

Approved 6/25/2024
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2024
Via Zoom & In Person, 7:00PM-8:30PM

Attendance

- *Vestry Members Present:* Michele Morgan (Rector), Jim Brooks (Senior Warden), Martha Huizenga (Junior Warden), Hank Donnelly, Jan Lipscomb, Nick Rogers, Travis Beaty, Kristina Keenan, Todd Thorpe, Meg Platt, Doug Padgett
- *Vestry Members Absent:* Elizabeth Becker
- *Officers Present:* Randy Marks (Clerk), Doug Ammon (Treasurer), Frank Nickerson (Assistant Treasurer for Special Gifts & Bequests)

April 2024 Minutes

April minutes ([☰ Vestry Minutes.4-23-2024](#)) approved Unanimously.

Reports Highlights

- Discussion of bequests and the Treasurer noted that we had received a bequest and he intends to put it in the Building Reserve Fund. .
- [☰ Volunteer Leader Guidelines.5-15-2024](#) : will be distributed to Parish leaders next week.

- Roof repairs & request to Endowment Board to repair the Wardens' Chairs.
- Income trailing expenses and a reminder to Parish to pay pledges would be helpful.

Volunteer Engagement Discussion

Context: These notes largely reflect what the Vestry discussed, along with some post-meeting comments.

Introduction:

- Jim introduced the topic by referring to the [Leadership Directory](#) and raising two questions about volunteer leadership.
- Does the current pillar and committee structure serve the needs of the parish today?
- What is the role of the Vestry to cultivate leaders?

Background:

- The Parish Pillars are: Worship, Christian Education, Arts, Service & Social Justice, and Parish Life. Volunteers lead them and each has a Vestry liaison.
- The standing committees that support the Vestry or the Rector are Finance Committee, Membership Committee, Personnel Committee, Stewardship Committee, Canvass Team, and Fabric Committee (maintains our property), along with a Communications Team. Volunteers lead them, with support from the Vestry.
- The clergy and staff work with Pillars and Committees as members, consultants, or when needed.

Points about gaps:

- Several key leadership positions are vacant: Manciple, Worship Chair, Parish Life Chair, Canvas Chair, and Stewardship Chair. They are unsupported by parish elected leadership, are disconnected, unknown, and unable to achieve the critical mission of providing parish members an opportunity to engage, be known and belong.
- The Parish Life Pillar is so expansive as to be totally unsupportable even when a Parish Life Chair is in place and we have had a lot of trouble recruiting and retaining Parish Life Chairs. Although Service and Social Justice (S&SJ) is similar in size and diversity, it has a tradition of strong leadership. Note that Parish Life is composed of internal groups (e.g., 20s & 30s, Men's Group, Woman to Woman, Hospitality) that (except for hospitality) involves little money, while S&SJ is grounded in service outside the church (e.g., WIN, Grate Patrol, Diaper Bank, Navajoland) and distributes a lot of money in support of that work.

Points about leadership needs:

- Pillars and committees do not necessarily need "management" from the vestry. What these groups need is "connection" to each other, to parish elected leadership, and to the parish at large. Connection allows for coordination and mutually reinforcing programming as well proper budgeting.
- Parish volunteers need to have a clear purpose and feel connected, engaged, appreciated, and informed and vestry can support this clarity of purpose and need for connectivity.

Points about communication:

- The problem might be communication rather than structure.
- For better communication:
 - Post photos of parish leaders.
 - Publicize parish leader email addresses.
 - Have a better master calendar (Martha reported that the calendar on the website will be improved in conjunction with a better space rental system.)
 - The web site needs to be the gateway to information that leads to engagement, then belonging, and eventually leadership.

Points about structure:

- We developed structure at a time when there was more “bureaucrat engagement” energy.
- We can look at creating a coherent and clear structure:
 - Pillars (adding Music, Youth, and Stewardship to existing Pillars) are programs;
 - Committees are groups that manage Church activities.

Respectfully submitted

Randy Marks

Vestry Clerk