

St. Anne's Parish
Vestry Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 14, 2017

Clergy and Vestry Members Present

Rev. Amy Richter
Rev. Joe Pagano
Linda Adamson
Patrick Carlson
Carrie Dana-Evans
Ginger DeLuca
Katherine Hilton
Cary Lukens
Bill Malicki
Doug McNitt
Pat Poffel
Cardie Templeton
Tripp Trippitelli
Josiah Dykstra
Mark Grimes
Monica Barry
Mickey Thaxton

Vestry and Executive Officers Not Present

None

Non-Vestry and Others Present

Thea Chimento, Clerk
Steve Fisher, Treasurer
Betty Creighton, Refugee Committee
Bill Silva, Refugee Committee
Eleanor Huggins, Refugee Committee
Jeanne Malicki, Refugee Committee
Dave Huggins, Stewardship Committee
Amy Hoffman, PASA

- *Opening/ Welcoming of Guests*

Amy opened the meeting at 1900 with a prayer and introduced Betty Creighton, Bill Silva, Eleanor Huggins, Jeanne Malicki, Dave Huggins, and Amy Hoffman.

A form to approve Paula for candidacy for the diaconate was sent around for Vestry members' signatures. A card for Vestry of St. Phillip's Church to thank them for joining us was also sent around.

- *PASA Proposals*

Amy Hoffman brought a request to fund a curriculum planning team for PASA for the 2017-18 year. The proposal passed.

Snack policy change – In the past, parents provided snacks for the children. Parents now prefer that PASA provide the snacks, but parents will pay for them. The proposal passed.

PASA has openings in the 3's program, which means a shortfall in tuition revenue. Amy anticipates this shortfall will be offset through aftercare revenue and summer camps. PASA is also starting to do more marketing via social media, e-blasts, and mailings to targeted parents.

➤ *Refugee Committee Update*

Jeanne Malicki and Eleanor Huggins provided an update on Refugee committee activities. The Refugee committee started in 2016; the church invited speakers from First Presbyterian to give a presentation on their refugee program and did a follow-up survey to see if there was interest. 28 people expressed interest in helping; Vestry gave initial support for research and exploration; and the committee is now returning with a proposal as follows:

St. Anne's would join with Lutheran Social Services to provide assistance through their Good Neighbor Program, which partners with groups in the community to assist refugee families. St. Anne's would assist 9-12 months with rent (full rent for 3 months, partial rent for next 6 months); finding housing and furnishings (similar to work done by the Homeless Advocacy Team); and would have a general responsibility to welcome the family and acclimate them to living in the US. LSS provides volunteer training, medical care, jobs training, community support to refugees in the US.

The Refugee Committee is very excited about this mission; we want to share God's love with people who have suffered so much.

Questions included:

*How would refugees be selected? LSS will provide the church with background on several families, and we would pick who we would support. (Note: refugees are vetted by State Department prior to arriving in the US). We can request a particular family size, country of origin, etc.

*Is LSS charging anything for assistance? No. All monies are filtered through LSS to pay on the family's behalf, but LSS does not charge a fee. The church will also need to provide services: transportation, education, employment assistance, etc. We have been thoroughly briefed by First Presbyterian and we have preliminary volunteers.

*How will language skills be dealt with? Many families from Afghanistan-Iraq area already have English skills from working with US troops. Many other families would need assistance; LSS provides the training.

*Have we spoken with anyone who worked with LSS to see what their experience was like? Yes, there is an Episcopal Church in Towson who has started work with them. Experience has been positive so far.

*What is the long term commitment? Our commitment is for 9-12 months, to help a family get resettled and familiarize them with living in the US. LSS' goal is self-sufficiency within 9 months.

Linda moved that the Vestry approve the work of the Refugee Committee; Bill Malicki seconded, and the motion carried by voice.

Thanks to the Refugee Committee for their hard work and careful listening over a long period of time. Amy noted that there are two funds to be used at the discretion of the clergy of the church for the poor and needy. One of these, the Good Samaritan fund, has enough funds to cover the \$15,000 (upper end of costs to support the family). This seems to Joe and Amy to be an appropriate use of the Good Samaritan Fund, since it has the potential to help support a family and knit them into the community. Normally how funds are used is not announced to protect privacy; since we don't know who the family is, we are not concerned about anonymity. This would also be the largest disbursement, Amy has made, from the Good Samaritan Fund since she has been here and since Amy and Joe are leaving, they want to insure transparency by announcing this decision to the vestry and also asking for vestry endorsement of this use of the funds.

Amy also noted that if anyone else would like to contribute to help the refugee committee's work, they should first make a pledge, and then feel free to contribute to the Good Samaritan Fund. Note also that the second fund is the Rector's Discretionary fund, which has a healthy balance, so the new rector will be able to continue to

assist people in need. Although funds to LSS are paid as needed, we will need to make a large disbursement now to ensure that future clergy are not bound if they would prefer not to be.

*Do Amy and Joe have any affiliation with LSS? No.

Linda moved that the Vestry approve the decision to support the refugee family from the discretionary fund; Monica Barry seconded, and the motion carried by voice.

➤ *Rector's Report*

Amy distributed her report prior to the meeting. She noted that there is a change in office hours; the office will not be open for drop-in visits on Fridays (but will continue to be open for appointments). Also, since Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year, we will be dealing with 4 Advent and Christmas Eve services differently. Please see the special calendar that is being given out to the parish with all our Advent and Christmas activities.

➤ *Vestry Approval for the Candidacy of Paula Waite*

The latest news from Paula and Bishop Chilton is that she could be ordained in June 2018. As noted above, the Vestry approval for her candidacy was distributed.

➤ *Financial Stewardship Update*

Dave noted that the first two weeks of the campaign went well; however, since Amy and Joe's resignation announcement, there have been very few pledges (9 per week). On a YTD basis, we're in good shape. We received 37 total over the last four weeks, where we normally receive 100 pledges—about \$210,000 discrepancy. There are about 100 families who normally would have pledged but have not yet.

Josiah is sending out a letter this week. We are also looking for volunteers to present the message.

Amy asked that the families be contacted directly prior to adding more announcements, in order to target more specifically. We don't want to turn off people without actually reaching the people who need to pledge.

Discussion centered around the following points:

Effective reminders: the consensus was to consider sending out additional reminders to those pledging by email, and to put different pledge cards in the pews.

Effective outreach: the consensus was for the Vestry to call individual members who have not yet pledged, as well as draft a letter to the group. Speakers at services should acknowledge the resignation and how it might change things and encourage people to pledge for the health of the church. We should also consider reaching out to those who have pledged to see if they are able to add to their pledge for the year.

➤ *Rector Transition and Interim Search Committee*

Josiah distributed a report prior to the meeting. Thanks to members of the Executive Committee for their work on the transition and performing the groundwork of the process. Note: it is the Vestry's responsibility to hire an interim; we can do a parish profile later.

Josiah suggested that a smaller transition committee take over the process, namely the 4 non-clergy members of the Executive Committee, plus Pat Poffel and Linda Adamson. Recommend Vestry give committee permission to follow the process and present candidates for choice of interim.

The Vestry expressed thanks to all who are volunteering for the committee and reinforced the importance of transparency. Josiah noted that he would be at all five services to provide an update on the transition process and answer questions.

Josiah moved that the Vestry approve the creation of interim search committee as previously named. Mark

seconded, and the motion carried by voice.

Please let Josiah know which services you will be attending so that you can answer questions.

Pat Poffel noted that we will have celebration for Amy and Joe on the 21st of January—there will be a potluck after the 9:30 service.

➤ *Junior Warden's Report*

Cardie distributed her report prior to the meeting. There were no questions.

Cardie requested that the Vestry approve funds for painting windows in PASA. The Facilities Committee received 3 bids. The least expensive is a company known to us. They offered \$2,350 for the job. Job will be performed in the next three weeks.

We have given Covered Bridge, the chosen contractor, the asbestos management plan, which they will follow.

Linda moved that the Vestry approve \$2,350 from the Facilities Committee budget to paint the PASA windows, Cardie seconded, the motion carried by voice.

➤ *Treasurer's Report*

Steve distributed the Treasurer's report prior to the meeting.

Church

- October was a strong month for giving with Pledge donations at \$12,713 favorable to budget. Pledge giving is now \$(17,500) unfavorable to budget through 10 months. Offsetting that are Non-Pledge which is favorable \$20,000 and plate which is favorable \$2,438.
- All revenue categories are favorable to budget through 10 months for a total favorability of \$14,393 partially offset by Cost of Sales related to the Anniversary books.
- Most expense categories are also favorable and total expenses are favorable \$43,665 through 10 months.
- Net income is favorable \$53,962 through 10 months.
- December is typically the largest month of the year for Giving with totals in the range of \$120,000 which is our budget for that month.

Cemetery

- Lot sales were strong in the month with 2 sales totaling 8000 and burial fees of \$4,600
- After 10 months, Cemetery Net Income is \$14,325 favorable to budget.

PASA

- PASA is \$2,446 favorable after three months of the 2017-8 Fiscal Year as favorable expenses have offset tuition shortfalls.
- A new 4-year old student has joined the school mid-term which has helped offset some of the 3-year old tuition shortfalls.

Endowment

- The Endowment had an outstanding month in October with Investment income of \$71,710, the second best month of the year. Only February was higher at \$101,565. The YTD investment income is \$564,426. Our quarterly management fee was posted in October (\$3,965).
- The 10/31 Endowment balance was \$4,750,152.

Other

- The Treasurer is working on various budget scenarios for 2018 considering the Interim situation.

Steve presented restricted funds for review.

Tripp Trippitelli asked about net percentage gain of endowment, which was 9.27% at a 65-35% split, net distributions and fees. 9.9% exclusive of those.

Mark Grimes noted that there are a lot of under budget expense accounts, do we expect that to continue? Yes,

there may be some additional spending but not that much. Expenses tend to remain favorable.

➤ *Audit Committee*

The Audit Committee met with the current auditors in October to discuss the 2016 audit and to explore rotating the audit firm. The 2016 audit went well; there was nothing that rose to a material threshold. Nothing significant that we need to be concerned about. Current cash controls are adequate. The auditor's biggest concern is providing backup for Steve. The audit also noted the number of restricted funds; if we can combine or reduce them, that would be better.

The audit committee also discussed rotating the audit firm. We have worked with this group for 5 years; while private companies do not have to rotate firms, best practices suggest changing the firm periodically at the Vestry's discretion. The committee asked if we could change partners—they met with Amanda Ragula, the other audit partner, and are pleased with her work. The committee believes that adding a new firm would add rather than remove risk with the other transitions going on, so the Committee recommendation is to keep firm but switch partners. Since the cost is fairly reasonable, we also recommend using the firm to do extra work on reviewing cash controls, etc, so that we know things are shipshape for the new person.

Mark moved that the Vestry approve the engagement of Alta CPA LLC as the auditor for 2017 at \$7500 with Amanda Ragula as the audit partner. Cardie seconded, and the motion carried by voice.

➤ *Executive Session*

The vestry went into executive session from 2104 - 2109

➤ *Announcements/Approval of Minutes/Open Floor/Closing*

Cardie moved to waive the reading of the October minutes and approve them as submitted; Carrie Dana-Evans seconded, and the motion carried by voice.

Monica Barry led all present in a litany of Thanksgiving, and the meeting adjourned at 2111.

Respectfully submitted,
Thea Chimento