

**Vestry Meeting
Minutes
June 25, 2006
DRAFT**

Present: Paul Abernathy, Rector, Senior Warden Mike Townsend
Members: Kathryn Gerhard, Don Mosher, Eileen Blumenthal, Margaret Wood, Bruce Sherman, Burton Reist, Susan Thigpen
Officers: Pete Carlson, Treasurer; Nadine Hathaway, Register; Michael Knipe, Human Resources; Rosemary Harold, Vestry Counsel.
Staff: Susan Block

Opening prayer: Paul Abernathy

1:30 – Paul made a motion, seconded by Susan, to formally approve Michael Knipe as Human Resources Officer. There was a unanimous vote (Lisa voted in affirmative in absentia.) The term is one- year renewable. A meeting with members of the Human Resources Committee has been scheduled to get their input into issues that need attention.

1:35 – Convention Report (Paul)

Paul made some remarks about the Convention and reminded everyone that he would convene a meeting on Wednesday evening (6/28) to speak more fully. He was asked to explain the decision around the convention public statement on appointing gays as bishops. Vestry members asked where Paul stood and what Bishop Chane’s reaction.

Background: The Windsor Report was produced by Archbishop of Canterbury. Presiding Bishop Griswold and George Werner appointed a special committee to take the report to the Convention –The report produced resolution A161 - that the Episcopal Church would pursue restraint. (Both houses have to approve legislation.) On the 8-9th legislative day, Bishop Griswold called together a group to produce language that would appease all members and to reach consensus. Incoming Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori came before the House of Deputies to make an appeal that A161 get passed. The House of Deputies and the House of Bishops passed it.

Paul added that Linda Smith Bugge’s art work was displayed at Eucharist every day. She had four pieces that showed up during the week.

1:45 – Children’s Choir Director Update

Bruce handed out a memo from Don Mosher and himself. Their sub-committee consisted of Keith Reas, Leslie Allen and Terri Trissell.

He highlighted their findings:

- A questionnaire had been sent out to families with children grades 1-3. They were asked:
 1. if they would support a choir
 2. If they would place children in it
 3. when they would like to have rehearsal (Sunday 9 – 9:45 or 8 – 8:45 or Thursday)

The sub-committee received 20-21 responses to questionnaires and felt it was a good exercise – Based on survey, the sub-committee learned:

- The overwhelming desire to hire a part-time director to do children's choir.
- holding Sunday rehearsals.
- that discontinuing children's choir is not an option.
- finding a volunteer does not seem possible within the parish.
- families were in favor of on-going rehearsals and service participation, as opposed to having a smaller period of time in which a group rehearses for an appearance on festival day or something like that.
- Proposed cost basis: \$4000. for 40 weeks -- 2-3 hours a week total at \$100 a week.
- Keith to have active role in the selection and final contract; sub-committee would help with recruiting.
- A large body of children in church and sends good signal to community.

There are 100 families with kids in age range in church database. We don't know if they are active. There are 52 children 5 and under – nearly half will be eligible for the choir in the next two years. The October 2003 survey had the same results – pointing in same direction, according to Leslie Allen. If we fund for 3 years, it will bring in other families in the future. This year there were 6-7 members who did not belong to St. Mark's.

A lengthy discussion followed on where the Vestry would find the money and whether St. Mark's could offer someone longer than a one-year contract.

Questions included:

- Margaret: We don't want to jeopardize the budget – can't rely on another great canvass.
- Paul: should we desire to do this, I would not have a problem signing on a time certain contract.
- Michael: what would be our commitment toward a part-time children's music director. – particularly if there was a budget crunch. Other options?
- Susan: expressed concerns about making budget decisions in isolation of other programs.

- Pete: The problem is that we're out of our budget consideration – and we're looking for fall. Finance committee meets next month – it could be taken up.
- Eileen: it fits the main things we should be focusing on: worship and the needs of children and families. Newcomers see lots of participation. We might have to look at money for camp.
- Paul – it's the time for recruiting someone – A candidate has to be recruited now.
- Burton: We've had one good canvass, the so we might want to hold this conversation after canvass. In the meantime, we can spend a little money to keep it going...not stop it now and see where we are a year from now.
- Kathryn – vote for a year's contract.
- Paul: It is our intent to make it a priority

Susan made the motion: To approve the intention of the Vestry to continue a K-3 choir program by contracting a part-time children's choir director for a one-year term, reporting to the Director of Music with Vestry approval of final salary.

Seconded - Kathryn. Call the question: All approved.

Michael will work with Keith to get job description finalized.

Paul asked how the chain of supervision would work? Nadine said that Keith as director of music was the natural supervisor.

2:00 – Shrine Mont report (Mike)

Mike: report is not final because the finances have not totally closed; we did not need \$3000 to supplement for children programs (\$2500-\$2700 range.) The money will remain in vestry budget

- Subsidizing of children did not result in more children. There were 17 between 4-10 years old. Fewer teens than last year. More smaller kids
- Fewer people camped. This was not the outcome anticipated.
- Weekend went very well. Logistic flowed smoothly. People seemed happy
- Enormous list of ideas around sabbatical related. Mike has 27 pieces of newsprint.
- Paul wants a copy of final budget to submit to the Wilmer Conference Fund for \$600 reimbursement. To get it you have to send receipts and an evaluation of the conference.

2:10 – Sabbatical Update (Mike)

- July 7 party -- Doris Burton has great plans.
- July 9 service -- Vicky Street and John Terry are putting together service. There will be some symbolic handing off of leadership from Paul to Shearon and Mike.

- Guest preacher schedule is coming together. Summer guest preachers: July 23 -- Ben Pratt and August 13 Imam Yusuf Saleem are confirmed.

Mike hopes to have schedule announced soon so that it can be publicized internally and externally. Bishop Spong (January) and Bishop Harris (December) will require lodging at the Capitol Hill Suites. Bishop Spong costs quite a bit. Since the rest are as budgeted, we are within Lilly Endowment budget

■ Advertising

Rosemary and Michael presented a proposal to raise funds to advertise guest preachers and the Sabbatical theme. With a proposed budget of \$1,900, the funds could be raised through solicitations in the St. Mark's community and through the Vestry. They want to borrow the approach from greening the nave – ask people to give money and get recognition in the bulletin.

If approved, they felt that we are already behind schedule. Their plan calls for:

- Series of newspaper advertisements – *Voice of the Hill and Hill Rag*. Each has different distribution schedule. They will use the same format each time with new speakers listed as appropriate.
- An outside banner from Kinko's naming the theme.
- Flyers on cardboard would be placed in store windows and paper flyers produced with whole schedule
- They have 2 volunteers to write feature stories or press releases to roll out – interview the guest preacher in advance and get it out to Hill papers, Washington Post Religion page as features, and to colleges, seminaries, etc.

Rosemary said that they will need help from others to carry out other suggestions.

Discussion

- There were questions about raising the money: Should Vestry allow fundraising or dip into the budget? The suggestion was raised to ask a couple people to underwrite it?
- Pete: there is \$1600 left over to Gospel and \$4000 for Sabbatical which we so far do not have allocated. Other concerns were discussed about the purpose of the program.
- Don: We might use this as an opportunity to explain what we are about. If there is an assumption that a guest is not from St Mark's – would it intrigue them?
- Mike suggested that we look at this as an opportunity to do effective outreach focused on drawing people in. The potential benefit is high.
- Eileen – all the other elements will be going on. Visitors might be drawn in and kept here.

Motion: by Kathryn – to allocate \$2,400 to Rosemary and Michael for a communications program during Sabbatical.

Seconded by Bruce

Vote carried

Library Construction Update (Mike)

As Charley was not present, Mike summarized: Proposal for architectural drawings which indicate a door in Library and glass in top spot – to comply with safety rules. Estimate for drawings \$2000-\$3000 to come out of the building fund. Next month the Vestry will be called upon to approve actual construction.

A second plan for the space behind mural for classroom and perhaps extend Mezzanine would cost \$1000. Charley will explain those projects and clarify these questions about price.

2:55 – Baxter House Phone System Update (Mike, Paul)

Update: detailed discussion at last meeting; SMTI proposal – computer IT services.

1. We will change parish email addresses soon to @St.Marks.net and full name@,,,. There will be 25 mail boxes. There might be an address available for canvass.
2. At the last meeting, Kathrine was asked to go back for references among clients. She spoke to three clients – all agreed SMTI was excellent and available for support and advice
3. Wiring – based on SMTI's understanding there could be potential wiring problems – SMTI would determine wiring flaws – They understand that this expense could be a deal breaker. If wiring repair is needed, they would come back to Vestry to reconsider. We would decide at that time how we might move forward.
4. Conference call capability – Given that there are several conference call services that provide free calling, it was decided not to add conference call service to the agreement.

Pete stated that we can find the money.

Mike made a motion for approval to go ahead with the proposal, with the proviso to come back if fatal flaws in wiring are found.

Second Susan

The motion was carried.

Paul reminded everyone that the Vestry has to approve the minutes formally at each meeting.

Paul called for approval of the May 21 minutes– The motion was approved and seconded.

What's New, What's Not Working, What Needs Attention

Mike:

1. Jo Ellen Hayden has closed the books on the sponsorship on the Mississippi family St. Mark's assisted. There were \$2100 in total expenses and \$3000 raised. The balance went to Lutheran Episcopal Services of Mississippi, the organization overseeing the family's recovery.

JoEllen ask the Vestry to consider further supporting the Lutheran Episcopal Services of Mississippi by holding a "Shrimp Fest" – (possibly on September 10th with tickets at \$25) to support the shrimp industry. This event would replace Pub Lunch. Don suggested that someone could provide an alternative lunch. He reminded us that if Pub Lunch is supposed to encourage fellowship and if the shrimp event precludes fellowship, there should be another option. He offered to raise the subject with Jim Steed and Doris Strange and come back to Vestry. There were further questions about dates and the alternative meal.

2. Karen Falk completed research on-line pledging and sent something to Bruce and Mike. At the next meeting, they will summarize the options. Bruce called for some reflection in considering on-line pledging. He suggested that might want to think about what we want right now. Do we need more?

3. Kathryn asked about what had happened after Nancy Corr's plea for help. A short discussion followed. Nadine said that she had provided information on resources to the Corrs and that she would follow-up and get back to Paul.
4. Margaret urged adding into the Minutes our praise of the Senior Warden for special service at this time.
5. Mike said that he would bring his thoughts and suggestions to the July meeting about how to get everything done while Paul is away and to carry out some of the ideas raised at Shrinemont.
6. Question asked: Do we want more information on the inside cover of the Directory about Vestry Liaisons?
7. There was a discussion of the elimination of the Vestry Greeting. At this point do we want Vestry members pointed out during the service? Should Vestry member get up with two lines? There is no kick off to announcements at 11:15 service. Mike said he would put this on the agenda for the July meeting.

8. Feb 18th 2007 is Paul's next Vestry meeting.

9. Eileen will write to thank folks for today's service. Thank you notes were sent to the Shrinemont team. Linda Staheli has volunteered to help with kids next year.

Closing Prayer: Paul

3:15 – Adjournment

Respectfully submitted by:
Nadine Hathaway, Register