

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

Vestry Meeting Minutes

22 August 2019

Present: Jay MacLeod, Bruce Avery, Harvey Best, Marni Eaton, Morris Edwards, Lisa Kelly, Lin Potter, Russ Register, Barbara Smith, Greg Vogt, Alice Perry.

Absent: Joe Daly, Becky Forbes.

Marni opened the meeting with a prayer.

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

Financial Report: Becky Forbes submitted her ledger report by email to all vestry members prior to the meeting. It was moved, seconded and **voted unanimously to accept the report as submitted.** We had no questions to forward to Becky. Marni also reminded us that she had forwarded Becky Rylander's Outreach report.

Foyer groups: As last year, Marni and Janie Webster will put out a sign-up sheet for those interested in participating in a new round of foyer groups. Peter Ruth will be invited to assist them in organizing the new groups sometime after Labor Day.

Stewardship planning: Morris noted that he and Jeanne have agreed to serve again as Stewardship chairs for 2019 and are looking for successors for the subsequent year(s). A short stewardship campaign will be launched following Jay's sermon on 13 October with ingathering of pledges set for 17 November. A target for the campaign will be established after reviewing lists of those who have moved away, those who have passed away and those who are newcomers, and the proposed 2020 budget. The theme of the campaign will also be determined. A celebratory dinner will take place on 22 November. We noted the absence of a legacy program.

Buildings and Grounds: Harvey expressed frustration in his efforts to work with contractors. He has learned that it is necessary to fortify the acoustical ceiling tile in the hallway before insulation can be installed; similarly there are steps to be taken before insulating in the parish hall. Because these steps involve a greater expenditure than had been forecast by the energy audit, Harvey will take the issue to the Green Committee for a cost-benefit analysis before moving forward.

Greg noted that it may be as late as the November diocesan convention before we learn the outcome of our diocesan grant application.

Rainbow flag: Prior to the meeting the vestry reviewed information to be found at [BBC - Culture - The history of the rainbow flag](#) and [Church Clarity | Ambiguity is Harmful, Clarity is Reasonable](#), summaries of comments received by email and via the suggestion box pro and con, and individual letters submitted by James Dunford and Joe Daly.

Bruce spoke about the Biblical significance of the rainbow and the importance of meaningful action to support a statement that “all are welcome.” He also noted that the Episcopal Church in particular has taken a stance supportive of LGBTQ. In consequence he noted that while we had received statements both for and against the rainbow flag there is no reason to see it as a win-lose situation. He proposed that we show and talk about both flags, rotating between the outside wall and the indoor parish hall wall, every three weeks.

In further discussion there was concern that the rainbow flag is not inclusive and that it is both “inadequate and inappropriate” in today’s world of bigotry. Others offered that the two signs are saying the same thing -- one qualifies the other, and in the absence of any other available symbol, and with appropriate education for parishioners, we might go forward.

It was moved, seconded and **approved by an 8 to 2 margin to rotate a new rainbow banner with the existing “welcome” banner on a three-week schedule with appropriate education and conversation with the parish.**

Bishop’s curate: Jay outlined the possibility of engaging Leah Torrey for a one-quarter time curacy with St. Andrew’s and Epiphany under a program initiated by the Bishop that would provide a portion of the funding. The vestry signaled its approval in principle for Jay and Aaron Jenkyn to form a committee to explore Leah’s interest and qualifications.

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 September.