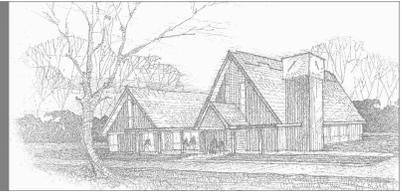


St Stephen's Anglican Church

Mays Chapel, Maryland



Vestry Minutes 19 February 2020

Attendees: **Rector:** The Rev'd Guy Hawtin;
Vestry: John Cobb; Tracy Collins; Paul Douglas; Tom Fitzgerald; Brock Johnson; Sev Miller; Jai Seunarine; Peter Threadgill (secretary);
Treasurer: Bob Reynolds;
Clergy: Fr Dan Bursi; Fr Novicki;
Staff and Guests: Bill Spicer.

The Rector called the meeting to order at 1900 with the Vestry Prayers. The vestry met in executive session, so guests and observers were not allowed.

1. Reading of the Minutes

Mr Miller moved to approve the minutes, Mr Cobb seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report

2.1. Year End Report

Mr Reynolds reported that, overall, total income is up, due to a few large gifts, but that pledged/unpledged income (that is, weekly offerings) were down 25%. He added that we have been fortunate over the last couple of years to have received several large bequests/donations (esp for the Roof Fund). We should be okay for two years, but he is not sure what the five-year outlook will be. Total current assets remain over \$300k; the T Rowe Price fund made money last year. We raised \$22K of the \$28K needed for the roof (including one very large donation).

Mr Reynolds noted that a number of parishioners have given their full-year pledge up front, which inflates the numbers. He also mentioned that the Revere Bank balance was large last year because of a large donation which was subsequently moved to the T Rowe Price fund.

Mr Reynolds pointed out that the parish has a tendency when not bringing money in to burn through the reserves. We spend \$16K per month just for payroll and mortgage; that doesn't include electric, choir, insurance, et cetera. He is trying to watch incidental costs up front.

Fr Novicki brought up the topic of Microsoft subscriptions (which are quite reasonable, given that the parish qualifies for a non-profit discount). He is looking to have all the staff and some volunteers use the software so that they can work cooperatively (sharing calendars, documents, and the like). He said that Fr Hawtin will need to seats, one for home and one for work, since the seats are tied to hardware. It was pointed out that the vestry had previously approved the subscription purchase.

2.2. Missing checks

Fr Hawtin reported that several checks have gone missing. (Mr Reynolds first discovered this when talking with a parishioner.) In a couple of cases, \$10k bank checks have gone missing. It is unclear whether the checks have been negotiated (cashed). Mr Cobb reported that BB&T says the money was not gone as of Monday a week ago, but Mr Reynolds reported that there are affidavits stating that the bank checks have been negotiated.

Among the missing checks are diocesan tithes from Mississippi and Columbia (Frs Munn and Keller), which have disappeared over the course of one or two months. According to Mr Cobb, there has been a total of five checks which have disappeared over the last three months—that we know of. Mr Fitzgerald asked how many checks are sent by mail; Mr Reynolds responded that several donors mail checks issued by their bank.

Mr Fitzgerald asked what recourse we have. Fr Hawtin said action must be taken by the donors with their banks, not by the parish. Mr Seunarine said we should let the USPS know that mail wasn't getting through, but Mr Cobb said it is better to let the State's Attorney involve the UPS. Fr Hawtin said that as a preventative, donors should not label envelopes "to the attention of the treasurer", and that they should enclose checks in a sheet of paper or use a security envelope. Mr Cobb asked how much personal mail the parish receives, and Fr Novicki said we regularly receive several pieces of hand-addressed mail.

Fr Hawtin pointed out that when people deposit checks by taking pictures with their smart phones, there is no record of an endorsement (only the front of the check is photographed), so no signature is necessary. Mr Seunarine said that people would notice if their bank accounts didn't balance. Mr Reynolds observed that when the parish tax notices are sent out, people would notice discrepancies. Fr Hawtin would like to include an article in the newsletter alerting parishioners and inquiring about uncashed checks.

2.3. Rental locker

Fr Novicki inquired about the rental locker, which is being used to store the sheet music which was obtained from Old Saint Paul's (the music was moved abruptly before the Garden Party to clear out the Parish Hall for the Garden Party Afternoon Tea). Fr Novicki proposed to move the music to the area in the office where his desk used to be; this would stop the \$141/month cost for the rental locker. Mr Johnson said that he had volunteers to pay for shelving. It was stated that, weather permitting, the music would be moved by the end of the month.

2.4. Insurance

The church's insurance is up for its three-year renewal. Mr Darlington had arranged for a policy review, and he has recommended increasing the coverage from \$1.3M to \$1.4M for the building. The policy is for full replacement up to a limit: 25% beyond the coverage. Mr Darlington also recommended increasing the insurance on contents from \$326K to \$400K. This will increase the cost by \$191/month. The total will be \$5800/year (\$4500 + \$600 workman's com). Mr Darlington thought this was reasonable. Fr Hawtin pointed out that the primary business of insurance firm is churches.

Mr Seunarine looked through the proposal and pointed out that the policy includes coverage for a loss of donations up to \$50K, and theft of money up to \$2K. (Mr Cobb pointed out that this only applies after the parish has the money in hand, so it doesn't cover the missing checks). Mr Seunarine also observed that it includes directors' insurance. Mr Seunarine was concerned that the policy didn't

distinguish between per-occurrence and aggregate liability. Fr Novicki said he would have Mr Darlington call Mr Seunarine to discuss the matter.

Mr Fitzgerald moved that we accept Mr Darlington's proposal, as long as he and Mr Seunarine both said it was okay. Mr Cobb seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr Johnson proposed a vote of thanks to the treasurer. Mr Miller seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

3. Rector's Report

Lent is beginning soon. This year's Lenten Study will be led by Fr Novicki, assisted by Mr Johnson and Fr Bursi. The first three sessions will center on the Anglican Church: where we've been, where we are, and where we're going. Mr Johnson will discuss the temptation in the wilderness, and Fr Bursi will discuss a topic yet to be determined.

The Ash Wednesday services will be at 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM at the church, and 12 Noon at Union Memorial. There will also be visitations at Joseph Ritchie. Mr Johnson mentioned that we recently broke an attendance record at Glenn Meadows; Fr Hawtin pointed out that this was the first location for the parish's outreach, beginning in 1990.

Fr Hawtin said he saw the Bishop on Saturday and Sunday; the Bishop is not leaving for Ireland until Saint Patrick's Day.

4. Rector's Warden Report

Nothing to report.

5. People's Warden's Report

5.1. Appointment of People's Warden

Fr Hawtin invited Bill Spicer to be People's Warden. Mr Johnson moved to endorse the invitation, including a brief testimonial. Mr Miller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Mr Spicer thanked the Vestry for the honour, and said he would rethink the position in a year.

5.2 Electrical issues

Mr Spicer reported that we need an electrician to fix the overhead lights in parish hall, which tend to short out. He is trying to schedule meeting with electricians; he received recommendations from Tracy and Jai. Apparently one company was on a celebration cruise.

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Parish Life Committee

Fr Novicki reported that Pam O'Shea has stepped forward to be parish coordinator; she is working with Fran and Priscilla Huffman on getting up to speed.

Fr Novicki reported that Mr Spicer had gotten all the griddles out, and checked them to work with circuits in preparation for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper.

6.2. Sunday School

Mrs Collins said there wasn't much to report. The Sunday School tends to be inundated every other week and then have gaps, due to a number of families' attendance patterns. Some people want a formal curriculum, but they haven't found a good one. Mrs Collins thinks that she and Mrs Novicki are doing a good enough job. Fr Hawtin recommended a curriculum available from a priest in the APA; it is based on the lectionary. Mrs Collins objected that a formal curriculum is awkward when attendance fluctuates. Mr Threadgill requested that when the matter is resolved that he be given an update to replace the outdated description on the web site (which still says the program is led by Charlotte Hawtin and uses the Saint George's curriculum).

6.3. Grounds

See under the People's Warden's report.

6.4. Stewardship

Fr Hawtin said we need to do an every member canvass.

6.5. Memorials

Mr Cobb forwarded two columbarium-related documents prior to the meeting. Mr Threadgill asked if he had responded to Mrs Darrell's request for background information. Mr Cobb said he hadn't, but that the initial discussion dated back to 2014.

There was a discussion of the design and placement of the columbarium. A freestanding structure outside is not reasonable; and inside structure is likelier, but would be smaller, as would a columbarium in the atrium. Fr Novicki has looked into pre-made columbaria, which are modular, like erectors. Others are pre-cast concrete. There would be room on the wall of the atrium for two 3x3 units without stacking. With a footer, they would sit about 6-8" off the ground. Mr Fitzgerald said the units would not necessarily need a special cover: Judy Brown's father was recently interred at Saint Thomas's, and there was no cover on that columbarium. Mr Cobb said we need to keep an eye on construction costs; Mr Fitzgerald suggested pre-selling spaces to offset construction costs. Mr Cobb related that Govans sold plots in 1890 for \$6, but they can't resell them because they can't find the next of kin.

Mr Threadgill moved to ask Fr Novicki to move forward with developing a design at his convenience (given how busy he is). Mr Miller seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Fr Novicki observed that there is a certain amount of urgency, given that there are already five urns awaiting ("stooging around" in his words) inurnment.

6.6. Construction & Rehabilitation

Nothing to report.

7. Old Business

Nothing to report.

8. New Business

8.1. Personnel Issue

There was a discussion of a personnel issue. *[Detailed discussion omitted.]*

8.2. Role descriptions

In concert with the personnel matter, there was a discussion of job or role descriptions. Mr Threadgill re-iterated his recommendation that, as Mr Cobb had suggested previously, we assemble a handbook of job or role descriptions. Currently the clergy, staff, and volunteers are performing bits and pieces of various jobs and roles, and there is incomplete coverage. Fr Hawtin said that Father Novicki was picking up on stuff that Bill Hawkins had abandoned. Currently, Fr Hawtin and Fr Novicki are doing the newsletter labels because the volunteers had quit. Mr Threadgill observed that that was an inappropriate use of their time, and that they should advertise for new volunteers. Fr Hawtin agreed that it would be best to define what Mr Hawkins did.

Mr Spicer pointed out that the parish survey could find out what the volunteer capacity is. Mr Threadgill said he would resend the survey with the meeting minutes. Mr Spicer said we should discuss the survey at the next meeting.

8.3. Facebook Advertising

Mr Threadgill had previously forwarded reports on the Facebook advertising for Epiphany Lessons & Carols and for Candlemas Evensong. The next ads will be for the Ash Wednesday services and the Lenten study sessions.

8.4. Vestry Position

Mr Douglas graciously offered to resign and let Mr Spicer be a full voting vestry member (since otherwise, as People's Warden, he would be a non-voting member). Mr Miller moved to accept Mr Douglas's offer with a serious vote of thanks. The motion was generally seconded and passed unanimously.

8.5. Credit Card

Mr Johnson inquired about the status of the credit card which was previously authorised by the vestry. Fr Novicki reported that the information had been passed on to Mr Reynolds, and that Mr Reynolds had increased the limit on the debit card.

9. Close

Mr Miller's motion to close the meeting was seconded by Mr Collins, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.