

Minutes of Regular Vestry Meeting
Tuesday, December 15, 2009
Christ Episcopal Church
Woodbury, Minnesota

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Ernie Ashcroft. We read Luke 1:39-55 (in which the pregnant Mary visits Elizabeth) 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 God saying to me?" After the third reading we asked, "What is God calling me to do?"

Present: Rector Ernie Ashcroft; Senior Warden Deb Shoemaker; Junior Warden George Pratt; Treasurer Aaron Twait; Clerk Catherine Jacobson; elected vestry members Denny Davis, Alida Knoll, Jim Lee, Janeen Leick, and John Potter; and guest Christine Shoemaker

Absent: Elected vestry members Tory Hassenauer, Austin Ihiekwe, Ann Marie Metzger, and Doug Sprinthall

Approval of the agenda: John moved that the agenda be approved. Motion carried.

Approval of vestry minutes: Jim moved that the minutes of the November 17th regular vestry meeting be approved. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Aaron presented the November 2009 balance sheet and a preliminary treasurer's report for January through November 2009; he will send a final treasurer's report to the vestry. There were several items of note. Pledges picked up again in November. There were expenditures for Godly Play materials. We are caught up on Dana Fath Strande's pension through the third quarter. We did not make a diocesan Apportionment for the Common Good (ACG) payment. Although the balance sheet shows a substantial balance in the checking account, that is because payroll must be made during the first week of December. The EYC Fund has money for the J2A pilgrimage. One disbursement from the Dire Need Fund was made to a family. The vestry received the treasurer's report.

Stewardship results: Janeen reported that we now have 87 pledges for a total of ~\$258,000; the mean pledge is \$2965. Sixty-two pledging units increased their pledge vs. 2009; seven decreased; and 12 remained the same. We have six new pledges; two are re-pledging after an absence of a year or so, and four are truly new. We lost four families from 2009; at least three families moved. The team has yet to hear from 15 pledging units; in 2009, those pledging units represented ~\$17,000 in pledges. The stewardship team continues to follow up with those families; initial calls have been made to all of them. The team hopes to realize \$7000 from the outstanding pledging units, bringing our total pledged to ~\$265,000. John asked what the pledge income is in our 2010 budget. Aaron replied that the budget has gone through several drafts; the budgeted amount has gone from \$275,000 to \$270,000 and will likely come down to \$265,000.

Diocesan ACG: Ernie reported that we have a balance of \$32,000 for our ACG. He reminded the vestry that in 2006 the diocese forgave our parish \$50,000 in debt on the condition that we pay our ACG in full going forward. Ernie had asked Charlene Peterson to estimate our total 2009 pledge income so that Aaron could calculate what we could pay; there was a gap of \$18,000. Janeen said that the stewardship team asked some families if they could pay part of their 2010 pledge in 2009; people agreed, and we will be able to cover that \$18,000. Ernie said that that will enable us to pay our 2009 ACG in full. Although this solution may be seen as simply pushing the problem out a year, given our recent growth and some uncertainties in expenses (i.e., they may be less than what is currently budgeted for), he is optimistic. Ernie's optimism is rooted in (1) the fact that in one day the stewardship team was able to quickly come up with \$18,000; that says a lot about people's commitment to the church; (2) a number of people exceeded their 2009 pledges; that may happen next year, too; (3) he finds it impossible to believe that God has brought us so far in the last four years to have it all come to an end. We have grown in numbers, giving (pledges, for the bathroom remodeling, and for the Dire Need Fund), and morale. Ernie's experience is that, when a congregation feels good about itself, wonderful things can happen. There was additional discussion about our past history with the diocesan ACG. Ernie noted that he has been a priest in this diocese for 27 years, and every year his parish has paid its ACG in full.

Annual meeting (January 31): A single service will be held at 9 am, with the annual meeting following. A celebration dinner will be held on January 30. Ernie will work to organize the dinner, and the vestry should help to plan, set up, and clean up. Deb will help to coordinate the dinner and will ask the inreach team to also help. Deb said that, at the annual meeting, members in good standing will receive ministry team reports, receive the 2010 budget, and elect wardens and vestry members. A slate needs to be prepared by the nominating committee, which is composed of Ernie, Deb, George, John, Doug, and Austin; that committee needs to set a meeting date. The slate needs to be given to the vestry 30 days before the meeting, and a notice of the meeting needs to be mailed to church members by January 10. If a vestry member is elected as warden, the vestry fills that vacancy until the next annual meeting.

Ministry team reports:

Building & Grounds: Denny reported that the old cleaning service has been terminated and a contract with the new service is being put together; the new team will start January 4. The Olsons would like to create an outdoor memorial for Samuel; Deb suggested a bench, and Denny is interested in other ideas as well. Ernie is talking with the family. The vestry discussed how to most economically remove snow from the walkways and entryways. Denny noted that Pierre LePere is supposed to be informed when outside groups use the building; he is not being told. The team will try to deliver by the next vestry meeting a capital improvement plan. The team is working on documentation regarding how to repair and maintain, e.g., the heating system and hot water heater; they are also developing a maintenance log. Ernie raved about all the work done during the recent inside clean-up.

Communication & Marketing: None

Faith Formation: John reported that the team met November 1. Ernie has 10 people interested in his small group; they will meet after Christmas. Janeen will also meet with those interested in her small group in the new year. The Faith in Film group met on December 4, with 12 in attendance. They are scheduled to meet on the first Friday of every month (except January and Good Friday); on January 15 they will see *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* The small group Adult Forum met twice in 2009 and has most of next year's Adult Education scheduled with topics. A Lenten retreat will be held on February 21 from 5-8 pm; because that would be a good opportunity to reach out to the community, Ernie will email the Woodbury Area Clergy Organization about it. Fourteen people went to TEC (Teens Encounter Christ). The media mayhem sale netted \$400 for the pilgrimage. The senior high youth group attended a diocesan-wide meeting at Messiah on December 13. The ministry team has some new members.

Finance & Legal: Aaron reported that the team did not meet this month. He noted that the vestry must pass resolution regarding Ernie's housing allowance each year; because we do not provide a rectory, this allowance is tax-free (similar to that for members of the military). Denny moved that Rector Ernie Ashcroft's housing allowance for 2010 be set at \$52,000. Motion carried.

Inreach: None

Outreach: Alida did not have anything to report. Denny said that someone had twice contributed the main meal for Loaves & Fishes and will do so again. That helps our budget. Last time, they served 90 people.

Stewardship: Janeen said that she had nothing additional to report regarding stewardship, but she asked the vestry to provide updates to our 2008 programs and activities brochure. Updates (pen on paper) should be provided to Janeen by the next vestry meeting. Deb mentioned at this point that ministry teams have written reports for the annual meeting. Vestry members are asked to put together a paragraph with the name of the vestry liaison, a team meeting schedule, and a list of activities. That report should be submitted to Ernie or Mary Margaret by January 15.

Welcoming & Evangelism: None

Worship & Music: Jim reported that the team will meet next month.

Junior Warden's report: None

Senior Warden's report: None

Rector's report: Ernie noted that next year will bring big changes in our diocese. Not only will we have a new bishop, but three large Twin Cities churches are losing their rector. Ernie noted that he welcomed eight new members/families on Sunday; there were three more that couldn't be at church, and another is seeking transfer of membership. Ernie is grateful for the help of Dana

Fath Strande and Nancy Forman with visitors and new members. When asked how these people came to Christ Church, Ernie said that each had a different story and a different path.

Final review: Catherine reviewed our action items:

- Aaron will send a final treasurer's report for January through November 2009 to the vestry.
- Ernie will work to organize the January 30th celebration dinner.
- Deb will help to coordinate the celebration dinner and will ask the inreach team to also help.
- The nominating committee needs to set a meeting date.
- Because February 21st's Lenten retreat would be a good opportunity to reach out to the community, Ernie will email the Woodbury Area Clergy Organization about it.
- Updates to our 2008 programs and activities brochure should be provided to Janeen by the next vestry meeting.
- Vestry members are asked to put together a paragraph on their ministry team, with the name of the vestry liaison, a team meeting schedule, and a list of activities. That report should be submitted to Ernie or Mary Margaret by January 15.

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

Catherine F. Jacobson, Clerk