

Vestry Minutes

Final

Nov. 12, 2005

Dewey Beach, Del.

Present: Clergy and staff: Paul Abernathy, Shearon Williams

Wardens: Mike Townsend, Charley Donnelly

Vestry Members: : Stewart Andrews, Eileen Blumenthal, Rod Lawrence, Julie Murphy, Burton Reist, Lisa Sotir, Susan Thigpen, David Willson, Margaret Wood

Officers: Jack Burton, Pete Carlson, Hank Donnelly, Gardner Van Scoyoc

The meeting, which Mike chaired, was held during the course of the Vestry fall retreat.

Action Items and Discussion

1. Minutes

To the Oct. 16 minutes, Jack proposed a clarification of the stance of the Outreach Board relative to the response to disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. The change was accepted, and the minutes were approved.

2. Rector Emeritus

Paul reported on a recent conversation with former Rector Jim Adams concerning the idea of naming him Rector Emeritus. Noting that St. Mark's already had a Rector Emeritus, in the person of former Rector Bill Baxter, Adams politely declined the suggestion.

3. Outreach Board

A proposal by Susan Cunningham to hold a second Alternative Gift Fair, which collected more than \$4,000 last year, was brought before the Vestry. In response, Paul offered two points. One was that leaders need to be more aware of the variety of askings presented to parish members during each year, which, he said, could strain the capacity of the community to give. Secondly, such efforts should be seen as another way of doing outreach, even though it does not show up in the budget. Michael suggested that it would be good to receive outlines of fundraising requests somewhat in advance, and Susan urged that groups be asked to lay out their fundraising plans for the year.

Burton moved the request for approval of the Alternative Gift Fair, and it was approved by voice vote.

4. Early Music Festival

Mike presented a request from Music Director Keith Reas to waive the standard room use fee for the Washington Early Music Festival, which has scheduled a number of concerts at St. Marks in 2006.

Noting that the Vestry had been discussing a reconsideration of space use policies, several members expressed concern about the proposal. Margaret asked that the Vestry receive a more detailed report on the event than it got for 2005, while Jack suggested that the \$200 donation received from the festival was too little. Paul urged members to take a hard look at the value of "publicity" received by St. Marks as a result of such events.

Charley moved approval of the request to waive the building use fee for 2006, except for a \$200 contribution, and requested a more detailed report for 2006. The motion was approved by voice vote. Three "nay" votes were heard.

5. Players Fundraising Event

The desire to reconsider relationships with other organizations was also evident during discussion of a request from the St. Mark's Players to hold a fundraising performance of the play "Lost in Yonkers" in January to raise money for new risers for the company.

While expressing a willingness to approve the request, members also urged that the Players be told that the company's relationship with St. Mark's was under review. Susan moved to approve the request, while sending a clear message to the Players about the possibility of change in the future. The motion was approved by voice vote. Two "nay" votes were heard.

6. Thanksgiving Baskets

A previous Vestry electronic vote approving the sale of Thanksgiving baskets was read into the record.

7. Treasurer's Report/Budget Priorities

Pete reported that pledge revenues were strong in the fall, which he suggested had to do with the enthusiasm generated by the Canvass. He also reviewed the state of expenses, and urged that parishioners submit requests for reimbursements before the end of the year.

The treasurer also reported on the prospects for the 2006 budget. Because of the strong Canvass and unspent funds from 2005, the Finance Committee expects to have about \$55,000 available for spending above current levels. While the committee's plan is to put some of that money in reserve, Pete

explained, it needs guidance from the Vestry as to how to spend the other money.

The treasurer and members considered a number of ideas of how to spend the money, including increases in clergy and staff pay, sabbatical costs not covered by the Lilly grant, building repairs beyond the budget, increased compensation for Shearon in Paul's absence, and savings toward covering the costs of the Music Director's scheduled sabbatical in 2007.

Vestry members then voted in writing for their top budget priorities for 2006. The results of the poll were:

1. Pay raise for clergy and staff.
2. (tie) Additional sabbatical funding
Building maintenance and repair.

8. What's New, etc.

New

Julie: Requested Outreach Board to consider donation for Katrina relief.

Mike: Committee formed to lead Katrina response effort, composed to Rosemary Harold, Michael Knipe, Jo Ellen Hayden and Martha Connor-Donnelly.

Needs Acknowledgement

Paul: Sedgewicks and Walt Moody for allowing use of their homes for the Vestry retreat.

Paul: Wanda Womack, Greg Niblett's assistant, for doing a lot of work in support of the Canvass. She will receive a check for \$1,000 from the parish.

Reviewed, amended and approved electronically, December 2005.

Respectfully submitted,
Hank Donnelly
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