

# Christ Church Vestry Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 20, 2020, 5:00 PM

## Online Zoom Meeting

**Attending:** 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, Laura Whitney (Secretary of the Vestry), Penn Williams, Helen Wynkoop, Sherri Allred (Clerk of the Vestry).

**Note:** This is a regular meeting of the Vestry that took place online via Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent orders for social distancing.

The Rev. Dr. Harrison McLeod opened the meeting with prayer at 5:01 PM.

### Executive Summary of Actions:

- The Vestry approved by consensus the website completion date at the end of the first quarter.
- The Vestry approved by consensus hiring musicians for the typical Christmas services.
- The Vestry approved by consensus moving forward with basketball registration and planning.
- The Vestry approved by motion endowment distributions subject to the approval of the Endowment Board.
- The Vestry tabled the approval of the Canterbury Counseling Center By-Law revisions until the November meeting.
- The Vestry approved by motion the minutes from the September meeting.

### Rector's Report

Harrison reported that he was pleased with the staff and how it has been living the new normal since March. Staff continues to work hard to get parishioners back into church. Stewardship is going strong and parishioners have continued faithfulness to pledges. Staff has been careful and cautious about COVID protocols and procedures—there have not been any COVID issues reported from church or preschool.

### Website:

Harrison asked the Vestry to consider having the website completed by the end of the first quarter of 2021 rather than having to spend an extra \$27,000 to have it completed by January 1. He explained that it has been under construction for almost two years partially because the current database system decided to end its service. As a result, the work has required a full database conversion as well as new design. CC has not employed any extra staff help to complete the project. Suzanne has created a plan to have the website complete by January 1. This plan would require overtime from two business office employees and hiring a full-time digital person. Harrison said he is frustrated that the project has taken so long, but he has not authorized spending any additional funds on the project because CC currently has a website that is functioning. Vestry members voiced concerns about continued delays as the

website is the gateway to Christ Church and very important especially given the times we are living in now. They emphasized the need to make a decision and get the website finished. The consensus was that the website be completed by the end of the first quarter with no further delays rather than spending the additional funds and overworking an already stretched staff over the holidays.

#### Christmas Services:

The average Sunday attendance is 65 people per service, according to Harrison. As a result, he asked the Vestry for guidance in scheduling this year's Christmas services. There are typically seven services offered which requires CC to hire musicians now for the season; the cost would be \$7,000-\$8,000. Harrison asked the Vestry to weigh in on whether to have 3-4 services or plan for the 7 services. COVID will still require social distancing at Christmas which will allow 100 maximum attendees. The Bishop believes that these protocols will continue until June 2021. Some important points included:

- Christmas Day service is typically small; Christmas Eve is the largest one.
- We need to be prepared for larger numbers. It would be very sad for those who plan to come and find out they cannot because the church is full.
- The average age for attendance right now is 50-65 years old.
- Older folks are reluctant to come because they are still cautious about COVID.
- Families are reluctant because of the length and limitation of Sunday morning offerings.
- Livestreaming the services could be done but would not look as professional because we do not have the proper technology.

The consensus was reached to hire the musicians for seven services to be offered on Christmas Eve.

#### Budget:

Harrison reported that the budget work started this year with a huge deficit as it typically does. There is a huge deficit, but there are also reserve funds and other ways to bridge that gap. He recently was asked about the 2003 commitment to purchase a bus for the seniors. Every year he asks Pastoral Care to do a cost analysis and it has always been more cost effective to rent a bus than to buy a bus. It is a \$70,000 expense that would be used 3-4 times per year. The cost of renting a bus is included in the Pastoral Care budget.

Harrison shared slides of data Dan Seaman compiled concerning resource allocation. The pie charts reflected more accurately how staff costs are distributed across Ministry Areas for two years. For example, in 2019 Harrison's salary was charged 100% to worship, Kellie's 100% to faith development and Charles' 100% to pastoral care when, in fact, all three clergy teach, do pastoral care, and provide worship services. Harrison told the Vestry that looking at resource allocation in terms of people rather than programs gives a more accurate picture and more valid information to use in budgeting. Vestry members suggested that this would be good information to share with the parish. Harrison will look for an opportunity to share it during the Annual Meeting on November 22.

#### Basketball:

Harrison reported that staff recently learned that there will be a basketball league this winter. Games can start January 2 and run for eight weeks. CC typically has 25 teams that participate. While he does

not know how COVID will impact the number of teams, it is certain that COVID procedures and protocols will be in place for the foreseeable future. Harrison shared the following considerations:

1. Only Finley Hall and ASC gym are available for basketball. According to protocols, we are severely limited in the number of people we can have in those spaces at any given time. Even if we have basketball, we might not be able to allow spectators. Masks are a big question. Brannon Traxler is not in favor of having basketball from a physician standpoint. Additionally, we use the gyms every day. They are the only rooms on our campus that we can gather in numbers. If we reserve it for basketball, we don't have a place for EYC, MAD Wednesdays, handbell choirs, or the epiphany pageant. How do we keep the rooms clean? Right now, we sanitize the building between each use. We cannot do that with back-to-back games and schedules. Registration would have to start tomorrow. That creates a nightmare for the business office. We would receive money, but we would have a very difficult time refunding money if it is cancelled. We might create a perception problem. How do we say you cannot have a bible study but you can play basketball? There are lots of considerations—we are not confident that we can have basketball without sacrificing other programs.
2. We have talked to other churches. Churches and leagues are both reluctant to be the first one to cancel.
3. If we don't offer our gyms, we cannot have basketball.
4. It is a signature ministry. We've had worship since September and no cases and none in the preschool
5. The Bishop has not said we cannot have basketball.

Vestry members made the following points:

- Basketball is an important family ministry that we need to figure out based on the priority of In-reach and reaching young adults.
- Both gyms do not have fresh air exchange.
- Christ Church school is offering basketball.
- There is precedent for us to look at. We should be careful and cautious, but we need to look for ways to do it. Let's look for a way to say yes rather than to look at all the no's.
- If we have basketball without spectators and families, the risk of abuse of children does go up.
- If we host the games, we might run into more resistance with the Bishop.

The consensus was that basketball is a very important ministry for younger adults and families and that CC should proceed with registration and creating a plan to make basketball safely available.

#### **New Business:**

1. Endowment distributions:  
Chris shared the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Endowment Distribution request list, reporting that it comprised of routine distributions except for the Fletcher Mann Fund. Chris explained that the Fletcher Mann Fund is underwater as of the date the distribution was prepared. The donor's family has indicated they wish to make a draw from the corpus so the fund's designated charity will receive a donation in 2020. This amount is included for approval but will not be distributed until the signed written letter is received from the donor's family indicating approval of this one-time corpus. Chris will provide the endowment by-laws for the Vestry to review.

George E. McCall made the motion to approve the requested endowment distributions subject to the approval of the Endowment Board. Milton Bates seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous. The motion carried.

2. Canterbury Counseling Center By-Laws:

Milton Bates reported that the CCC board met last Thursday with a unanimous vote to remove Christ Church from the By-Laws of the CC Board. Wade Kolb worked with Kevin Mertens, Faith in Action Director, on the process of letting CCC go out on its own without being under the review of Christ Church. This involved removing requirements that certain numbers of the board must be Christ Church members; two members must be the rector and Pastoral Care priest, and the requirement that the Vestry approve any dissolution. Wade said this will allow CCC to do its own work. Nelson said the impotence of this was brought on by CC's auditors; as long as CC maintains any control over CCC, the church must incorporate CCC's financial statements into the church. Milton made the motion to accept the revised Canterbury Counseling Center By-Laws. Nelson seconded the motion. The motion was tabled until November pending the By-Laws being provided to Vestry.

**Sr. Warden's Report:** no report.

**Jr. Warden:** no report

**Treasurer's report:**

Chris Klasing shared the financial report from September 2020. For the first time this year there was a deficit in September. Income for the year went into deficit. Chris said CC will not have to borrow from reserves because there is cash on hand thanks to the PPP loan. Some ministry areas picked up spending in September—support did because of insurance payments as did building and grounds. The forecast for year end is more likely \$54,000 based on small increase in ministry spending compared to what we have been forecasting. The audit is complete and is clean. It is available if anyone wants to read it.

George shared that the budget committee met last night and will meet again tomorrow afternoon from 4-6 pm. The committee will discuss revenue the first hour and Faith in Action the second hour. Harrison said the budget is starting off the same way it always starts off. This information will eventually make its way to the Vestry because many of the decisions on how to balance the budget will be in the Vestry's hands, not in the finance or budget committees' hands.

Dan said that revenue is down \$117,000 primarily in pledge giving. Harrison and Lauren felt that it was prudent to be conservative. The Diocesan Ask would be \$132,000 increase. The total deficit is \$670,272. Dan said the Vestry could decide to take a standard distribution. All profit from the Broadus rental is going into capital reserve. The Vestry could decide to divert it. Dan said CC expects to get full forgiveness on the PPP loan. He believes CC will not have to use the deficit reserve this year. There are a lot of one-time benefits in it.

Harrison said this information is important Vestry members to be aware of so they can begin to look for strategies to balance the budget.

**September Minutes:**

Harrison presented the September minutes for approval. George made the motion to approve the minutes. Mac Gentile seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous. The motion carried.

**Other Information:**

Harrison announced that the Vestry Retreat is scheduled for January 29-30 on the Christ Church campus. Details to follow.

Ben closed the meeting with prayer at 6:51 pm.