

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING JANUARY 21, 2021

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

Devotional: The opening devotional was led by Janet Johnson who read excerpts from Bishop Curry's Christmas message.

Confirming New Officers of the Vestry: Fr. Josh called for a motion to accept Jennifer Shelton as Senior Warden, Jerry Tanner as Junior Warden, and Tom Griswold as Treasurer. Marie made the motion, Elizabeth seconded it, and was passed by the Vestry.

Additionally, Fr. Josh called for an amendment to add the new Senior Ward as a signatory for financial institutions. Dick moved that we add our new Senior Warden, Jennifer Shelton, as a signatory for our PNC Checking Account, PNC Money Market Account, Wells Fargo General Endowment Temporary Account, Wells Fargo General Endowment Permanent Account, Wells Fargo Historical Churchyard Maint/Growth Fund, and our Wells Fargo Historic Churchyard Restricted Trust.

At the suggestion of Tom Griswold, the motion was amended: *Dick moved that we add our new Senior Warden, Jennifer Shelton, as a signatory for our PNC Checking Account, PNC Money Market Account, and all Wells Fargo Accounts.* Terry Enslin seconded the motion, and it was passed.

Approval of Minutes: Janet made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, Vestry Meeting; it was seconded by Elizabeth and was passed.

Senior Warden Report: Jennifer began by saying how excited she was to work with the Vestry and to be involved in strategic planning. She sees this as an opportunity to continue the process that began with her involvement in the Discernment Committee and looks forward to the future of St. John in the Wilderness.

Treasurer's Report - Tom Griswold began with the 2020 Financial Report. He reported that 2020 closed with a \$76,000 surplus which he attributed to the generosity of parishioners in payments beyond the anticipated pledges and in disciplined management of expenses. Pledges exceeded the Budget by \$36,163 or 7.4%; and expenses were down 7.9% from Budget for the year. Personnel, Building & Grounds, and Music accounted for most of the reductions.

In a discussion of Balance Sheet and Funds, Tom noted that in December the church eliminated the Next Chapter Building Fund Balance of \$183,325 and the Mortgage Debt Sinking Fund was increased to \$40,470 due to surplus funds from General Operations

gifts. Various funds, including the Capital Replacement, the Operating Reserve, and the Outreach General and Outreach International Funds were all increased. In addition, Tom added that the balance on our PNC Bank Mortgage Loan for the new Parish Hall is \$128,285. Plans include using the Mortgage Debt Sinking Fund to pay down the principal of the loan after March 1. Overall, assets having increased in 2020 by \$190,694 and Liabilities decreased by \$62,995.

In discussing the 2021 Operating Budget, Tom stated that a revised Proposed 2021 Budget for General Operations was presented by the Finance Committee. The Revised Budget adjusted the Diocesan Pledge to 10% of the 2019 reported Income less rental income. With these changes, the Proposed 2021 Budget for General Operations is balanced with no surplus or deficit. As such, it was submitted to the Vestry for approval. Shelley made a motion to approve the 2021 proposed budget; Jerry seconded the motion, and it was passed. Cynthia made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, Marie seconded the motion, and it was passed.

After the Treasurer's report, Fr. Josh called the Vestry into Executive Session. He asked for the Minutes of the December 17 Executive Session to be read. Elizabeth made a motion to accept the minutes as read, Gibson seconded the motion, and it passed. Fr. Josh provided an update on personnel matters and discussed the need for confidentiality by the Vestry.

Junior Warden's Report: Jerry Tanner discussed progress being made to replace Kevin's work truck. Although funds have been set aside, Jerry is continuing to seek other options. In addition, Jerry reported that the lease on the parsonage is up for renewal and the tenants have been notified of a rate increase. The lease will be renewed annually.

Committee Reports and New Business

In a Communications Committee update, Janet invited everyone to view the 'Year in Review' posted on the YouTube channel link: <https://youtu.be/8jw70aMU6Bc> It consists of Eduard's church service videos, Fr. Josh's photos, Dewitt's music and Joey's various video/photos as elements.

During December, Committee members helped E.R. Haire generate publicity in several media outlets for his December performances. The Committee recognized the following for their contributions: Lori Griswold, who is a wonderful copy editor, fine tunes news releases; Lynn Wiescholek joined the video crew and operates the Facebook camera for Sunday services; and Eduard Wiescholek who continues to operate the main camera used for the YouTube uploads.

Terry noted that the Pastoral Care Committee met recently. Currently there are more than 35 people listed. The Committee will continue its efforts to provide outreach and care for these individuals.

Rector's Report - Fr. Josh Stephens stated that the vestry devotional and gatekeepers' schedules have been updated and are available in the Vestry Folder. In addition, Fr. Josh discussed the IRS code that makes clergy housing exempt by designating a portion of the salary as federally tax exempt. Jennifer made the following motion: *For 2021, I move that we designate \$36,000 of Fr. Josh Stephens' salary as housing allowance and that this amount remains designated each year unless amended by this Vestry.* Cynthia seconded the motion, and it was passed.

Following an announcement about the Vestry Retreat which will begin after this meeting, the January Vestry Meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Barker, Clerk

