

Christ Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Vestry
Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Present: The Rev'd Joanna P. Hollis; Rector's Warden Artie Phills, People's Warden Sheila Cooper; Vestry members: John Ager (arrived at 7:08 PM), Austin Cooper (arrived at 7:44 PM), Carole Forsythe, Mel Garber (arrived at 7:16 PM), Mervis Johnson, Effie Lamptey, Debra Lowe, Andy Murphy, Melisande Skillicorn

Also Present: Parishioner: Victoria Harbour (arrived at 8:05 PM)

Absent: Treasurer Jonathan Gloster, Vestry members: Beth Binde, Andrea Cunnell, Cheryl Ann Stofan,

Rev'd Joanna P. Hollis called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM with opening prayer by Artie Phills

Dwelling in the Word was Zephaniah 3: 14-20

Approval of Consent Agenda: The consent agenda was moved for approval with two corrections to the Minutes from Regular Vestry Meeting on November 10, 2015. The first correction was under Old Business: remove Vestry member Carole Forsythe's name as an alternate for the Annual Meeting Committee. The second correction was under Topics on the Mind of the Vestry: correct the spelling of Ginny Keil's name.

Vestry member Andy Murphy gave an update on the Stewardship campaign. A total of 89 pledges have been received; we are ahead of where we were at this time last year. He informed the Vestry members that he created a Google doc containing a list of parishioners who've pledged within the last two years, but have not yet submitted for this year. He asked that we select someone and reach out to them by Friday, December 11. Andy circulated a hard copy of the document for selection. He'll update the Google doc and email a script to the Vestry members.

Vestry member John Ager asked why "removed for a reason" was next to some names. Andy explained that, for the most part, it indicates that the parishioner has moved and does not need to be contacted. John asked if we could contact people who haven't increased their pledge over last year. He believes that people aren't as engaged as they used to be. Rev'd Hollis responded that the more engaged, the more people give and that the Way of St. Paul may take this on.

Finance: Finance Committee Chair Carole Forsythe submitted a written Finance Committee report. Carole highlighted that the Diocesan Fair Share for 2016 is \$73,655; our fair share rate is 16%. The Finance Committee does not have a number yet, but they will present it during the budget meeting in December.

There isn't a COLA increase for 2016. The base cash stipend for Clergy should be 1.5%. Carole put this in the budget for the Rector and all staff because they did not get an increase last year.

Treasurer's Report: In the absence of Treasurer Jonathan Gloster, Vestry member Carole Forsythe highlighted that pledge income is up. There were several people who paid the remainder of 2015, even though they weren't attending Christ Church New Brunswick (CCNB) for the entire year.

John Ager moved to receive the report and file for audit. The motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence: Clerk of the Vestry Debra Lowe reported that the Episcopal Church Foundation sent a letter asking for donations. Rev'd Hollis and the Vestry members agreed that we will not donate at this time.

Old Business

Matter of the Estate of Gladys K. Anderson: Rev'd Hollis stated that she received an email from Ryan Erdreich, the attorney handling the Estate of Gladys Anderson on behalf of CCNB. He explained that the Plaintiffs have made a settlement offer of approximately \$200,000. He'll speak with the other attorneys regarding next steps and get back to her.

New Business

Rector's Housing Allowance: Rev'd Hollis explained that there will not be an increase in the total compensation package and there is a certain amount of salary that she would like to have designated as a housing allowance. John Ager moved to accept the request. The motion carried unanimously.

The Way of St. Paul: Rev'd Hollis mentioned that she will ask Meegan Adames to write an annual report for The Way of St. Paul. People's Warden Sheila Cooper informed the members of the Vestry that on November 21, she attended a half-day workshop at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Perth Amboy. Nine churches attended. They are planning an Adult Formation program for Lent. The Way of St. Paul team will meet with Rev'd Hollis to get her input on their ideas. Sheila thinks it will be a fun way to begin these activities for The Way of St. Paul.

Topics on the Mind of the Vestry:

Vestry member John Ager shared his thoughts and suggestions on a way to acknowledge and reward parishioners who volunteer their time. He created a spreadsheet and listed activities/events that have taken place in the parish. He included the parishioners' names with a smiley face (☺) next to those who volunteered to help organize and/or run the activity/event. He said there would not be names on the list without smiley faces, as it would only list parishioners who volunteered.

John explained that this will be a way of communicating how much takes place at CCNB and what people are doing. It would also help in the annual planning process as it would not be retrospective, but prospective. His long-term vision is that this information would be used at the Annual Meeting.

He stated that the committee hosting the event, would be responsible for managing the matrix and Vestry members need to decide how often we update the document and where we publish it. John asked for our reaction, for us to look at the list and add any activities that are missing.

People's Warden Sheila Cooper said she liked the idea. They could display it at the Ministry Fair to highlight the activities/events and encourage people to volunteer. She said the information could be used in the Close Call and Prayers of the People to give a "shout out" to those who have volunteered. The names could also be included in Committee Vestry Reports.

Several Vestry members expressed concern of forgetting someone and leaving them off the list. Rev'd Hollis stated that should that happen, we can make sure to acknowledge and recognize people in the Annual Report.

People's Warden Sheila Cooper reminded the Vestry members of fellow Vestry member Beth Binde's upcoming surgery. Sheila said she was collecting money to send Beth a floral arrangement from the Vestry. All members who were present donated.

Sheila stated that the St. Nick's party on December 5, 2015 was a big hit. About 35 people, including 10-12 children, attended.

Reflection on Parish Gathering: Rev'd Hollis gave an overview of the meeting that took place on Sunday, December 6, 2015. She said the attendees were herself, the Rector's Warden, the People's Warden, the Clerk of the Vestry, two facilitators, who spoke to each other prior to the meeting, and 17 parishioners. She was told that the entire group could not make it and that there were about 30 in all. She said the meeting lasted for 1.5 hours. She approached it as a receiving of information.

Rev'd Hollis shared a copy of the document that was presented at the meeting. The group believes that the items listed are what they are losing or have lost. She expressed that it was a lot of information to receive; it was very heavy and very hard. She shared that the following day, Monday, December 7, was especially hard for her.

She asked the members of the Vestry to look at the documents when they get home; to sit with it, read it and **pray** with it. She explained that we will talk about it at the next Vestry meeting in January. We will look at what we want to work on and what is a priority. We, as a Vestry, need to know how to respond. Many items on the document are adaptive, not surface. This is a multi-year process. Some of the items were not new; except the personal items. She asked that the Vestry hold the document in a sacred way and be sensitive with it as it must remain confidential.

Rector's Warden Artie Phills stated that the Vestry needs to take accountability. Vestry member John Ager said that he was there. He said the group was broad and had diversity of opinion; they were not unified. There were some dissenting opinions within the group. He said some people had broad motives and a number of people expressed a desire for healing and moving forward. He explained that they have goal agreement, but not agreement for method. Some people's goal was for the greater good of the church.

Rev'd Hollis said that there are pastoral issues that she needs to deal with. We, as a Vestry, are also called. She asked that we write down our questions for the next Vestry meeting. It will not be an Executive Session as she wants to keep things open. She asked that we prayerfully consider what's on the document.

The meeting adjourned on consent with Compline at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra P. Lowe
Clerk of the Vestry