

October 16, 2018 - Christ Church Vestry Meeting

Earle Conference Room, Christ Church Parish House

Vestry Meeting

Attending: Harrison McLeod (Rector), Bern Mebane (Senior Warden), Dena Benedict (Junior Warden), Chris Klasing (Treasurer), Dan Seaman (Assistant Treasurer), Bill Kehl (Chancellor), Anne Arrington, Jim Baumgardner, Lauren Briles, Cotton Clarke, Mac Gentile, George E. McCall, Kevin Mertens, Louise Oxner, Chuck Reichert, Betty Teague, Brent Williams, Helen Wynkoop, Rose Cuddy (recorder).

Absent: None.

Guests: None.

Harrison opened the meeting with prayer at 5:00 PM.

Ministry Area Goal Presentations

None this month as Facilities staff members are transitioning from the Business Office to Parish Life and are updating their goals accordingly. They will be scheduled to present in 2019.

Rector's Report

Harrison commented on the Third Century Commission's work to distill the parish mission and core values. He said that we will take a few minutes at each meeting to help us focus on the mission statement and our values so as to keep ourselves on track. He is doing the same in the Rector's Forum each week – he discusses a word, the theology and the scripture behind it.

Embrace: The first time we encounter this word is in Genesis with the story of Jacob and Esau and their reconciliation. Embrace speaks to the desire to reenter into right relationship, to wrap our arms around someone and restore the family. He related that the New Testament's story of Christ inviting Simon and Peter to enter into ministry, and calls us to recognize what we must do to rally people around the work. The task we have before us can only be done when we join together. Jesus goes on to relate the story of the prodigal son, which revives the motif we've seen in the story of Jacob and Esau. We've seen Christ enact it and talk about it. Matthew 25:35 "But I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

He said that we will be attentive to our values as we move Christ Church forward. He used the example of *Inviting to All* with an incident when we may not have been inviting to a visitor in a wheelchair. We offered her opportunity but may need to take our own opportunity to ask - do we need more wheelchair spots?

Budget: Harrison said that he has challenged the ELT to wrestle with the budget this year – in previous years, they've presented their budgets to the Budget Committee, who is responsible for a balanced budget. This year, he asked the team to try to balance the budget by working with a common budget before it goes to the committee. As of today, we are \$423,000 in the red, so we have a gap to close! It is a real learning opportunity for the group to learn to make peace with the budget. About \$205,000 of this amount is personnel, and \$215,000 for program budgets. Some is not discretionary – such as utility bills. Between now and December, the ELT and the Budget Committee will work to prepare a balanced budget to present to the Vestry at the December 18 meeting. Brent asked if the MVVP have been

included in this process and Harrison responded affirmatively – this helps keep everyone focused on how we accomplish our mission. Lauren reported that the Faith Development team is actively working on prioritizing their budget requests. Cotton asked about the Budget meeting schedule. Dan will send the meeting schedule. Harrison said that all Vestry are invited to all meetings, not just their ministry area's. He said that you will rarely have a better opportunity to see all the things that the church is doing and the passion of the staff. Chris commended Lauren's engagement with her Faith Development team's budget.

Personnel: Harrison said that Vanessa Levin Pompetzki has resigned after three years of work in our Communications department. Harrison said that he and Lauren Sigmon will view what options we might have in restructuring the Communications Department. Leslie Provence, Liturgical Assistant and Bookstore Manager, will be resigning November 18. Especially with the additional open position of Music Administrator, Harrison has challenged Donald to consider how to structure the Worship department.

Annual Giving: Harrison thanked the Vestry for their 100% pledging status and this tangible demonstration of their commitment.

Senior Warden

Bern Mebane commented on the value and content of the monthly Wardens & Treasurers' meeting with Harrison and thanked Chris and Dan for their excellent work. He brought up a couple of examples with the natural gas and water bills that their work uncovered, and he also commended Dena for her assistance in helping us obtain a credit and recoup some expenses. Additional ways to save will be reviewed going forward.

Junior Warden and Third Century

Junior Warden: Dena Benedict said that she held an exit interview with Vanessa Levin-Pompetzki.

Third Century: She reported on the Third Century Subcommittees continuing to work: Communication is Lauren Sigmon and Jack Bacot. Implementation is Donald Duncan and Bryant Nixon.

Ways that Communications is working to increase visibility of our mission and values include posters, Community News, the header of the eblast, letterhead, meeting agenda format with the logo.

Implementation is making progress on their goals, one of which we saw in action tonight as Harrison discussed *Embrace* during the Vestry Meeting and is doing the same in the Rector's Forum. She invited everyone to attend the forum. Ways to help our staff and our parish become more familiar with our mission and values include the candidates for Vestry elections answering questions related to our mission and values; the Budget Committee will consider our mission during their process; our staff will be taught how to include the mission and values in their committees and meetings; clergy-led staff meeting devotions will include one of our values; ministry area report forms will be revamped to include our values.

She thanked the subcommittee members for their hard work on these tasks; those serving on the committee along with Bryant, Donald, Jack and Lauren, are Bern, Harrison, Penn Williams and Rose.

Kevin asked if there had been feedback from staff and membership on the values. Dena said she heard comments on how much they appreciated Harrison's discussion in Rector's Forum, and that the

Women's Ministry Task Force used the Mission and Values in their meeting last night. Anne commented that the Women's Ministry Task Force did purpose statement work within this context last night under Kellie's leadership. Dena said that the Prayers of the People that address our values will be used with staff, some of whom are not members of Christ Church, so everyone is hearing the same thing. Harrison said that his hope is that our mission and values will become pervasive in the life of our church. Harrison responded to Brent's question on staff awareness and interaction of the mission and values.

Treasurer's Report

Chris Klasing drew the Vestry's attention to the emailed report. He said we were behind about \$50,000 on the budget. Monica Eslick found that some donors paid more quickly last year than this, so Chris feels confident that this pledged income is likely to come in. He said that last year we identified areas in which we could do better – one of those is our copier contract. Nelson Arrington and Madison McKissick assisted Suzanne with a review and we are about to execute a contract that should save us about \$8,000. Next item targeted is the telephone contract.

Endowment Items for Vestry

Rannie Townsend Bequest: Rannie bequeathed \$139,000 to Christ Church as a beneficiary of an IRA she held. It was not specified whether for current use or for the Endowment. Our gift acceptance policy only speaks to gifts specifically designated for current use or the Endowment. Thus, it is a Vestry decision where to apply this bequest.

We recommend:

- Adding this bequest to the Endowment.
- Establishing a Rannie Townsend Endowment Fund, designated for general parish use. The gift acceptance policy provides that a gift of over \$50,000 may be used to establish a named fund.

Vestry approval is requested. With Vestry approval, approval of the Endowment board will be solicited at its forthcoming meeting.

Helen Wynkoop so moved, Cotton Clarke seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Kevin Mertens asked if the Endowment will specify the use. These funds would be subject to the 4.5% draw. Anne asked about the named sub-funds within the Endowment. There are more than 40 and some have very specific stipulations, but there is also a perpetual giving fund that is in support of the parish operating budget. Gifts of \$50,000 or more become named funds. If there is no specification, a fund becomes part of the general parish use funds. All members of the Vestry voted to approve, none opposed. The motion passed.

Joe Pearce Fund 2018 Draw: The Joe Pearce fund specifies that it may be used to fund "Greenville County outreach, Christ Church music programs, or buildings and grounds of Christ Church parish" beyond the annual budget. The past few years, it has been used to fund music programs that were not budgeted. However, given our current deficit situation, it is recommended that this year we use it to offset an unbudgeted expenditure for natural gas for the church. The new HVAC system requires that the boiler be used to maintain humidity in the church during the warm months to protect the organ; this

was not anticipated when the budget was drawn up, and as a result the gas bill for the church building is expected to finish the year about \$10K over budget. The available draw of 4.5% from the Joe Pearce fund is \$5,755 which would offset part of this expense.

Donald Duncan has agreed that this is an appropriate use of the draw.

Vestry approval is requested. With Vestry approval, the draw will be requested from the Endowment board at its forthcoming meeting.

Brent Williams made a motion, Cotton Clarke seconded. Discussion followed. Lauren asked if we've just found this out and need more money. Chris said that they had been reviewing items that needed to be addressed to balance the budget. Lauren asked if this would reduce the amount discussed for draws from reserves at last month's Vestry's meeting. The answer was yes. Dena asked more about the details of running dual systems. Chris said he would like to know more, too. Harrison said that the natural elements of the organ expand and retract dependent on temperature and humidity and will become out of tune if not kept in balance. Brent asked if this was an issue prior to the restoration. Chuck said that Jim Cothran has met with the gas company, Johnson Controls and learned more about how to manage the systems to minimize expenses. Jim said that we need to think bigger picture issues rather than continually find ways to bail out the budget every year with the Endowment. Bern said the idea of considering the Endowment funds and the budget overall according to our mission and values is what we want to work toward. Jim said he would like to hear the Endowment's position on this. Harrison said that we adopted a balanced budget at the beginning of the year, but a budget is a forecast and there will always be changes throughout the year, whether surplus or deficits. He said that, ideally, we would not look to the Endowment to fund any parish budget expenses. Anne asked if the Endowment has a statement about use of funds. Harrison said they do not have a statement that the Endowment is not to be used to assist the budget. Louise said she thought it would be interesting for the Vestry to see the Endowment Funds and the purposes for which they are designated. Harrison suggested it would be a good idea for the Vestry to look at the Endowment funds at the January Vestry Retreat.

All members of the Vestry voted to approve, none opposed. The motion passed.

Further discussion: Lauren asked if one person pays the bills and notices changes on the utility bills. Chris said that Monica Eslick does and that she, Suzanne, Chris and Dan meet every month to review the accounts. This is how they found the unusual change to the natural gas and water bill.

Prior Meeting Minutes

The September 18, 2018, regular Vestry Meeting minutes were distributed prior to the meeting by email. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Anne Arrington and seconded by Cotton Clarke. All Vestry members voted in favor of accepting the minutes. The motion carried.

The October 1-2 Email Vote minutes to approve the Slate of Nominees for 2018 Vestry Elections were distributed prior to the meeting by email. A motion to accept the minutes was made by George E. McCall and seconded by Betty Teague. All Vestry members voted in favor of accepting the minutes. The motion carried.

New Business

None.

Committee/Team Reports

Ministry Area Reports from department heads were distributed prior to the meeting via email. Updates and additional reports from Vestry liaisons may be found below.

Annual Giving: Cotton thanked everyone who pledged and increased. As of today, we've received 359 pledges (44%), \$1,381,370 (51%), 211 increased pledges (51%), 26 new pledges (26%), with the average gift at \$3,847. The phone-a-thon is Thursday, November 8, from 4:00 to 5:30 PM at the church and all Vestry members are asked to take part. He urged the Vestry to encourage others to pledge in their interactions with parishioners. Lauren can provide training. He distributed packets for Vestry to write thank you notes to donors.

Building & Grounds: Chuck said that the bank lease has been signed and we will be installing new lighting in the bank. He thanked Gunn Murphy for providing the lights at cost. We will reuse some of the lights in the Parish House fixtures. He thanked Parish Administrator Suzanne Mize for her work on this and other projects.

Harrison closed the meeting in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Rose Cuddy