

**Christ Church**  
Vestry Meeting Minutes  
Regular Meeting of the Vestry  
Tuesday, June 9, 2015

**Present:** The Rev'd Joanna P. Hollis; Rector's Warden Artie Phills; People's Warden Sheila Cooper, Vestry members Beth Binde, Austin Cooper, Andrea Cunnell, Carole Forsythe, Mel Garber, Mervis Johnson, Effie Lamptey (arrived at 7:01 PM), Debra Lowe, Andy Murphy, Melisande Skillicorn, Cheryl Ann Stofan

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

**Absent:** Vestry member John Ager

Rev'd Joanna P. Hollis called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with opening prayer by People's Warden Sheila Cooper.

Discussed chapters 5, 6 and Conclusion of *The Agile Church* by Dwight Zscheile

Discussed Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love. Rev'd Hollis informed the Vestry members that the document is from the Mennonite Church. She gave a high level overview and asked that we read it in detail. Rev'd Hollis explained that we are in a place where we may be having difficult conversations and it's important to have a standard for how we engage with each other when we disagree. There are three ways to agree and disagree in love (in Thought; in Action; in Life); we should use these as guiding principles.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of May 12, 2015:** Sheila Cooper moved the minutes for approval with one correction on page 3, misspelled Altar. The minutes carried with the correction. Vestry member Andrea Cunnell abstained.

**Correspondence:** Clerk of the Vestry Debra Lowe reported no correspondence.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jonathan Gloster pointed out a correction under Highlights. The amount of the health care premium is \$4,900 not \$900.

Sheila Cooper moved to receive the report and file for audit. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports by Title**

**Rector's Report:** Rev. Hollis stated that the report is as given and will be discussed in more detail during Topics on the Minds of the Vestry.

**Committee Reports**

**Pastoral Care:** Pastoral Care Committee Chair Mervis Johnson submitted a written Pastoral Care Committee Report. She informed the Vestry members that the committee is thinking of additional steps

to make Pastoral Care more effective. In addition to reaching out to members who are incapacitated, they want to acknowledge, celebrate and sympathize in life-changing events. Rev'd Hollis said that there was a stack of generic greeting cards in her office that Mervis could use.

***Stewardship:*** The Stewardship Committee Chair Andy Murphy informed the Vestry members that the Stewardship Committee had a meeting and they are gearing up for the campaign. He will have more to share at the next Vestry meeting in August.

***Finance:*** The Finance Committee Chair Carol Forsythe submitted a written report. She highlighted that People's Warden Sheila Cooper is working on a letter to send to those individuals who still owe on their Living Stones pledge.

***Newcomers:*** The Newcomers Committee Chair Cheryl Ann Stofan distributed a written report. She highlighted that there are several other people on the committee who are helping. The committee is interested in experimenting with name tags; they are being looked into. Cheryl Ann also mentioned that the Newcomers Committee touches other committees such as fellowship, pastoral care, evangelism, etc.

### **Old Business**

*[None scheduled]*

### **New Business**

***Community Conversations:*** Rev. Hollis thanked attendees, facilitators and scribes for participating in the Community Conversations. There were 80 attendees. The next step is to gather a small group of people who participated and ask them to reflect on what we heard and validate the ways forward to build upon our strengths. A letter will be sent to all participants and an announcement will be published in Parish Notes. The group will comprise of up to 15 people selected on a first-come-first-serve. We want to hold the meeting at the end of June. The Way of St. Paul Team is discussing next steps as well. A few themes to highlight from the Community Conversations are as follows:

- Relationships are important
- Need to focus in our experimentation with building community. It's not random and we need to make it explicit
- There was truth telling with the youth

Rev'd Hollis stated that communication is a challenge. We want to be transparent with what the leadership of the church is doing.

***Matter of the Estate of Gladys K. Anderson:*** Rev'd Hollis explained that Christ Church New Brunswick (CCNB) is a named defendant in a contested will situation. Paul Ambos was contacted and he wrote a memo. Thanks to Paul for summing up the document. If the transfer that Ms. Anderson's relatives made is found to be invalid, CCNB will get \$400,000. Paul suggested that Rev'd Hollis speak to St. James in Edison.

Julia Utz reached out to other local non-profits named as defendants, specifically churches, and suggested that maybe we can partner and share attorney fees. We haven't received a firm commitment from anyone. We need to decide our plan of action by July 3; the hearing is on July 17.

Rector's Warden Artie Phills stated that we need to find out what CCNB's costs will be. If we retain an attorney, we can still check with other churches. A suggestion was made to ask either Paul Ambos or Gerri Callahan to refer us to legal counsel who can represent CCNB.

Rev'd Hollis will contact an attorney and retain to answer in order to show cause in the matter of Gladys K. Anderson. Carol Forsythe moved to accept the motion. Rev'd Hollis will keep us informed as things progress.

***Mustard Seed Account:*** Carol Forsythe informed the Vestry members that the account sitting in Vanguard Funds was set up as an endowment account, although we don't have a true endowment account. Paul Ambos helped her write a letter and the Finance Committee made some tweaks. They resolved to leave the account with Vanguard. However, we will not be able to touch the principle; only 5% of income on a three year rolling average will be available each year. Carol explained that it means the income the account earns is safeguarded so that we are not invading principle. The Finance Committee approved this change and she would like the Vestry to approve as well. Carol moved to approve proposed wording on instructions for Mustard Seed Account so that it becomes a true endowment effective June 9, 2015. Rector's Warden Sheila Cooper seconded the motion. There were no abstentions.

***Fund Raising Policy:*** Rev'd Hollis explained that this policy requires action, but not today. She explained that the document needs to be tweaked. Rev'd Hollis asked where do the profits for the groups that have fundraising events go. She answered that the majority go to each group directly and not to the operating budget. Do we want to think about the events that take place and raise funds, that a portion (10%-30% was suggested) will go towards the operating budget? Electricity and water is being used during these events. Rev'd Hollis needs to have a meeting with the groups that host events and listen to their perspective on this topic. She will also meet with the Fundraising Committee to gather their input. In addition, we need to define fundraising and distinguish it from community outreach.

***Topics on the Mind of the Vestry:*** Rev'd Hollis announced that Cathy Brunson, from St. Barnabas in South Brunswick, will be our second Deacon. Cathy and Pete Cornell will work out a schedule where we will have a Deacon every Sunday.

Rev'd Hollis requests a photo of every Vestry member. If the Vestry member has one they'd like posted, they should send it to Julia. Otherwise, Rev'd Hollis will take photos at the August Vestry meeting.

If a Vestry member did not attend service on Sunday, June 7, Rev'd Hollis asked that you listen to it online as there are key messages that she'd like all members to hear.

The job description for the Director of the Food Pantry has been tweaked. It will be sent out soon.

Rev'd Hollis interviewed a student for the internship position. The student is from Rutgers University and is in her first year of the Masters (MSW) program. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. Rev'd Hollis laid out the expectations for the position, including food pantry duties and working with community members who come into the church asking for money.

Andy Murphy mentioned that parishioners want to know where Rev'd Hollis goes when she is away and that the perception is that she gets more time off than previous rectors. Rev'd Hollis thanked Andy for bringing this forward. However for safety reasons, she does not want to post her whereabouts on the church website or Facebook prior to or during her absence. When absence or travel is church related, she may post upon her return.

People's Warden Sheila Cooper suggested that we sell the plates commemorating the church's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration. Melisande Skillicorn informed the Vestry members that she already planned to sell them for \$20 each.

People's Warden Sheila Cooper handed out the new rotation schedule for announcements. The schedule starts on July 5.

The meeting adjourned on consent with Compline at 9:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debra P. Lowe  
Clerk of the Vestry