

Minutes of a Regular Meeting
of the Vestry
of St. James's Episcopal Church
December 20, 2016

A regular meeting of the Vestry of St. James's Episcopal Church was held on December 20, 2016, pursuant to proper notice of time and place. Vestry members attending were Mrs. Louise Bald, Mr. Willson Craigie, Mrs. Peggy Crowley, Mr. Ralph Cummins, Mrs. Becky DeCamps, Mr. Matt Harper, Mrs. Kathe Hetzer, Mrs. Erin Jewett, Mr. Dave Johnson, Mr. Jay Jordan, Mr. Harry Moore, Mr. Connell Mullins, and Mrs. Beth Skidmore. Mrs. Carol Ann Fuller, Mrs. Carrie Montague, Mr. Allan Rees, and Mrs. Tina Sherrod were absent. Also attending were the Rev. Dr. Thom Blair, Rev. Carmen Germino, Rev. Hilary Streever, Ms. Suzanne Hall, Mr. Russell Lawson, Mrs. Anita Lisk, and Mrs. Poconna Thiel. Mr. Charlie Whitaker and Mrs. Laura McCoy from the Search Committee attended as special guests. Mrs. Crowley served as chair, with Mrs. Lisk serving as secretary.

The meeting opened at 5:00 p.m. with a prayer. Motions to adopt the agenda and approve the Minutes from the November 15, 2016, regular meeting were made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

SPECIAL GUESTS

Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. McCoy announced that the Committee is moving from the planning and data-gathering phase to receiving applications. Mr. Whitaker cautioned that the Committee will not communicate with the Vestry and Parish as often going forward, as there will be a greater need for confidentiality. The Committee has met eight times thus far.

Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. McCoy distributed a draft of the Community Ministry Profile. The Profile encapsulates the feedback from the parish and the Committee has consulted with the Diocesan Transition Ministry Director for this initial draft. Mrs. McCoy particularly thanked the staff for their help in providing data for the Profile. The Vestry reviewed the draft of the Profile and comments included praise for the Committee's ability to condense much information into a concise document. The Search Committee welcomed comments and suggestions from the Vestry through December 23. Mr. Moore wanted to be sure candidates were made aware of the church's commitment to having a Capital Campaign in the next few years, especially if that information is not in the Profile.

The Profile will be posted to the Diocesan website beginning January 2, 2017 and applications will be received until mid-February. The Transition Ministry office suggested that the Committee should expect to receive around 40 applications. The Committee will then cut the list to approximately 10-12 people to interview with written questions and Skype interviews before further reducing the list to around three candidates, which members of the Committee will personally visit and interview before recommending a final candidate to the Vestry to call to serve as the Rector.

Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. McCoy encouraged the Vestry to join the Search Committee for a special meeting on Saturday, January 14 with a consultant from Holy Cow!, the firm that has been hired to manage the parish survey for the Search Committee.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Mrs. Streever announced that her husband has been diagnosed with testicular cancer, which they have been told it is highly treatable. Mrs. Streever said that she and her husband have been thankful for the church's support and prayers.

Mrs. Crowley commented that the sixth Taste of St. James's, under the leadership of Mrs. Bald and Mrs. Jewett, was exceptional.

Mrs. Skidmore praised the recent Sunday School Christmas Pageant as amazing.

Ms. Hall reminded the Vestry that the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes (CEEP) conference will be in Washington, DC in February and she, Mrs. Crowley, Mrs. Thiel, and some members of the Search Committee plan to participate.

NEW BUSINESS

Clergy Housing Resolutions

Mrs. Crowley presented Housing Allowance Resolutions for the full-time clergy staff, which provides documentation that the church does not provide housing for clergy and they may allow part of their salary as a housing allowance to be exempted from federal taxes, as provided by the IRS tax code. The resolutions state that, as of January 1, 2017, Ms. Germino's allowance will be \$30,000, and Mrs. Streever's allowance will be \$40,000. Upon a motion made and seconded, the resolutions were unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Crowley distributed the final draft of the Parental Leave Policy, as approved by the Finance and Executive Committees, as follows:

Full-time clergy and staff employees may take maternity leave of up to twelve consecutive weeks at their discretion beginning on the date of birth of the child. Maternity-related time away from work prior to the date of birth should be charged to sick leave.

Full time clergy and staff employees may take paternity leave of up to four weeks at their discretion. If eligible employees desire to take paternity leave, it must be taken within one year of the date of birth of the child.

During the maternity or paternity leave periods, full compensation will be paid by St. James's. Eligibility begins on date of hire. There are no pre-existing condition exclusions.

Maternity and paternity benefits are independent of any sick leave, disability or vacation benefits. However, any disability benefits paid for maternity or paternity purposes from the Church Pension Fund will be paid to St. James's, since 100% of the employee's compensation is already being provided as noted above.

The same leave time and related provisions above also apply to adoptive parents.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Stewardship

Ms. Hall distributed a Dashboard report, noting that the Annual Giving Campaign is near to achieving its goal of 650 pledges. The Peer-to-Peer process has proven to be efficient and helpful to knit the parish together during this transition time. The Dashboard indicates that the average pledge is \$3,179 and the median pledge is \$1,500. Those who have pledged in the past but have not yet pledged for 2017 are being contacted and several other Stewardship communications are being planned, including a letter from Mrs. Crowley, as Sr. Warden, that will highlight the state of the parish and include an alphabetical list of all who have pledged to support the church in 2017.

Ms. Hall promoted the upcoming Financial Peace University, a financial education series that has a stewardship component.

Finance

Mr. Moore distributed the financial reports, remarking that he anticipates good revenue in December and expects to meet budgeted income projections. The church has a history of year-end payment of pledges, as well as pre-paid pledges for the following year, being made in December.

Mr. Moore reported that the full audit has been completed and the church has received a clean report. Mr. Moore reminded the Vestry of the previously approved cycle of alternating years for a full audit and a review, which means the cost next year will be less. It is generally agreed that conducting a full audit during a Rector transition is wise and Mr. Moore was pleased with the timing for this full audit. Copies are available in the office if a Vestry member would like to review it.

ONE TO ANOTHER REPORTS

Hospitality

Mrs. Skidmore announced that there are several events for the Hospitality Committee coming up in the new year and she is excited to work with so many enthusiastic volunteers. She especially encouraged the Vestry to attend the MLK Jr. Evensong and reception on Sunday, January 15.

Communications

Mr. Cummins distributed a written report, as well as the 2017 Parish Communications Plan. He encouraged the Vestry to download the church's smart phone App and to invite others to do so, as well.

The Communications Committee has discussed the need to be more pro-active in support of stewardship and has suggested beginning to communicate the needs of the church more prominently and more frequently communicate how funds are used in an effort to increase giving in the future.

Mr. Cummins expressed his appreciation for Mr. Lawson and the work of the Communications staff, and noted that they are working at maximum capacity and do not have the resources to absorb additional expenses or projects.

Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Harper distributed a written report, which included an update on the status of the chiller replacement and the steeple maintenance projects. The chiller replacement is on schedule. The Steeple Committee has determined that the work necessary to stop the water leaks in the steeple will not be as extensive or as expensive as previously thought (unless unexpected issues are identified upon close examination during the roof repairs). Additional work to repair numerous interior and exterior structural cracks can be deferred for a few years and will be scheduled for a later date. As planned, an overhaul of the chimes will be done in conjunction with the steeple maintenance for cost effectiveness.

The new electrical panel that will support sanctuary, Parish House and Gibson Hall (including the new chillers) will be installed between Christmas and New Year's Day, when the Children's Center is on its holiday break. The office will need to close during that time.

An energy audit is underway, at no expense to the church. This audit will identify the extent to which energy-related operating expenses may be reduced or stabilized, occupancy comfort levels can be improved, and/or how more environmentally-friendly energy solutions may be used.

Mr. Harper reported that Buildings and Grounds projects recently completed included the replacement fire alarm system for the main buildings and ceiling plaster repair and repainting in the sanctuary.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Mrs. Crowley announced that Tom Porterfield had resigned from the Vestry due to health reasons.

Mrs. Crowley reported that the Vestry Nominating Committee has been established with the following people serving:

Peggy Crowley, Chair; Becky DeCamps; Bill Gregory; Erin Jewett; Jay Jordan; Thayer Montague; Newnie Rogers; Mark Shuford; and Emily Stock.

Per the Vestry's previous approval to propose re-election of Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Harper, and Mr. Moore in their current Vestry leadership positions, the Nominating Committee will be nominating a slate of three parishioners for three-year terms, one parishioner to complete the one year remaining in Mr. Porterfield's term, and Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Harper and Mr. Moore for one-year terms.

INTERIM RECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Blair announced that the Rev. Dr. Mark Cooper will return to St. James's during Ms. Germino's upcoming maternity leave to help cover liturgical duties and pastoral care.

OTHER

Attendance for the month of November was distributed.

Mrs. Crowley asked the Vestry to note upcoming events listed on the reverse of the agenda.

Mr. Lawson reported that the Winter/Spring Study Guide will be distributed soon and encouraged the Vestry to check out the number of great programs coming up next semester.

Mrs. DeCamps announced that the ECW will host a baby shower for Ms. Germino and Mr. Presson on January 8, 2017, following the 11:15 service and encouraged the women on the Vestry to attend.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Anita Lisk
Secretary

Approved:

Rev. Dr. Thom Blair
Interim Rector

Peggy Crowley
Senior Warden