

Vestry Meeting

June 16, 2020

Via Zoom

Present: Harrison McLeod (Rector), Ben Horne (Senior Warden), Ashley Reynolds (Junior Warden), Anne Arrington, Nelson Arrington, Milton Bates, Emily Davis, Jordan Earle, Elizabeth Fletcher, Mac Gentile, Norma Givens, Nancy Kennedy, Chris Klasing (Co-Treasurer), Wade Kolb (Assistant Chancellor), George E. McCall, Helen Wynkoop, Sherri Allred (Clerk of the Vestry).

Absent: Laura Whitney, Penn Williams

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

Executive Summary:

- Vestry unanimously opposed a motion to abolish the alcohol restriction of drinks with over 18% alcohol.
- The treasurers reported that the church is now DEBT FREE due to the sale of the Washington Street bank property. The Finance Committee will make a recommendation of what to do with the extra income at the next Vestry meeting.
- Vestry unanimously approved the May meeting minutes with two corrections.

Rector's Report: (*Following is Harrison's full report to Vestry sent via email prior to the meeting*)

Faith in Action

As of this writing, our kitchen staff, volunteers and supporters have produced over 25,000 meals for the hungry and homeless in the Greenville community. This ministry continues to be one of impact and meaning for our parish, our partner Project Host, and the Greenville community which has been the recipient of these efforts. We can be confident that this ministry will continue throughout the pandemic and in some creative form afterwards as well.

For more news regarding Faith in Action, please see the last paragraph under *worship* for news on the Church Street Choral Academy.

Worship

It is our hope to be able to resume public gatherings of worshippers on Sunday, July 5. These "Vesper" services will consist of readings from Holy Scripture, Prayers of the People and musical offerings (hymns and anthems). These services are intended to allow our community to begin reenter the worship space and have an appropriate experience of in-person community which has been absent for the past 14 weeks. As per the bishop's current guidelines, these offerings will be limited to 25 participants and will be offered at 2:00pm & 4:00pm on the Sundays in July. At this point the restrictions on administration of Holy Eucharist would deny a meaningful experience for the participants so we will refrain from Holy Eucharist until such time as the sacrament can be offered in a way that it will be satisfying to

worshippers. I can review these restrictions and our thinking at our next vestry meeting on Tuesday, June 16. We will also discuss the logistics and procedures which will need to be observed as we begin to regather.

Please note, the increased incidence of infections and deaths from COVID-19 may affect the Bishop's criteria for allowing church meetings and offerings of public worship. So, while we are certainly planning limited opportunities to regather beginning Sunday, July 5, our plans may change as the date approaches. Again, we will be able to discuss this in more detail at the vestry meeting.

Also of note, our virtual worship offerings have now passed 100,000 views since their implementation in March. This is an astounding accomplishment and good news for our parish. Our worship team, as well as communications and faith development are all to be commended for their good work.

Additionally, we learned yesterday, Thursday, June 11, that our Church Street Choral Academy received a \$53,000 UTO grant. While the work leading the start of the Choral Academy has necessarily been put "on hold" during this pandemic, this very large gift, the support we have already received from our Bicentennial Donors, and the enthusiasm from our Faith in Action committee positions us well for the day when we believe it is right to launch this new outreach ministry. As many of our parishioners feel the desire to "do something" or take some steps in addressing racial tensions in a helpful way, our ability to join our community with those from diverse backgrounds may prove to be a wonderful ministry.

Faith Development

Faith Development continues to "thrive" as we seek to offer quality Christian Formation during these times of physical distancing.

In addition to the many Sunday School and Weekday Bible Studies we are offering, we have two initiatives worth noting.

1. Our small group ministry is nearing its start-up. We anticipate that small group ministry may be a perfect antidote to the isolation many in our parish are feeling. A vibrant and nimble small group ministry would offer an opportunity for parishioners to gather in smaller numbers and promote deeper relationships with others within the parish.
2. In response to the civil unrest many communities are experiencing, including our own, Norma Givens and I will offer a Wednesday night book study addressing racial relations and social justice during the time slot where we have been offering the Clergy Klatch. She and I are considering several books that might prove fruitful for discussion and study.

I continue to remain hopeful about offering some form of Rector's Forum, but as of yet, I have been unable to pull this (virtual) class together.

Communications

Our second iMac computer is now up and running and proven to be a great help to our communications effort. This additional machine allows us more flexibility (and human power) in producing on-line content as well as improving the quality of the offerings.

Resource Development

Lauren Sigmon and I have continued to follow-up with the donors who were interviewed as part of our feasibility study. The calls have been enjoyable and productive. Our donors have continued to be very supportive of the church and have let us know they would be receptive to a follow-up call later this fall to check in about the possibility of a capital campaign beginning early in 2021.

Our mid-year report to the parish is in development and we hope will be a great help to the parish in terms of communicating many of the ways in which the parish has continued to be actively involved in ministry during the pandemic. The report will contain statistics, stories and a number of examples that are both touching and important.

As we look to the fall and the annual stewardship campaign, we are recruiting co-chairs for the campaign and thinking creatively and critically about how best to conduct the 2021 annual giving campaign. Many parishes have anticipated a 10% reduction in annual giving for next year. We will review our 2020 parishioner giving levels and run some projections before we attempt to settle on a goal for our 2021 giving target.

Support

Our business office continues to work diligently to keep us abreast of best practices regarding working remotely. Our staff has been very efficient at this practice and we will continue as long as is necessary to offer our staff the opportunity to be safe as they discharge their responsibilities.

Additionally, our business staff has been incredibly adept at maintaining the business of the church taking care of all the PPP loan/grant evolving work, accounting, payables and receivables, maintaining the physical plant and all the other areas that require attention.

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral care team has coordinated phone calls to every parishioner household over the course of the past several months. It is our goal to maintain meaningful contact with all our parishioners during these challenging times and assure them of the church's care for them and offer whatever assistance needed that we can appropriately respond to.

CCEP

Our goal is to reopen (under limited conditions) CCEP on Monday, July 6 to the families that are year-round students. The reopening will abide by CDC guidelines, and the Bishop's directives, and offer a reasonable and responsible place where our students may attend without undue risk. Of course, maintaining physical distancing will be a challenge, but the CCEP staff and administration will be vigilant in safeguarding our students. As with our regathering plans for the church, the Bishop has the authority to restrict our reopening should he feel that necessary. We will share with you in the next several days our plans for reopening CCEP so you will be able to respond to questions should they come up. We can discuss this more at our June meeting if you have questions.

General

1. Our sale of the property at 505 East Washington Street has been completed and the funds have been deposited in the bank. We will need to make some decisions about the use to which we want to apply these funds. Dan and Chris will have all the information you will need regarding the sale and proceeds.
2. I have spoken with Addie Townes to thank her personally for the generous gift she and Bob gave to the church for the 2003 Doorways to Discipleship capital campaign. After a bit of initial sadness recalling her late husband, she was very pleased that the church was able to retire our debt with her help.
3. Unfortunately, I was unable to take the time away I had planned for the week of 5/20. I will reschedule some time away for R&R later in the year. Perhaps as early as late July/early August if the church's schedule permits.
4. Our reopening task force has been meeting regularly to define policies and procedures for reopening and regathering at the church. I continue to be very grateful for their advice, counsel and leadership.
5. The Bicentennial Steering Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, June 15 to continue with our bicentennial plans. I hope to be able to give you a full report of our discussions at the vestry meeting.
6. We will have a presentation and a request by Mary Johnston who would like the church to be able to host the Joyful Garden our sponsor's party in the McKissick Family Courtyard the evening of Tuesday, October 6. Specifically, her request is that the vestry would grant the JGT an exception to the alcohol policy which prohibits serving liquor at gatherings at the church. Our current policy actually prohibits serving any beverage with an ABV of 18% or higher. For your information, the port wine we serve at communion has an ABV of 18%. Wine is typically somewhere between 12%-15% and beer around 5%. There are practical, ethical and theological reasons for the policy that we can discuss as well as the possibility of granting the exception.

Warden's Report

None

Jr. Warden's Report

Ashley said she is very excited about the book study *Just Mercy* that Harrison and Norma are offering. Ashley also reiterated that Mary Johnston has requested to host the Joyful Garden Sponsor Party in the church yard under a tent—she wants the Vestry to waive the ruling of not serving alcohol of over 18% on the church campus.

Motion: Ashley made the motion that the Vestry abolish the alcohol restriction of drinks with over 18% alcohol. **Second:** Norma Givens. **Discussion:** Vestry members voiced the concern that this is not the

proper time to abolish this ruling or have a large celebratory gathering in the church yard. **Vote:** All opposed. The Vestry was unanimously opposed to the motion and the motion was denied.

Treasurer's Report

Chris shared the standard treasurer's report and cash flow assumptions.

- The financial position has changed dramatically for the better after two months of people playing their pledges and the preschool supporting itself in April and May. He said the church could possibly have to support CCEP in June.
- The latest information from the government is that the church won't have to pay back any of the PPP funds.
- The financial committee has changed the 2020 forecast to a 10% reduction in giving rather than the initial 25% reduction. The months of April and May were on budget. Minus gifts, they were 8-9% off budget.
- The treasurers are expecting to reinstate external Faith in Action grants that are not funded by the endowment.
- The church can restart the commercial landscape contract in July to take care of the grounds.
- The church will have to purchase safety equipment in July for the CCEP reopening (approximately \$5,000 for hand sanitizer and thermometers.)
- The finance committee wants to continue to fund the reserve for the Broadus property. The Property Committee will look at some maintenance estimates and recommend what the Vestry should do. It will not be necessary to use reserves.
- The treasurers believe it is safe and prudent to remove some of the restrictions.

Discussion followed about the necessity of restarting the landscaping contract, budgeting for added personnel in communications and the young adult ministry, upfitting the church to continue providing virtual offerings as well as live-streaming when parishioners are able to re-gather for worship services, and upfitting classrooms to offer hybrid gatherings for Sunday School. Consensus was reached to prioritize the following: 1. Restart landscaping; 2. Upfit the church's video offering capability; 3. Investigate adding a communications staff person with video experience; and 4. Investigate adding a Young Adult Ministry staff person.

Capital Situation

Dan reported that the church is now debt free after the sale of the Washington Street bank property. Additional money from the property sale will go into a property reserve. All loans have been paid off. Any extra income in the property reserve fund is currently invested in money market funds. There is approximately \$554,000+ still unpaid from History Lives pledges. Dan said that the money left over from the bank sale will have to go somewhere. The Finance Committee will consider it and make a recommendation at the next Vestry meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Harrison presented the minutes from the May meeting for approval. **Motion:** Elizabeth Fletcher made the motion to accept the minutes with two noted corrections. **Second:** Anne Arrington seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Vote:** Unanimously approved. The motion carried.

Other Discussion:

Helen Wynkoop reported that CCEP will make contact with parents concerning reopening via Zoom. She also reported that CCES is having board meeting Thursday to discuss reopening plans.

Anne Arrington reported that the Faith in Action Committee will be asking for \$30 gift certificates from 30 different families to feed the families involved in the virtual IHN in July. They are all being housed in hotels right now.

Harrison closed the meeting with prayer. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.