

Christ Church Vestry Minutes
Tuesday, May 18, 2021, 5:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting

Attending: Harrison McLeod (Rector), Dena Benedict (Senior Warden), Nelson Arrington (Junior Warden), Milton Bates, Emily Davis, Jordan Earle, Elizabeth Fletcher, Norma Givens, Bill Hardaway, Nancy Kennedy, Chris Klasing (Co-Treasurer), Russ Miller (Secretary of the Vestry), Cecil Nelson (Chancellor), Cindy Poe, Dan Seaman (Co-Treasurer), Penn Williams, Kellie Wilson (Senior Associate Rector), Sherri Allred (Clerk of the Vestry).

Attending Via Zoom: Betsy Elliott, Sam Erwin, Wade Kolb (Asst. Chancellor), Reid Sherard

The Rev. Dr. Harrison McLeod opened the meeting with prayer at 5:04 PM.

Executive Summary of Actions:

- The Vestry approved a motion to approve the May minutes as presented.
- The Vestry approved a motion to use \$5,000 in the Affordable Housing Reserve Account to fund one year of rent and utilities for one family in transitional housing through IHN.

Community Moment:

- Jordan Earle said it is great to be back physically in the church. He said no member should try to overvalue his worth in a community. God works behind the scenes to bring forward members who might otherwise be marginalized.
- Betsy Elliot said she loves the definition Jordan gave of community. She gave two examples of how she sees community. Through her work with the altar guild with funerals and also setting up eucharist, she has met and bonded with so many people. Secondly, her work with Jasmine Road has allowed her to meet people from all walks of life and has allowed her to bond with the volunteers and board member. It has broadened her horizons in many ways.
- Penn Williams said the Vestry meeting is a community moment for her being together for the first time in over a year. She remembers that she felt part of a community the first time she stepped foot on the Christ Church campus. "When you grow up in a church you don't have to do much to feel community. After I had Annabelle, we used the nursery. That became a community. We started to use the nursery and then began volunteering. This parish seemed huge at first but all of a sudden, this great big church seemed so much smaller. When you call someone to ask them to volunteer it might seem like a burden, but it can also become an opportunity."

Rector's Report:

Harrison reported that he wants staff and Vestry to make an intentional effort to bring community to mind because everything about regathering is community. He said CC has an excellent opportunity to bring community to the parish and those around us.

The Capital campaign is paused while he is on sabbatical. He will provide updates upon his return.

The CDC is issuing new protocols every day. Harrison said CC will not require registration or temperature check and he hopes to return prayer books and hymnals to the church. There will be other steps taken to loosen protocols, but the church will still ask people to wear masks and will not pass the chalice.

Harrison said the rationale for that is as much theology as it is science—he will continue to look for direction from the bishop. A parish-wide communication will be delivered. Harrison and the wardens are working hard to figure out how to regather the staff and set a target date for July 6. He said it will be a while before everyone feels normal going out, masked or not masked. He wants CC to be sensitive, responsible, faithful, and compassionate.

Regathering:

As talk begins about regathering, Harrison's instructions to the staff are all hands on deck for the fall. He said everything they are doing right now is focused on the fall—getting to the fall and through the fall successfully. The Regathering Committee (led by Nancy Kennedy) works like the bicentennial committee did. It is their responsibility to make sure the church and staff have the resources and are holding themselves accountable. This committee doesn't do the work; it is to make sure that staff, leadership, and Vestry are all doing what it needs to be doing.

Staffing:

There are currently nine open staff positions. Harrison said CC always wants to be good stewards of employees, provide a good working environment, support, compensation, morale, and make sure they are satisfied and working well. When there are nine openings, he said that invites the question of whether leadership is doing everything we can to nurture our employees. Bill Hardaway, who has 39 years of human resources expertise, is working to be sure the church is providing the tools staff needs and doing everything to retain employees. Bill has taken on additional responsibilities to help guide through adopting best practices. On the staff Suzanne Mize does all HR work related to forms, onboarding and offboarding, pension, and benefits. Kellie handles more of the personal aspect of an employee's life here. Bill will help guide leadership through some questions and help set the stage.

Comments:

- Bill Hardaway said that one of the keys of success is how valued an employee feels. If they can feel valued, our chances, we want to focus on some work processes to help them feel valued. First is revamping the exit-interview process to gain feedback on leadership of the church. He said the key is to listen because that will help employees trust and provide information. The second element is a Performance Improvement Plan which provides a chance for employees to correct any issues. Last is an employee engagement survey which provides a good benchmark as to staff satisfaction. What is important to them? What do they value? Bill thinks one-on-one interviews will be very helpful with knowing where people stand and giving them a chance to tell us what they think. Finding Great People will be consulting with the church for this work and sending Dennis Hughes to meet with employees for about 30 minutes. She will ask clear questions and help employees feel comfortable doing this. The proposal investment is \$5-6,000 and is scheduled for July.
- Norma Givens said it is important that the church is competitive in terms of salary and benefits and make sure staff feel they are making a contribution.
- Russ Miller said it seems like when someone leaves the church, duties are reassigned and he feels like those type of decisions need to dovetail with decisions the Regathering Committee is working on. How do we break this out and determine where these jobs go?
- Harrison agreed that is something to be attentive to, stating there have been seasons where positions have gone unfilled, but the ministry has to go on. When I got here we had 5 priests.
- Russ said his concern is that the ministry doesn't always go on. He doesn't think the church can expect continuity if there is a two-year gap or there isn't a conversation between the person who is leaving and the one who is coming.

Senior Warden's Report:

- Dena Benedict said that having priorities going into this year's budget process is best gift last year's Vestry gave them. Going forward to get the budget process underway, Vestry needs to look at priorities now. Sherri will email Vestry the break-out session reports from January's retreat to allow everyone to review the priorities over the next two weeks. She asked Vestry to see if they would change, add, or delete anything and return those comments to Sherri so they can be evaluated at the June meeting. She plans for Vestry to begin ranking those priorities between June and July and finalize rankings in July. By August, Dena wants Vestry to start the process for budgeting with a set of priorities that will make Vestry "put our money where our priorities are."
- Dena asked Vestry members to pray for Harrison during his sabbatical and allow him a break as much as possible. She also asked Vestry representatives to check in extra with their Ministry Areas during Harrison's absence. She thinks they will be back on campus in July and might need some more help and volunteer help as they return. Dena also thanked Kellie for what she will do in his absence.
- Harrison said he has every confidence that Kellie, Nelson, and Dena can make 99% of the decisions. Kellie will send him an email on Monday evenings, and they have scheduled a Wednesday morning time where he can respond to those questions.

Junior Warden's Report:

Nelson told Vestry that they will soon begin the budget process which will begin with the Vestry Priorities. He plans to have members affirm, add, and/or subtract by the July meeting. He asked Vestry members to look at the priorities and the current budget and be prepared to come back in June and discuss what changes need to be made. There is a committee comprised of Kevin Mertens, Anne Arrington, Kellie Wilson, and Sam Erwin that is reviewing the 10% Outreach directive that hopes to come to the Vestry with clarity and a plan for going forward.

Treasurer's Report:

- Dan reported that revenue was over budget, strongly driven by pledges.
- March spending was low. CC is \$164,000 to the good coming out of March because of COVID.
- Pledges are overbudget. Prior year pledges are double. Most come in early months of the year, and he does not anticipate seeing more.
- Non-pledge gifts are behind. Dan said that is difficult to forecast because it tends to be unpredictable. He doesn't see anything to indicate concern.
- Loose plate offerings are below budget. It's a good idea to get back to the collection plate.
- Building usage fees are down because of COVID. Overall, the plus on the prior year is likely to offset the shortfalls like building usage, loose plate, and unpledged gifts. The pledge target was \$2.6 million. Pledge numbers finally came in a little over \$2.6 million. Dan does not see anything to cause an alarm.
- April reports will most likely come out the last week of the month. Expect the May report to be given out in the June meeting. With the additional temporary help, the business is getting caught up.

Vestry decided to place the offering plates at the bottom of the steps in the church and the hand sanitizer stations at the top of the steps.

May Meeting Minutes:

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

MOTION: Bill Hardaway made a motion to approve the May minutes as presented. Cindy Poe seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

New Business:

IHN Proposal: Sam Erwin said that the Faith in Action Committee has approved moving \$5,000 from the Affordable Housing Reserve to fund one year of rent and utilities for one IHN family in transitional housing. United Ministries has recently acquired a house in the Berea neighborhood that is designated as Interim Housing for families who are moving out of Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) Emergency Shelter and engaging in long-term programming designed to improve economic mobility. The original funds used to purchase the house were contributed by Greenville Women Giving and the Trinity Lutheran Church Foundation. These funds were leveraged with a 3-to-1 match from the South Carolina Housing Trust Fund to cover the full purchase. UM's long-standing housing partner, Homes of Hope, will own and manage the property and is in the process of making initial repairs in preparation for the first family to move in. Homes of Hope Project Manager estimates a 6- to 8-week renovation/repair completion date from March 1. United Ministries will contribute a monthly rent payment of \$300 to Homes of Hope to cover the property management costs. United Ministries will also cover monthly utility expenses estimated at \$150. CCE Funds would be utilized for one year's rent and utilities for this home.

MOTION: Sam Erwin made the motion to use the \$5,000 in the Affordable Housing Reserve Account to fund one year of rent and utilities for one family in transitional housing. Jordan Earle seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Worship and Engagement: Emily Davis reported that Chantal has done a spreadsheet which shows 66 new members have joined CC year-to-date. Emily praised Chantal for her excellent work, especially given the restrictions she has been during the pandemic.

Resource Development: Penn Williams reported that paper statements will no longer be going out to pledgers. The business office will accommodate those who don't have email addresses.

Worship: Norma Givens reported that the Worship Committee and others have put in a lot of effort to help parishioners remember a different Pentecost. She encouraged Vestry members to wear red to church and come to the picnic afterward. People will be reading lessons in different languages.

The meeting adjourned at 6:27 pm.