

Vestry Meeting – September 19, 2017

The meeting was convened at 5:00 PM in Earle Conference Room.

Attending: Harrison McLeod (Rector), Bern Mebane (Senior Warden), Dena Benedict (Junior Warden), Jim Baumgardner, Lauren Briles, Cotton Clarke, Rose Cuddy (Recorder), McNeil Epps, Bill Kehl (Chancellor), Chris Klasing (Asst. Treasurer) Kevin Mertens, Bryant Nixon, Ben Norwood, Louise Oxner, Chuck Reichert, Dan Seaman (Treasurer), Lizzy Sterling, Betty Teague, Brent Williams.

Guests: Christine Skelton (CCEP), Leonard Kupersmith and Valerie Riddle (Christ Church Episcopal School), Bill Johnson (Interim Business Administrator), Perry Gilreath (Faith in Action Committee).

Absent: None.

The Rev. Dr. Harrison McLeod opened the meeting with prayer.

Christ Church Episcopal School Report

Harrison introduced Leonard Kupersmith and Valerie Riddle and thanked them for their service at CCES.

Headmaster Leonard Kupersmith gave an update on the State of the School. He said that it takes a team to make CCES successful and thanked the church for its role in giving birth to the school.

Lower School Chaplain Valerie Riddle shared a religious life update. She reported on the search for a Senior Chaplain and on student involvement in spiritual activities. Two priests are potential candidates for the open position of Senior Chaplain and will visit the campus soon. She thanked the Rev. Kellie Wilson for conducting an Instructed Eucharist recently for the school. She said that it is an exciting time to be at CCES as they look to strengthen their Episcopal identity through the strategic plan unveiled this week. A copy of the report is included in the file for this meeting.

Leonard said that the components to the Senior Chaplain search are pastoral, spiritual, administrative, and educational. CCES has contracted with George Andrews, a priest who consults on chaplain searches. Leonard reviewed the physical report he distributed prior to the meeting and the salient points of the strategic plan. Full enrollment is 1140 and 2017-18 opened with 1101 enrollment, which is a good number.

Bern asked about the non-white population and diversity. Leonard said this number is at 9%.

Jim asked about the term "Episcopal identity." Valerie said that this is determined by a number of factors, including the NAES (naes.org) and responses from a set of 20 schools contacted directly by CCES, the Baptismal Covenant, etc. Jim also asked about any challenges with which the Vestry can assist or of which they should be aware. Leonard prioritized hiring a Senior Chaplain, and reaching 1140 max enrollment with a waiting list.

Dena asked about the number of students receiving financial aid. At the present time, this number is 18%.

Leonard said he would be happy to continue the conversation and invited Vestry members to visit the school.

Harrison thanked Betty Teague for her excellent service as Vestry liaison to CCES. Betty noted that Leonard and Valerie were leaving at this time to go to the CCES Annual Giving event. She will be leaving the Vestry meeting early to attend this event as well.

New Business, Part 1

Faith in Action 10%

Harrison introduced Jim Baumgardner, Perry Gilreath, and Frances Poe, who presented a resolution from the Faith in Action Committee to clarify the 10% of church resources given to Faith in Action mission endeavors. The question: Is this 10% of pledged funds? The definition is that 10% of pledges is defined as well as Endowment funds, plus 100% of outreach position salaries. Frances said this resolution is part of an effort to be transparent. Unique parts of this definition is that with some part of the salary in it, that salary increases, etc., come out of this as well. Perry Gilreath spoke in favor and support of the resolution and Christ Church's support of ministry in the community. Frances thanked Dan Seaman for his assistance in negotiating and analyzing the resolution.

Jim Baumgardner, Vestry liaison for Faith in Action, read the resolution from the Faith in Action Committee.

It is resolved by the Vestry of Christ Church that the goal for Outreach spending included in the operating budget, to include associated administrative costs and funds budgeted to be set aside in reserves for known future projects, will be equal to (1) 10% of the annual pledged income budget, plus (2) proceeds from the Christ Church Endowment Corporation designated for Missions and Outreach.

The second on the motion came from Betty. Discussion followed.

Cotton Clarke asked a question about how gifts such as land are covered by this resolution. He brought up the Sterling lot, which we swapped for a Habitat build. The answer was that this would be a gift, not a pledge as defined by this resolution. The goal is always 10%, but if in a lean year, we cannot meet church expenses, the Vestry will wrestle with how to restrict this.

Bern asked about funding large projects, such as Habitat. Frances said that rather than paying for such amounts in full, the FIA department requests smaller amounts over several years to build a fund for the project.

The percentage of endowment accounts over a three year averages is 4.5% that is designated for outreach and can be drawn.

Frances said that the FIA full budget includes in-reach and business expenses, which are not part of the 10%.

All voted in favor, none were opposed. The resolution passed.

Ministry Area Visits

Christ Church Episcopal Preschool

CCEP Director Christine Skelton introduced herself to the Vestry. She commented that she knew most of the Vestry through professional and personal associations and has been a member of Episcopal, Presbyterian and Baptist churches. She described her education at Presbyterian College and teaching experience, which she views as mission, which began in inner city Atlanta. She is the former director of the Westminster Presbyterian Preschool, and began work at Christ Church in April 2016. She and her family like to hike and she enjoys reading and cooking. Her wish list is more space for a school with a long waiting list and a salary increase for her dedicated teachers. Bryant Nixon, Vestry liaison for the preschool, brought up the recent toddler playground renovation project. She thanked the Vestry members who were able to visit and tour the CCEP at the beginning of the school year and invited them to visit again. She asked the Vestry about their perception of the preschool. Bryant asked how many people were on the waiting list. Currently, the CCEP has 180 students enrolled and 200 on the waiting list. Betty reminded the group that Christine was Teacher of the Year DeKalb County Georgia. Christine thanked Bryant for his support as Vestry rep for the CCEP.

Support Ministry

Harrison introduced Interim Business Administrator Bill Johnson, who has been on staff for two weeks. Bill's background in the for-profit and non-profit world has served him well. Staff have come to Harrison and complimented the job that Bill has done in this short time. Bill said he is a CPA with an MBA from Rutgers and most of his 30 year career was with W.R. Grace and Co. He and his family have been in Greenville for 29 years. He has done executive interim work with United Way of the Piedmont, Converse College, Upcountry History Museum, Urban League of the Upstate. Bill and his family are Episcopalian and were members of Christ Church until his wife took a Christian Ed position at Redeemer. His children went to CCES. He knows many parishioners through these multiple involvements. Dan and Chris said that they were overjoyed at Bill's arrival. Dan and Chris have done an incredible job and put in many hours during the interim.

Annual Giving

Harrison introduced Lauren Sigmon, Resource Development Director. He praised her ambitious goals that were achieved in last year's Annual Giving campaign – her first at Christ Church.

Lauren said the Annual Giving kickoff will be October 1 and thanked the Vestry for their attendance at the Leadership pre-campaign event at Nolley Sanchelli's home September 6. She thanked the Vestry for their work in last year's campaign. She asked them to take on this more visible role and distributed a handout of ways the Vestry can help with this year's Annual Giving campaign. She said that the new year-round Resource Development Committee will assist the AG cabinet and Vestry in thank you efforts to donors this year. She spoke to the LYBUNT (giving Last Year But Not This Year) phone a thon and the follow up thank a thon. Last year's thank a thon was a big success and received many positive comments. She asked the Vestry to share AG communications on their social media accounts, too!

Betty Teague asked about then number of families/giving units. Lauren answered that it is close to 2000.

Bern Mebane reiterated that those in this room could represent 19 increased gifts toward the goal of 400 and asked for the Vestry's prayerful consideration of their pledges as they model leadership for the congregation. He asked the Vestry to be at the Food Truck Kickoff Event Sunday, October 1.

Harrison also emphasized the 400 increased pledge goal would be almost unheard of in the Episcopal giving world and pointed out that financial gifts truly build ministry.

Bill Kehl liked having the information regarding what increasing a gift by 5% or 10% would represent being included on the annual pledge card.

Jim Baumgardner said that Harrison's sermon emphasis on stewardship last year was very helpful. Harrison said it was intentional that he scheduled himself to preach throughout the campaign. This will also be the case this year.

August Minutes

The August 15, 2017, Vestry Meeting minutes were distributed prior to the meeting by email.

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Cotton Clarke and seconded by Chuck Reichert.

All Vestry members voted in favor, none were opposed. The motion carried.

Rector's Report

Harrison said that it is with real sadness that he announced that Frances Poe is leaving the staff as Director of Faith in Action at the end of October. Frances has helped the church move to a healthier model of Outreach. We will celebrate her 9+ years of service after the 10:30 AM service October 29.

He spoke to the Bicentennial of Christ Church in 2020 at the conclusion of the HIStory Lives capital campaign. The church was founded as a mission (St. James' Parish) in 1820 and was admitted to the diocese as a parish (Christ Church) in 1826. In 2026, we will celebrate our 200th anniversary as Christ Church as we conclude the next campaign, HIStory Lives Again! The next goal will be renovation of the Parish House and expansion of the CCEP, which would allow us to increase enrollment and thus, build additional relationships. He invited the Vestry to visit the renovated playground in the CCEP.

Senior Warden's Report

Bern Mebane submitted a written report that will also be distributed electronically tomorrow. He emphasized that the 2018 budgeting process is coming up and should be perceived not only as a financial tool, but as a way to describe how we do ministry. He urged the Vestry reps to work with their ministry areas during the budgeting process. He also said that the Vestry's collective job is to see that the parish not only meets, but exceeds the goal for the Annual Giving campaign.

Junior Warden's Report

Dena Benedict said that the Human Resource Committees will begin annual conversations with the staff soon. The CCEC interviews will be in the month of October and the CCEP interviews will be in the spring. Randy Clarke, Bill Crawford, Kay Curtis, Dena Benedict are currently serving on this committee. An ask is out for one more person and we are just waiting for a confirmation. The committee will seek information on ways to seek continuous improvement.

Dena also noted that one of the items coming out of last year's process was to initiate exit interviews, which have been taking place this year.

The Staff Appreciation Lunch in the fall is Tuesday, October 31. She feels strongly that staff should not be involved, but be able to enjoy the event. Dena passed around a sign up sheet about ways to help and attend.

This Friday, a candidate for Parish Nurse will be interviewing. Blood Drive is Wednesday, September 20. Thanks was expressed by Dena and Rose Cuddy to Lisa Hunt, who has filled in for many of the items under this job description in the interim.

Treasurer's Report

Dan called the group's attention to the report sent electronically Monday. Currently, we remain on budget and expect to stay in this position through the end of the year. Some savings have occurred from unspent funds, including favorable weather, which leaves Building & Grounds in good shape. Non-pledged giving remains under budget since most of those with non-pledged gifts moved to pledging and tripled their giving for the current year. We are entering the period of time when spending is greater than income until December. Draws on reserves will take place in the fall as needed.

Katherine Johnstone left a charitable remainder trust that will go into the Endowment as a named fund which will be used for draws for operating expenses over the years.

Bill Johnson assisted the Treasurers' in the report on the Bradford, Gordon and Clinkscales audit recommendations to consolidate the Endowment and CCEP funds for the purposes of financial reports for the auditors. To recommend consolidation, there are two factors: Economic Interest and Control. The wording of the Endowment by-laws regarding the election of directors is "conditioned upon the ratification of the Vestry of Christ Church." The auditors stated that this wording indicates that the church does exhibit control. The CCEP is on a different fiscal year than the church and the operations are quite different, but the CCEP is not a separate entity as the Endowment is, so consolidation is recommended. The auditors are asking for 2016 consolidated reports. Bill Johnson thanked Bill Kehl for his time and legal advice. If the Endowment by-laws are revised, it will affect reports going forward. In order to address this issue for prior years, Bill suggested issuing a letter from the church and issuing a letter from the Endowment, indicating that it was always intended that the Endowment would operate independently from the Church. Bill questioned the opinion of the auditors bringing this issue to light now, but not in previous years.

New Business, Part 2

Approval of Slate of Nominees for Vestry & Delegate Elections

We are one short on Vestry and one short on Delegate. Please look for the motions with the slate of nominations for candidates for Vestry and Delegate elections to come via email as soon as Harrison receives the appropriate number of affirmative responses from nominees presented by the Nominations and Elections Committee. Please respond quickly since time will be of the essence to accommodate our Communications deadline for the elections brochure.

Approval of Canterbury Counseling Center Board Nominee

Kevin Mertens presented a motion from the Pastoral Care Department and Canterbury Counseling Center for the Vestry to approve CCC Board nominee Kathryn Hix.

The motion was seconded by Ben. All Vestry members voted in favor, none were opposed. The motion carried.

Approval of Revised Corporate Resolution

Dan Seaman presented a Revised 2017 Corporate Resolution to reflect the hiring of Bill Johnson as Interim Business Administrator. Larry Pope's name was removed from the resolution and replaced with Bill's. The revised resolution will allow Bill to conduct business on behalf of Christ Church.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Cotton Clarke and seconded by Louise Oxner. All Vestry members voted in favor, none were opposed. The motion carried. Senior Warden Bern Mebane signed the resolution, which will take effect immediately.

Independence Bank Lease Report

McNeil Epps has reviewed the current lease information and reviewed it with Bern. He has a meeting with Bill Johnson tomorrow to bring him into the loop and look at some changes that could prove more favorable for the church. The church and the bank have items they would like to address on the lease and would prefer to renew the lease before it lapses in 2019. Following that meeting, McNeil and Bill will set up a meeting with Larry Miller of Independence Bank.

Jasmine Road Upfit Report

Harrison noted the abovementioned report as information not requiring Vestry action. We are partnering with several entities to renovate the building. A revised estimate of expenses has been provided. Bill Johnson will have a meeting tomorrow that will shed additional light on this estimate. If Vestry members have any questions about this process, please feel free to contact Bill Johnson.

Departmental Reports

Pre-submitted Ministry Area reports were sent via email to the Vestry in advance and are attached to these minutes.

CCC: The Canterbury Counseling Center Annual Luncheon is this Thursday, September 21, at the church. Please come if you can.

Resource Development: Cotton Clarke asked the group to be sure to get their pledges in by September 27 so we can say at the October 1 kickoff that 100% of our leadership is on board.

HIStory Lives Update: Bryant said that a report is complicated at this time in the project. The payback on debt is approximately \$500,000 at this point. When he reviews information from Harper, he will get a more detailed report to the Vestry.

Lighting Update: Chuck reported that he will meet with Bill Johnson Wednesday to discuss the two lighting proposals that he has received from vendors. Good numbers will be required for the budgeting process so they hope to move forward quickly.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 PM.
Rose Cuddy, Recorder