

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
VESTRY MEETING MINUTES  
December 17, 2020 – Via Zoom

**Present:** Senior Warden-Murry Edwards, Junior Warden-Paul Westrom, Treasurer-Chris Bartlett, Clerk-Mattie Gustafson, David Brierley, Marlo Pratt, Julie Zecher, David Spengler, Matt Spohn, Peter Collins, George LeBlanc, Dave Ferkinhoff, and the Rector- the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick.

Absent: Chris Winslow

Jennifer began the meeting at 6:03 p.m. by reading a poem by G. K. Chesterton, *A Child of the Snows*. St. Mary's mission was reviewed.

**Reconnecting with each other, in the presence of God.**

Jennifer asked the Vestry to think about two questions

1. What have we learned this past year?
2. What should we carry into 2021?

- "All things are possible!"
- Adaptability and flexibility and the ability to accept what is beyond our control may be hard to do, but is crucial.
- Throw out rigidity with the garbage, and learn to accept change more readily.
- Don't be afraid to reach out for help or to rely on friends.
- Our church is far more adaptable than one might have thought.
- Coming together as a community is not always going to be perfect, but it is always important.
- "Don't sweat the small stuff."
- We have learned, often on the fly, how to use technology effectively. We need to keep our online presence, as it seems to be an important evangelism tool. Through it we are able to reach out to so many more.
- We are always stronger than we think we are, and being strong ourselves helps people around us to be strong.
- We've created a faithful energy in our community.
- The generosity of the people of St. Mary's has been amazing – and not just speaking of money, but with gifts, and their presence, hard work and commitment. "It feels really holy when we're all out there doing our crazy lawn thing."
- Important to have an open mind and to not be afraid to share your vision – sometimes some of the silliest things can turn out to be something fabulous.
- St. Mary's has become an accepting family, and we are doing a good job of caring and praying for each other.

### **Moving Forward Taskforce – Jennifer Pedrick**

The MFT met this afternoon and made several decisions;

1. Due to the snow and ice, the upcoming Sunday morning service will be online only. Drive-through communion will be offered after the service from 11:45 – 12:15. This may become a winter pattern for us, during the coldest and snowiest times.
2. The Task Force will make a decision on Tuesday with regard to the Christmas Eve service. The decision will be based on the state of the grounds on Tuesday and the weather forecast.
3. Lessons and Carols are scheduled for Sunday, December 27. The venue is TBD

The Office will be closed from December 28<sup>th</sup> through January 4<sup>th</sup>. For that Sunday in between these dates, January 3, we will make available a choice of online services members may tune in to. There will be no service at St. Mary's. (Our incredible team needs a rest!)

Decisions and procedures for January and February (Lent begins on February 17) are being formulated.

### **Historic Church – Paul Westrom**

The wallpaper in the church has been removed. Paul needs to have several discussions with the architect, etc. before a decision about the walls can be made.

The thank-you letter written by Hugh Hall to all parishioners who made contributions to the historic church is ready to go out. Paul, Jennifer and Murry need to talk about procedures for signing and mailing.

### **Stewardship Report – David Brierley**

The total for pledges thus far is just shy of \$250,000. There are still a number of pledge units still out, and if most of these donate simply what they did last year, we should reach \$265,000.

### **Treasurer's Report – 2021 Budget– Chris B.**

Chris B. passed out the proposed Budget for 2021, and discussion and questions followed. George L. asked where did the goal of a 5.5% endowment draw come from? Jennifer responded that this was generally what church leaders consider prudent.

Paul mentioned that this has been a goal of St. Mary's for a long time – because at one point our annual draw on the endowment had been higher than 10%. Chris B. wanted the Vestry to be aware that this 5.5% is an artificial construct and the reality of the situation is that we cannot always adhere to it. The endowment is there to help us take care of the property – and it is the responsibility of the Vestry to take of the property.

Chris B. made a motion to accept the budget as presented. Dave B. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer thanked Chris for his excellent stewardship and skill with St. Mary's budget and finances.

**Annual Housing Allowance motion**

Mattie made the following motion –

"Whereas, Internal Revenue Code Section 107, as well as the associated Regulation and Revenue Rulings, provide that the portion of a minister's remuneration, designated as a rental/housing allowance by the employing church or other qualifying organization, is excludable from the minister's gross income under Section 107 of the Code;

and Whereas, St. Mary's Episcopal Church of Portsmouth is a qualifying organization,

Now, Therefore, be it Resolved that a portion of the compensation paid the Reverend Jennifer Pedrick during 2021 is designated as a rental/housing allowance in accordance with the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code as follows:

Fair Rental Value of Church provided parsonage	\$22,200
Utilities and related costs paid by St. Mary's	<u>\$8,000</u>
Total 2021 Designated Housing Allowance	\$30,200

The motion was seconded by Chris B. The motion passed.

**Consent Agenda**

A motion was made by Paul W., seconded by Marlo P., that we accept the Consent Agenda, consisting of the minutes from the November Vestry meeting. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mattie Gustafson, Clerk