

Minutes of a Regular Meeting
of the Vestry
of St. James's Episcopal Church
August 22, 2017

A regular meeting of the Vestry of St. James's Episcopal Church was held on August 22, 2017, pursuant to proper notice of time and place. Vestry members attending were Mrs. Peggy Crowley, Mr. Ralph Cummins, Mrs. Becky DeCamps, Mrs. Kathe Hetzer, Mr. Scott Hurt, Mrs. Erin Jewett, Mr. Dave Johnson, Mr. Jay Jordan, Mr. Connell Mullins, Mrs. Tina Sherrod, Mrs. Beth Skidmore, and Mrs. Laura Strickler. Mrs. Louise Bald, Mr. Willson Craigie, Mr. Matt Harper, Mr. T.A. Hickman, Mr. Harry Moore, and Mr. Michael Whitlow were absent. Also attending were staff members the Rev. Dr. John McCard, the Rev. Carmen Germino, the Rev. Hilary Streever, Ms. Suzanne Hall, Mr. Russell Lawson, Mrs. Anita Lisk, Mr. Matt Presson, Mrs. Poconna Thiel, and Dr. Mark Whitmire. Mrs. Crowley served as chair, with Mrs. Lisk serving as secretary.

The meeting opened at 5:00 p.m. with a service of Evening Prayer, with the business of the meeting beginning at 5:30. Motions to adopt the agenda and approve the Minutes from the May 16, 2017 regular meeting and the specially called meetings on June 23 and 24, 2017 were made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Mrs. Crowley re-introduced St. James's new rector, the Rev. Dr. John McCard and announced that his first Sunday will be on September 10, 2017. Members of the vestry and staff present introduced themselves to Dr. McCard.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Mrs. Crowley thanked Associate Rectors Carmen Germino and Hilary Streever for again stepping up this summer after Interim Rector, the Rev. Dr. Thom Blair, suffered a heart attack and had to finish his service sooner than expected. Mrs. Crowley also thanked the staff for continuing to work so hard even without a Rector in place.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Finance

Mrs. Thiel distributed and reviewed the financial reports through July, 2017. She noted that pledge income receipts are low and there is a possibility that an advance from the cash reserves may be needed, especially if disbursements for Vestry Outreach Fund grants are made.

Stewardship

Ms. Hall distributed an overview of the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) effort, including the names of the multiple volunteers who will be calling all members of the parish. The "Welcome Home" Feast of St. James's in late October will celebrate Dr. McCard's arrival and the culmination of this year's annual giving campaign.

Ms. Hall also distributed a “Pledge Q&A” pamphlet which will be mailed to the parish and also put in the pew racks in the sanctuary. She noted that 90% of the church’s income is from pledges. Vestry members are requested to return their pledges by August 28.

Mrs. DeCamps remarked that Ms. Hall and her assistant, Thomas Pugh, had been hard at work this summer preparing for the annual giving campaign. The P2P training sessions have been informative and spirit-filled. She commented that this year’s P2P volunteers are different people who volunteered for the campaign last year, which helps spread the word about the importance of stewardship.

Ms. Hall reported that this year’s ambitious goal is to secure 700 pledges for 2018, estimating that approximately 75 new pledges will be needed to meet that goal.

Mr. Johnson said that the Strategic Stewardship Committee hopes to have a 3-5 year plan, which will include education about stewardship.

COMMITTEES REPORTS – *God In Christ*

Worship

Mrs. DeCamps reported that the summer Sunday Jazz Mass will conclude on August 27. The Jazz Mass will not continue during the program year while the Worship Committee reviews and evaluates how the 5:30 p.m. Sunday service can be funded through the operating budget, rather than from designated special gifts. A survey has been created and distributed to gain feedback about the service in its current form, encouraging comments from those who attend to say why they do, as well as comments from those who don’t attend to see what may appeal to them. Dr. Whitmire recommended the Vestry attend the final service of the summer on August 27.

Mrs. DeCamps also reported that the lay leaders for the various worship assistants will meet with Dr. McCard soon.

Baptism Guides

Mrs. DeCamps reported that the Baptism Guides program is being re-evaluated now that the Rev. Caroline Parkinson, who created it, has retired. It has been determined that the Baptism Guides and the classes they lead for parents of infant baptismal candidates, will be supervised by the Rev. Hilary Streever, as the Associate Rector responsible for Adult Christian Formation. Ms. Streever said that the classes prior to the baptisms will be pared to two instead of three and a new general orientation about baptism will be offered 2-3 times a year to parents who expect to have a baby baptized in the coming months.

Music

A list of music events that occurred over the summer was distributed. In addition to the annual Welcome Summer Recital Series, the bi-annual concerts for Memorial Day and “Homegrown” were also presented.

Adult Formation

Mrs. Hetzer reported that the Adult Formation Committee was working hard to meet the strategic goals. The new Parish Resource Guide for 2017-18 was distributed and Mrs. Hetzer encouraged the Vestry to note all the educational opportunities included in it.

Mrs. Streever commented that she was very excited about the upcoming Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont and pilgrimages to St. Cuthbert's Way and the Camino de Santiago through Portugal.

Children's Formation

Mrs. Sherrod commented that this year's Vacation Bible School was a highlight of the summer. She hopes to brainstorm ways to get "tweens" involved in Sunday School.

Youth & Young Adults

Mr. Hurt reported that the Young Adults leadership is making an effort to "brand" themselves as "2nd Quarter" (25-50) to be more inclusive. The group offered several great events last year, including the annual Stations of the Cross hike on Holy Saturday before Easter and an overnight retreat in May at the river home of Chip & Sandy Woodson. Mr. Hurt commented that social events help keep young adults involved in the church in general and St. James's, specifically.

Mr. Hurt reported that Director of Youth & Young Adults, Mary Beth Abplanalp, is due to return from maternity leave at the end of the month and Pim Jager and Carrie Montague, who have been Youth leaders, will be rotating off the Committee. The Committee plans to focus on the Senior Youth Fellowship (10th-12th grades) next year in an effort to keep youth who have been confirmed active in the church.

A calendar for scheduled youth events for the 2017-18 program year has been mailed so that families can plan ahead.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Crowley commented on the accessibility seating in the sanctuary. Mr. Harper submitted an outline for discussion about accessibility seating, with the background and action to date of the Accessibility Committee's establishment and goals. Mrs. Crowley apologized for not informing the Vestry in advance of the Committee's decision to have a trial period where a portion of the front pews would be removed to create wheelchair accessibility seating. It will be communicated to the parish that a trial period for wheelchair accessible seating will last through the end of October, with an effort to get feedback on it during and after the trial period. While the removal of these half pews may be a short-term solution, the Accessibility Committee hopes to discern how best to develop a more permanent solution for accessibility into the sanctuary and seating inside it.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Mrs. Crowley announced that she has established a transition committee to aid the McCards in settling into Richmond and their new home. Chaired by Wilson Trice, the Committee includes Wyatt Beazley, Cary Milley, Beth Moore, Gloria Prevatt, and Mark Shuford.

Mrs. Crowley also announced that Wyatt and Mason Beazley, who have organized the weekly plate offering counters for several years, plan to retire and she encouraged the Vestry to contact her with recommendations for volunteers to take over that ministry.

Mrs. Crowley distributed a report from Jeanette McKittrick, chair of the Art & Spirit Committee, which was established over the summer to "provide organization, resources and

leadership for the management of St. James’s interiors, including furnishings and art, with the goal to improve stewardship and reflect the spirit of this vibrant parish throughout the buildings.” Work of the Committee includes establishing a parishioners’ art gallery in the Gibson Hall Atrium, solicitation of appropriate artwork and furnishings throughout the facilities, and decorating, as well as other work desired by the Vestry and staff.

RECTOR’S COMMENTS

Dr. McCard said that he and his family have enjoyed a wonderful welcome from the parish. He’s had gracious and helpful conversations with former Rector, Randy Hollerith, and noted that St. James’s is blessed with a great staff. Dr. McCard also said that he is grateful to the Search Committee and Vestry and is looking forward to the coming year.

OTHER

The attendance report for May/June/July/August was distributed.

Mrs. Crowley reminded the Vestry to note the events listed on the reverse of the Agenda.

Mr. Lawson distributed new publications for the 2017-18 program year, including the Parish Resource Guide, the Fall Study Schedule, and the Fall Quarterly Chimes.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with a benediction by Dr. McCard at 7:00 p.m.

Anita Lisk
Secretary

Approved:

Rev. Dr. John McCard
Rector

Peggy Crowley
Senior Warden