

**Christ Church**  
Vestry Meeting Minutes  
Regular Meeting of the Vestry  
Tuesday, September 9, 2014

**Present:** The Rev'd Joanna P. Hollis, Rector; Rector's Warden Paul Ambos; People's Warden Sheila Cooper; Vestrymembers Beth Binde (via telephone), Kelly Bogan, Carole Forsythe, Mel Garber, Judith Kuldinow, Effie Lamptey, Debra Lowe, Artie Phills, Melisande Skillicorn.

**Also Present:** Jonathan Gloster, Treasurer (via telephone)

**Absent:** Vestrymembers Andrea Cunnell, Andy Murphy

Rev. Joanna P. Hollis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with opening prayer by Vestrymember Debra Lowe.

Dwelling in the Word was on Matthew 20:1-16.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of August 12, 2014:** Rector's Warden Paul Ambos moved the minutes for approval. People's Warden Sheila Cooper moved for a correction on page 2, Children and Youth Formation, to change "Keith Cook" to "Keith Thomas". The minutes carried unanimously with the correction.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Ambos reported two pieces of correspondence from the Diocese. 1) General Convention Resolutions Referred to Dioceses for Action and for Information; 2) a June 19, 2014 letter to the Wardens and Vestry from The Right Rev. William H. Stokes, D.D., Bishop of New Jersey, regarding allowing clergy to attend the upcoming Clergy Conference. Rev. Hollis noted that she planned to attend the Clergy Conference. The Resolutions were tabled until next Vestry meeting to allow the Vestry time to read the Resolutions.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Jonathan Gloster reported that both pledges and plate are down, but that is not unusual for the summer months. He hopes to see those pick up in the fall and get back on budget. He did note, however, that, because income is \$7,747 behind budget for the month, the parish had to draw from the investment account. So far this year, after considering the investment account draw downs, the parish is \$26,915 behind budget and is running at a \$59,201 deficit through August. He noted that expenses are up approximately \$28,000 due to bookkeeping (transition to the new system) and property costs.

Vestrymember Artie Phills asked about increase in parking expenses and Mr. Gloster advised that the parish is paying for an additional spot, since the free one formerly provided by Penelope Lattimer is no longer available. Vestrymember Judith Kuldinow inquired about the fundraising line and Mr. Gloster explained what is included in fundraising and replied that the same amount was carried from last year and it will be evaluated in the upcoming budget.

Mr. Ambos moved to accept the report and file for audit. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports by Title**

***Rector's Report:*** Rev. Hollis distributed a revised Rector's Report, Vestry Meeting September 2014. Rev. Hollis stated that rather than hold the February 2015 vestry meeting on February 10, the meeting will instead be held at the end of the vestry retreat. Rev. Hollis highlighted the Missional Leadership Cohort for Episcopal Clergy in her Report, noting that Rev. Gideon is in the group. Regarding stewardship, Rev. Hollis advised that the Stewardship Committee asks that leadership make pledges by October 5, 2014.

**Committee Reports**

***Finance - Audit:*** Finance Committee Chair presented the audit, noting that the suggestions made by the Diocese already were mostly in place, including eliminating the midweek deposit which was done to reduce bookkeeping hours. Action on the Audit was tabled to allow Ms. Forsythe to distribute the Audit Report.

***Finance - Rector's Housing Allowance Designation :*** In light of the her upcoming home purchase, Rev. Hollis requested an increase in the standard IRS housing allowance to cover the additional expenses of homeownership. This would not increase any obligation of the parish but would allow her to deduct expenses for income-tax purposes. Ms. Forsythe moved the following resolution, which carried unanimously:

*Whereas*, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the Gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of her compensation to the extent used by her for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

*Whereas*, the Reverend Joanna P. Hollis is compensated by Christ Church, New Brunswick, exclusively for the services as a minister of the gospel; and

*Whereas*, Christ Church, New Brunswick, does not provide Rev. Hollis with a rectory;  
Now, therefore, it is hereby

*Resolved*, That the total compensation paid to Rev. Hollis for calendar year 2014 shall include \$30,000 of her regular cash salary annually, which is hereby designated to be an additional housing allowance over and above the contracted annual housing allowance in compliance with diocesan mandate of \$28,000, for a total allowance of \$58,000 for purposes of Section 107, and it is further

*Resolved*, that the designation of \$58,000 as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar 2014 effective from the passage of this resolution and for all future years unless otherwise provided.

***Stewardship:*** Rev. Hollis presented Stewardship Committee Co-Chair Andy Murphy's written report. Rev. Hollis reported that the Committee is coordinating the cottage meetings, and all parishioners will receive an invitation. The Committee is meeting on September 10 to finalize the details. In response to Vestrymember Debra Lowe's question, Vestrymember Melisande Skillicorn stated that the meetings attendees will be arranged geographically.

**Personnel:** Personnel Chair Debra Lowe presented her written report, noting that the Committee's current focus is on the ongoing annual staff review process. Ms. Lowe advised that the Committee is considering ways to streamline the process, as it presently is very time-consuming. She said that future evaluations will use goals as opposed to job description, following the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) model. She further noted that a goal is to have mid-year reviews. Ms. Lowe will meet with staff to discuss the new process and seek their input. People's Warden Sheila Cooper suggested having staff create goals. Mr. Ambos stated that since the Vestry has approved staff job descriptions in the past, the Committee should present the new descriptions, once they are updated, for Vestry approval. Rev. Hollis invited Vestrymembers to give her any suggestions for job descriptions.

**Property:** Property Committee Chair presented a written report, which listed seven completed projects and 20 projects underway. Mr. Bogan noted that the eave/gutter/roof repair project will be done in mid-October and is estimated to take three days. The cost is \$16,602 and any additional expense is capped at \$4,000. Mr. Ambos received approval from the New Jersey Historic Trust for the repairs. He further advised that work will proceed on the chair lift in September and that, after considering other companies and options, the Committee contracted with Handi-Lift for the repairs as well as bi-annual inspections. Mr. Gloster noted that the repairs will come from the capital budget. Rev. Hollis advised that the parish has applied for a Pearls and Oyster grant for ADA purposes. Mr. Bogan also raised the energy audit being offered through the GreenFaith energy project. Titan Energy will conduct an audit for \$100. Mr. Ambos noted that energy-efficient light bulbs have been installed as a result of the prior PSE&G lighting-efficiency audit and that the church roof had been insulated as part of the Phase II Exterior Restoration Project. Any further savings would likely only come from insulating the Parish House or upgrading the heating systems. After discussion, the Vestry agreed that Mr. Bogan will check further into the efficacy of a new audit, since the parish had one not too long ago, and report back to the Vestry.

**Fellowship:** Fellowship Committee Co-Chair Melisande Skillicorn reported that the Committee is preparing for the Ingathering Brunch on October 26. The Committee is waiting for its budget and will discuss the event with Rev. Hollis. The report further noted the upcoming November 15 Harvest Potluck. Ms. Skillicorn reported that Marie Thompson has joined the Committee.

### Old Business

**Archdeacon Peter Cornell:** Rev. Hollis reported that she continues to work on the Letter of Agreement.

### New Business

**Ali Van Kuiken:** Rev. Hollis reported that she will meet with seminarian Ali Van Kuiken to formalize a contract for her services for 5 hours per week. Mr. Ambos moved that the Vestry authorize Rev. Hollis to negotiate a contract with Ms. Van Kuiken, which contract will be subject to Vestry approval. The motion carried unanimously.

**Irene Foster:** Rev. Hollis reported that Irene Foster, a senior in the Rutgers BASW program, will intern with the parish, helping with the Food Pantry and the Men's Shelter, as well as other matters. There is no cost involved, as she will work pursuant to a learning contract. Mr. Ambos moved to authorize Rev. Hollis to engage Ms. Foster pursuant to the terms of a learning contract. The motion carried unanimously.

**Topics on the Minds of the Vestry:** Ms. Skillicorn stated that a parishioner asked her about providing the Sunday service leaflets in large print. Rev. Hollis will investigate the matter. Ms. Cooper wondered whether the Book of Common Prayer and Hymnal are available in large print.

Mr. Phills thanked the Vestry for nominating him for the diocesan senior award.

Vestrymember Mel Garber asked if he could have assistance preparing for next month's Outreach Committee as he is new to the Vestry and Committee. Rev. Hollis will help.

Vestrymember Beth Binde asked whether there are photos from last year's Pledge Ingathering for the website. She was advised that there are no photos.

Rev. Hollis asked Vestrymembers to note the upcoming meetings, including the December 14 budget meeting. Ms. Cooper asked whether the annual meeting can be held earlier in the day on January 25 if both services are combined. Rev. Hollis agreed.

Mr. Ambos advised that, responsive to his challenge, Rev. Hollis, Ms. Cooper and Archdeacon Cornell will undertake the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge after the 10:30 service on September 21.

Ms. Cooper thanked all who helped make the Ministries Fair a success.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. with compline led by Ms. Lowe.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gerri Callahan  
Clerk of the Vestry