

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2019

Present: Fr. Gaston, Derek Gordon, Sr. Warden; Rhonda Warren, Jr. Warden, Linda Deuble, Grace Giammarco, Bob Kennedy, Beck Rand, Sara Strattan, Christy Thorley, Caroline Willoughby

Excused: John Wise

Guests: Charlie Kiesling, Treasurer; Joe Hoot, Search Committee; Carol Popovich

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. Rhonda and Linda led opening devotions.

Bob **motioned** to accept the minutes of the July 3, 2019 meeting. Linda seconded the motion and the motion was approved. There was no meeting in August.

Transition Update

- The Search Committee is in the process of interviewing candidates presented by Percy Grant.
- The Search Committee's meeting next week will mark one full year of service.

Finance Committee

- Charlie presented a copy of the 2018 Financial Audit. The Audit was parish-oriented and not just about finances. There are two recommendations that the Finance Committee is passing on to the Vestry:
 - Original Vestry Minutes should be signed by the Clerk (or minute-taker) and filed appropriately.
 - A windowed door should be considered at both entrances to the Rector's office/study.Sara **motioned** that the Vestry approves the 2018 Diocesan Team Audit dated July 2, 2019 conducted by Christina Monreal, Diocesan Audit Team Member. Rhonda seconded the motion and the motion passed.
 - The Clerk will sign approved minutes beginning with the July 3, 2019 minutes.
 - The Vestry decided to wait and let the new rector guide planned renovations, such as windows on the Rector's office doors and soundproofing.
- An additional signer is needed for the ECW savings and checking accounts. Sara **motioned** that the Vestry approves adding Marcia Tirpak as an additional signer on the ECW savings and checking accounts at the Stark Federal Credit Union. Sue Little and Marcia Tirpak will be the signers on the accounts. Beck seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- The cost of tree removal and the storm damage deductible were not paid out of the budget. Vestry approval is needed to use money from Capital Reserves to pay these expenses. Sara **motioned** that the Vestry approves the use of Capital Reserve Funds for the \$3,440 Hercules Tree payment for taking down 8 trees, and the \$1,000 storm damage deductible. Caroline seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- Emily Gordon has asked to be replaced on the Finance Committee. Kathy Kennedy has agreed to join the Committee if approved by the Vestry. Sara **motioned** that Kathy Kennedy is approved to join John Willoughby, Sara Strattan, and Norm Warren, as members of the Finance Committee. The Rector, Treasurer, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden are also members of the Committee. Beck seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Finance Committee (continued)

- Charlie presented the June 2019 six-month status update of the **2018 Three-Year Restoration Campaign**.
 - The six original projects have been completed and all invoices have been processed and paid.
 - Parishioner pledge payments are on schedule.
 - Other donations and events have slowed down.
 - Based on present projections, we are \$24,081 short of our \$150,000 goal.

Charlie and Derek will announce to the parish, before the Stewardship campaign begins, that more donations are needed.

- The **Quarterly Financial Reports** were presented for review. The reports are unusually positive due to the new interim rector arrangement.
 - **Second Quarter Analysis of Revenues & Expenses:** Quarterly income continues to exceed operating expenses. Pledge payments are ahead of schedule. The St. Mark's Trust Income account is negative because we have not and should not need any additional funds from the Trust this year. Expenses are under budget by \$22,654.
 - **Cash and Investment Balance Recap:** Two formats were offered for review. One is the year-to-date status and is used for the annual report. The other is a quarterly recap and is used by the Finance Committee. The Vestry preferred to use the Quarterly Recap format for reporting to the parish. Based on the 2018 Audit recommendations, the Altar Guild, Clergy Discretionary, and ECW account month-ending balances have been added to these reports. In August, \$15,000 was transferred to the Money Market account to improve yield.
- For the **2019 Stewardship Campaign** we will use the letter from last year and send personal thank-you notes again. Fr. Gaston will write a paragraph for the parish about how important stewardship is as a good recruiting tactic in our search for a new rector.

Senior Warden's Report

- **2020 Vestry Recruitment/Leadership** – Both Derek and Rhonda's Vestry terms end next year. Rhonda and Derek are willing to consider continuing in their roles for one additional year, but special action will need to be taken by the Vestry and possibly the by-laws. There is a precedence for doing this in parishes that are in transition, as continuity is helpful for a new priest.
- **Convention Attendance** – The annual Convention will be held on November 8-9, 2019 in Huron, OH. Two delegates and an alternate are needed from the parish. Bob and Sara said they will attend.
- **Frazer Avenue Street Vacation Request** – Derek talked to Canton City officials and learned that we can waive the 6-week public hearing process. Frank Kemp will draw up a Quit Claim Deed for us to sign.
- **November Election Day - Building Monitors** – The Board of Elections asked that our parking lot be upgraded to ADA standards for handicapped parking. We now have several handicapped parking spaces across from the main entrance. This was done at no cost to St. Mark's. We will need three shifts of building monitors for election day. We would like to begin having a bake sale again at the election, as it is good outreach and connection to the community. Christy will put out a request for volunteers for shifts.
- **Community Christmas** – We have budgeted \$1,500 for Community Christmas. In the past, we have spent around \$1,800 for 4 families. The Vestry discussed using \$1,500 as seed money and ask the parish if they want to donate on top of the seed money. Christy **motioned** to allow for one plate offering to go toward Community Christmas. Sara seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- **Security Committee** – Derek is going to meet with the Security Committee. Weaver just did an active shooter drill and they have suggestions for us.

Rector's Report

- **Summer Liturgy/Discussions** – We received 17 responses to the Expansive Language Liturgy trial which we will forward to the Diocese. The Discussions were well-received and well-attended. We will continue the Discussions every two weeks between the Sunday services.
- **Welcome Guild** – There are 3 elements in a good welcome strategy: Greeters, Ushers, and a Welcome Guild. A Welcome Guild is a ministry of parishioners who greet newcomers, assist in their experiences during and after services, and follow up with phone calls, etc. An organizational meeting will be held on September 15, 2019. On Sunday, October 6, 2019 at the 10:00 service Fr. Gaston will commission and bless all three groups.
- **Applesauce** – We have committed to providing 600 plastic 24oz. jars of applesauce to Canton's Interfaith Thanksgiving food basket project, which is based at St. Paul's.
- **Welcome Center** -- The Welcome Center has been moved to the lobby.
- **Oil Stock** – Fr. Gaston has generously donated a silver Oil Stock to St. Mark's Altar Guild. This will replace the nondescript plastic bottle of oil that was recently used at a baptism.
- **Church Life** – We will be sending photos of our Baby Changing/Feeding Station at the Stark County Fair to *Church Life*.
- **Choir Room Dedication** – The new choir room will be dedicated after a Sunday service. Beck will ask Bob Morrison about a date.
- **Combined Service** – We got a lot of positive feedback on the combined summer service schedule, and we should consider doing it again next summer. Our regular schedule resumes on September 22, 2019.

Other Business

- **Stark County Fair Booth** – Carol reported that we had 168 people use the Baby Changing/Feeding Station this year, which is the second-best year since we began in 2014. Improved placement of our booth increased our visibility. Expenses for the booth are around \$1,400 and are paid for by a grant from the Diocese. Fr. Gaston commended Carol and the parish volunteers for this initiative.
- **Outreach** – In addition to Thankful Thursdays, we may consider Hope Outreach Ministry for ongoing outreach.
- **Columbarium** – We received a request from the Friar family for relocation of ashes from our Columbarium to Arlington National Cemetery. Vestry approval is needed. Caroline **motioned** to approve the relocation of Calvin and Margaret Friar's ashes pending a Hold Harmless Agreement. Beck seconded the motion and the motion was approved. We will find a template for the Agreement and send it to the Friar family for signatures.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:40pm.

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 2, 2019 at 5:30pm. Caroline will provide the devotions.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Violand
Clerk