

Vestry Minutes—Church of Our Redeemer

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 – 7:30 pm

Handley Library, Church of Our Redeemer

Attendance: The Rev. Kate Ekrem (Priest-in-Charge), Connie Parrish (Sr. Warden), George Murnaghan (Jr. Warden), Dinesh Dulipsingh (Treasurer), Janet Kern (Clerk), Erica Brotschi, Jed Geyerhahn, Sandra Keshishian, Peter Lund, Jack Manes, The Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons.

Absent: Randy Bowlby, Lindsay Koso, Katherine Mirani.

Opening: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Kate Ekrem; We began with prayer using stones placed on our small finger labyrinth.

Approval of Minutes:

A MOTION was made and seconded to approve the minutes previously distributed for review over email from the Vestry meeting of December 2, 2009. The motion was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report (Dinesh)

Income perspective – revenue on track – Pledges, Rental: a little ahead of YTD budget, in large part because of 13th month contributions. On the Expense side: personnel expenses are on track; check cut in amount of \$8K for Diocesan assessment through October; Office and Communications: a few items have exceeded, but generally on track; Property at 101% due to overpayment of snowplowing, so it is showing up as pre-payment of expenses. Fire alarm expense moved to capital expense; Utilities on track at 67% (low compared to previous years) Programs have exceeded expenses at 111%; mostly due to travel expenses which have been a catch-all for various things such as cell phone expenses for clergy. Transition related expenses exceeded; this was already known and approved by vestry. Retreat came in under budget, so we didn't have to tap other accounts. Generally accounts are fairly clean.

A MOTION was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was approved unanimously.

Investment Funds review: Dinesh explained the mapping of the Diocesan Investment Trust Funds and the Fidelity Account funds; our Diocesan Investment Funds have yielded a 19% increase.

Dinesh believes that there needs to be some oversight and some investment policy to take advantage of possible returns on some of our long term investments. Need a committee of people to look at the policy. Suggests that after Annual Meeting, the next vestry establish and populate an investment committee.

Vestry was asked to consider this and think about people who might be willing and able to serve.

Vestry Liaison Reports:

Stewardship: (Connie and Jed)

Almost 20 pledges before ingathering, 40 pledges on ingathering, about 74 pledges to date; 6 new pledges, 4 from new parishioners – more increases than decreases. Finance is cautiously considering that there might be a 5% increase overall; note cards are going out soon to thank those who have pledged so far.

Committee will meet on Jan 17 and talk about year-round stewardship.

Communications: (Janet)

The church calendar, available online, is undergoing a change that will make it more useful to all those wishing to church-sponsored events only and not all activities taking place at the church.

The committee recently discussed what type of regular communications might be possible for shut-ins.

Also, the current process for producing *Redeeming Features* is under review; The committee is trying to balance appropriate use of limited resources vs. who we are serving with a bi-monthly newsletter. Part of the process might be helped with a volunteer Editor-in-Chief. We confirmed that our website should not list names/phone numbers or email addresses of parishioners on non-password protected pages.

Assistant Priest's Report (Sabeth)

Nursery is doing well – Laura is on-board and seems to be very popular; she arrives on time, often early!
Atrium – continues to need help on Sundays from people that are interested.
4th and 5th grade in capable hands of Peter Koso and Kathleen Mirani.
Rite-13 needs another adult - another consistent leader to work with Sam Stevens.
J2A is visible already with their pilgrimage fundraising and has a good leadership team of Steve Burns, Ashley Rooney, and Judy Downes.
YAC is going to Advent Conspiracy and having their own discussion after church.
Youth Group going well on Sunday evenings.
Adult Ed: January hopefully follow-up on sustainability from the parish retreat.
Mary Ann Burnside will be leading a Sat. 27th of Feb. “Quiet” retreat day.
Welcome team just had great event: cookies and caroling on Sunday, Dec. 13th
“Blue Christmas” – special service planned.
Crèche Service leadership was late getting formed, but it seems to be working out.

Sabeth trying to keep her hours at the half-time level and so is changing her email to help people know that her office hours are Monday and Tuesday and she might not answer email until then.

Ad Hoc Classroom Space Committee Report (Sabeth)

In response to need for more classroom space, an ad hoc committee was formed that included:
Randy Bowlby, Murray Daniels, Evelyn Hausslein, Peter Koso, Beth Murnaghan
Goal was to look at both short-term and long-term solutions for the need for more classroom space and dedicated nursery space. Summary of report below. Complete report is attached
Described potential solution for classroom shortage: Modify Great Hall: \$30 - \$40K
Potential solution for dedicated nursery space: Proposal to relocate library items and shift nursery into library.
Would require people-effort, but not much actual cost.
Seemed like the right group of people to talk about the topic.
Ongoing evaluation of space – diocese has resources/contractors, etc.

Question about what the next steps are to make things happen.

- Because this would require a capital expense for Property and Great Hall, there needs to be more people included in the conversation, not necessarily the entire parish, however.
- Further conversation and vestry discussion on this topic will occur after 2010 budget discussion

Annual Meeting preparations (Kate)

- The Nominating Committee needs help identifying a clerk candidate.
- Organizing Potluck lunch – Jed will ask Sally Z. about quiches and franks/beans

Vestry Adult Forum Q&A Jan 17th

Sandy, Jack and Connie will answer questions about Vestry

Budget Draft (Dinesh & George)

Dinesh set the context :

1st draft with budget requests unchanged: Revenue: \$462K revenue; Expenses: \$515K = \$53K deficit
reduced to 40K deficit by removing capital projects from the budget, since they are more reasonably funded out of the capital fund.

Stewardship data is good so far: We might be able to reasonably plan for a 4-5% increase in pledged income, reducing the deficit further by \$12 – \$15 K. These two reductions bring the deficit to \$30K.

This is the 4th consecutive year we find ourselves in the same situation with a large deficit.

George followed with “our sense from the Finance Committee is that we’ve been through the exercise of making reasonable cuts, etc., so we’re really at the point where shaving a bit here and cutting a bit there is not going to be enough to make a difference.”

We agreed to work on the difficult conversation of other options for large cuts for the Jan 6th meeting.

VPD Announcement for upcoming weeks:

Acknowledgements:

From Jack:

acknowledge the following folk for their parts in last Sunday evening's intergenerational Advent celebration:

1. Elisabeth and Steve Donahue (and boys) for hosting the cookie decorating event
2. Evelyn and Bob Haussein for hosting the dinner and caroling fest
3. Paula Antonevich, Leader of the Welcome Team, for coordinating both events.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Kern, Clerk