

Minutes of a Regular Meeting
of the Vestry
of St. James's Episcopal Church
November 27, 2018

A regular meeting of the Vestry of St. James's Episcopal Church was held on November 27, 2018, pursuant to proper notice of time and place. Vestry members attending were Mrs. Louise Bald, Mr. Arthur Brinkley, Ms. Melinda Davis, Mr. Jim Goggins, Mrs. Kathe Hetzer, Mr. T.A. Hickman, Mr. Scott Hurt, Ms. Erin Jewett, Dr. John Mahoney, Mr. Trey Sibley, Mrs. Beth Skidmore, Mr. Michael Smith, Mrs. Laura Strickler, and Mr. Michael Whitlow. Mr. Ralph Cummins, Mr. Dave Johnson, Ms. Karen Stanley, and Mrs. Annie Witthoefft were absent. Also attending were staff members the Rev. Dr. John McCard, the Rev. Hilary Streever, Mrs. Mary Beth Abplanalp, Ms. Suzanne Hall, Mr. Russell Lawson, Mrs. Anita Lisk, Mrs. Poconna Thiel, and Dr. Mark Whitmire. Mrs. Cheryl Guedri and Mr. Harry Warner, co-chairs of the Annual Giving campaign, were invited guests. Dr. McCard served as chair, with Mrs. Lisk serving as secretary.

The meeting began at 5:00 p.m. with a service of Evening Prayer, with the business of the meeting beginning at 5:25 p.m. Motions to adopt the agenda and approve the Minutes from the October 16, 2018 regular meeting were made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

SPECIAL GUESTS

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RECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. McCard distributed a written report. He particularly noted that he's working on a name for the committee that will plan the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the fire next year. It has been suggested that the celebration begin the new program year, rather than be held on or around the actual anniversary date in July.

Dr. McCard reported that Mr. Gene Roland, the new Facilities Manager, and the Rev. Laura Inscoe, Pastoral Associate, have both started and everything was going well. The Rev. Whitney Z. Edwards, former Associate Rector at St. James's and current Chaplain at St. Christopher's School, has agreed to serve on occasional Sunday mornings throughout Mrs. Streever's upcoming maternity leave. Weekly staff meetings have been reconfigured so that the full staff meets at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday mornings, with the pastoral staff meeting immediately afterwards.

SENIOR WARDEN REPORT

Mr. Whitlow encouraged the Vestry to regularly review the Work Plan online. Additions to the Plan since the last Vestry meeting includes:

- 1) Vision – How to develop and promote it? How do we prepare for what’s next for St. James’s?
- 2) Recognition of leadership and volunteers over the years.
- 3) Values – Where are we headed, particularly regarding Formation? How can we continue last month’s conversation on this topic?
- 4) Pastoral Care Standards – How do we keep in touch with those who have pastoral needs?
- 5) Facilities Planning – What’s next?
- 6) Wednesday night program assessment. Mrs. Streever encouraged the Vestry to attend.

Mr. Brinkley suggested that the Vestry should have “talking points” about what the Vestry is focused on so that everyone gives a consistent message about what’s going on at the church.

Mrs. Skidmore commented that there still needs to be communication about the Feast being discontinued and that Doers Dining is offering more intimate fellowship opportunities instead.

JUNIOR WARDEN REPORT

Mrs. Strickler thanked David Barnett for serving as the Interim Facilities Manager and his help bringing Mr. Roland on board. They are working together to develop processes for how best to manage time and money for facilities needs and are evaluating current vendors and processes. One thing that has been determined is that the church needs new fine arts appraisals.

Mrs. Strickler reported that the Strategic Buildings & Grounds Committee will meet the end of October and anticipates presenting its report to the Vestry by the end of the year.

Mr. Johnson asked how the new sexton service was working out and Mrs. Strickler replied that, while there have been some adjustments, the new sextons are generally off to a good start.

NEW BUSINESS

Stephen Ministry

Dr. McCard announced that about ten parishioners recently participated in an introductory workshop for the Stephen Ministry, which is a program from Sewanee that develops lay leadership for follow-up pastoral care. Dr. McCard met with the participants after the workshop to see if they thought it was something that St. James’s should adopt and all agreed that it would be a good new ministry opportunity. Dr. McCard requested the Vestry consider approving going forward with this program, as there are fees involved in training and implementation. Dr. McCard said that the Stephen Ministry helps establish a culture of parishioners caring for each other and helps expand current pastoral care given by the clergy. A motion to continue the process of implementing a Stephen Ministry program was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Formation Ministries Coordinator staff position

Dr. McCard distributed a job description for a new support staff position for the Adult, Youth, and Children’s Ministries. Dr. McCard, as well as Mrs. Jewett and Mr. Hurt, support the need for this position, which is expected to aid the growth of all three formation areas. Dr. McCard would like to hire someone for this position by next Easter.

Concern was expressed about the cost associated with adding this new full-time staff position, when a full-time support staff position is also critically needed for Stewardship. All agreed that both support positions are invaluable.

WORK PLAN UPDATES

Safety

Mr. Brinkley reported that most usher teams have been briefed on welcome and safety initiatives, including an evacuation plan, if ever necessary. He is consulting with Buildings & Grounds people regarding issues such as locking doors on Sundays. Mrs. Strickler recommended speaking with Mr. Roland and Dr. McCard suggested communicating the new safety initiatives to the staff.

Formation

Dr. McCard remarked that he is working on topics raised at the last Vestry meeting. Mrs. Strickler commented that the most recent Sunday was a very cohesive morning as children went to their respective classes, and parents had dual parenting forums – one for fathers and another for mothers – that were very meaningful for those who attended.

Mrs. Streever reported that the Adult Formation Committee is meeting monthly and will be able to specifically respond to the Vestry's concerns.

Welcome

The Welcome and Adult Formation Committees are reading the Invite, Welcome, Connect book as a follow-up to the Vestry retreat interest.

FINANCE REPORT

Annual Giving

Ms. Hall remarked that fundamental aspects of this year's campaign also came from the Vestry Retreat, particularly several initiatives for intentional fellowship and new ways of connecting.

Ms. Hall distributed a Dashboard report for the current Annual Giving Campaign progress, noting that there are fewer pledges than the same time last year; however, the amount is greater. A second mailing with pledge cards is scheduled, with email reminders to those who have not yet made a pledge.

Finance

Mr. Hickman distributed the monthly report, noting that September was also a difficult month, with approximately \$40,000 in pledge revenue collection behind budget. Buildings and Grounds expenses continue to be high and the Current Year-to-Date are a loss of approximately \$33,000. Fourth quarter statements have been mailed and that is expected to generate revenue.

Mr. Hickman said that he is keeping a close eye on expenses and revenue in these next few critical months. Mrs. Strickler questioned if the Vestry should be thinking about additional sources of revenue and Dr. McCard suggested that it may be easier to curtail costs.

OTHER

Dr. McCard asked the Vestry note the upcoming events listed on the reverse of the Agenda, particularly noting the annual Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont and the number of music events.

The attendance report for September was distributed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with a benediction by Dr. McCard at 7:05 p.m.

Anita Lisk
Secretary

Approved:

Rev. Dr. John McCard
Rector

Michael Whitlow
Senior Warden