

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING MINUTES
August 17, 2016

Present: Senior Warden- Linda Drummond, Junior Warden – Dave Monroe, Treasurer- Christine Winslow, Clerk– Mattie Gustafson, Jenny Williams, Chris Bartlett, Chris Barker, Dave Ferkinhoff, Judy Hall, the Rev. Rachel Field and the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick.

Absent: Christian Myers, Trish Culver.

The meeting began with prayer and a Bible study of Acts, Chapter 9.

Consent Agenda

Linda Drummond made a motion, seconded by Christine W., that we accept the Consent Agenda, which included the Minutes for the July 20th Vestry meeting. The motion passed.

Rector's Report

St. Mary's Numbers

We have a fairly static ASA (Average Sunday Attendance) of 136. We really need to work on increasing our membership and participation in Sunday worship. We are staffed to support growth – we need to grow!

Planning Team

Jennifer wants to create a planning team to start some concrete strategizing and planning around all the “energy, spirit and vision that has been swirling around St. Mary's.” This effort should come to fruition with plans for programs, worship and fellowship, to be presented at the next Annual Meeting. This planning team will be working hard over the next months and checking in regularly with the Vestry – to keep them informed and for input and comments. St. Mary's can be (as Judy Hall once said) a vibrant and dynamic center for spiritual growth for our congregation and for our community. It is time we did some concrete planning around this vision.

Vestry Vacancies

We have two open spots on the Vestry and after a brief discussion we arrived at a consensus of two people that Jennifer will ask to fill these openings.

Stewardship

The theme for the fall's stewardship efforts is “living generously” and designates three key words to express that theme: grace, gratitude and generosity. A Community Ministry Fair is planned for Sunday, September 18th. The fair has been described as a “big home show” with displays, costumes, give aways (for example - some sample meatloaf from the Soup Kitchen?),

and will include groups based at St. Mary's *and* other community groups that we work with, e.g., MLK Center, Aquidneck Land Trust, Boy Scouts, Tenth Gate Yoga, etc. The formal annual campaign will begin on October 2nd, and Rachel F. and Claire Hebert have been working together designing an exciting educational component. The Stewardship campaign will culminate in an in-gathering during the Harvest Festival, the weekend of November 13th.

Treasurer's Report

Christine W. went over some highlights in her report.

Dave F. made a motion, seconded by Chris Barker to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Property Report

Oliphant Lane Property

The sale of the Oliphant Lane property has been approved by the Standing Committee, and the Bishop has also given his approval, pending an opinion from Rich Sayer, the Diocesan legal counsel. Dave M. has sent Mr. Sayer all appropriate documentation and we will hopefully have final, written approval from the Diocese shortly. Once written confirmation has been received from the Diocese, we will market the property for 30 days and receive offers during that time. The Vestry needs to approve the sale, once the successful bidder is determined.

A&E Study of the Church

There was a brief discussion of what grants might be available to help us with the church restoration and renovation project. Dave M. said that identifying suitable grant sources and writing grants is something the architect is poised to help us with. Also, grants might be easier to obtain if the church was "officially" recognized as an historic building. Chris Barker will ask at Grace Church about the process of having St. Mary's so designated.

Dave M. and the Property Commission have recommended that NewPort Architecture be hired to do the initial architectural and engineering assessment of the condition of the church roof and structure to determine the need, options for and cost of restoration. Because of the specialized nature of this study and the specialized and outstanding qualifications of NewPort Architecture, the Vestry agreed not to go out for bids in this case. Dave M. made a motion that the Vestry authorize the Property Commission to move forward contracting for the Architectural and Engineering assessment of the church as a first step in restoration planning. Chris Bartlett seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business

Raise the Roof Update

Chris Barker presented an initial draft of plans for this fund raising effort, and mentioned that the committee will meet on Saturday to flesh out some of the ideas. Chris said the committee could use more participants, and several Vestry members suggested people that might be interested and could contribute. Chris Barker will call some of the folks suggested.

Fashion Show

Judy Hall reported on the progress being made on the Fall Fashion Show. The date for the show is October 15th from 12 noon to 2 pm. She has recruited “famous” models from the community. Tickets are \$30 each, which includes lunch and the fashion show, and will go on sale at both St. Mary’s and the MLK Center September 11th. We are hoping for 100 attendees.

By-Laws Revision

We had a very brief discussion of the By-Law revision that Dave F. and his committee have been working on, but once again, we ran out of time. Linda said she would put the By-Law discussion first on the agenda for next time.

New Business

Christian Formation in the fall

Rachel Field mentioned several Christian formation opportunities she has started planning for the fall. These include Date Night with Your Bible on October 21st and Clergy and Coffee on September 14th. Stayed tuned for details.

Use of PH space

Jenny W. has compiled quite a few ideas about community and commercial use of the Parish Hall. We need much more discussion about the issues involved in opening up our facilities, including the resultant increase in staff time required and safe church issues. Linda will also put this issue at the top of our agenda for next time.

Chris Bartlett offered a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

The next meeting is Wednesday, September 21st at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mattie E. Gustafson
Clerk