

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING
MINUTES
November 17, 2022

Present: Senior Warden-Marlo Pratt, Junior Warden-George LeBlanc, Treasurer-David Brierley, Clerk-Mattie Gustafson, Lee Ferreira, Rita Verespy, Matt Spohn, Julie Zecher, John Corbishley, and the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick.

Present via Zoom Ann Wood, and Richard Updegrove

Absent: Peter Collins, Ray Edler

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 6:00 with a reading from the Book of Common Prayer.

Reconnecting with Each Other in the Presence of God – Jennifer

Jennifer asked us to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible milestone we had just reached, and to share a memory on what touched you during this journey, and what insights might we bring to our future ministry?

- Cultivate and trust our community
- Prayer works
- Don't worry
- There is a deep commitment here – how can we leverage this commitment to bring folks back in?
- Continue to be welcoming to all – especially newcomers.
- How do we continue to make our community important to our members?
- How do we continue to develop leaders who have a similar, deep commitment?

Jennifer reminded us that the healthiest communities have the generations working together.

These next few months are very important. God did not give us all this so we could sit back and say, "Didn't we do good!" We need to pivot and look forward. We have "completed" the work of this generation – what will be our work going forward?

Priorities for 2023 - Jennifer

Jennifer made a motion that the Vestry adopt the following. Dave B. seconded the motion.

The Vestry of St. Mary's is establishing four priorities for the upcoming year, 2023.

1. A focus on deepening spiritual growth for all ages. (Rector and Asst Priest)
2. An intentional emphasis on service and support for children and families (IWC)
3. Continuing attention to stability and support for our mission, i.e., worship, well-being and service. (Vestry)

4. Development of an organizational, staffing and volunteer plan that will serve as an important foundation for these priorities. (Vestry and Rector)

Accountability for all these priorities rests with the Vestry, but the person or group named in the parenthesis after each priority is taking leadership in that area.

Goals, objectives and a timeline will be developed based on these priorities.

Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report – The Budget for 2023 – David Brierley

David B. passed out the proposed budget for 2023 and discussion followed. Comments included

- This budget is created without calculating in the effect of hiring an Assistant Priest. This priest, if hired, would only begin work in October – so the effect on the 2023 budget is only for 3 months, and is roughly calculated to be \$25,000.
- The Sea Rose lease will continue until mid-June. We need to figure out what the rent for Sea Rose will be after June, and determine if they are planning to continue to operate.
- We are anticipating a 5.7% draw on the endowment – which is one of the lowest we have had in recent years.
- David will look more closely what is being labelled as “miscellaneous income.”

Stewardship Report – Rita V.

To date, we have received pledges for \$212,813.00. There are 39 folks who have not yet pledged, who pledged last year. Rita and her team will call these folks to ask them to please get their pledges in.

Invite, Welcome, Connect – Lee F.

Lee F. presented the IWC report. This committee met in November and had an in-depth discussion on how we could make St. Mary's more welcoming to families. Based on this discussion we are proposing ten action steps – some to be implemented now – some in 2023 and some, which have major budgetary implications, in the future.

IWC is setting up an after-the-service meeting on St. Nicholas Sunday, in the hopes that many parents will stick around and let us know how we can best support them.

Invite, Welcome, Connect has decided to put our energy for 2023 into welcoming and supporting children and families. We are hoping the clergy, staff, vestry and the rest of the church community will also support this effort – It takes a village! – and that, working together, all our labors will show fruit.

[The IWC report and its ten recommendations are at the end of these minutes.]

Property – Junior Warden Report – George L.

Lightning Rod Saga continues!

A generous parishioner has offered the funds to pay for replacing the lightning rods on the historic church. The consensus of the Vestry was to have the Property Committee proceed with this replacement. Jennifer reminded everyone that in general, this is not how we want to proceed with receiving funds from parishioners for specific projects.

Beech Trees

The Property Committee is also going to deal with the various beech trees we have on the property. They have become susceptible to a disease, and Bartlett Tree has developed a spray that will act, both as a treatment and a prophylaxis. The plan is to treat these trees in 2023.

Insurance Review – David B.

David asked our insurance company about the adequacy of our coverage, given the restoration work just completed, and the small number of archival quality objects we own. The insurance company said – “You’re good.”

Consent Agenda

David B. made a motion, seconded by John C., that we pass the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Vestry Minutes and Treasurer’s Report for October. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. with all reciting The Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Mattie Gustafson

Invite, Welcome, Connect

Action Recommendations to the Vestry
November 7, 2022

To be implemented as soon as possible -

1. Designate 2 parking spaces in both the upper and lower parking lots, for parents with babies and toddlers.
2. Greeters should receive training in welcoming and looking out for families –
 - Offer warm greetings to families, giving particular recognition to children
 - Notice if anything can be done to assist a family entering the church, assisting with bundles, holding doors, etc.
 - Anticipate possible needs new families might have, i.e., coat racks, activity bags, bathrooms, etc.

3. Create Activity Bags and Children's Bulletins.

- Bags will be available at the welcome table for use while in church.
- Created for various age groups
 - None for babies to 2, since parents seem to bring these toys on their own.
 - 3 – 5 year-olds - early childhood
 - 1st and 2nd grades – age appropriate children's bulletin
 - Grades 3+ -- age appropriate children's bulletin

4. Add a page to the website – Children at Church – which will detail what steps we have taken to make families feel more welcome at St. Mary's.

To be implemented in 2023

5. Hold intentional focus group(s) on Zoom in an effort to talk directly to parents and see what they say they need – what they think would make it easier and more welcoming for them at St. Mary's.

6. Create a designated area in the historic church – most appropriately near and around the Baptismal Font – with child-size tables and chairs. This area would be called a Prayer Ground, and would be a place where young children could quietly work on the contents of the Activity Bags.

7. Invite families and children to gather at the altar for Eucharist. (There is enough room now, that they could be on one of the lower levels, within the altar rail.)

Long range plans that have major budgetary implications -

8. Have nursery service available every Sunday, with a hired staff. (The need for establishing a nursery would come out of our Focus Group discussions. It might be that parents say they would not use a Nursery.)

9. Additional worship services

- Saturday evening service
- Wednesday evening or Sunday afternoon Family Service -once a month

10. Arrange TV's in northside classroom in parish house lower level to be on and broadcasting the service, for those who need to leave but still want to see what's going on.