

Meeting Minutes from the vestry meeting on Sunday, November 8, 2009

Present: Jim Arthur, Eric Crane, Rev. Thea Keith-Lucas, Jane Maihos, Claire Jordan, Henry Witham, Dick Healy, Carol Pechinsky, Gail Arnold, Paul French, John Gettings, Bill Hooper, and Sally Symmes.

Absent: Erika Bianchi

Clerk of the vestry's report:

- The clerk will begin emailing approved minutes to Fran Weil, who will upload them to the Calvary website.
- The clerk will also make sure the parish administrator is sent a copy of the minutes to print out and provide hardcopies to members of the vestry without email addresses.

Motion: Accept the minutes from the October vestry meeting as submitted.

Result: Approved, 10 in favor, 3 abstentions

Treasurer's report:

Bill Hooper presented the parish's monthly financial report, which was reviewed by the finance committee at their meeting earlier this week.

- The \$15,000 transfer from the DIT occurred in October, which means the \$12,000 in revenue that appears on the monthly financial report is, instead, evidence that we took in \$3000 less than was budgeted for the month.
- Bill is continuing to monitor our budget shortfall. He anticipates that the parish's deficit will be in the neighborhood of \$32,000 this year.
- Update on fuel costs: We currently have a \$4,800 credit with Ken's Oil. January 2010 and beyond payments have not been discussed yet. Due to the recent and prolonged rise in fuel costs, Bill suggested that we may want to discuss, at some point, increasing our payment to \$1,500 (from \$1,200) per month. Paul asked whether we had plans to use the parish hall again this winter for our services, because "although there were some parishoners who did not like it, there were a lot who did," he said. No decision has been made yet. And Thea pointed out that although we were able to save about 1,000 gallons worth of fuel from the previous year, it was not just because of that move to the parish hall. That was one piece of a larger fuel-efficiency initiative, which also included lowering thermostats and not heating the chapel (Stepping Stones area) on Sundays.
- Dick recommended we make it clear in the vestry meeting minutes that the treasurer's financial report is always reviewed first by the parish's finance committee.

Motion: Accept, with thanks, the treasurer's report.

Result: Approved, unanimously

Update on worker's compensation issue:

- Thea spoke with the Ron Knutilla, our sexton, and briefed him on our discussion at last month's vestry meeting about our liability concerns. Thea explained that people working at the church, who are not officially on the payroll (and are not considered "volunteers"), aren't covered by our worker's compensation insurance. In the event of an accident/injury the church could potentially be partially liable. Ron was given some options, and he decided that he'd like to have his son, Ron Jr., who has been helping him since his shoulder surgery earlier this year, hired as assistant sexton; and he agreed to have the church divide the sexton's salary equally across the two positions. As a result, Thea will draw up a letter of employment for Ron Jr. this week. Also, she pointed out that it speaks a lot of Ron and his family that when he was injured, other members of his family maintained the consistency and care of the church, which meant we did not have to go out and find/hire an outside vendor to help in his absence.
- Bill posed a question he had been asked, "Why is this positioned salaried and not paid hourly?" Thea said that from a cost perspective switching might not be advantageous for us. Dick pointed out the difficulties of totaling hours worked on a weekly and monthly basis for this position. One reason for the salaried positions is that in addition to being easier to budget, it's been a way to maintain an even cash flow for the employee, who may reduce his/her hours in the summer, according to Eric.

Motion: Hire Ron Knutilla Jr. and split the current sexton's salary in half to fund the new position. Any fees for special events are to be paid to the sexton or assistant sexton who carried out the duties during such events.

Result: Approved, unanimously

Initiate parish-wide survey (proposed by Gail Arnold):

- Gail said she would like to get the entire parish more involved in brainstorming new ideas for the church. Specifically, she proposed creating a parish-wide survey that would gather ideas for increasing the church's visibility and membership.
- Thea pointed out that the Blessing of the Animals is a good model, because it shows us caring for something very important to our community. Although fundraising is involved in the event, it's secondary to us doing community outreach, she said. This survey should ask people, "What are we saying about our church at these events?" and "What identity do we want to project to the wider community?"

- Jane pointed out that we need to retain members who are here now, and especially those who used to be involved but aren't anymore. We need to find out why they aren't coming and what might get them interested in getting involved again.
- It was discussed that if we are to do a survey there has to be a process for addressing the results. Also, each responders will be given the option to participate anonymously or add his or her name—both types of responses will be given equal weight by the vestry. The survey is tentatively scheduled to be sent out after the first of the year.
- Gail is gathering a small group of three or four vestry members to draft a survey. The draft will be presented to the vestry at its December meeting.

Discussion: Attracting and retaining new members:

- Thea presented a draft of the annual stewardship letter, which asks parishioners to pledge with their hearts and features a wooden heart that can be written on and brought into the church for display with other members' hearts.

The next vestry meeting is scheduled for 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, December 13.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Paul W. Gettings". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Paul W. Gettings, clerk of the vestry