

## Christ Church Vestry Minutes

Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 5:00 PM

### Online Zoom Meeting

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

**Guests:** Susan Clark, Sharon Landis, Sarah Marczynski, Donald Duncan, Betty Teague (Church Street Choral Academy Launch Committee)

The Rev. Dr. Harrison McLeod opened the meeting with prayer at 5:02 PM.

#### Executive Summary of Actions:

- The Vestry approved the February meeting minutes.
- The Vestry approved the 2020 Parochial Report.

#### Community Moment:

Milton Bates said that the value of community comes in unity and through synergy. The photo on the cover of the latest church directory of everyone who was in service speaks to both. Milton shared his experiences with the Lay Eucharistic Communion. He shared a story about serving communion 15 people with only three wafers, serving to another parishioner for over 10 years, and being told that parishioners should give money to the church right away rather than spreading it out for a year. He said, "we have a strong foundation to build on to bring on a great community in Christ."

Nelson Arrington said he was recently asked what he most likes about Christ Church. As he thought about it, he answered that it was the family and community aspects. "Every time I stepped on campus, I felt like I was seeing a friend. For the first decades of my life, Christ Church was a destination. Then at some point it evolved to the point where I would be driving near the church and I found myself walking in just to see who was there. There are so many parishioners that are there during the week. I would just stop by to see who was there and just to chat. I'm so excited about reopening as soon as we can so I can come back to where my friends are, and my sense of community and home is."

#### Church Street Choral Academy Presentation:

Susan Clark, Sharon Landis, Sarah Marczynski, Donald Duncan, and Betty Teague from the Church Street Choral Academy Launch Committee attended the meeting. Additional committee members are Nelson Arrington, Tim Brockman, Sonya Brooks, Claire Cappio, Kay Jenkins, Wayne McDonald, Sally Skardon, Joe Waters, and Kevin Mertens.

Susan Clark made a presentation to the Vestry about what the academy involves and how the plan has evolved during the pandemic year. The program was ready to launch a year ago but was halted because of the pandemic. The target day for launching the program is Fall 2021 and includes the Church Street Choral Academy, a Children's Sabbath, and a Youth Ensemble. The presentation is available at the following link and is stored electronically with Vestry minutes:

<https://prezi.com/view/BPXDjMo2fmsDpidt4Ci3/>

Vestry members expressed that they were happy with some of the revisions and new emphases which are now part of the plan. Additional suggestions included talking with CCES about potential collaboration, creating focus groups, and identifying student volunteers through local high school service projects.

There are legal documents that last year's Vestry authorized the drafting of. When those documents are ready, Harrison will present them to the Vestry for authorization. As CC broadens the pool of folks to whom this program is publicized, Harrison said the conversation between Vestry and parents/volunteers could be significant. He sees wonderful things that can be done with CCES, reaching into the community, and working with other schools to bring in kids who will benefit from the program.

#### **Rector's Report:**

Harrison commended Vestry members for helping articulate the values, priorities, and mission of Christ Church. The Church Street Choral Academy is no small testament to the priorities the Vestry has set. He said it has been important to name those priorities and lay them beside the programs CC is providing.

#### Personnel:

- There are several more folks in line to interview for the adult ministry position. Harrison hopes to hire a priest for that position. He has interviewed three people so far; two will interview with the wardens tomorrow. He is also pursuing conversations with three other candidates. He has every expectation that he can announce the hire to the parish in a month or two and have the new staff person start a month after that.
- The Business Office has taken steps to cover for a CCEP business staff shortage while an employee is on leave. It has begun conversations with an accounting firm to outsource some of the work and the Business Office is working hard to cover those bases. Harrison praised the office and Co-Treasurers Dan and Chris for their diligent work.
- Tami Clark has resigned from the receptionist position. There will be volunteers (Margot Stewart, Susan Dana, Leslie Provence) to cover the front desk in the mornings until that position can be filled. The Parish House is closed except by appointment. Harrison said CC is dependent on volunteers and are blessed that folks have stepped up to help.

#### Reopening Protocols:

The Bishop is still being very cautious about regathering and there are still very strict protocols. He is opposed to having group gatherings. The CDC says that it is safe to gather a small group of people that are all vaccinated, but it has not defined what constitutes small groups. The April Vestry meeting will be offered in a hybrid format. Members who have had both vaccines can come in person and must

follow all safety protocols. Those who are not comfortable meeting in person can join the meeting via Zoom. Harrison said CC wants to enable groups to meet in person. Leadership will evaluate each ministry and will offer the opportunity to meet as it is safe. CC cannot ask staff to step into a risky environment if they are not vaccinated or it is unsafe for them. Harrison has encouraged staff to get vaccinated as they are able—he can only encourage; he cannot mandate it. He said we all want the same thing—to get together—and we are all working to accomplish that. The Bishop is looking for the church to be a model and leader for safe behavior. Harrison reminded the Vestry that CC can only offer programming that is open to everyone, including those who are not comfortable gathering in person. He has also told the staff to stay virtual until the church can open to everyone. He asked that everyone please be patient—the church wants to take every step it can to return to life as normal as quickly as possible. Each Vestry member should have gotten a call from his/her Ministry Area leader today, inviting representatives to attend department meetings. Staff wants to collaborate and communicate with the Vestry.

#### Grand Reopening:

Harrison will recruit a small committee to plan a Grand Reopening in the fall. He had a conversation with Holly about VBS. Many families are looking for a place to put their children for a week during the summer. All moms that met said they have enjoyed some time not being so scheduled out. They want to reserve family time. They might want a parent involved in VBS with the kids. Harrison said it is important be nimble and use focus groups to meet the needs of parishioners and the community. He hopes to send an email this week to tell Vestry who is on that reopening committee. He hopes to have some liturgical marking of the regathering—some enthusiastic regathering at the church where CC marks the new beginning. If all goes well, he would love to wed that to the conclusion of the Bicentennial.

#### Feasibility Study:

The results of the feasibility study will be available at the end of March. Pre-pandemic, 15 people named a potential Capital Campaign figure that totaled \$3.7 million. A quick phone call with consultant Rob Townes indicates that the lead donors have held firm and the initial results look encouraging. Harrison is eager to get that news and get that report in front of the Vestry for some good prayerful conversation about having a capital campaign. The campaign would include the renovation of Markley Chapel first and then the Parish House, starting with the kitchen and including the Stephenson courtyard.

{Cindy Poe shared that the Grounds Committee goal is to expand the area where the coffee pot is, bring the wall out and have it all glassed so folks can have a small gathering there and spill out into the courtyard. Additionally, they would raise the walls on Church Street to handle the traffic noise, put a fountain on that wall, and perhaps add a columbarium and a memorial garden from the entrance from the chapel walkway into Stephenson Courtyard. The committee thinks it will be a fundraising opportunity as well as an improvement to the area. There is a significant gift in place to renovate the courtyard that would not be part of the Capital Campaign.}

Harrison told the Vestry that rights to sell niches in the St. Luke's Columbarium were sold to the endowment, which paid \$400,000 for the rights, used to build the chapel. The endowment will receive \$720,000 over time as niches are purchased from the endowment. There are still about \$500,000 in

receipts from History Lives and the Business Office still receives payments on the windows campaigns from more than 13 years ago.

**Warden's report:**

Dena reminded Vestry members to ask questions or request additional information about the reports during committee reports.

**Junior Warden's report:**

Nelson asked Vestry members to let him, Dena, or Harrison know if they don't feel that they are getting updates from Ministry Areas.

**Treasurer's report:**

Dan Seaman reported that the Business Office is very stressed right now. The immediate issue is with processing payroll and dealing with year-end reports. Additionally, the budget came in late, there is a new database system, and they are assisting with CCEP business. As a result, the office was unable to get reports prepared for this meeting. Dan hopes to get February reports for the April meeting and all reports by the May meeting. Dan said applying the budget is difficult as there are some COVID-burdened months and some non-COVID months for comparison. Year-to-date is about \$663,545 in revenue now. Pledge income is larger than normal in those pledges that were not paid in full last year. Non-pledged income is smaller. The numbers are a little behind last year, but revenue looks good at this point and there is no cause for concern. He said it is encouraging that the pledge target was met.

**February Minutes:**

**Motion:** Elizabeth Fletcher made a motion that the February minutes be approved with one correction (3<sup>rd</sup> bullet under community; "making" the calls.) Nancy Kennedy seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion carried.

**New business:**

Parochial report: Harrison presented the 2020 Parochial Report to the Vestry who asked for the following clarifications:

- Page 2, Questions regarding the 606 "others who are active." Harrison explained that there are many families where a spouse is active at CC but not a member of the parish.
- Page 2, Questions #10-#16. Harrison will double check the figures for the online portion.
- Dena noted that it appears membership dropped by 39 in the past year. She said it would be helpful to see the totals for the last 10 years. Harrison said it has not been down by more than 50 and has not been up by more than 100. Chris will chart the 2020 data and provide the information to the Vestry.

**Motion:** Norma Givens made a motion to accept the Parochial Report with the opportunity to make any adjustments. Emily Davis seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. The motion carried. Harrison will report back to the Vestry next month with answers to questions.

## **Committee Reports:**

Engagement & Hospitality: Emily Davis reported that Chantal Smith is doing a fabulous job in an untenable situation. She has been in touch with folks visiting the church, she has hosted one Zoom Discovery Weekend and will do another Discovery Weekend in April with a hybrid model she has formulated. Participants will pick up dinner and cinnamon rolls on Friday night, have virtual offerings on Saturday and end Sunday with a church service. Emily said she has done a great job of being innovative and working within the parameters she has been given. There are 13 people currently signed up and she is expecting more.

Resource Development: Penn reported that Vestry members will receive instructions from Lauren Sigmon for the Annual Giving Thank-a-Thon. It will require each person to make 10-12 calls.

## Faith in Action:

- Sam Erwin reported that the Can Food Drive was a huge success with over \$5,000 worth of food.
- The kitchen has now prepared over 90,000 lunches for Project Host.
- The committee continues to work on drafting a Vestry resolution. According to Chris Klasing, Christ Church is all about outreach. The 1997 Vestry resolution said that the church was required to offer 10% in outreach; it has reached above 20% in some years.
- Sam said the committee will make a formal resolution to the Vestry in an upcoming meeting. The recommendation is to simplify the outreach process to use readily available accounting data to measure outreach. Also included in the total percentage would be subsidized rents, a percentage of pledge income, and volunteer hours. The goal would be 8-10% as a range. It is understood that the cash outreach and non-cash outreach report would include everything, and it would be up to the Vestry to determine if the church has met the outreach goal.
- Bill Hardaway praised John & Karen Rathburn and the team involved in the Book Ministry. The ministry received a whole stack of thank you notes from the children who received books through Christ Church's partnership with First Steps. The ministry has distributed over 250,000 books.

Norma commended Harrison for his message commemorating the anniversary of the COVID Pandemic.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.