

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE VESTRY

The regular meeting of the Vestry of Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church convened online on Wednesday, January 19, 2022, at 4:30 pm.

Vestry members in attendance were Richard D'Antoni, Senior Warden; Erica Sartain, Junior Warden; Arnold Spencer; Warden-At-Large, Stuart Brown, Eric Gilmour, Carol Goglia, Louise Griffeth, John McFarland, Jr., Holly Pena, Kelly Reddell, Darrel Rice, Carol Roehrig, Jack Rubarth, Ginger Sager and Keller Webster.

Ex-officio members in attendance included The Rev. Chris Girata, Rector; Janice Bywaters, Treasurer; and Nancy Wilbur, Clerk. Others in attendance were Rob Baber, Dianna Bowen, The Rev. Ken Brannon, Tony Briggie, Steve Haal, Caroline Law, Caroline Marak, Bhavnita Marish, Colleen O'Hara and Tim Smith.

Richard D'Antoni welcomed everyone to the meeting, and he asked Keller Webster to open with a prayer. Richard then made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Erica Sartain requested that one addition be made to the minutes and that change was made. Louise Griffeth seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda and it was approved.

RECTOR'S REPORT

Chris welcomed the new members to their first Vestry meeting of 2022 and expressed his hope that future meetings would be in person. He especially welcomed Erica Sartain and Arnold Spencer to the new Warden's Committee.

Chris reminded us of Father Harmuth's retirement and the upcoming party celebrating his service that will be held in the Garden Cloister on January 30th. Chris noted two updates to the 75th birthday party celebration and the Saint Michael Musical. The formal dress rehearsal for the musical will be on Thursday, April 21, with only those participating in attendance. The one big show will be Friday, April 22, and tickets are now going to be free due to very strong underwriting support. The big birthday party for the church will now be outside on Sunday, April 24, with lunch being served. Chris thanked everyone who is coordinating the celebration. Richard asked if the tickets could have "donations are accepted" stamped on them in case anyone did want to donate. Chris explained that the reason we were originally selling tickets to the event was to cover the cost of the production but because the underwriting has paid for those costs, an ask for money related to the tickets is not necessary, but he offered to check with the leadership of the events to get their feedback on Richard's idea.

Chris then asked for two Vestry members to participate in hosting the first Saint Michael 101 luncheon of the year on Sunday, January 22, with he and Rev. Mary Lessmann. Louise Griffeth accepted one of the invitations. He then reported on goals going forward that he thinks are very important. Foremost, is the goal of shepherding people back into our physical community.

He is hopeful that this year we shall be able to accomplish this goal. He said that the Lenten season will be focused on doing in-person moments at the church as the virus recedes. Chris thinks that Easter could be a target moment to encourage people to come back to church as Easter is a good season for people to create deeper connections with the church community. We then go into summer where we can be more physical. Keller Webster asked Chris if there is a way going forward to be able to tell our older and more vulnerable population ways in which they can return to church in person safely.

Chris asked Ken and Colleen to address the technology and data base strategies of the Touchpoint firm. Ken said that although much work has been done over the last couple of years, we still need to do a better job in donor tracking. We are hopeful that Touchpoint will be able to enhance our platform and take us to the next level. If not, the church might consider bringing in another company to assist them or go to a different platform entirely as we need to advance our fundraising capabilities. Ken said that Van Sheets is our new IT chair for our Tech Committee, and he is doing an amazing job. Ken asked the Vestry to allow a four-week time frame for our consultant to assess Touchpoint's viability to provide what Stewardship, Finance and the Capital Campaign need. Ken assured the Vestry that regular reports will be given to the Vestry going forward. Richard told Ken that his report was all good news.

SENIOR WARDEN REPORT

Richard asked that all Vestry members return their signed Confidentiality Agreement forms to Bhav. We should also be receiving a Doodle email from Bhav to sign up give the prayer at Vestry meetings this year. Richard suggested that Vestry members be thinking about additional parishioners who might be good candidates for nominees to the Vestry and Diocesan Delegates for next year. He would like for us to have some names in mind by the end of May when we shall begin that process. He said that the Spring Parish Meeting is Sunday, March 6, at 10:00 am in the Sanctuary, and Richard asked Chris to recognize any existing members of the Vestry in attendance at that meeting as he feels it is important for our parishioners to know who their Vestry members are. Richard mentioned that an email has been sent out by Colleen O'Hara concerning the Church Safe Training program. He asked the Vestry members to do the training. Colleen said that the training course is necessary every 3 years, and she offered to check for those who could not remember the last time they took the training course. Ken said that abuse has declined in the Episcopal church because of this training.

JUNIOR WARDEN -no report.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Caroline Marak shared a screen report of the last two weeks online for all to see. As of today, we have cleared the \$6M mark with two weeks left in the 2022 Stewardship Campaign. Chris will be reaching out to some of the people who have not yet pledged, and Caroline will be asking each Vestry member to call approximately 3-5 people. Our goal is \$6.6M. She pointed out that the slightest increase in the average pledge has an impact on our bottom line. She also

wanted us to know that when calling, if we find that someone is ill or suffering other significant problems, we want to assure them that we, the church, is here for them.

Caroline then addressed the question about demographics and the definition of “new pledges”. She explained, for example, someone who is a parishioner who has not pledged in the last 3-5 years but is still on our roles as an active member is considered a “new pledge” vs. someone who has recently moved here and is new to the parish and has never pledged. She said her committee is studying this. Richard pointed out that our information analysis will be easier as we continue to build our data bases and IT program. Louise asked Caroline about duplicate calls from different departments that are also calling. Caroline said that the people we shall be calling have been contacted multiple times as well as have received email communications. She will be sending us a script to use when calling.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Finance Committee Report to Vestry January 19th

Janice Bywaters, Treasurer, reported on the Finance Committee meeting Tuesday, January 18th. The year ended with no surprises. The soft close indicates that we will close with \$7.7MM in Total Operating Revenue, this is \$154M under budget; we will likely collect a portion of the negative 2021 variance the first quarter of ’22. It will be reflected in the ’22 financials. After Diocese assessment and other outreach contributions, Total 2021 Revenue Available is approximately \$6.9MM or 2.4% under budget.

Expenses continued with positive variances. The YE statement includes the performance bonus and debt forgiveness Vestry approved in December, so we are not seeing the big positive variances at YE that we saw last month. The other two areas that were over budget were communications and music. Communications was over due to additional mailings and the successful use of professional search firms to help fill vacancies. Music was over because we returned to the big church earlier than expected so have the added expense of staff singers. We are proud that SMES is now fully covering their shared services agreement. That agreement has been renegotiated for 2022 to reflect their increased space usage; they are budgeting an ability to fully cover the load.

Yearend surplus is projected to be approximately \$46M.

Last month in Vestry an unplanned gift of \$250M was noted, by year end unplanned gifts totaled \$370M. In FC yesterday we discussed these gifts and a tentative recommendation for their use together with the use of our year end surplus. Unplanned gifts of \$370M plus the positive budget variance \$46M bring the total surplus to \$416M. The Warden’s had agreed on the recommendation for use of the \$416M in the prior week. The recommendation is presented today for your consideration. The Vestry will vote on the use of the surplus next month after the hard close.

One of the gifts was specifically dedicated to support Christmas expenses, and of course we honored that request. Otherwise, the gifts were given to be used by the Rector's discretion for the ongoing work of the church.

We recommend an increase to the Christmas plate by \$10M and this makes our total gift approximately \$46M which is line with our pre-pandemic plate. \$40M was used for Christmas programming. We are recommending \$50M to be used for AVL and Tech projects, this includes improving the lighting in the chapel and camera upgrades for streaming.

We are recommending \$70M to utilize search firms for the filling of three key positions. We have discovered firms whose specializations will be ideal. We might not need to use the full \$70M, but we are committed to filling these key positions.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Richard asked the Vestry to read the handout in the Vestry Packet entitled Summary of 2021 Budget Surplus and Use of Funds. He explained that because of Covid, we had lost a year of the 3-year program to invest in growth and engagement. The last item shows that we are pushing the plan forward to 2022, 2023 and 2024 of investment and growth. Chris thanked Janice for her very clear explanation of how the surplus will be used. He asked the new Vestry members if they had any questions. Carole Goglia asked from where this money has come. Chris explained that the surplus has come from generous gifts from Saint Michael families. Some of the gifts are donated for specific reasons but most of them are general-use gifts. He said that he has made it a priority to nurture parishioners to think of the church first when making a special gift. They are told that the church will work with them as to where their gift will best be used. Chris explained that we took the value of the 2020 PPP loan we received to use over the next 3 years in church entities. Because of the generosity of our parishioners, we were able to extend that loan over another year. Richard feels that there has been an increase of trust in the Clergy and staff that encourages our parishioners to give. Chris thinks that there has been a shift in development because due to transparency, they know their gift will be used well. He said that since 2016, we have increased the amount of giving by almost 35%, and it is a blessing. Richard said that this surplus proposal will be voted on next month after we receive the hard close information.

Holly said that she and Erica have been working with Chris over the last year to help enunciate his goals that relate to the VTO. She addressed the evaluation form that had been sent out to the Vestry at the end of the year asking Vestry members to assess Chris' progress toward these goals. The feeling is that our mutual ministry together is an opportunity for the Vestry to provide their input. The response from the Vestry was very positive. This VTO progress will continue, and Holly encouraged the Vestry to take notes from Chris' reports at our meetings as she will be reaching out to the Vestry mid-summer for their input after a full year has passed.

Lastly, and most satisfying, is that we are recommending \$246M be contributed to a reserve allowing the church to prefund designated staff and program initiatives outlined at the end of

last year expanding our engagement and outreach. Extending the support for these initiatives through 2024 provides the church an opportunity to grow into support of the programs. Richard pointed out that this review is for both Chris' and the parish's benefit. He thinks that we have an obligation to help Chris grow in his ministry.

Richard then addressed the handout entitled Vestry Liaison Role and Responsibilities. He asked the Vestry to read it and to offer any questions they may have. He also asked each member to address any area of interest they might have in an individual entity and to let it be known this year, and they could possibly shadow the existing Vestry member in his/her liaison role. The entities and their liaisons are as follows: B&G, Erica Sartain; Jubilee, Darrel Rice; WOSM, Louise Griffeth; Finance, Janice Bywaters; M&O, Carol Goglia; SMES, Ginger Sager; Foundation, Arnold Spencer and HR Committee, Holly Pena.

The last handout to be addressed was the Handbook Addendum. Richard reminded us that the new Handbook was approved last year. This addendum is specific for the Saint Michael Woman's Exchange employees and their holidays. Richard then made a motion to approve the addendum, and it was seconded by Carol Roerhig. The motion passed.

Richard asked for any further questions or comments, and Stuart Brown told Ken Brannon that he, Stuart, was instrumental in bringing Touchpoint software to the church. He offered to be of help in any way that he could. Ken thanked Stuart.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Wilbur
Clerk of the Vestry