This is the long version. I'll send a short form soon, if you'd rather just read the highlights. If I got anything wrong or left anything out, please let me know. Thanks.

Debra

**2.15.22 Vestry Minutes**

Win Fernald, Jon Showalter, Alliee DeArmond, Mtr. Tracy Wells Miller, Joanna Phillips, Antonette Wood, Chris Rowen, Kathy Butler, Nelson Crandall, Debra Spencer (notes)

Guests: Deacon Joan, Linda Buskirk (consultant), Anne Baker

Mtr. Tracy convened the meeting at 6:32pm.

Win prayed us in and led the formation.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Nelson said the receipt of the $15,000 memorial donation distorted the budget and he had no time to adjust it. He would like to resolve (1) the serious shortfall in pledges from last year--is it an accounting error or nonpayment? One substantial pledge has no account in Realm. Anne Baker did a preliminary review of pledges and found that 28 families haven’t paid up, and $17,000 in 2021 pledge income is lacking. Nelson feels pledge statements mailed out to parishioners are too long and aren’t being reviewed by those who pledge. He thinks people want to meet their pledges, but we may have to wait for Tiana to return from her leave (3 weeks). (2) There are three errors in QuickBooks; Nelson corrected one manually but not the other two. Some money moved from the Helpful Shop and the AYCP. He is working on a new chart of accounts to put into the new Realm system after reviewing the preliminary draft made by Rev. Mary Lou. Win said he’s willing to help with the Realm transfer and has the preliminary draft also. Debra said maybe we should remind people to review their pledge statements and let us know of any errors. Alliee said maybe check to see if statement recipients are still in the congregation and if they’re still able to pay their pledge. Anne said she has the whole list of individual pledgers with data on how much they’ve paid; her investigation is complete, on one sheet of paper. Nelson hasn’t wanted to look into how much people pledge and how much they’re negligent but will. Anne’s report was done in order to compare what was reported where, to ease the switch from QuickBooks to Realm. Joanna asked what we do if someone can’t pay their pledge. Nelson said we adjust the pledge to reflect what they can or have already paid. We would never discourage them by demanding payment.

Budget Revision: Nelson presented what we cut from the budget in December. He explained how the $15,000 memorial donation is actually between $6,678-$7,359, depending on whether we use a figure of 3% (of pledges unpaid) or 5%. The Finance Committee was unsure which figure to use. Some thought we should take an average of the last 3 years of pledge payments.

We looked at the items cut from the budget: Outreach grants, organist fees, Regional Youth Program, Stewardship, Hospitality, Flowers, and rotating shelter expense. Win suggested we call them “unbudgeted items” and ask the congregation to contribute to their funding. Mtr. Tracy said we signed a contract agreeing to pay $3000 to fund the Regional Youth Program, so we should pay it. Alliee said the outreach items should stay cut, and pay Regional Youth only if we have youth in the program. Jon asked what our relationship is to COPA now. Mtr. Tracy said we haven’t had much relationship with them except for Dee Roe, and if we don’t pay, we (St. John’s) won’t be members anymore. Jon asked who of our youth are in the Regional program; Mtr. Tracy said Emmi and Lili Gansauer, who are taking the confirmation class. Mtr. Tracy explained the funding comes from the national church, the diocese, and individual churches. It’s not looking viable, she said, but we signed a contract and should pay. Alliee pointed out we’re supporting COPA through the AYCP. Kathy asked if hospitality is only for coffee. Mtr. Tracy said it’s for coffee and to reimburse those who bring food.

Jon moved we fund the organist, Regional Youth, Stewardship, and Hospitality. Debra seconded it. We discussed. Chris said let’s make sure about the missing pledges first and moved to table the motion. Alliee seconded, and we voted unanimously to table Jon’s motion until the March meeting.

**ASUC Revised Charge**: Jon moved, Kathy seconded to accept the revised charge. Three edits were suggested and implemented. Jon affirmed that the ASUC is not designed to advocate for the building fund. Alliee asked that the agenda for meetings be posted so people may attend if they wish. In response to a question from Chris, Jon said the ASUC is an intermediary among parties in architectural matters. The charge approval was unanimous. Jon moved to confirm ASUC membership this year, Win seconded. Alliee asked if membership approval could wait until after discernment. Mtr. Tracy said we could add people later. Membership was approved unanimously.

**Linda Buskirk, Consultant, and Discussion of Discernment Steering Committee:** Mtr. Tracy introduced Linda, who joined us on Zoom. Win outlined a process: it will take 6-12 months, we’re setting up the church buildings model, we’re looking for a steering committee. Linda commended the Task Force on Communication for their work on the history of the process to create our current building and commended that process. She thinks we’ve done a lot of discernment already and may be close to a decision about building--maybe it won’t take a year. She wondered about the tie between our strategic plan and the building project. Alliee said the model is 20 years old; we haven’t decided to move forward with building but are ready to discern our needs before we build. Win emphasized that any building would serve our ministry. Linda said we then discern about ministry and vision, rather than building. It’s time to revisit the vision and ask what we need to realize it, to affirm a strategic direction and then look at how buildings would help fulfill that. Find committee leaders who’ll be cheerleaders for the process, not the project. She said we’ve been doing this work already.

Chris said that the steering committee would start from Vision 2025 and discern what’s needed, but he feels we will end up building something. Linda said sometimes people decide not to start a capital campaign or it becomes unfeasible. Sometimes they realize building would hold them back. Sometimes you have to take a leap of faith and say we need to build. But it may not be all about building. It could be a curate, or creative use of existing space. But at some point we must act. Jon said he wasn’t sure what the next steps are--small-group discussion, general discussion? When we’re not using the buildings it’s hard to be concrete. Alliee agreed. Win said we just start talking about it. Linda said she agreed with that, but you need to determine who will lead the conversations, either a task force to work with her, or a way to do it yourselves. The task force’s role is to provide structure for the discussions. The strategic plan is a good platform. She will provide structure also but needs a committee to help. Mtr Tracy said we need clarity on how to find people to ask to be on the steering committee. Alliee said people who present diverse views are better than no views. Linda said create a process to engage all voices in the congregation. Make sure the process is transparent and everyone is heard. Jon reminded us of characteristics of the task force we already came up with: credible, known, neutral, representing all parts of the congregation. Linda added good communicators. Put a structure in place to facilitate conversations. Jon asked if, since we’re not using the buildings, is this a good time to do this? Linda said yes; you’re still tied to community and active in ministry. The pandemic doesn’t change that. Alliee said it’s changed how we do church and that needs to be addressed. She asked about the time commitment for the task force and the optimal number of people. Linda said they’re the liaison to the vestry--around 6-10 people. Braistorming meetings might take two months. They’ll figure out how to gather and present information, recruit volunteers to host, to facilitate, to take notes. It doesn’t have to be an hour amount. Individuals could work on their own and check in. You’re creating this, so it’s hard to say how much time. Mtr. Tracy said we’ll keep Linda posted on our recruiting.

**Goals for 2022**: The Internal, External, and Admin Teams have sent their goals to the whole vestry. Check your email.

**Information**: Mtr. Tracy’s sabbatical dates are July 11-September 27. She will present a sabbatical plan at the March meeting. Rev. Mary Craig Caruthers has asked to become an assisting priest. If we have concerns, we should speak to Mtr. Tracy. If no concerns, Mtr. Tracy will say yes. Mtr. Tracy and Win will talk about the recent $15,000 contribution in order to decide if it’s meant for the general fund.

**Report Out**:

* We’re looking for a committee to work with Linda Buskirk on discernment of the future.
* We approved the vestry goals for 2022. Each team has set goals also. Any questions? Ask a vestry member.
* We began a review of the budget in hope of reinstating items cut.
* We accepted the revised ASUC charge.
* We urge everyone to examine their pledge statements for possible errors. Let Chrys know if you find any.

**Evaluation**: Covered a lot, unifying, hearts closer because of retreat--we work better, low blood sugar, positive vibes.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Spencer