

St. Mark's Church
Vestry Meeting Agenda
Sunday, July 16, 2006
1:15 p.m.

Present:

Clergy and Staff: Shearon Williams and Susan Block
Wardens: Mike Townsend, Charley Donnelly
Vestry members: Eileen Blumenthal, Don Mosher, Susan Thigpen,
Margaret Woods, Kathryn Gerhard, Bruce Sherman
Officers: Pete Townsend, Nadine Hathaway
Personnel: Michael Knipe

1 Approval of June Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes: Eileen – Susan seconded and the Minutes were approved.

Approval of Endowment Committee:

Margaret moved to approve Penny Hansen as Endowment Committee Co-chair. Susan – seconded. Motion carried

2. Treasurer's Report - Pete Carlson

Pete highlighted several budget developments since the beginning of this year.

- We have gained 12 new pledging households since January and lost 2, to bring us to our current level of 394.
- We have collected 47% of the income members pledged for this year – members are paying their pledges at same pace as last year.
- We have received \$18,000 in late payments on last year's pledges. This is more than we expected.
- We received an unexpected special offering of \$15,000 (members who made a payment in excess of their pledge).
- Plate income running behind last year, but we expect that with guest preachers and advertisements, it will go up.
- Expenses are running above last year.
 - Half of the increase over last year is due to higher salaries and payroll costs
 - One-quarter of the increase over last year is due to higher administrative costs -- canvass expenses, copying, etc.
 - One-quarter of the increase over last year is due to higher utility bills
- We are spending at same pace as last year, with 49% of budget spent by mid-year
- Parish programs are spending well below budgeted amounts, except for Worship, mainly because we bought two mikes @ \$600 a piece.

The Finance Committee is in the process of putting together the 2007 budget, and will have a first draft later in July.

3. Plans for Canvass - Greg Niblett

Greg announced that he came to the Vestry meeting to brainstorm: What's feasible? People made the jump last year to \$800,000. Will they do that again? The question Greg asked is if we are really giving what we can we give to the church?

Statistics from 2005 canvass:

- 40 people didn't increase at all.
- Parish income was carried at top and middle of giving spectrum
- 395 pledges – probably go to 400 this year.

If we are at \$912,000 and if the dream is that the budget should be \$1 million for the church and \$1 million in outreach, there needs to be lots of education.

- There was a targeted effort last year to raise gifts to the \$1,000 level.

Greg noted that the theme will probably center on “the promise of belonging”, part two.

- Giving people a reason to give.
- Promise of belonging.
- Leaving no stone unturned – mechanics as well as message. Why you belong to the community
- Of the \$850K, \$60,000 income came from new people. Wondered if we can we do that again?
- Several of the large increases are not going to do that again. We have to stay credible with the church.

What worked seemed to be:

- Small group meetings with lots of people
- Clergy involvement
- More targeted letters
- Use of email more

Discussion:

The discussion concerned what would motivate members to give more and where the new members were going to come from. Other points were:

- To remember our achievement in reaching 10% tithing to Diocese – it took several years to reach that goal. New piece of the education theme. Wanting to reach certain percentage.
- People in older age group can think about longer-term commitments. Planned giving should be highlighted.
- People are going to react negatively to tithing for individual pledges.
- Low pledgers give a high proportion of their income. I don't want to make those people uncomfortable – I didn't like the increase to \$1000.

- Question “where do we want to be in 2008 – 2009? How does each canvass build on previous year? How does this reflect on how we want to be in the world? How do we as a community offer things to larger world?”
- It’s important to lay out the canvass in the context of the sabbatical
- There has to be a way to handle the infrastructure so it doesn’t grow 6% a year.

Greg was asked, are you concerned with those who increased significantly? There is some precarious giving. People who are retiring and that affects giving level.

- Several members agreed that the energy of last year’s canvass allowed us to do new things.
- There are some definite things to note from this year’s canvas yield:
\$8,000 in outreach
No cost for Maunday Thursday
Reduced cost for Shrine Mont.
- We need to be on the alert to capture LCF graduates for this year’s canvass. But it was noted that the LCF class members have already made a commitment.

Greg expressed the hope that we can all work together in the fall to reach who’s ever left in last week in October by email. He took away the impression that the Vestry thought that we can increase our goals successfully.

Mike noted that the sermons will be: Sept 3 Mike; Sept 17 Shearon; Sept 24 Greg; October – guest preacher on canvass.

4. Consideration of Restoring the Vestry Greeting (Mike)

A short discussion expressing that there was a need to reinstate the live Vestry greeting... Vestry could also collect newcomer cards and get them to Shearon.

Motion made and carried that we reinstate Vestry Greeting.

We need to inform Co-Directors of Worship that starting next Sunday there will be Vestry greeters again.

Nadine will send out the list to everyone.

5. Sabbatical Report (Mike and Shearon)

Mike commented that there are some loose ends.

- Time line project moving forward
- Festival dance party in October
- Journaling project

Kenn and Janice will get the Sabbatical group back together – meeting July 27 to focus on moving forward. They will identify leaders for projects and coordinate all the efforts. A report will come back to Vestry after that meeting to report thinking about end product of all this.

Susan suggested that they look for way to feed the activity into small groups for canvass.

Guest preachers: Ben Pratt here next week – his visit Sunday (and Crab Sunday) will be different from others. Pattern for others –

- Sermon Seminar; preach at 11:15 –
- Ask guest preachers some prepared questions;
- Collect other questions on cards;
- Record the discussion for the preacher
- The pub lunch attendees will have a chance to talk (like the sermon seminar opportunity.)

Mike said he will keep community aware of Paul's arrivals and other details.

6. Junior Warden's Report (Charley)

Copies of Charley's report had not reached all Vestry members, so he will send them out.

Summary of projects:

1. Don L. has taken on Third Street Fence restoration. The Fabric Committee wanted a lead paint analysis – don't want to expose volunteers to this. We have to anticipate that it's going to cost money. The work must be done on site.
- 2 Terrazzo tile restoration
3. Redoing the finish on the Nave floor
4. The exterior doors on A Street need refinishing (but we don't want to spend money on that at this point.)

Terry Adlhock is meeting with DC Dept of Energy – The recommendation was to replace on all incandescent with compact florescent lights. He's trying to get a grant for \$500 for this purpose from DC.

5. Library: is proceeding with drawings. Some members expressed concern that the project was not moving as quickly as had been hoped.
6. It was noted in a discussion of the back stage area that the project was on hold subject to the Vestry's decision. Vestry was referred back to the February - March 2006 Minutes for the language of authorization to proceed on back stage area. There is confusion about what Dave Bell

(architect) will be doing for \$1000. Charley suggested that we get library done and then work with David on back stage. Charley asked how urgent is work on back stage area for classroom? The two youngest classes will need sizable classrooms.

Pete: reminded us that the building budget had \$101,000 available at beginning of the year. We've spent \$57,000 as of June 30th. We have something less now—and we must keep \$20,000 in bank.

7. Children's Choir Update (Bruce and Don)

Bruce's assignment was to go out to get cost of children's choir in the \$4,000 range. They spoke to Keith who doubted that the \$4,000 figure would prove adequate. They will speak with Keith again this week.

Don calling other churches including:

- Christ Church Capitol Hill –
- Church of Brethren, Metropolitan UMC(their position filled by parishioner had stipend was established years ago have same time commitment paying \$2000 a year)
- Foundry UNC – has a volunteer

8. Update on Ed Green's Contract (Mike)

Maintenance Contract is in flux. There's a meeting next Tuesday. Current contract with Ed was extended – while looking at options and rewriting the contract. More information at the next meeting. Tutu was hired to replace Anna – set up coffee, etc., on Sunday mornings.

9. What's new, working, not working, what needs attention

In the area of **on-line pledging**: Karen Falk has looked into resources and at a suite of services. She gave Mike and Bruce a memo – The basic question remains what we want to do? If we want to support pledging as starting place, "Acceptiva" remains the way to go. With 3.5% service fee on each gift. This is the usual service fee.

Bruce: If you want to support the upcoming canvass, take this program with a link on a web site, make the payment. You get notice by email.

Discussion concerned how much money St. Marks's would lose in fees if a sizable number of pledgers paid on-line. Several scenarios were used: if one-third used this on-line method, there would be a loss of \$11,000 in fees. The loss could be \$35,000 in fees if everyone used this service. It would also add to Susan Block's and Warren's time and work load.

We are going to put interactive pledge forms on the Web. Questions arose about security, verification and acknowledgments.

Susan Block noted that there had only been 2-3 phone calls in 6 years to ask to pay on-line. These are usually at the end of December. Warren makes the check for 40-45 people.

It was suggested that folks look into "Acceptiva.com"

It was decided to go back to do research by talking with the Pillar heads about their needs, talk to Warren about how his work would be effected by electronic pledge payments and to Greg about the implications for the canvass.

Since there is no meeting in August, there will be an e-vote by the Vestry, if necessary. Mike concluded that either we're trying to encourage people to use service and get payments on line or you are discouraging people to do this because of the fee. Why do it at all?

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The **Vestry Greeters** sign up:

July 23	9 a.m. Eileen	11:15 Bruce
July 30	Burton	Don M.
August 6	Michael K	Michael K
August 13	Dave. W.	_____
August 20	Margaret	Susan T.
August 27	Mike	Charley
Sept. 3	10 a.m. only _____	
Sept. 10	Eileen	Nadine
Sept 17	Kathy	Pete

The Meeting ended at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Hathaway
Register