

St. James' Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting (Hybrid)

February 27, 2024

Present: Rev. Joe T. Mitchell Interim, Warden Bill Spalding, Warden Doug Smith, Marie Hughes, Diane Steckel, Michael Brown, Margie Amberge, Beckie Hidy, Tara Covert-Lanning and Carol Murphy.

On ZOOM: John Devins and Nicole Bova with November Financial.

Absent: Judy Holmes

6:00 PM: Call to Order

Prayer: Margie Amberge led the Vestry in a prayer of thankfulness and asking for guidance.

Devotional – The Vestry will be choosing one of the Beatitudes for devotionals this year. Father Joe read Matthew 5:1-11 and suggested questions Vestry members might consider for devotionals.

A pre-read report was sent out to the Vestry, prior to the meeting, with supporting documents.

1. Quick Action Items:

A. January Minutes: The Vestry reviewed the minutes and found one correction. Discussion followed. Margie Amberge made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; Diane Steckel seconded. 5 new members abstained, 5 returning Vestry members, present, approved.

B. Parochial Report: Father Joe stated that the Parochial Report is now completed and thanked the Staff and any volunteers for their time. The Vestry reviewed the report prior to the meeting and had no questions or corrections. Warden Bill Spalding made a motion to accept the Parochial Report; Marie Hughes seconded; Vestry approved.

C. Vestry Retreat Cost Overrun: There is a cost overrun for the Adult Program presented at the Vestry Retreat. Warden Bill Spalding made a motion to pay the cost overrun from Retained Earnings of the amount of \$610.00, plus or minus \$50.00. Marie Hughes seconded. Discussion followed. Vestry approved the motion.

D. Committees Worksheet: Warden Bill Spalding ask the Vestry members to fill out the committee worksheet that was emailed with the pre-read. He requested that members fill out the sheet and email them back to him by March 1, 2024. Father Joe and the wardens will discuss choices and assign members to a committee.

E. Search Committee: Wardens Bill Spalding and Doug Smith will be responsible for communications between The Vestry and Search Committee. The Search Committee has collected comments and are being analyzed, with the goal of finishing in one month.

The Vestry will be scheduling Holy Conversations with parishioners, with a possible start date of April 6. This will affirm the congregation's involvement and assure them that their voice is being heard. Invitations will be sent out Monday, March 4th. Father Joe will be doing facilitation training with the Vestry.

F. Thrift Shop Letter to Vestry: The Thrift Shop sent the Vestry a letter regarding finances. Warden Bill Spalding responded to the letter, clarifying how funds are handled. The Wardens also met with the Thrift Shop Chairpersons to discuss how funds are handled and answer any other questions.

G. Columbarium: Warden Doug Smith updated the new Vestry members on plans for a columbarium. The committee is still working on various approvals.

H. Facilities Update: Warden Bill Spalding updated the Vestry on the progress addressing problems with the fire alarm system, the electric system and dehumidifiers. The discussion also included dealing with emergency buildings and grounds labor. Warden Bill Spalding made a motion stating that the Vestry gives authority to the Rector and the Operations and Communication Director to hire an individual or business on an as needed basis for competing tasks on urgent building maintenance during this calendar year. Costs per projects shall not exceed \$2000.00. A report of such projects will be prepared for the Vestry to review at the next regular meeting including: need, cost and who did the work. Carol Murphy seconded. Discussion followed. Vestry approved.

I. Assigning a room for the new children's program: Father Joe informed the Vestry that a new children's program is interested in renting space at St. James. This will involve assigning a room for this program. Marie Hughes made a motion to use the Storage Room for the new children's program. Diane Steckel seconded. Discussion followed. Vestry approved.

2. Finance Review:

A. January Financials: Nicole Bova presented the January financial reports. Warden Bill Spalding made a motion to approve the January Financial reports; Margie Amberge seconded; Vestry approved.

B. Treasurer: Jamie Bova. Warden Bill Spalding made a motion as following: The Vestry appoints Jamie Bova as Parish Treasurer. We acknowledge the Staff position of Nicole Bova, his wife as parish accountant. The professional

services of EAS Accounting Services, CPA LLC, have been retained to manage our accounts. Retainage of EAS and monthly review of the Balance Sheet, and the Budget Variance Income St. James YTD generated by EAS mitigate the close relationship of Jamie and Nicole.

Tara Covert-Lanning seconded and discussion followed. Vestry approved.

C. Finance Committee: Co-Chairs: Jamie Bova and Susanne Rynkiewicz: Warden Bill Spalding made the following motion: The Vestry appoints Jamie Bova and Susanne Rynkiewicz as co-chairs of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee is composed of the 2 co-chairs, the 2 wardens, the parish accountant, and a vestry member; Carol Murphy seconded; Vestry approved.

D. Vestry member present during counting of monetary donations: Nicole Bova reminded the Vestry that a member of the Vestry needs to be present during the counting of monetary donations. Information and a sign-up sheet will be emailed to Vestry members on 2/28/24.

E. Stewardship: Father Joe feels that St. James should research strengthening their Stewardship programs. He suggested exploring the following websites:

o **Workshops – Episcopal Parish Network (episcopalparishes.org)**

o **Stewardship – Episcopal Parish Network (episcopalparishes.org)**

3. Discernment Discussions with Rev. Joe T. Mitchell, Interim: Due to time limitations, Father Joe asked the Vestry to consider the following questions on their own time, prior to the next Vestry meeting.

1. What do we (St. James') really love to do?
2. How has God gifted us to do these things?
3. If we focused on doing what we love, so that we do it really well and share it, what are the best things that could happen?

2023-2024 RECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE PRAYER

Holy one, Creator of all, send your Spirit to watch over and guide St. James' its Vestry and Rector Search Committee as they work through this transition seeking a new rector.

In unity help the Rector Search Committee to listen and respond with wisdom, and gratitude in all conversations, every step of the way.

We pray for continued patience for this Committee and the St. James' Parish and commit to observe Your (God's) timing for this process.

We further pray that you give the Search Committee the spiritual strength to seek Christ amid the many distractions, challenges, and hardships locally and in the world that add weight to the decisions of the day. Please also lift up their families and provide extra care for them during this busy time.

Finally, Lord, we pray for our next Rector and their loved ones, that You (God) would give them a profound love for St. James' and the inspiration & strength to leave their current position.

All this we pray in your beloved name, Amen

The meeting ended at 8:45 PM.

Next Meeting: 4/2/24 at 6PM

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Quattrociocchi, Clerk