

The Episcopal Church of St. Andrew – New London, NH

Vestry Meeting Minutes

20 February 2020

Present: Jay MacLeod, Bruce Avery, Joe Daly, Marni Eaton, Morris Edwards, Chris Heyl, Lin Potter, Mike Quinn, Russ Register, Barbara Smith, Greg Vogt, Alice Perry.

Absent: Lisa Kelly.

Guest: Aaron Jenkyn.

Jay opened the meeting with a prayer, including a collect for Frederick Douglass who died on this date in 1895.

January minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Music Director: Jay reported that out of 23 candidates, 10 were interviewed on Skype. Of three finalists from that group, one has withdrawn; the remaining two, one from San Diego and one from New Jersey, will audition and interview on 2 and 4 March, with an opportunity to meet Shelly Boucher, Nicole Densmore and Aaron and also explore housing options. Candidates will be given 75% of their transportation costs and both are reported to be interested in the Upbeat position at Epiphany in Newport as well. Jay indicated the search committee is excited by the caliber of the candidates. Interim Don Cox expects to be done at the end of March so we are likely to need another interim before a new Director is able to begin.

Treasurer's report: Mike reviewed the 2019 year-end report, noting that we out-performed the budget by a substantial margin, in part due to bequests and one-time donations that had not been budgeted as expected revenue. Expenses were also under what had been budgeted, resulting in an approximately \$151,000 surplus to be invested.

Mike also reviewed ledger to budget figures for January 2020, noting we are about \$10,000 ahead in revenue compared to this time in 2019.

In response to a question about the funds remaining (about \$2,000) from the original \$60,000 donated anonymously to support the Outreach Commission's Last Sunday, we also learned that two new donors have pledged \$10,000 and \$20,000 respectively. Shelly, Bruce and Mike will discuss the best place to deposit those funds for easy access as matching funds to the monthly open plate offering.

Children & Church Together: Aaron reported on the first Messy Church event held 16 February, with about 40 worshippers at the Eucharist and meal that followed, with perhaps more in attendance at the various stations in the parish hall. She said new families had come and both expressed interest in the next Messy Church (slated for 22 March). Aaron expects the program to evolve over time, and hopes to schedule one about every six weeks. She and Jay emphasized that connection with the community is very important and that all of us need to be involved in that process, with Messy Church as a nice way to introduce newcomers to worship.

Incorporating children in worship at the all-age service is in progress, and we are working to be more flexible regarding roles (and their scheduling) during the service by providing opportunities for the youngsters to take on roles they want to take on. Emmy Potter, for example, is applying for a Lay Eucharistic Minister license (with the Bishop's approval) although under the age limit normally set for such a role.

Safety issues: Joe referred to an emailed report sent to vestry earlier this week, noting that he Bruce, Marni, Chris, Anne Hall, Shelly and Billy Kelly met as a committee from which the report was the result. He reported that Shelly is alone in the church perhaps 20% of the time and has felt unsafe at those times. Recommendations include electronic door locks and video monitoring, plus training of ushers, greeters and "security leaders" in prevention of and/or response to adverse events.

Jay (regretting that he had not been at the committee meeting to share his thoughts then), cited the 23rd psalm's admonition to fear no evil, and is concerned that the recommendations are "out of fear rather than out of grace." He asks that we carefully review how each proposal is going to help. Aaron similarly noted that while we may be safer by locking doors it is not what we are called to do as followers of Jesus. Mike stated that safety and welcome/helpfulness are not mutually exclusive. In other comments we heard about experiences with unfamiliar visitors and were reminded that the Thrift Shop door needs similar monitoring to the main entrance.

No decisions were made at this meeting. Joe will share by email input from Anne Hall's research related to Safe Church practices elsewhere in the diocese and we will revisit the recommendations at our March meeting.

Vestry meeting calendar: In an effort to provide sufficient time between Executive Committee meetings on the second Tuesday of the month (when vestry agenda is discussed) and vestry meetings on the third Thursday, Alice suggested three months when we might move the vestry meeting to the fourth Thursday. Due to conflicts for one of those, only meetings in July and October will move to the fourth Thursday. The schedule for the remainder of the year is as follows:

19 March, 16 April, 21 May, 18 June, **23 July**, 20 August, 17 September, **22 October**, 19 November and 17 December.

Lay Minister License Applications: Applications for Lay Eucharistic Ministers John and Louise Moses and Emmy Potter were approved. The forms were signed by Alice as clerk and by Jay.

Jay closed the meeting with a moment of silence and our mutual blessing.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice Perry, Clerk

Note: The next vestry meeting will be at 5 PM on 19 March.