

Minutes of a Regular Meeting
of the Vestry
of St. James's Episcopal Church
September 19, 2017

A regular meeting of the Vestry of St. James's Episcopal Church was held on September 19, 2017, pursuant to proper notice of time and place. Vestry members attending were Mrs. Louise Bald, Mr. Willson Craigie, Mrs. Peggy Crowley, Mrs. Becky DeCamps, Mr. Matt Harper, Mrs. Kathe Hetzer, Mr. T.A. Hickman, Mr. Scott Hurt, Mrs. Erin Jewett, Mr. Dave Johnson, Mr. Harry Moore, Mrs. Tina Sherrod, Mrs. Laura Strickler, and Mr. Michael Whitlow. Mr. Ralph Cummins, Mr. Jay Jordan, Mr. Connell Mullins, and Mrs. Beth Skidmore were absent. Also attending were staff members the Rev. Dr. John McCard, the Rev. Carmen Germino, the Rev. Hilary Streever, Ms. Suzanne Hall, Mrs. Anita Lisk, 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 5:25. Motions to adopt the agenda and approve the Minutes from the August 22, 2017 regular meeting were made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Dr. McCard reported that his mother was out of surgery and doing well. He will be in Atlanta over the next few days to be with her as she recovers.

Mrs. Crowley remarked that Dr. McCard's first Sunday at St. James's was great. Dr. McCard said that his family felt very welcomed.

The annual parish picnic was a great event, well-attended and with delicious food provided by Boy Scout Troop 400.

Mrs. DeCamps commended all the "Peer-to-Peer" (P2P) callers for their efforts to contact all members of the parish during the Annual Giving Campaign.

Ms. Hall thanked Mrs. Crowley for all her tireless service for the church and especially for the fabulous welcome party that she and her husband hosted to welcome the McCard family. In addition to the McCards, staff members, the Vestry, the Search Committee and the Transition Committee attended.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Stewardship

Ms. Hall distributed and reviewed the current "dashboard" report for the Annual Giving campaign, which showed a comparison in pledges between this year and last. Ms. Hall thanked the Annual Giving Committee, which had worked throughout the summer in preparation for the fall campaign. She also thanked the Vestry and P2P volunteers for their leadership in turning in their pledges early in the campaign.

Ms. Hall commented that the recent "Spring Cleaning" of our database had been helpful to cull out people who are no longer attending St. James's, making the P2P effort more efficient. She said that important and helpful information has been gained through these personal calls.

Both Mrs. Crowley and Mr. Johnson commended Ms. Hall for her excellent hard work to prepare for this year's campaign.

Finance

Mr. Moore distributed and reviewed the August 2017 financial report. He commented that he was still concerned about not having a provision to replenish the Capital Reserve Fund in anticipation of future capital expenses and that there is too much dependence on the Endowment Fund for certain operating expenses.

Mr. Moore reported that August was a strong month for pledge receivables and that income is on pace with prior years. The next quarterly statement will be mailed the first part of October.

COMMITTEES REPORTS – One to Another

Mr. Whitlow distributed and reviewed reports from the *One to Another* committees.

Towards the goal of improving/planning improvements/maintenance to buildings and grounds, the following projects are in progress:

- 1) Steeple repairs
- 2) Chimes restoration
- 3) Chiller installation
- 4) Accessibility and inclusion
- 5) Wireless microphones for clergy use during services
- 6) Strategic Buildings and Grounds planning

The Buildings and Grounds Strategic Committee intends to thoughtfully plan for buildings and grounds needs in the future so that the Strategic Finance Committee can determine how to fund those needs. It will also help to determine regular operating and maintenance costs.

Mr. Harper noted that there were some unanticipated expenses over the summer, including repair of the heating system in the sanctuary and the repair of wall and ceiling cracks in some areas in the Parish House.

Efforts to engage members in ministry includes welcoming ministry elements and a more active targeting and encouragement of new members to engage, strengthening Youth Ministry, and developing more “small ministry” elements.

The ECW is focusing on two major events this program year – *The Taste of St. James's*, which raises funds for the Food Force ministry, and *WomanKind*, a 2-day symposium for women. *The Taste of St. James's*, which will be held on November 15, 2017, is co-chaired by Annie Witthoefft and Ginny Wortham. *WomanKind*, which will be held February 23-24, 2018, is chaired by Meta Braymer and Christie Hartwell. This year's theme is “Lift Up Your Hearts! The Transformative Power of Word and Table” featuring Friday's keynote speaker, the Rev. Nichelle R. Guidry, author and Liaison to Worship and Arts Ministries at Trinity United Church of Christ, Chicago; Saturday's keynote speaker, Sara Miles, author and founder of The Food Pantry and former Director of Ministry at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco; and the Saturday worship service preacher, the Rev. Emily Scott, an ordained Lutheran pastor and founder of St. Lydia's, a Dinner church in New York City.

The Hospitality Committee continues to provide excellent receptions for many church-wide events, including those following certain music events, Pentecost, the Bishop's visit, and Founders Sunday, as well as several leave-taking and thank you events during this transitional year. Mrs. Skidmore reported that over 50 generous and enthusiastic parishioners are "on call" to fulfill their motto of "Love, Serve, Do" when needed.

Mrs. Strickler reported that the Communications Committee and staff support the parish by marketing and communicating about the various events and programs at the church. Fall publications have been created and distributed; the eChimes was redesigned over the summer; the service video live feed recordings are up on YouTube immediately after the services, but the live feed has been having some issues; and the second Patton Award for Excellence in Communications has been awarded to Chris Moore, in recognition of the creation of his amazing repository of photographs of the parish's big and small events and services, staged images, and stained glass windows.

To increase pledging households, the Stewardship Strategic Committee has been established and the current class of P2P callers is in the process of completing calls to the whole parish.

Mr. Whitlow also reported that the Safety and Security Committee is identifying a list of areas of interest to discuss, and is refining and adopting the Safety and Security Preparedness and Response report drafted by Tom Porterfield, Carrie Rose Pace, Ron Odom, and Matt Presson.

Mr. Whitlow thanked all the Vestry leaders of the *One to Another* committees and the volunteers who serve on them. Mr. Harper thanked Mr. Whitlow for an excellent summary of the work being done by these committees.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Crowley reported that a reception to recognize and thank the Rev. Dr. Thom Blair for his service as Interim Rector will be held on Sunday, October 1, following the 11:15 a.m. service. October 1 will be Dr. Blair's first day back to teach his Sunday morning Bible Study. Mrs. Crowley welcomed contributions for a gift to be given to Dr. Blair from the Vestry and staff.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. DeCamps reported on the Worship Committee's progress regarding a regular Sunday evening service. She distributed and reviewed a summary of the September 14 meeting of the Worship Committee, Executive Committee, Clergy, and select staff, which included survey results from surveys distributed at the summer Jazz Mass. She commented that the general consensus of the Committee is to determine whether or not the church wants to provide a Sunday evening service and, if so, how to incorporate it into the regular life of the church and the budget, rather than it being dependent on a designated gift. The Committee will continue to review and discuss this issue and Mrs. DeCamps invited members of the Vestry to contact her with their input.

Mrs. Crowley reiterated that the Committee is allowing time for Dr. McCard to discern the direction of what he would like to do going forward, as worship services are ultimately the decision of the Rector, and that no decision regarding the Sunday evening service will be made immediately. Mrs. Crowley thanked Mrs. DeCamps and the Worship Committee for their work.

SENIOR WARDEN’S REPORT

Mrs. Crowley reminded the Vestry to review the upcoming events on the reverse of the Agenda, especially noting that the October meetings of the Executive Committee and the Vestry will be moved forward a week because of the Diocesan Clergy Conference the third week of October.

RECTOR’S REPORT

Dr. McCard reported that the Children’s Center is preparing to sell their old vans, now that it has procured new buses. To that end, the Executive Director of the Center, Debbie Lickey, needs a Power of Attorney to execute the sale. On a motion made and seconded, it was unanimously approved that the Power of Attorney to sell the Children’s Center vans be held by Mrs. Lickey.

OTHER

The attendance report for August was distributed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with a benediction by Dr. McCard at 6:40 p.m.

Anita Lisk
Secretary

Approved:

Rev. Dr. John McCard
Rector

Peggy Crowley
Senior Warden