

St. Helena's Episcopal Church and School
 Vestry Meeting Minutes
 21 November 2017

Vestry Present: Tommy Hughston, Renee Snyder, Scott Hardin, Ruth McBride, Paul Johnson, Jasen Hart

Vestry Absent: Tommy Mathews, Julie Vickery, Anne Rea, Cindy Erikson, Linda Lee Gatell, one position open

Clergy: Fr. David Read

Staff / Treasurer: Ann Shorter / Ron Tribo

Visitors: none

Call to Order: 6:30

- Opening Prayer: Ruth McBride
- Motion for approval of October Minutes: R. Snyder, 2nd: S. Hardin, Vote: All in Favor

Rector's Time: D. Read recaps his first month as rector:

- Preaching on Sundays and starting a new Sunday school class
- Learning about the school: visiting chapels, events, being present on campus (excited about great teachers who are skilled at their work)
- Performing one baptism and one funeral
- Meeting with lay ministry leaders and Bishop Folts
- Attending any and all fellowship events
- Performing pastoral care: hospital visits, calls, counseling, Menger Springs service
- Analyzing available spaces and use by many ministries
- Overseeing stewardship and youth ministry growth
- Leading office staff is a joy, recent work with staff at camp capers retreat, how to move forward/ planning, and analyzing staff needs.
- Present needs St. Helena's needs to focus on:
 - Consistency: Parish has become very flexible, but needs to seek deeper practices in tradition esp. In worship (has become shallow due to frequent turnover in clergy)
 - Identity: clear distinction of unique quality and purpose of different services (not just times)
 - Opportunities: transition breeds internal focus, we need to turn outward in vision

- Communication: no newsletter means no venue to tell our story, so he contracted a graphic artist who will work from home to put together a newsletter bi-monthly at \$250 an issue plus postage and printing (done in house).
- Sexton: position open which leaves some things covered while other things are not getting done, and he plans to work it out with the school's current cleaning service to cover the entire campus. Toward hiring a full time sexton (Renee adds that whoever it is needs to be savvy with newer tech)
- Installation moving from 22 November to 10 December 2017 at 6 pm
- Security review (after south Texas shooting) good policies in place but reviewing procedures.
- Scott asks about 9 am service band status: they disbanded in December, Bishop Folts asked Bryce to stay on and he slowly rebuilt the team. Convening group to discuss purpose of 9 am service since it began as seeker sensitive, but has incorporated more and more elements of the 11 am service.
- Ron mentions he's heard a lot of positive feedback concerning sermons.
- Tommy adds that consistency (communication) is a high priority and that we have been operating in crisis more and our internal focus needs to shift to external ministries, the first ten months had the theme of "building for the future" and maybe we need to consider a new or rethought mission.
- Renee mentions that some of the changes in the national church had a negative affect on our parish. She wishes more people could hear from our presiding bishop Michael Curry to encourage participation in the national church and not have a negative view of it since he is a charismatic and engaging preacher. David mentions that the general convention this year is in Austin, so it should be easy for parishioners to participate and that we should not make the national church a scape goat for our own problems. How we lead in the face of controversy is more important. We don't have to agree with the national church 100%, but that doesn't mean we have to leave it. Things like gay marriage and prayer book revision are in the future, and indeed have already surfaced in the diocese, and we can work to prepare parishioners for national movements and resolutions.

Senior Warden Report: (7:09) Tommy H.

- Reads a letter from Bishop Reed concerning the compensation package and that the Vestry, not the clergy, must decide on it. Points out that Diocesan suggested cost of living increase is 2.5%, for 2018, and that we can also consider a merit raise on top of that. ASA averages 256, but we're lagging behind other parishes in compensation.

- New vestry members to be installed 28 January, so four members rolling off will stay past the 31 December.
- St Helena's Christmas party 3 December is only sponsored by House of Luke dinner at six. Sign up to attend at Fair Oaks country club.
- Senior's Christmas party 14 December 11:30 to 1:30 (lunch) As is our custom, Tommy Mathews, not being present, was unanimously elected to be responsible for writing and performing a Christmas skit for the seniors (otherwise Vestry may not perform a skit).
- Reminder to late vestry hosts to not forget to collect the breakfast money and put it in the safe.
- St. Helena's men will return to Fisher's House.
- Bethlehem build 2 December 8 am, 9 December is the tear down.
- SHEEP: Gala update (in J. Vickery's absence) - 95 students in preschool, with 4 pre-K / Kindergarten spots available. School is adjusting the budget to cover some unforeseen expenses. The total of \$12k+ in donations published in the bulletin is really more like \$20k in actual donations. 29 April Ten year anniversary of school (picnic and bounce house etc.). School board plan to report monthly to Vestry with a picture of annual budget standings. Currently, there is no deficit, and October is down for known reasons.

Junior Warden Report: (7:30) Renee

- Anonymous gift of \$5000 to fund Walk in Bethlehem and Messiah
- Grounds: landscaping clean up, vines, need for long range planning committee, Youth House needs a termite inspection and potentially treatment and repairs in the near future. Flat roof on Parish Hall extension has rot ten feet in from back door leading to parking lot and needs repair, and we need to discuss the goal for future use of that building toward repairs, currently no other leaks in the roof. Delay the painting of the building exterior as costs in the 40k range, requires investigation and plan for use. Playground open one week, currently fabricating metal backboards to replace broken plastic ones. Window in Historic sanctuary still undergoing repair / replacement.

Finance and Stewardship Report: (7:42) Ron and Ann

- 30k behind, 13.5k behind on special gifts. Income is the only means of eliminating debt. Numbers looking better, Ron is encouraged by November results
- Currently there are 166 pledges totaling \$742,000, compared to last year's 174 pledges totaling \$663,000.

- Ann contacted ministries about budgeting and making preparations for 2018's budget.
- 54 pledges increased, 21 decreased, 64 pledges remain the same as last year
- 31 new pledges were made totaling \$94,000.
- 35 people pledged in 2017 but not 2018; mailings for those individuals and outstanding balances will be mailed 8 December along with a request for Christmas offerings.
- There are many parishioners who don't pledge but give to plate. The finance committee is discussing how to reach those people.
- The plate has been higher, but many of those people have started pledging so the money shifts. New people take over the plate role so there may not be an increase but a balance. And some people don't give until December or don't pledge until January.

Action items:

Adopt minutes & Financial report - Paul moves, Jasen seconds (all aye)

Around the Table - Ministry Reports, etc : (7:55)

- Ruth: Think about church wide financial piece, a la Dave Ramsey. There's a difference between stewardship and giving.
- Father David: We need to be aware of how often we're asking the congregation to pay for things on top of pledge/giving. The vestry has to manage so the people aren't bled.
- Tommy H.: Thanks and remember the two Bethlehem work days. Around

the Guests: none

Executive session begins: (8:03)

Meeting Adjourns: (8:33)

Announcements:

- 19 December 2017 = next vestry meeting

Closing Prayer: Ruth McBride