

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

Vestry Meeting Minutes

20 March 2018

Present: Bruce Avery, Harvey Best, Joe Daly, Marni Eaton, Mark Kellett, Jay MacLeod, Peter Ruth, Lisa Kelly, Barbara Smith, Morris Edwards, Alice Perry.

Absent: Lin Potter, Greg Vogt.

Jay opened the meeting with a prayer.

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

Small groups: Review and prospects for the future: Morris reviewed the experience of his Meeting Jesus in John group, noting three factors that contributed to its success. (1) small size but large enough to be diverse and to learn from each other; (2) element of trust permitting members to learn and share deep and profound thoughts while getting to know one another; (3) Bible verses, messages and program structure provided by the brothers. While some Morris spoke with may have found the structure rigid, for the most part other group leaders and participants echoed his pleasure with the “heart-opening” program.

Jay noted that participants are asked to complete a one-page evaluation form. Recognizing that worship can't carry the full freight of our spiritual life, and as a way to incorporate new people and build trust and companionship, we must discern together how to move forward with additional small groups. These are meant to enhance discipleship, and encourage us to explore our interior lives with scripture as a focus. In addition to studying the responses on evaluation forms, we need to explore what has worked in other Episcopal churches. Jay asked that we re-visit this topic at the April meeting.

Bruce reported that the **photo directory** was well-done but with a disappointingly-low number of parishioners with photos. The directory will be available in about one month. Bruce will check with some of those whose photos are not included to gauge their interest in a new photo opportunity that would result in a supplement to the now-completed new directory.

In anticipation of the **Bishop's visitation**, Jay indicated little response to announcements of impending confirmation and reception. After some discussion of ways to identify and encourage people who might be interested in confirmation, reception or reaffirmation, we decided to schedule a “newcomers gathering.” Marni and Barbara will lead the planning as we also continue with announcements and emails about the Bishop's visit.

Peter's financial report: Our financial position remains strong with cash in bank accounts of \$186,673.14 and total liquid assets including endowment of \$863,350.10. February was a good month with an increase in total income and expenses under control.

Jay also noted that he is meeting with Charlie Forbes to lay the groundwork for a legacy giving campaign early in 2019.

Youth delegates on vestry: As Jay completed the annual parish return for the diocese he noted a question about this position for which we currently have no response. Noting it is high-time we had youth representation, his recommendation is to have two serve together for mutual support. After some questions regarding by-laws and other technicalities, Jay will consult with the diocese to discover best practice. Further discussion is planned for the April meeting.

Buildings and grounds: Harvey noted he continues to investigate renting hallway rugs versus purchasing and cleaning our own throughout the worst weather. In the process of recent boiler repair we discovered the need for a new hot water heater (\$1350). Because the boiler is at least 40 years old, Harvey has begun to investigate options for replacement, perhaps moving away from oil-fired. Further, he has replaced hallway lighting over the plaque with LED bulbs. He anticipates replacing more of the fluorescent fixtures with LED if there are no problems with the change already made. Harvey has also obtained blood pressure monitor and stethoscope to have on hand should a parishioner experience a health problem, for use by medical personnel on hand while awaiting response to a 911 call.

Social media: Alice brought the vestry up to date on the recently established “website working group,” noting that she will be trained by Rebecca Emery and Mary Eysenbach as back-up editor. The group will meet periodically to ensure design and content are suitable to our mission. In that context Jay reminded us that the website is our window to newcomers and young people even when most users are church members looking for current information. In that context, we are working to make our outreach efforts more prominent on the site.

Jay said that while he has had an offer by someone to create a Facebook page he does not yet have four people to volunteer to keep the page current on a rotating basis throughout the year. Church members who already use Facebook would be encouraged to share St. Andrew’s postings as another window to newcomers.

Seeking Shalom is an online interactive six-week course that includes a weekly meeting of participants. Jay previously described it as a critique of and suggestions for how to provide charity and outreach. The weekly meetings are set to begin on Friday, April 13 and will be held from 10:30 to 11:30 AM. St. Andrew’s has purchased a group registration for \$500. The program will be offered to the first 25 registrants at \$10, to be paid into a “bucket” in the church office. Additional registrations will be at a cost of \$25 (online) but with a \$10 refund from that bucket. Billy Kelly is administrator for the program.

Briefings:

An Outreach Brief that Jay shared with the vestry by email with positive response will be sent to outreach commission members.

Bruce and Joe recently toured the church with police and will soon meet with Harvey to complete the church’s Emergency Plan. More information will be presented at the April meeting.

Lisa described the high-schoolers involvement in this weekend's March for Our Lives, including an evening meeting open to the public for creating posters and t-shirts in support of the march(es).

Jay spoke about working with Bishop Rob to sponsor a public forum on gun violence.

Jay will be taking some vacation time April 2-6 and April 23-27. He will be present for weekend services each time.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Alice Perry, Clerk