

Minutes of Regular Vestry Meeting
Tuesday, November 17, 2009
Christ Episcopal Church
Woodbury, Minnesota

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Ernie Ashcroft. We read John 18:33-37 (in which Pilate asks Jesus if he is King of the Jews) using Gospel-based discipleship and three different translations of the text. After the first reading we asked ourselves, "What word or phrase struck me?" After the second reading we asked, "What is Jesus saying to me?" After the third reading we asked, "What is God calling me to do?"

Present: Rector Ernie Ashcroft; Senior Warden Deb Shoemaker; Treasurer Aaron Twait; Clerk Catherine Jacobson; and elected vestry members Denny Davis, Alida Knoll, Jim Lee, Janeen Leick, Ann Marie Metzger, and John Potter

Absent: Junior Warden George Pratt; elected vestry members Tory Hassenauer, Austin Ihiekwe, and Doug Sprinthall

Approval of the agenda: Denny moved that the agenda be approved, with the date corrected. Motion carried.

Approval of vestry minutes: John moved that the minutes of the November 1st all-parish meeting be approved. Motion carried. Deb moved that the minutes of the October 20th regular vestry meeting be approved. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Aaron presented the October 2009 balance sheet and the treasurer's report for January through October 2009. There were several items of note. As expected, pledges picked up in October. We made a quarterly payment towards our property insurance and two payments for the cleaning service and utilities. We did not make a diocesan Apportionment for the Common Good (ACG) payment. Denny asked if our endowment can be used for building and grounds needs. Aaron replied that his understanding is that the Monson Fund can be used. Ernie clarified that a decision by the parish (not just the vestry) is required in order to use the principal; the parish could be asked at an annual meeting or special meeting of the parish, e.g., if an emergency issue arises. There is also a fund controlled by an outside organization; we cannot use the principal. That fund is not carried on our balance sheet. Aaron will ask former treasurer Phil Vander Haar about it. The vestry received the treasurer's report.

Impact of diocesan convention on our 2010 budget: Ernie reported that we will pay less in our ACG next year vs. 2009, but not as much less as we had expected. At convention, the diocese adopted a 10/12 split for calculating parishes' ACG in 2010, with parishes with income <\$300,000 paying 10%, and those with income >\$300,000 paying 12%. However, additional percentage points were added in order to balance the diocesan budget (0.2%) and for mission development (0.5%, with funds to be used at the new bishop's discretion). Therefore, our 2010 rate will be 10.7%, and our budget will need to reflect that.

Preliminary stewardship results: Janeen reported that, as of Sunday, we have received 64 pledges for a total of ~\$229,000; the mean pledge is \$3575. Forty-nine pledging units increased their pledge vs. 2009; many increased more than the requested \$10 per month. The team has yet to hear from 35 pledging units; in 2009, those pledging units represented ~\$47,000 in pledges. If those pledges were realized at the same amount, our total pledges would be ~\$276,000, and we would have a balanced budget. Ernie noted that it is important to obtain those outstanding pledges. Deb commented that the team should follow up with letters and then a phone call. Ernie and Janeen were both encouraged by the results.

Diocesan convention (October 30-31): Ernie reported that Brian Prior was elected as our bishop-elect. His installation will be on February 13 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Ernie said that the diocese faces some real challenges and needs a strong vision. Ernie discussed the unhealthy financial state of the diocese, as well as the changing model of ministry. Thirty-four of 106 congregations in our diocese have “total ministry,” in which groups of people within a congregation offer their gifts for ministry, in place of a seminary-trained priest. Although that model may sustain small rural churches, it cannot be a viable model in urban and suburban parishes. Our vestry needs to think strategically about our parish and the diocese as a whole.

Annual meeting (January 31): A nominating committee of the members of the vestry with expiring terms, the wardens, and Ernie will meet to receive names and provide a slate of candidates for vestry, in preparation for our annual meeting. Ernie will begin to ask for vestry nominations on Sunday, November 29. Ernie thanked the outgoing wardens for their service, and he shared with the vestry the names of the two who had consented to being nominated as wardens and placed on the ballot for election at the annual meeting. The treasurer’s and clerk’s terms are also up at the annual meeting; Ernie will ask Aaron and Catherine if they are interested in serving another term. If they are, the vestry would need to appoint them for another term; if they are not, the vestry would need to appoint their successors.

Ministry team reports:

Building & Grounds: Denny reported that some maintenance items had been done in the last month. The team decided not to install a vending machine in the building. The team recommends we change our cleaning service, despite an increase in cost of \$36 per week; Ernie and the Finance & Legal team concur with that decision. The tentative plan is to start the new service at the beginning of the year. Denny was asked to put that change in motion. The issue of the roof is still in the hands of Dan Shoemaker and George Ham, who are working with the insurance companies and the contractor. Denny reported that the known issues requiring repair fit within the \$7000 allocated in the parish’s draft budget; additional items would double this. The team recommends that their budget remain at \$7000, and they will need to get parishioners to help with certain tasks (e.g., lawn mowing). The team has begun a list of capital expenditures and will deliver that to the vestry at the end of December or beginning of January.

Communication & Marketing: None

Faith Formation: John reported that the team met October 27. About 70 people attended the Halloween party, which was a success. The Adult Forum small group has 16 people, and they are developing themes for Sunday, with world religions being the topic for the first quarter of 2010. An Advent retreat will be held on December 6, beginning at 5 pm with a potluck; Sue Swanson will lead the program.

Finance & Legal: Aaron reported that the team recently conducted an audit of our 2008 books with St. Mary's of St. Paul; our books are in good order. The team met last night with Denny as a guest, to discuss building and grounds issues. The team also discussed the 2010 budget, which will be updated after the stewardship campaign ends. They have looked at areas that have historically been underbudgeted and will prioritize them for additional funds.

Inreach: None

Outreach: Alida said that we have delivered 1200 pounds of food to the Christian Cupboard food shelf so far this year. The team's project for Advent is a mitten and scarf tree. Courtney Ruiz is coordinating a group to volunteer at Feed My Starving Children on December 26.

Stewardship: Nothing additional to report

Welcoming & Evangelism: None

Worship & Music: Jim reported that the team will meet about Lent in January.

Coffee hour: We have begun holding coffee hour downstairs and will review that in January; it seems to be going well. Coffee hour team leaders have been recognized during Sunday services. It was noted that we need a new coffee maker.

Junior Warden's report: None

Senior Warden's report: Deb said that the ministry teams should actively enlist new members, in order to have new ideas and for succession planning. Both new and long-term church members should be asked to become involved. Aaron asked who is on the ministry teams. Vestry liaisons should provide to Catherine the names of their team members, and she will develop a roster. Faith Formation teachers and liturgical ministers should perhaps be included.

Rector's report: None

Final review: Catherine reviewed our action items:

- Aaron will ask Phil Vander Haar about a fund controlled by an outside organization.
- A nominating committee will meet to provide a slate of candidates for our annual meeting.
- Denny will put in motion a change in our cleaning service for the beginning of the year.
- Vestry liaisons should provide to Catherine the names of their ministry team members, and she will develop a roster.

Adjournment: Ernie Ashcroft closed the meeting with prayer at 8:44 pm.

Catherine F. Jacobson, Clerk