

Christ Church, Dearborn
VESTRY MEETING MINUTES
Sunday, September 29, 2019

Attendance: Jean Angel, Lynn Becker, Nick Bell, Barbara Hall, Michael Mroczyk, Stephanie Mulkern, Holly Schanz, James Thornton

Absent: Chris Ventura, Rev. Halim Shukair

Presiding: Rev. Terri Pilarski

Treasurer: Kevin Green

Guest: Diana Brehob

Terri called the meeting to order at 12:20PM, ten minutes early because all expected attendees were present. Nick add one additional item to the agenda, a conversation about the Vestry nominating committee and the search for 2020 Vestry members.

Terri led the Vestry in a brief prayer for Season of Creation and invited discussion on what Vestry members were feeling called to do in response to various concerns about being good stewards of creation.

Following the opening prayer and meditation Nick made a motion to accept the minutes from the August 18th meeting, subject to changing the heading to read “Minutes” (and not “Agenda”). Lynn seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mission discussion

Terri reminded the Vestry that they have provided two vestry meetings worth of thought and insight on our pending Partnership in Faith with Mother of the Savior. From the Vestry insight Terri will draft a vision for the vestry to consider. This vision will be a working concept for the Vestry as we prepare for and enter into the early stages of the partnership. The partnership is on hold, pending Halim’s return from Lebanon, once the US Embassy has approved his ‘R’ (Religious Worker) visa.

In the meantime, while waiting for Halim to return, Mother of the Savior will continue to worship at Christus Victor. However they plan to move their belongings to Christ Church in early October. Certain worship items will be stored in the balcony and the church sacristy. Other items, primarily books, will be stored in Halim’s office. A file cabinet will be used in the church office. Any remaining items, if any, could be stored in a small closet outside room 213. Two items they use in worship will invite conversation between Christ Church and Mother of the Savior as we learn about the different ways we worship. These include a white cart, the top of which is filled with sand and holds small candles and icons which parishioners at MotS use for special prayer concerns. The second item is a brass tabernacle that holds reserved sacrament. We use an ambry in the chapel for our reserved sacrament, they may want to use the tabernacle in the main church. We can have a conversation about the use of tabernacles and where it might best be placed.

The Baptized for Life grant proposal is due to our mentor by the end of the first week in October, and then to VTS by October 18. The BfL team is working on the grant submission.

Terri raised the question with the Vestry regarding their roles and responsibilities. Following a thoughtful discussion we determined that Vestry members will:

- Attend 8am worship, when possible given other personal/family commitments, if scheduled to be VPOD

- Vestry members will continue to serve as counters of the collection for 10am service only as scheduled on the Sunday BEFORE they serve as VPOD. Holly, Terri and/or others will ensure two people perform counting duties at the 8am service.
- Having a counter is intended to allow the VPOD to attend coffee hour and serve as the hospitality person following the 10am service on Sunday morning.
- The Vestry person who is the counter will get a second person to assist with the count and make sure it is locked in the safe. Terri will resend the February email to remind the Vestry of these duties.

Nick led Vestry members through a discussion of the upcoming VPOD schedule and made the following changes based on individuals travel commitments:

- October 6 - Michael
- October 13 - Lynn
- October 20 - Stephanie
- October 27 - Barbara (no change!)
- November 3 - James (no change!)
- November 10 - Nick
- November 17 - Jean
- November 24 - Stephanie (no change!)

Diana Brehob came on behalf of the Social Justice Renaissance Implementation Team (RIT) with a proposal to access RIT funds (Greenwood Bequest) for a nine session training program called, “Intentional About Money™” (IAM). If approved, the program will run on alternate Wednesday evenings over 18 weeks starting in January 2020. IAM is a proven program that helps individuals and couples become active in managing their money. Attendees develop a budget in line with their values, determine where their money is going, and assess how their spending aligns with their budget.

Part of the mission statement from the Social Justice team: “find among us and our community populations disadvantaged by disparate treatment and then use the resources and talents of our parish and community to mitigate the effects of that disparate treatment.” Financially-challenged people engage in risky financial behaviors such as taking out payday loans or other loans, paying bills late, incurring late fees, and racking up bank charges. They are subject to higher interest rates and pay more to service debt. They are locked out of buying a house or starting a business. IAM provides tools to become financially healthy to break the cycle of financial insecurity. This program has the potential to feed people in mind (stress reduction), body (meals), and spirit (increased hope over future prospects and improved self-esteem).

The Vestry received a draft of the proposal to begin their consideration of this request. Additional information will sent as soon as it is complete. The Vestry plan to entertain a motion on this proposal at its October meeting.

The Vestry took a break from 1:45-1:55.

Kevin Green presented the Treasurer’s report for August:

- Expenses overall are below what was expected, however that will change as Stewardship uses its funds, we have now hired a Music Director and those funds will be used, Fall contracts for items like

snow removal are being implemented, and Fall utility costs are generally higher than the summer season

- Pledge income for the month is down ~\$6,000 versus budget.
- Offering plate income for September is ~\$7,000 down for the month
- YTD income is behind by ~\$14,000.

The hope is that finances recover between September and December, as members catch up with their pledges.

Michael reported that Property is preparing for some upcoming expenses: elevator, gutters, contracts. John Jones (sexton) is soliciting help to do some exterior and interior painting.

Lynn offered an update on Stewardship 365 and its philosophy and approach engaging in the concept of Holy Currencies. Stewardship kicks off this week with articles in the October newsletter/

Nick made a motion that the Vestry adopt the Diocesan policy called “Safe Church: Creating a Healthy Environment for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults” and take steps to implement the obligations included in that Policy. Jean seconded the motion. In the discussion it was agreed that Vestry would table the motion for this meeting, insure that everyone read the policy before the October 20th meeting, sign up for the Track 2 training and understand what is expected of us to implement the Policy. The Vestry will consider a new motion in October. Nick will re-send a copy of the full Policy document to Vestry members and Terri will re-send the information about how to sign up for the Track 2 training

The Vestry nominating committee for this year is Nick, Holly, and Michael – outgoing Vestry members. They will begin to discern members, check in with Terri to insure no pastoral concerns with suggested members, and then work to have a slate together by end of December, if possible.

In reflecting on how the meeting went, Nick said he observed that the meeting ran 2.5 hours, even though we did not have a long discussion on Partnership in Faith. Previously the Vestry agreed to increase the meeting time by 30 minutes to allow for more discussion and visioning. It was noticed that we used all the time, even though we did not engage in a visioning conversation. Michael felt that we should have had more of a discussion on the Partnership in Faith. Terri wondered what we would discussed since the Partnership in Faith is temporarily on hold as we wait for Halim to return. Holly stated that the meeting went well, a lot was discussed and good decisions were made.

The Vestry prayed a closing prayer together.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05pm.

NEXT VESTRY MEETING: October 20, 2019, gather at 12.15am to start promptly at 12.30pm

Courier (Vestry) article: Lynn due Sept. 20 for the October newsletter