

Minutes of a Regular Meeting  
of the Vestry  
of St. James's Episcopal Church  
April 25, 2017

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A regular meeting of the Vestry of St. James's Episcopal Church was held on April 25, 2017, 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, Mr. T.A. Hickman, Mr. Scott Hurt, Mrs. Erin Jewett, Mr. Dave Johnson, Mr. Jay Jordan, Mr. Harry Moore, Mr. Connell Mullins, Mrs. Beth Skidmore, Mrs. Laura Strickler, and Mr. Michael Whitlow. Mrs. Tina Sherrod was absent. Also attending were the Rev. Dr. Thom Blair, Ms. Suzanne Hall, Mrs. Anita Lisk, and Mrs. Poconna Thiel. Mrs. Crowley served as chair, with Mrs. Lisk serving as secretary.

The meeting began at 5:00 p.m. with a tour of St. James's Children's Center. The business of the meeting began at 5:35 with a prayer. A motion to adopt the agenda was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the March 14, 2017 regular meeting. A friendly amendment to correct the beneficiary of the *Mardi Gras for Missions* fundraiser was approved and the amended Minutes were unanimously approved.

**COMMENTS & CONCERNS**

Mr. Hurt reported that at the recent Youth Leadership Team meeting it was determined to reserve in the account designated for youth the monies that were saved from the recent youth Snowfest retreat so that they can be applied toward future youth activities.

Mrs. Crowley expressed condolences to Mr. Cummins on the death of his father-in-law. Mr. Cummins said that he and his wife's family appreciated Dr. Mark Cooper's ministry to them during this time.

Mrs. Bald commented that the Stations of the Cross hike sponsored by the Young Adults ministry was great.

Mr. Mullins reported that Margaret Bloor, who volunteers as St. James's liaison with the Red Cross for the McGuire Veterans' Center ministry, was recently honored by the Red Cross for her volunteerism, and the Church was also commended for its ministry to the veterans at the Center.

**SPECIAL BUSINESS**

**Loose Plate Offerings**

A list of specially designated offerings for the year was distributed. On a motion made and seconded, the following was approved:

<b><u>Recipient</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Occasion</u></b>
Bishop Shannon's Discretionary Fund	May 21, 2017	Bishop's visitation
Endowment Fund	June 4, 2017	Founders Day
VTS, Yale	June 11, 2017	Theological Education Sunday/ Trinity Sunday
Central Virginia Foodbank	November 23, 2017	Thanksgiving Day
Children's Center	December 24, 2017	Christmas Eve 4:00 p.m. service
Diocese of Jerusalem	March 30, 2018	Good Friday
Children's Center	April 22, 2018	Children's Center Sunday

**Parochial Report**

The 2016 Parochial Report was distributed and discussed. On a motion made and seconded, the report was unanimously approved.

**Election of Diocesan Conference Delegates and Alternates**

On a motion made and seconded, the following Delegates and Alternates to the Diocesan Conference, which will be held on November 4, 2017, were unanimously elected:

Delegates (Class of 2021) – Ron Odom and Wilson Trice

Alternate (Class of 2018) – Willson Craigie

Alternates (Class of 2019) – Newnie Rogers and Mark Wickersham

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

**Finance**

Mr. Moore distributed the monthly report.

Mr. Moore reported that the Strategic Finance Committee will be addressing both short and long-term financial issues. The monthly report reflects that it is early in the year to assess trends. Stewardship receipts for each of the first three months of the year are more than the same time period last year. Mr. Moore expressed some concern about the variable income, particularly the loose plate offering expectation. Mrs. Crowley noted that some of those monies had come from people who formerly gave to the church through a plate offering but now make a pledge. Mr. Moore noted that lower attendance during this transition year will also affect plate offerings. Mr. Hurt suggested that plate offerings may be down because fewer people carry cash or checks with them and prefer transferring funds electronically.

Mr. Moore also expressed his concern that the budget adopted for this year doesn't provide for a method of replenishing the Capital Maintenance Reserve, which has been reduced significantly for recent approved capital expenditures. When asked how much should be held in the fund and from what source did the monies typically come, Mr. Moore responded that he felt the Capital Reserve Fund should have at least \$100,000 and that, since there's no provision for it to be increased in our budget process, any surplus at the end of the year typically goes into the fund. Mr. Harper suggested that reducing expenses in any budget category possible would be one method to reimburse the Capital Maintenance Reserve.

Mr. Johnson reiterated that the church needed to increase revenue for operating expenses, and not rely on the Endowment Fund to subsidize some of those expenses.

Mr. Moore said that the new strategic committees for Finance, Buildings & Grounds, and Stewardship plan to address these types of concerns and will work together to determine future needs, how they will be funded, and how those funds are raised.

Mr. Cummins suggested that the Children's Center may be in a position to absorb some of the infrastructure costs currently carried by the Church and apply for grants to pay for them.

### Stewardship

Ms. Hall distributed a report on the Peer-to-Peer Annual Giving leadership program. The kick-off for the program was very well attended. The program hopes to generate a richer level of engagement as these volunteers contact fellow parishioners. The Spring Cleaning effort will help to clarify who will get these calls. The Peer-to-Peer effort also offers the opportunity to teach the theology of stewardship. Mrs. Crowley thanked Mrs. DeCamps for leading this year's Peer-to-Peer program, and Mr. Johnson and Bobbie Ukrop for returning as Annual Giving chairs this year.

Mr. Johnson reported that the purpose of the new Strategic Stewardship Committee is to develop, implement and monitor a stewardship program that looks at the long-term needs of the Church and how to raise the necessary funds. Membership on the Committee will include the Stewardship Chair, as well as the Annual Giving and Planned Giving Committees Chairs, and six members-at-large, including two from the Vestry. The Senior Warden and Rector will serve as ex-officio members. Mr. Johnson hopes to have a 3-5 year stewardship plan by December. Mr. Johnson said he would like the Vestry's approval to establish this committee before recruiting its members. A motion was made and seconded to establish the Strategic Stewardship Committee. While the concept of the committee was approved, the motion was tabled until the May meeting for a formal vote so that the Vestry has an opportunity to review a detailed description of the background, purpose, near-term agenda, and composition of the committee.

### COMMITTEES REPORTS

#### *One To Another*

Mr. Whitlow distributed a report updating the goals of the *One To Another* committees. He noted that these committees "use the learning, hospitality, communications, physical plant, planning and doing skills of parishioners and others with whom we work to create an environment where participants in the life of the church can enjoy and live out loud the love of God and of our neighbors."

Mr. Whitlow said that the key goals for the year established at the Vestry Retreat were

- 1) Improving/planning improvements/maintenance to buildings and grounds
- 2) Engaging members in ministry
- 3) Increasing pledging households

Mr. Whitlow also reported that the Safety and Security Committee is in the process of reorganizing and confirming participants and a key focus of the Committee will be refining and adopting the "Preparedness and Response" report that is in process.

### JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Mr. Harper reported that the Strategic Buildings & Grounds Committee and the Handicapped Access Committee have both met and are off to a great start.

Mr. Harper reported that the first phase of the steeple repairs, which will address the water leaks, is planned for July/August. He is hoping that the project will come in under budget.

**SENIOR WARDEN’S REPORT**

Mrs. Crowley said that the Rector Search Committee reports that it has received applications from excellent candidates. They are in their “quiet phase” and have had seven video interviews and are planning on 3-4 visits to the churches of prospective candidates.

**INTERIM RECTOR’S REPORT**

Dr. Blair reported that the Rev. Caroline Parkinson, who has served as a part-time Pastoral Associate for St. James’s since her retirement, will be moving to North Carolina and retiring from her duties at St. James’s. Her last day will be in mid-May, with a final Sunday on June 25. The Hospitality Committee will provide a farewell reception following the 10:00 a.m. service.

Dr. Blair also reported that Gina Young, who serves as the church’s secretary, will retire sometime this summer, and the Rev. Carmen Germino will return from maternity leave in mid-May.

Dr. Blair reiterated Mr. Moore’s comment that the church is coming through this difficult transition time very well and he is very proud of the staff and Vestry leadership.

Dr. Blair reported that approximately 1,400 letters were mailed to all those in the parish’s database in a “Spring Cleaning” effort to clean the database and establish more accurate membership rolls. Approximately 530 responses have been received thus far. The letter was mostly well-received, but there were a few who took offense. All those who did not respond by the deadline but are evidently involved in the church will be contacted. After that, the staff (with Vestry input) will evaluate those names remaining to determine which of those who have been unresponsive should be purged from the database.

**OTHER**

Mrs. Crowley asked the Vestry to note upcoming events listed on the reverse of the agenda. Mrs. Bald said that 36 young adults had registered for the River Retreat. The Young Adults ministry is “rebranding” themselves as “2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter” going forward.

The attendance report for March, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter was distributed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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Anita Lisk  
Secretary

Approved:

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Rev. Dr. Thom Blair  
Interim Rector

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Peggy Crowley  
Senior Warden