Rob

Waste management contract has been put on an on-call arrangement since there is little trash generated these days during covid-19. The arrangement is \$90 per pick up monthly. Previously it was \$900 per month. Rob will monitor trash levels. The savings will be added to the end of the current contract. We will receive credit for the month of June. Rob will have a copy of the contract.

Outreach – Diana

Ben has given the numbers for the distribution of the extra outreach funds, see above.

Pastoral Care – Janice

Janice spoke with Julie Lynch about a parishioner in dire straits. There was a list of needs. Julie saw to it that all these needs including furniture for the family were met. The rector's fund was tapped.

Donations were made to the rector's fund in the amount of \$1000 plus \$500.

St. Francis Flock – Meghan

They have funds if people have needs with regard to their animals for food, etc.

Janice said all committee reports should be turned in the Tuesday before the vestry meeting; we need to keep that schedule going.

New Business

- **We need to fill the vestry clerk position.** Janice is attempting to find someone, and new vestry members will be asked to think who can fill this position.
- For our interim priest, we need to be clear if there are differences on the vestry. A purse was collected for Lisa by a parish member. Janice did not speak up but hopes it will not be repeated.
- **There are probably 5 parish families that attend the school, i.e., 10 students. The issue has arisen – do we want to support them with an annual scholarship?**

Will we continue the scholarship for one student that has received it in the past? The scholarship has been for \$10,000 funded by the endowment fund.

Geof stated that some criteria should be used for the award. Emily stated that we should let it be, continue the scholarship.

Diana said, let's fund 50% of the tuition. Or \$10,000?

Do we want to fund a scholarship from the endowment fund? The discussion involved whether to ask for criteria for the scholarship or continue as we have in the past. This would be the last year. Delia stated she agreed with Emily that we should let it be for this one last year.

A motion was made by Geof: approve the use of \$10,000 of endowment funds for a family that is a member of the church for the 20-21 school year. It was seconded by Delia and pass unanimously.

- **A parishioner asked that more info on vestry members be put on the website after the election.**
- The parish database is not functioning properly. When finances are more stable, we need to clean this up and provide better database system for the future.

There was a discussion about the upcoming **Annual Meeting**.

Episcopal Church Foundation

Emily Pearce made a presentation, beginning with referring to a letter and a proposal in the attached materials.

She noted that Bishop Marianne has been an advocate for racial healing. The Episcopal Church as a whole has been committed to this for a long time. Michael Curry has initiated Beloved Community. The Episcopal Church has developed a curriculum called Sacred Ground which has been around a long time and is not based on current events. There is a history of racism in the country and the church. This curriculum helps white people think about issues around race.

There is a syllabus available on the Sacred Ground website. Materials can be given out electronically to participants including excerpts from books; people won't have to buy books. It can be studied over time, every 2 to 3 weeks. It takes 7-8 months to complete. It would bring the congregation clearly in line with the church's position.

Emily has spoken to others in the church about this, including Simone Bramble. She also looked into the African American Museum of History and Culture about thoughtful and curious ways to address race. She is proposing an online discussion group to meet. Some of the people who've already expressed interest are: Victor Ban, Bill Thompson, Mark Wright and Emily's husband James.

Four participants are needed to run the program. Emily proposed sending out an initial inquiry to the congregation, to meet by zoom and have small breakout groups. Emily is willing to take a leadership role and asked if it is acceptable to get started.

Meghan mentioned that she has experienced a 6-week program focused on animals with readings and video, that St. Francis Flock administered. She said you need to work out the kinks in a small group, or say this is the moment and do it on a large scale.

Geof said he was thrown into a diversity group and it was a big eye opener for him.

Whether it should be a select group or something open to the parish – this was raised.

Emily said she would need help with the tech behind the group. It would start using zoom and then hopefully go to in person meetings. She asked whether there was interest in the vestry to investigate and to access the materials. The idea is to get the bones in place before sending out an invitation to the congregation.

Geof moved that we do the Sacred Ground curriculum as a church initiative. Meghan seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Emily said she would get on it immediately.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is Tuesday, July 28 at 7:00 PM by zoom. Jim will do the opening prayer. Emily will be the note taker. All committee reports are due 7/21.

The members thanked Janice and Geof for their leadership.

Adjournment

The meeting closed with a prayer read by Janice.

DocuSigned by:
Delia McCormick
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8/1/2020