

Vestry Minutes

October 18, 2022

Present: Kathy Butler, Alliee DeArmond, Win Fernald, Joanna Phillips, Chris Rowen, Jon Showalter, Debra Spencer, Antonette Wood,

Absent: The Rev. Tracy Wells Miller, Sabbatical, Nancy Shephard, passed away

Guests: Nelson Crandall and The Rev. Eliza Linley

Win convened the meeting at 6:35pm.

Formation: Kathy opened with a prayer and reading. We were asked to answer the question, "Why do we go to church?" Using mutual invitation, we all shared our answers.

Consent Agenda: Chris moved for approval of the Consent agenda and Joanna Seconded. The Minutes of the September 20th Vestry Meeting passed

Treasure's Report: Nelson Crandall

- The September books, end of quarter, have not been closed and there are lots of adjustments to be made before they are closed.
- We are still on track with pledge receipts and budgeted expenses for this year.
- The consultant recommends that we transition to Realm at the end of the year. Only the Financial Position numbers have to be moved to Realm and this saves a lot of work.
- Nelson needs to rebuild the Chart of Accounts as we better understand Realm.
- Endowment Funds, ACYP, The Helpful Shop and other funds are not part of church operations and need to be accounted for separately in Realm.
- Credit card expenses do not always reference a category clearly. We need to pay more attention to the purpose of these expenses.
- The Diocese is voting on a resolution to increase clergy compensation by 4%.
- We are expecting the cost of medical insurance to increase about 15%.
- COMCAST expenses change frequently and this needs some research.
- PG&E suggested we changed plans for a small reduction in costs. The new formula is very complex and may not meet our needs. We elected not to change plans.
- Nelson needs some projected income numbers to develop a draft budget.
- A draft budget can be prepared using this year's numbers and adjusted by what we know about specific spending categories.
- We are forecasting income using 95% of pledges. We came in a bit lower than that last year, and most people paid these off in January.
- Alliee pointed out that in the past year and a half the treasure has consistently told us what the bookkeeper hasn't accomplished. We agreed that the Admin Team needs to stay on top of this.

INFORMATION: "Lift Every Voice" A report by The Rev. Eliza Linley

The Discernment Team met with the consultant, Linda, to review responses to the **Lift Every Voice** survey effort. Thanks to the commitment of the Team and volunteers that helped, 89 voices were heard, representing 75% or more of the active members of St. John's. The written statements in the report are the actual statements as spoken by those interviewed. This is not

only a very strong participation level it provides an unusual level of validity to the results. It is a snapshot of parishioner opinions during the summer of 2022 and during a pandemic.

Now that the report is released and available to everyone, the Discernment Team, with consultant Linda Buskirk, has completed the work they were asked to do by the Vestry. The resulting report contains a lot of information and shows some trends and commonalities. The Vestry's task is to digest the contents of this report and determine what the next step should be. The following are some of the comments offered by Vestry members regarding the report and next steps:

- The report, Discernment Team, Vestry and Architectural Committee are all important elements in digesting the report and setting the next step.
- Consultant, Linda Buskirk, may be the best facilitator to help with this process. The Vestry will need to address the value and cost of the various options.
- An all-parish meeting would help all of us to understand the content and results of the report and bring parish members into the decision process.
- A couple of statements pointed out that mutual conversations and discussion are vital to actual discernment.
- Are the steps we are taking leading to any kind of a consensus?
- Is the Discernment done?
- What is the Vestry's commitment to Linda?
- Linda's agreement is and hourly fee.

Discussion/Decisions:

- a. The Vestry considered the proposal from Creative Design Enterprises to install shades in the Sacristy and make repairs to shades that need repairs at \$1,071.43. Jon made the motion to grant this request, Joanna seconded it and it **passed 8 to 0**. Funding to come from the Capital Account.
- b. The Vestry is currently approved to have 9 members. It typically has 9 to 12 members. The Vestry nomination committee may be able to suggest electing more than the required 3 new members at the next vestry meeting. They have also developed a tentative list of members who are qualified to serve on vestry and will have that list available to the parish at the next Sunday service. The vestry election is expected to take place in early Dec
- c. Outreach requested that a payment of \$750 be approved to complete our commitment to COPA for 2022. Most feel that we need a wider conversation within St. John's about our continuing association with COPA and support of their mission. This is also a budget issue and should be more than one person attending a monthly meeting. Chris moved that we approve \$750 for COPA keeping our membership in place. Debra seconded and it passed, **7 for and 1 against**. Note: COPA is not part of the Outreach budget.
- d. Jon asked that we reinstate our dues payment of \$3,000 to the AFC program. This funding was cut from the budget early in the year. This money is used by AFC to cover salaries for program managers and other administrative costs. While individuals may make personal donations on their own, funding AFC by St. John's was presented to the Vestry as an important "institutional donation" that illustrates St. John's commitment to

the program. Apparently 12 to 15 people from our parish already donate individually to AFC. Alliee pointed out that not only is COPA a political activist group, but when AFC placed a pro-BLM ad in the Sentinel they moved into partisan politics. Jon moved that \$3,000 be reinstated to the AFC fund. Debra seconded the motion and the vote was **7 in favor and 1 opposed**. Clarifying note: AFC is not part of the Outreach budget.

- e. Outreach requested that \$1,500, same as last year's allocation, be reinstated to the budget line item for grants beyond our community. These grants may be to groups not in the USA. Chris made a motion that the \$1,500 be approved. Alliee added a request that the Vestry ask the Outreach Committee to specify how they plan to spend the money before it gives final approval and seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 to 0.
- f. Nelson asked that the vestry approve reducing budget item 51014 from \$1,600 to \$0. Chris made the motion which was seconded by Jon and it **passed 7 for and 1 against**.

Information:

- a. Discernment Steering Committee: Discussed earlier to meet Eliza's schedule.
- b. Diocesan Convention Nov. 5th on Zoom. Delegates are Jane Dawson, Jeanne O'Grady, Robin Gaither and Barbara Raney.
- c. The Adult Formation Team wants to bring the Forum back during the coffee hour following the 10:30 Service. Bill Kell, Prison Ministry and Mary Nona, South Sudan, have both agreed to lead forums. During Advent Sundays the team is planning to ask people to talk about their faith journeys.
- d. The church water pressure problems may originate from a defective Backflow. More testing is proceeding on this issue.

Report Out:

- a. The Discernment Team presented the results of their study and charting the next step is in the hands of the vestry.
- b. Shades for the Sacristy were approved charging the purchase to the Capital Account.
- c. Funding COPA through the end of the year was approved.
- d. Funding of \$3,000 for AFC was added to the budget to cover our institutional membership.
- e. Funding of \$1,500 for Outreach was added subject to receiving a spending plan from the Outreach Committee.
- f. The Adult Formation Team is bringing back the Forum after the 10:30 service in Nov.

Evaluation: Meeting ran late and I forgot to cover the evaluation.

Win closed the meeting at 8:30 PM

Special Note: All documents reference in this report were made available to Vestry members before the Vestry meeting and are available upon request by email to the Rector or Wardens.

Respectfully submitted,

Win Fernald