

Vestry Minutes

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Oxford, Ohio

May 14, 2019



Present: Sara Palmer, Rector; Pete Lindsay, Sr. Warden; Hugo Olaiz, Jr. Warden; Stacey Peterson, Clerk; Vestry Members: Ken Grabach, Bonnie Mason, Ellen Reister, Chris Shoker, Margaret Smith and Debbie Williams Guests: Kathy Mohylsky and Jack Southard

Absent: Martin Ganev, John Harper, Lisa Herrmann and Jim Michael

Spiritual reflections presented by Pete.

Agenda for 5-14-2019 Meeting: Unanimously approved with the addition of an Outreach Commission request agenda item and deletion of the Altar Guild Endowment report – Debbie moved and Hugo seconded.

Approval of 4-9-2019 Vestry meeting minutes: Unanimously approved as amended – Ken moved and Bonnie seconded.

Safe Church Training: Ellen has completed; Ken, John, Lisa, Bonnie, Margaret need to complete.

Rector's Report – Sara

- **Pastoral care:** Sara visited six elderly parishioners. Two church members died this month: Dick Smith's celebration of life will be May 16 and Eleanore Vail's June 22.
- **Parishioner honors and milestones:** Went to the Proctor Center May 1 to honor Dick Nault and Lila Mason's induction into the Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna. Returned to the Proctor Center May 11 for the Diocesan Convocation where Holy Trinity parishioners John, Suzanne, Henry and Thomas Harper were confirmed.
- **Student Ministry:** One new student has started regularly attending church, and student Bible study group has a new member.
- **Religious Communities Association:** Sara continues to work with this local group. She has signed up for three slots at Miami's summer orientation as part of its outreach work.
- **Community involvement:** 30 people joined Holy Trinity's Earth Day neighborhood clean-up, including four from the Oxford Presbyterian Church. Sara has been invited to the celebration of Ramadan at the Center for World Studies on May 10. Zafer Ozdemir has been invited to speak at the fall Adult Forum about his faith and his experience as a Muslim in Oxford.
- **Healing prayer:** The Wednesday midday Holy Eucharist and Healing Prayer service will end May 12. Sara is meeting with Linda Church, Mary Hay and Valerie Ubbes to explore reviving the healing prayer ministry.

Endowment Committee Q1 financials – Kathy and Jack

The Endowment's assets were up 10% at end of Q1. The committee made a small change in the holdings to rebalance the portfolio, moving some of money into mutual funds. Members also have discussed ideas to help ensure that an ongoing cash flow is available to Holy Trinity.

Capital Campaign update – Pete, Margaret and Jack

Jack said the Capital Campaign Committee is developing three documents: A case study, a campaign timeline and a “giving pyramid,” which shows how many pledges will be needed at each level of giving. People will be encouraged to think in terms of giving the amount of their annual pledge spread over three years. Sunday, August 25, will be the campaign kickoff. The campaign slogan will be “Pay off the past – Free up the future!” An article is being written for the May Triad.

One key step is to get people in positions of responsibility – Capital Campaign Committee and Vestry members – to lead the way and commit early in the process. Vestry members will be getting an email request to make a commitment.

Vestry members raised questions and concerns that Jack addressed as follows:

- Based on past fundraising experience, this capital campaign shouldn’t affect annual giving.
- The campaign, as envisioned, is too small a project to hire a professional consultant.
- If the campaign goes over the target amount for paying off the bank loan, the overage will probably be used for a building contingency fund.

Gardening and Grounds Committee update and tree lawn project – Pete

Sally Southard has resigned from the Gardening and Grounds Committee and a new chair person is being sought.

Based on a memo from Jim Michael for the Grounds Committee, a large ash tree needs to be removed on the Poplar Street side of the church near the alley. The City will remove the tree and is proposing planting a Chinese Elm and Japanese Zelkova on the treelawn on that side of the church. On the Walnut Street side of the church, two Japanese Tree Lilacs are being considered. One Vestry member suggested considering native trees or bushes. Two other members supported that suggestion. Pete said we’re waiting to hear back from contractor Doug Hair on that suggestion.

Building Committee membership, update – Pete

Vestry approved by acclamation the appointment of Elaine Brandner to head the Building Committee – Debbie moved.

Margaret Smith’s gift resolution – Pete

Vestry unanimously approved the resolution copied below – Hugo moved and Pete seconded.

WHEREAS, the Vestry has been informed that Margaret Smith has offered to donate six complete place settings of dishes matching Holy Trinity's existing dishes, plus a few more pieces in varying numbers, including 6 additional mugs; and

WHEREAS, the Vestry has determined that the dishes are needed, will complement those already owned, and that it is in the interest of the parish to accept the gift; and

WHEREAS, the Parish's Gift Acceptance Policy states that "[e]xcept for unrestricted gifts of cash and publicly traded securities, no gift to the Church or the Endowment Fund will be accepted without an explicit resolution of Vestry,"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. The gift described above is accepted.*
- 2. The Vestry expresses heartfelt thanks to the Margaret Smith for this generous donation.*

Contract with Kathy Parrett -- Pete

Vestry unanimously approved terminating the existing contract with Kathy Parrett, who provides cleaning services to the church – Bonnie moved and Debbie seconded.

Vestry unanimously approved establishing a contract for cleaning services with Joy Tipton at the same rate we've been paying Parrett – Ellen moved and Ken seconded.

In response to a question about liability insurance, it was noted that Joy will be hired as a contractor and will be responsible for her own insurance and taxes. Pete will follow up with Joy to make sure this is the case.

Outreach request -- Sara

Vestry unanimously approved a request to give \$100 for the 2019 ShareFest effort – Hugo moved and Chris seconded.

Stations of the Cross, sharing impressions – Sara and Pete

Pete said he would like to have a vote on whether to accept the donation of the 14 Stations of the Cross plaques at the June Vestry meeting. Vestry members took a field trip to look at the stations positioned in the church as they might be if installed.

The following points were raised in follow-up discussion:

- Bob Benson researched whether other churches in the Diocese have Stations of the Cross installations: 34 do and 36 do not.
- Pete looked at websites to find out how other Episcopal churches handle such installations. One church has the stations up only during Lent. Another covers them at all time except during Lent. A third church leaves them up all the time, but only does the liturgy during Lent.
- Rosalyn Benson, chair of the Art Committee, forwarded committee comments: All agree the plaques are of high artistic quality and would complement the Holy Trinity's chancel or nave. The committee doesn't have an opinion on where the plaques would be installed and is open to considering temporary installment. The committee would like to see a conversation with the congregation on understanding the Stations of the Cross liturgy.

In a round robin, Vestry members made the following observations:

- A Stations of the Cross installation will affect the parish for next 30-40 years. We would need serious education as to why it's important and the variabilities involved.
- This has been a growth experience for me. I saw Stations of the Cross as something related to the Catholic Church. I like the idea of having the plaques up only during Lent. Maybe they sit in the window wells during Lent.
- They are beautiful, and they might make sense if our goal is to target Roman Catholic folks or delve into the Stations of the Cross liturgy. However, I don't think it makes sense for Holy Trinity. It would be an imposition on generations of folks who come after us.
- I'm not sure how we would implement this.
- I'm uncertain about the liturgical aspects. Is there a way to focus just on the eight stations that are based on gospel? I do like the idea of limiting them to Lenten usage. Aesthetically, the metal tone and wood of the sculptures are compatible with elements of the organ.
- They don't offend me, but I don't feel I know enough about Stations of the Cross at this point to make a decision.
- Having spent years in the Catholic church, it feels very Roman Catholic to me – especially the scenes depicted. It doesn't feel right; it doesn't reflect the progressive, liberal tradition of Holy Trinity.
- The lack of decoration in our church isn't a bad thing. It's actually a strong part of Holy Trinity's identity – a bright, open space with a lot of light.
- It is possible to do just eight of the stations, and there's no requirement that they be permanently affixed to the walls. However, the donors have expressed concern that the plaques could be damaged if repeatedly put up and taken down.
- The donors would like to have the installation as a memorial with a memorial plaque.
- The church as a whole has evolved over the last 40 years in the direction of focusing on the love of God.

The meeting was adjourned following a closing reading on the Beloved Community and a prayer lead by Pete.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Peterson

Stacey Peterson, Clerk

Attachments:

Memo from Jim Michael for the Grounds Committee