**DRAFT: Minutes of the Regular Meeting**

**The Vestry of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church**

**November 20, 2017**

**Present**: Lisa Brown, Louise Cannon, Jon Delano, Betty Duckstein, Bob Johnston, Eric Linn, Jon Paulus, Pat Eagon Stafford, Stephen Sumpter, Mark Tranquilli, Ell Vines

**Absent:** Ginny Barnicoat

**Clergy Present:** The Rev. Noah H. Evans,

**Clergy Absent**: The Rev. Garrett Yates

**VPOM**: Ell Vines

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm.
2. The first order of business was presented by Jon Delano, Senior Warden, who opened a discussion regarding the proposed appointment of Stephen Sumpter to fill the seat on vestry previously occupied by the late Scott Reynolds. After comments on his qualifications and a brief discussion, a motion was made to nominate Stephen to the seat, and seconded (BD/JP). A motion was made to close the nominations (LB/PS). Both motions were carried unanimously. Stephen was then asked to join the meeting.

**3**. **Opening reflections** were lead by Noah. Each vestry member spoke of what they were thankful for.

**4**. The **minutes** of the October 16, 2017 vestry meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve was made, seconded, and approved (BD/LC, 10/0/1).

**5. Rector’s Report**:

* End-of-year appeal letter: an appeal letter will go out; the letter will be a “soft ask” since stewardship campaign was successful and very recently closed. Noah discussed his prior experience with such letters and how different groups respond. A brief vestry discussion covered whether to include a return envelope, how to phrase the letter, and expectations of responses.
* Update on committee work to generate employee manual: work is nearly complete and it is likely that a draft will be available for review at the next vestry meeting. The intent is to have the manual approved and in place by January 1.
* Calvary Camp Sunday will be held January 28; the Reverend Leslie Reimer will preach and Tim Greene will present Adult Forum that day.
* Community Outreach: A Boy Scout troop in Mt. Lebanon is looking for a new sponsor, and St. Paul’s has been approached. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the troop and hold its charter if we are selected (EV/LB, 11/0).
* The Worship Commission decided that Palm Sunday will feature a combined service at 9:45am with passion play and live donkey.
* Nursery School (NS) items: In a meeting with Noah, Eileen Sharbaugh, and the Mt. Lebanon Chief of Police, the latter made suggestions regarding training of staff and students, discussed use of drills, and offered a security assessment of the building and future advice as needed. The vestry discussed this in detail, with Ell noting that the information gained needs to include an action plan, and Lisa suggested involvement of fire department with drills. Ell also noted that St. Paul’s was the receiving station for evacuation of Mellon School and the high school, and questioned what resources would be needed in case either school was evacuated. It was noted that all church rooms need an egress plan and map. Further discussion involved the NS expansion into the 3rd floor rooms. The expansion will use 2 rooms that will be connected by an archway, with the ability to close the rooms into singles. The NS will engage an architect and contractor to do the work. The NS has also requested the use of a 3rd room. Discussion of this request ensued, with questions about the design (MT) and whether it would be up to code (EL/EV). A motion was made to allow the use of the 3rd room if these concerns are satisfied (EV/LB, 11/0).
* The vestry nominating committee consists of: Ginny Barnicoat, Paige Russell, Jon Delano, Jeff Dunbar, and Eileen Sharbaugh. A motion was proposed to accept these nominations, seconded, and approved (EL/BJ,11/0).
* General announcements: The annual meeting will be held on February 11, with annual reports due on January 12. Noah will be using Dropbox to post materials for vestry review. Lenten Wednesday forums will be discussions on death and dying. Pledges are still coming in, current total is 200 pledges, including 25 as new, and total to date is $595K.

**5. Assistant Rector’s Report:** none

**6. Officers’ Reports**

**Senior Warden**:

* Report from convention. St. Paul’s had full representation, and several of our parishioners were elected to offices/positions: Noah+ and Bob Johnston to Standing Committee; Peter Balfe and Jon Delano to Diocesan Council; Betty Duckstein to Trustees; Courtney Horrigan to Constitution & Canons and to Disciplinary Board. These newly elected individuals join a number of other parishioners serving on these and other committees/boards. The convention speaker, Bishop Doyle, was inspiring, and the off-site dinner was excellent. Several people mentioned that the site had very limited handicapped accessibility, and that this is a critical issue for future conventions. Jon also noted a successful meeting of District III prior to the convention at his home.
* Update on bylaws committee: Noah and the committee are meeting regularly and progress is being made. However, the number of changes needed and the disorganization of the current bylaws require that care must be taken and deliberations may take time to achieve a workable outcome. In addition, the bylaws must reflect those of the diocese and national church.
* Jon introduced a discussion regarding a revision in Noah’s letter of agreement to include whole family health care coverage. Until now, the bishop has covered partial cost of Sara’s healthcare, but St. Paul’s needs to begin coverage. After a discussion of how insurance works in an Episcopal church and how all staff must have the option of family health care, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to include all members of the rector’s family for health care insurance (MT/EV, 11/0). Bob asked that the minutes reflect the understanding by the vestry that by covering Noah and his family, we are obligated to do the same for staff who desire such.

**Junior Warden:**

* Sustainability Committee: the committee met on Sunday, November 19, to review the year’s work and to review savings in energy costs due to the improvements. Andy Vines concluded that we had savings on both gas and electric: $3600 saved on electric; $4893 on gas. The data on current use of electricity will be reviewed and presented to the consultant helping with the solar project so he can determine if there would be a change in number and/or size of panels needed. Eric hopes to present the conclusions at the annual meeting.
* Church insurance: Eric noted that the parish has one year left on the Brotherhood policy. The vestry discussed whether we should consider Church Insurance Group that does most Episcopal churches. Eric will meet with them to review current coverage. Ell asked if we look outside church insurers, as has been done previously. Eric commented is that their value is that they understand churches. Kathi Workman has sent Janet information on the Church Insurance Group.
* Plumbing update: Eric noted that a plumber will arrive the next day to finish the three items have to be added to or replaced in the kitchen to be in compliance, an overflow valve for the dishwashing sink, a backflow valve for the icemaker, and replacement of some molding around the floor. He also stated that the plumber would assess whether the women’s bathroom near the kitchen could be retrofitted to accommodate a handicapped-accessible toilet.

**Treasurer**:

* Bob reviewed income and expenditures for October, and noted an increase in income due to the contribution of the NS. Income for the year is at 83%, which is on track. Pledge payment is on track at 84%. Non-pledge payments are up overall for the year because of the spring mini-campaign. Bob feels that given the more favorable holiday calendar this year and the potential for end of year contributions, we should finish the year with no deficit. A motion was made to accept the October report, seconded, and approved (BD/LC, 11/0).
* Jon D. mentioned that the diocese has funding for evangelism projects, and that Peter Balfe is writing a grant application for an HVAC system for HEP.
* The vestry discussed the budget for 2018 briefly. It was noted that increased expenses would include health insurance for the rector and adjustments in staff salaries. Increased revenue would be coming in from the expansion of the NS.
* Bob noted ongoing delays in adaption of the new accounting system, but that progress and training is occurring. Bob stated that we must formally accept the audit, which amounts to stating that we received it. A motion was made to accept the audit, seconded, and passed (BJ/BD, 11/0).

**Assistant Treasurer**:

Jon P. stated that the budget poll sent out previously to get input from the various groups and committees in the parish did not have a good response, and that we need to rethink how this is done in the future. Very few groups actually responded with a numerical assessment of needs.

**7.** **Capital campaign/endowment report**: Ell reported that the installation of the windows in the library was being finished this week, and that the 3rd floor work would follow immediately. He noted that there were complaints about the staining of the window frames in the lounge, and that the color would be redone to better match the walls. El stated that he would manage the renovation project for the NS’s new 3rd floor rooms. All plans will be reviewed and approved by the vestry before any work will begin. In addition, all renovations must receive approval from the township.

**8. Commission/committee Reports:**

**Children and Youth**: Ginny circulated a report electronically (attached).

**Fellowship:** Betty noted that Fellowship has been on hiatus for the fall, and that the role of Fellowship in providing food for events is being reconsidered. More groups may become involved in providing food, and more potlucks are being considered.

**Worship:** Jon D. stated that Christmas services have now been set and will be publicized soon.

**Stewardship**: The campaign wrapped up on November 19th with the Sunday Sundae celebration. Lisa thanked all who wrote thank-you notes. The next actions will be to send a letter and call non-pledgers and to givers who don’t pledge.

**Outreach:** Pat noted that theTrinity Cathedral drop-in ministry is working well, and a collection box for various needs has been placed in the undercroft by the library. Requests include socks, underwear, gloves, hats, diapers, toiletries, etc. A Shepherd’s Heart meal will be provided by the men’s group on December 17. Pat said that she has had several people volunteer to cook, deliver, and provide food for meals for the Severe Weather Shelter, and noted that St. Paul’s will do only five dates this year due to difficulties in producing the increased number of meals this year. She noted that Rachel Hutchinson has taken the lead for the reverse Advent calendar, and that the calendar will be ready in advance of Advent. Ginny mentioned in her memo the ongoing needs of the refugee families and that Christmas gifts would be sought. Pat also stated that the commission was meeting the next evening, and that decisions would be made on spending the funds available.

**Welcoming:** no report.

**9. Unfinished Business:** Lisa noted ongoing issues with LifeTouch and detailed her attempts to schedule sessions for photography. Strategies will include emails and bulletin inserts. However, she suggested that if this attempt doesn’t work, we should consider another approach.

**10. New Business**: Betty suggested that the vestry recite the 23rd Psalm in the memory of Scott Reynolds.

**11. Meeting evaluation**: Positives were a lot of work done, honesty in discussions, and both kinds of coffee. Negatives were that the meeting ran too long and the lounge was too warm.

**12. Prayers for parish over next month**: We will pray for a very strong finish to the stewardship campaign. We will practice praying out loud. We will pray for Scott Reynolds’ family during the holidays, for staff, and for all parishioners with medical issues. We will pray to experience Advent for its beauty and benefits rather than simply as a segue to Christmas, and safe travel for all during the holidays.

**13. Adjournment and Closing Prayer:** Noah+ lead closing prayer, and meeting was adjourned at 9:55pm.

**\*Next Meeting: December 18, 2017; VPOM: Mark Tranquilli**

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Eagon Stafford,

Secretary of the Vestry

**APPENDIX I**

**Children and Youth**

**Vestry Report**

November 20, 2017

* Intergenerational Jeopardy, the one service and the breakfast seemed to be a very well-attended

and enjoyable event. A lot of folks did seem to stay after the service. A few

of the “older set” ladies told me that they were happy to have met some younger people

and had invited them to Wed. Bible study.

* The Nursery School Board met. The board talked a lot about the upstairs renovations

and Ell V can fill everyone in on that. They also reported that they will donate $2000 to

the church from their fall fundraiser.

* Grade 3 Sunday School will now do “ Chapel Plus” with grades 4 and 5, and the 6th

graders will give up Chapel Plus in order to have longer, more meaningful lessons in

class.

* A guest speaker came to talk to the SS teachers about creating lessons that allow for

deeper reflection and higher level thinking skills. It was agreed that the Spark

Curriculum often does not specify any learning objectives. A new initiative began this

week that allows teachers to have an email discussion about what the main ideas of the

week’s lessons are, and what we feel should be the “take home” message for kids.

A few teachers participated this week, and we hope to increase participation in weeks to

come. This will be of benefit to the teachers as well as to the kids.

* Teachers are interested in training in Godly Play. A huge donation was made to the

church of materials for this curriculum. Noah can speak as to the effectiveness of this

teaching style if anyone wants more detail.

* Help is needed for all aspects of the Christmas Eve Nativity play. See Kristen if

interested.

Submitted by Ginny Barnicoat

**APPENDIX II**

Vestry Expectations:

1. Attendance at monthly Vestry meetings
2. Leadership role in at least one commission or one major project
3. Pray regularly for church and vestry
4. Commitment to being welcoming, represent parish and vestry to others, learn about Diocese and church “best practices” and model “good behavior”
5. Complete Safeguarding God’s Children training and background checks
6. Pledge and contribute time, talent and treasure to the life of the church
7. Respect confidentiality when expected
8. Respect vestry processes

Qualities needed:

Community Spirit

Open to Discussion and conversation

Leadership Skills

Flexibility; growth mind-set

Sense of spirituality

Contributor

Sense of teamwork

Sense of humor

Commitment

Willing to get hands dirty

Honoring diversity

Vestry Meeting Norms

1. Detailed material sent out in advance
2. Minutes sent out two weeks after the meeting
3. Step Up / Step Back
4. Listen carefully to others – ask for clarification
5. Report of Actions Taken and Follow-up
6. Attend all meetings and report absences