

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING OCTOBER 15, 2020

The October Virtual Vestry meeting (via *GotoMeeting*) was called to order at 5:00 pm by Fr. Josh Stephens, our Rector. Attending were: Senior Warden, Carol Rector, Junior Warden, Jerry Tanner, Elizabeth Christenbury, Cynthia Easterling, Terry Enslin, Marie Hyder, Janet Johnson, Greg Newbold, Shelley Schiro, Gibson Sims, and Dick Zecher. Michael Shannon was absent.

Devotional: The opening devotional, which included words from Bishop Michael Curry followed by prayer, was led by Gibson Sims.

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

Discussion of Worship Schedule Options: Fr. Josh lead a discussion of the transition from outside to inside worship as the winter season approaches. The Tent of Meeting will be available until November 12. Until then, both services will take place either in the Parish Hall or the Tent as weather permits. According to the Bishop, worship inside shall be limited to 25 individuals per service. Parish members will be reminded of the basic expectations of physical distancing, wearing masks, and bringing one's own *BCP*. In addition, the church will use the RSVP list as a tool for implementing contact tracing if necessary. Members of the parish will be asked to notify the clergy if they test positive for COVID-19 so adjustments to worship schedules can be made if necessary.

After discussion, Carol made a motion to form a subcommittee to plan the transition for moving services including location, times, and scheduling of ushers, readers, etc. Shelly seconded the motion and it was passed. Greg, Gibson, and Cynthia volunteered to serve as members of this subcommittee.

Treasurer's Report: Tom Griswold presented the following 2020 Financial Report, September Actuals, and the Forecast Summary:

- Current forecasts for 2020 indicate a surplus of \$11,948 in General Operating which represents a narrowing of the surplus amount projected in August. While pledges are on target, the reduction of Forecasted Contributions/Memorial Income is being attributed to the Covid-19 shutdown.
- In the past, income from the Sheffer Trust was included in the budget. However, it has been removed. Likewise, comparable distributions of the Sheffer Trust Income have been removed from Outreach Expenses.
- Although overall expenses are down 15% from Budget YTD and are forecasted to be down approximately 6% from the 2020 budget, forthcoming significant expenses

include Outreach Contributions and additions to Capital and Operating Reserves.

- Some worship expenses and other budget categories are running on a reduced forecast given the continuing lower level of activity during the pandemic.
- If a shortfall occurs, it will be balanced by elimination/reduction of funds added to the Operating Reserve and other possible reductions of General Operating Outreach.
- The Endowment Trustees, in consultation with the Finance Committee, requested the Vestry to authorize the transfer of \$28,733 from the Endowment; \$27,440 to General Operating Income and \$1,293 to the Outreach International Fund.

Janet made a motion to move the amount stated above from the Endowment Fund to General Operating; Elizabeth seconded the motion and it was passed by the Vestry.

Continuing, Tom discussed the 2021 Proposed General Operating Budget Summary by reporting a revision by the Finance Committee which recommended the elimination of the Sheffer Trust income and corresponding Outreach distributions as previously mentioned. He stated that the budget continues to be balanced with a small surplus, but further revisions to the Proposed 2021 Budget may be necessary pending the results of the Stewardship Campaign. Tom also reported that Donorbox Contributions have accounted for approximately 27% of Memorials and Contributions while only 4 % of pledges are received in this method. Fees from these contributions average almost 3% of total donations.

As for Outreach, Tom reported that a financial analysis of the programs is in progress at the request of the Vestry. Outreach programs are being divided into several categories that include General Operating Fund, Outreach General Fund, Local Outreach Fund, Outreach International Fund, and Designated Programs.

Elizabeth made a motion to accept the 2021 Proposed General Operating Budget including removing the Sheffer fund as discussed; Greg seconded the motion and was passed by the Vestry.

Committee Reports and Other Business

Vestry Nominating Committee Report Update: Carol reported that all candidates for vestry who were contacted have agreed to serve. Nominees will be voted on at the Annual Meeting scheduled for November 18, 2020.

Gate Keepers - Dick Zecher reported a need for volunteers to serve as a Gate Keeper at 7:45 a.m. He also noted that individuals will only serve once per month and he will provide any necessary training. To date, the following have volunteered; David Dethrero, Albert Gooch, and Dick Zecher.

Junior Warden's Report - Jerry Tanner reported there were no undue expenses at this time. He also stated that there will be a new lease and cover letter for the renters of the parsonage.

Senior Warden Report – Carol Rector reiterated that the Western North Carolina Diocesan Convention will be held virtually on November 13-15. Shelly, Marie, Dn. Sandy, and Fr. Josh will attend the conference. Carol will serve as an alternate.

Carol announced that the Annual Meeting of St. John in the Wilderness will be held virtually via Zoom on Thursday, November 19 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will include Committee Reports, Budget Reports, as well as the slate for the 2021 Vestry candidates.

Rector's Report- Fr. Josh Stephens began by stating that the Stewardship Campaign's Ingathering in October was well received with 68 families making initial pledges totaling \$278,000 to date. Continuing, he discussed the formation of a Pastoral Care Committee to minister to the needs of the sick, infirmed, and elderly who live in care facilities and/or are cared for by members of their families. Dick Zecher, who leads the Lay Eucharistic Ministers, will collaborate with Janet and Elizabeth to compile a detailed list of those who would benefit from this ministry.

In conclusion, Fr. Josh discussed a letter received from a local church requesting support for an effort to demonstrate civility and mutual respect for all in the community prior to the election. Greg made a motion to support the movement; it was seconded by Dick and was passed.

Closing

After an evening prayer led by Fr. Josh, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Barker, Clerk