

Christ Church Vestry Minutes
Tuesday, June 15, 2021, 5:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting

Attending in Person: Dena Benedict (Senior Warden), Milton Bates, Emily Davis, Jordan Earle, Betsy Elliott, Elizabeth Fletcher, Norma Givens, Nancy Kennedy, Chris Klasing (Co-Treasurer), Cindy Poe, Reid Sherard, Dan Seaman (Co-Treasurer), Kellie Wilson (Senior Associate Rector), Rose Cuddy (Administrative Coordinator).

Attending Via Zoom: Nelson Arrington (Junior Warden), Russ Miller (Secretary of the Vestry)

Not Attending: Sam Erwin, Bill Hardaway, Penn Williams, Cecil Nelson

Guests: Donald Duncan, Sam Nixon

The Rev. Kellie Wilson opened the meeting with prayer at 5:00 PM.

Executive Summary of Actions:

- The Vestry approved a motion to endorse the work of the Church Street Choral Academy Launch Committee as they seek to file Articles of Incorporation with the State of South Carolina and make application to the Internal Revenue Service for the assignment of an EIN (Employer Identification Number) also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number
- The Vestry approved a motion to approve the May 2021 minutes as presented.

Church Street Choral Academy: Donald Duncan

Donald Duncan updated the Vestry on three initiatives to provide enriching programming for Children and Youth.

- Youth Ensemble: Parish Musician Chase McAbee will recruit students for a Youth Ensemble. Chase will work with Director of Youth Ministry Hannah Flack before she departs the staff and will direct this offering for Middle School and High School youth.
- Children's Sabbath: MAD (Music, Art & Drama) Wednesdays were well received and are the impetus to redesign the year-round children's music and education programs into Children's Sabbath. A focus group of parents has provided valuable feedback and input. Additional focus groups will meet and their input will help refine this program.
- The Church Street Choral Academy is the third of the multi-pronged new approach to Children & Youth music programming. The academy will be inclusive of parishioners as well as welcoming to underserved communities. A candidate to lead the school is visiting the campus this week. Project Host has agreed to partner by providing meals for the school.

Donald said that the academy is applying to become a separate legal entity, which will allow it to pursue grants and other sources of funding. He requested the Vestry's endorsing the following resolution:

Whereas, the Vestry of Christ Church Episcopal has previously authorized the Church Street Choral Academy (CSCA) Launch Committee to work with Wyche Law Firm to prepare documents relating to the formation of a separate legal entity known as the Church Street Choral Academy, and

Whereas, the CSCA Launch Committee consists of parishioners Betty Teague, Claire Cappio, Kay Jenkins, Nelson Arrington, Sally Skardon, Sharon Landis, Susan Clark, Tim Brockman, Dr. Wayne McDonald; and staff members Donald Duncan, Kevin Mertens, and Sarah Marczynski; and

Whereas, the purpose of the CSCA has been expanded and refined to include a fulsome arts enrichment, mentoring, and leadership development program that is inclusive of all parishioner children, as well as underserved communities within Greenville;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Vestry endorses the work of the Church Street Choral Academy Launch Committee as they seek to file Articles of Incorporation with the State of South Carolina and make application to the Internal Revenue Service for the assignment of an EIN (Employer Identification Number) also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number.

Senior Warden Dena Benedict brought the resolution and requested a second. Norma Givens seconded the motion.

Discussion: Cindy Poe asked if the program was fee based. Donald said the program would have no fee associated for any participant. Wade Kolb noted that this step is preliminary to the academy filing for the tax-exempt status.

Vote: The Vestry voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Community Moment:

Elizabeth Fletcher brought three examples of community.

- 5th Grade Welcome Back: This event was so fun to see people back on campus. The turnout, food and games made her feel like we were back where we should be.
- Pentecost Picnic: She was struck by how many of the volunteers were newcomers, already engaged, whom she had not met before.
- Attended a funeral at Christ Church and sat with Altar Guild members. It was special to see how Christ Church supports grieving family members.

Senior Warden's Report:

- Dena Benedict said all staff will return to campus July 6. If you're in the area, please come in and welcome them back.
- The Bishop has released new guidelines that vaccinated persons will no longer need to wear masks and the 3 foot distance requirement is dropped. At Eucharist, we will pass the bread but are not yet receiving the chalice.
- We have a signed agreement for a new Resource Development Director, parishioner Kristen Bennett, whose background is in banking and donor development for United Way and Project Hope. She will begin work July 6. Former Resource Development Director Lauren Sigmon is contracted to work with Kristen on the transition. When you see her, please welcome her. This will be announced to the parish soon but it's public knowledge.
- Finding Great People has been contracted to help us with hiring for some admin positions. Bill Hardaway has also been working with FGP Human Resources department to work on a Staff Engagement Project. Dennis from FGP will confidentially interview each employee from 30 to 45 minutes on specific dates in late July. A comprehensive report will be provided in August along with action plans. Additional communication from Dennis, Dena and Bill will be sent to staff this

week. Reid Sherard asked if all staff have an employment review each year. Kellie Wilson said a Mutual Ministry Review to establish goals for teams and individuals was initiated last year. Russ Miller asked if we will also be interviewing people who've left employment at the church as this would add a valuable perspective. Reid asked if we had an offboarding process. Kellie responded that we do and that no red flag has come up in those interviews. Dena said that Bill has reported that there are no concerns to be addressed.

- Staff Engagement Committee is a staff group that plans on and off campus events to promote staff engagement and life events and transitions. Dena encouraged the Vestry to attend any of these events.
- The Diocesan Convention will be at Christ Church in November. The Bishop Search committee is currently on a retreat. Walkabouts to visit with the final candidates will be September 11 and 12 in different geographic locations. The Electing Convention will be held September 15 at Trinity in Columbia.
- More information about opportunities for lay persons on the Diocesan Executive Council and other boards is available on the Diocesan website if Vestry members are interested in serving.
- The Bishop will schedule a time to meet with the Vestry after Harrison returns.
- Save the date for a Parish Retreat April 29-May 1, 2022, at Kanuga.

Junior Warden's Report:

Nelson told the Vestry that he is hopeful to put some new practices in place for this year's budgeting process to improve efficiency. His first recommendation is the elimination of the Budget Committee. The process will be as follows:

- The Vestry will affirm the church priorities every year May-June
- The Finance Committee will determine the broad categories.
- Categories will be sent to the ELT, and the ELT and Vestry Reps will work together to determine the departmental budget by the end of August
- The budget is then sent to the Finance Committee for review
- and then to the Vestry for approval.

Next Month: Sam Erwin will bring a resolution to the Vestry regarding the 1997 10% outreach funding resolution, the interpretation of which we have wrestled with.

Rector's Report:

Sr. Associate Rector Kellie Wilson reported.

- Kellie shared the work she has been doing with our staff, who are helping us define Embrace, Equip, Empower and Apostle, during inter-ministry time at Staff Meetings once a month. She shared an image to illustrate on one side the tendency of large parishes to have lots of programs and, on the other, one that defines a path to leadership with fewer words and programs. The staff has narrowed down to four words to describe what each of these looks like. The next step is for the staff to place our programming under these words. We would have a list of what falls under each step and tools to invite people to the next step, to work on a unified path to engagement and leadership development. Vestry members Betsy Elliott and Reid Sherard commented favorably about this project to help define ministry. Chris Klasing noted that commissioning of volunteers is empowering and that we always need to remember that the job

of staff is to equip volunteers to do a lot of the work. Betsy said that a major problem is finding people willing to do the work, especially year-round. Reid asked about a timeline to complete this work. Kellie said by the end of the year and especially by next summer we will have much of this work done. She said the Vestry and parishioners will also be part of this discussion.

- Hiring Update:
 - Associate Priest for Pastoral Care: August 8 is Charles' last day. We have interviewed two people and have an additional applicant. The Diocesan House will also be collecting applications for the next 30 days.
 - Adult Ministry Position: This is advertised in several locations. A lay candidate is still viable and another lay person has approached us.
 - Youth positions: Several applicants have been vetted by the committee. One has been interviewed on campus, another is coming June 29-30. An assistant director candidate from Greenville will also be interviewing soon.
 - Communications Coordinator has 15 applicants and 4 are now finalists. Find Great People is helping check these applicants.
 - Nursery Preschool: 10 candidates, narrowed to 3, we will be hiring someone and another person, through a creative idea, who really wants to work here.
 - We have hired Shantel Lee as Receptionist.
 - We have hired Fabio Niera as Facilities Assistant.

Vestry members Cindy Poe, Reid Sherard, Russ Miller and Norma Givens expressed disappointment that we have planned some meet & greets with priest candidates and then, at the last minute, they withdraw. They expressed concern at the associate priest turnover rate. Kellie said that those who are in the senior year of seminary have active help from their Diocese to hire them within their own diocese but may be released to search outside the diocese if no positions are open within a diocese. The shortage of qualified priest candidates throughout the Episcopal Church was also noted. Dena commented that we are a great training ground for the newly ordained and this is part of our ministry to help new priests gain experience. Russ said that he is hearing that we accept turnover from priests but expressed concern that candidates are not as attracted to places that can't keep people. Chris said he doesn't see it as a rationalization but thinks the ratio should be three long term priests and one gaining experience. Reid said he sees two issues: people are here who are leaving and trying to recruit people who will stay. Norma asked if we are relying on people coming out of seminary and Kellie responded that we do have other recruitment strategies. Dena said she prefers a four-year commitment but that she will not hold people back if they have another opportunity. Wade said that Harrison would welcome any leads. Jordan asked if we would consider an ordained Deacon, Dena said that hiring is the top thing that she, Nelson and Kellie are working on. She asked the Vestry to take the information they've learned tonight to help alleviate the concerns of parishioners or to send them to her, Nelson or Kellie if they have questions. Milton asked if we had looked at any Lutheran priests Wade said that he sees that the responsibility of raising up people to the priesthood is that of the whole parish.

Treasurer's Report: Dan noted that the temporary person hired during Stephanie Martin's leave of absence has accepted a full-time job. A new temp begins Monday and Kim will train her. He did receive the normal financial package but the change in staff limited their ability to complete the full report. He is hopeful that he will have the full Treasurer's report to you by the end of next week.

Pledge giving for May was around \$13,000 behind projections. Last year, we were around \$5,000 behind. He's not concerned since we are coming out of the pandemic and still seeing some effects. Non-pledged income was \$15,000 in May, larger than usual, since one parishioner who does not pledge gave their annual gift of \$10,000. We are on budget for non-pledged income and around \$6,000 behind on revenue. Our Administration expense was larger than usual this month since we wrote the check for

the website. We have reserve credits for the website, so these largely offset. B&G spending is below projections due to underspending on maintenance.

May Meeting Minutes:

The May meeting minutes were presented prior to the meeting via email.

MOTION: Jordan Earle made a motion to approve the May minutes as presented. Emily Davis seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

New Business:

Priorities & Ranking

Kellie updated a spreadsheet during the meeting with the feedback provided by the Vestry in the document in the Vestry packet and noted changes made during the meeting. The updated document containing both the Vestry and ELT priority rankings is attached. It was suggested to also have the staff rank the priorities not just ELT.

Homecoming Update: Nancy said they've changed the name of their group from Reopening to Homecoming Committee. A phased homecoming is planned as follows.

- August 22 Regular worship schedule and Sunday School begins (No Sunday School on Labor Day weekend.)
- September 1 Wednesday nights begin and will continue throughout the program year. This will support the ministries Donald mentioned earlier.
- September 12 will be the special celebration Sunday. She asked the Vestry their thoughts on if this should be held in the morning or late afternoon. Ideas were 5:00-7:00 PM, immediately after church could be too hot, offer nursery/preschool friendly activities so the whole family can attend together, tie in youth EYC on a Sunday evening, avoid the parking lot and use the grounds or the ASC. Nancy will provide this feedback to the committee.

Nancy will talk to Jessica about Communication regarding these dates this week. She said that the kickoff will also be presented as a grand regathering of volunteers with information on all the opportunities that we have. Dena said that the Homecoming events are a fabulous opportunity for Vestry to volunteer to get behind these efforts and talk it up to the parish.

Nancy said that Sunday morning breakfast is expected to be reinstated.

Committee Reports:

Preschool: Reid reported that the CCEP is adding a bathroom in the all-purpose room space due to an increase in enrollment for 5K. A parent gave \$10,000 toward the estimated cost from \$22,000-50,000. They plan to reach out to a mid-range construction company. Suzanne, Reid, Nelson, Christine, and Harrison met on the alteration of the preschool space.

CCES: Emily said that the headmaster's speech is included in the Vestry packet, and she encouraged everyone to read his outstanding speech after his first year as headmaster.

Youth: Sam said that he has a senior who has been in the youth program since 6th grade and, during that time, has been through 8 youth leaders since then. He praised the strong leadership of Joel Tassie and Hannah Flack and cited the recent year's deepening involvement with the Diocesan youth. Sam is a member of the Student Leadership Team and also on staff for fall Happening. The youth program has been on the rise recently, but he said he has also seen the youth program when we could barely keep our heads above water, so the search for both youth directors concerns him. He understands the need

to move quickly but encouraged the staff to take their time to choose the right person who will stay awhile. He asked the following questions:

- How are we going to increase parent involvement in the youth program?
- How are we planning on increasing youth involvement in programs in the fall?
- Are youth on the search committee? Kellie said that there were 7 of 17 youth on the committee and that there are opportunities for candidates to meet and teach with the youth.

He said that he would like to have a senior year with a strong youth program. Betsy commended him for his work. Dena asked what parents can do for the program? Sam said that youth parents can bring dinner to EYC, chaperone events, help with program planning and not rely on the same small group of parents who help. He said he would love to increase the worship elements in EYC. Kellie said Hannah & Lillian are working on creating a Steering Committee to help with programming in case someone is not in place. She said research shows we need all ages involved to keep youth involved.

Kitchen Ministry: Dena noted that items currently needed are chips, crackers, fruit (no bananas). She thanked Joyce and the volunteers for all they are doing.

Worship: Norma said that lots of unique offerings will take place in July, including the patriotic Eucharist and Gospel Sunday, so please attend!

Kellie closed the meeting with prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.