

# THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

## MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING DECEMBER 17, 2020

The December Virtual Vestry meeting (via *Zoom*) was called to order at 5:04 pm by Fr. Josh Stephens, our Rector. Attending were: Senior Warden, Carol Rector, Junior Warden, Jerry Tanner, Elizabeth Christenbury, Cynthia Easterling, Marie Hyder, Janet Johnson, Shelley Schiro, Gibson Sims, and Dick Zecher. Terry Enslin, Greg Newbold, and Michael Shannon were absent. In addition, the new Vestry members, John Barker, Jennifer Shelton, and Lynn Wiescholz were present at the meeting. Fr. Josh opened the meeting by welcoming the new members.

**Devotional:** The opening devotional included readings from Thomas Merton's "The Mystery of Christ" by Fr. Josh and prayers for Guidance led by Carol Rector.

**Approval of Minutes:** Shelley made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 15, Vestry Meeting; it was seconded by Elizabeth and was passed.

**Rector's Report:** Fr. Josh presented and discussed each of the following items:

A Stewardship and Giving Update indicated that overall giving has been positive with pledges of \$497,000 which reduces the reliance on gifts from trusts. Although there has been a reduction in the number of family units pledging, the amounts being pledged have increased.

Liaisons to Committees - Fr. Josh believes that members of the Vestry offer servant leadership by participating in various ministries. Liaisons also serve as a point of contact by keeping the vestry informed of committee activities and ministry. Going through the list of committees, Vestry members were appointed to each.

Fr. Josh discussed the newly formed *Pastoral Care Committee* which will provide a structure to ensure that those members who are no longer able to attend services will not be forgotten. Dick Zecher who chairs the Lay Eucharist Members, along with other volunteers, will work on that committee.

Gatekeepers, under the direction of Dick Zecher, have 3 members responsible for opening the church on Sunday morning. Starting in 2021, each Vestry member will be responsible for closing the church at 4:00 p.m. for one month of the year. Dick will provide updates and training.

Monthly devotionals at Vestry meetings will be assigned by Fr. Josh. Members can access that information in the December Vestry Folder.

### **Insurance and Bylaws Committee – Marie Hyder**

Marie reported that parish insurance renewal begins at the calendar year with Church Insurance of Vermont. The premiums, which are \$15,700 annually, contain a \$4 million umbrella policy and \$7.2 million real estate. This policy also covers cybersecurity.

### **Treasurer's Report - Tom Griswold**

Tom, with an update on finances for 2020, reported a positive operating budget with a forecast of \$47,000 surplus for the year. Expenses were well controlled being down by 14% from those projected. The 2021 Proposed Budget must be approved by the Vestry.

Referring to Balance Sheet and Mortgage with PNC, Tom reported a \$129,000 balance. While there is money available to pay down the balance, the penalty for prepayment drops to 1% after March 1. Tom also recommended eliminating the Next Chapter Fund, which carries a negative balance and is no longer being used.

Researching the total Outreach for 2020 outside the Operating Budget, Tom reported a disbursement of approximately \$90,000.

### **Junior Warden's Report - Jerry Tanner**

Jerry reported that a new air filtering system was installed in the church on December 2. The system, which has an electronic LED, produces clean air without ozone odor.

### **Senior Warden Report - Carol Rector**

Discussing the Clergy Evaluation for Fr. Josh, Carol asked Vestry members to return their evaluation forms to her.

Carol continued by discussing the \$46,000 surplus in the 2020 budget. She recently met with the Finance Committee regarding how to best use this surplus. After discussion with the Vestry, Carol proposed the following: Separate the surplus from the 2020 budget into two separate parts: (1) Add \$35,000 to the Sinking Fund to pay down the mortgage; (2) Add the remaining \$11,000 to Capital Reserves to help purchase a new truck for the Sexton. Cynthia made a motion to approve the proposal, Marie seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Vestry.

### **New Business**

Fr. Josh reported that all staff evaluations had been completed and he was pleased with the process. Continuing, he discussed Discretionary Canonical Accounts set up by the Diocese with the purpose of helping those in needs. Fr. Josh proposed the establishment of the *Innovations in Ministry Fund*, financed through private donations, and would become a line item in the Operating Budget being subject to audit. With advice and counsel from the Finance Committee and Wardens, Fr. Josh would use monies from this fund for gifts per the donors' wishes.

In closing Fr. Josh honored and thanked the two Vestry members who were leaving, Greg Newbold and Carol Rector, by mentioning their invaluable leadership, service, grace, and good humor.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 to move into Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,  
Margaret Barker, Clerk

## Addendum to Vestry Meeting - Vestry Members - Committee Ministries 2021

<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>2021 Vestry Committee Member</b>
Finance	Jodi Sundeen	
Bylaws, Canons Insurance	Jim Olson	Marie Hyder
Buildings and Grounds	Robin Howe	Jerry Tanner
Personnel	Margaret Barker	Cynthia Easterling
Historic Churchyard	Ken Jones	Elizabeth Christenbury
Christian Formation/Youth	Mary Ann Inglis	Shelley Schiro
Outreach	Carol Rector	Jennifer Shelton
Stewardship	David Christenbury	Elizabeth Christenbury
Publicity/Communications	Joey Popp	Janet Johnson
Community Engagement, Evangelism, Newcomers	Brenda Hillyer and Judy Peterson	Lynn Wiescholak
Altar Guild	Marti Smith	Gibson Sims
Lay Readers	Susan McDonald	Dick Zecher
Gatekeepers	Albert Gooch	Dick Zecher
Endowment	Tom Griswold	Marie Hyder
Pastoral Care		Terry Enslin