

Trinity Parish Wethersfield, Vestry meeting

7/15/2021

Present: The Rev. Tom Furrer (mission priest), Warren Blessing (co-warden), Connie Harasymiw (co-warden), Rebecca Scrutin (co-warden), Robert Heath, Greg Joseph, Melanie Hepburn, Carol Jones, Ann Marie Stavola, Sarah Butters, JR Stanko.

Absent: Peter Dewberry

6:35pm meeting called to order.

1. Opening prayer. Fr. Tom let us know that Mrs. Rodgers, the wife of former rector, died earlier this week, and led us in an opening prayer.

2. Dwelling in the Word. Fr. Tom. Genesis 41:25-57. A quick review of Trinity's recent past regarding expenses and reduction of staff as instituted by the diocese. Fr. Tom wants the parish to prepare for a future priest who will require higher salary and fringe rates. The 2 parts of the equation will include reduction in expenses and a higher level of giving. Consecration Sunday is being planned to encourage members of the community to increase their support. Warren Blessing underlined the purpose of the vestry is to plan for the future of the parish on all fronts, including finances.

3. Monthly reports

a. Minutes. Motion to accept by Greg, second by Carol. Melanie will correct Anne Marie's last name. Minutes accepted with corrections.

b. Financial report. Motion to accept by Greg, second by Carol. Rob Heath reviewed the report. Income and spending are both under budget. There was clarification of the funds designated for the memorial plaque. Report accepted unanimously.

i. Rob has stopped the payments coming from the investment account to support the bank account as the balance is at an adequate level. Current level of the checking account balance is due to a "delay" in spending for mission and outreach. However, calculating that expense in, we should still be in good shape in the checking account by the end of the year. Rob proposes to move \$20K back to investment account to replenish, and to demonstrate to diocese that the parish is currently sustainable. For clarification, if necessary, we could dip back into investment account. Warren stated there are some property updates that will be attended to that may draw down some of the funds. (We may need to adjust the amount based on those property updates.)

Motion to move \$20K from checking account back to investment account. Greg moved, motion seconded by Carol. Motion approved unanimously.

c. Agenda updates. Warren added property improvements.

4. Reopening. Connie reviewed the reopening guidelines and timelines. Eucharist will continue via individual plastic units through September for indoor service. Parishioners will have the choice based on individual comfort level - including wearing masks and social distancing. The new arrangement will go into effect 7/25/2021. Everything is also subject to change based on data. The updated guidelines will be included in the Trinity news, the Belfry, and at Sunday services. JR asked about music at services. Fr. Tom stated that we are moving towards returning music to services, but nothing yet about choir. The 9am service has included individual singing behind masks. Warren reminded us that while the sanctuary is air conditioned, we do not have good air exchange. The 9am service has been averaging about 40 congregants, which is pretty much at the max as per earlier social distancing requirements. The vestry

was at consensus regarding the guidelines proposed. (The 10:30am service has begun experimenting with traditional shared host.)

5. Mission Outreach. Warren shared information re St. Vincent's, Haiti and the dire situation faced by the country due to COVID, assassination of the president, rampant violence. A zoom link is available to attend a prayer session on 7/22. Warren wanted to accept mission and outreach but has come to the realization that he cannot manage as he would like. We need someone to take on this leadership role. Vestry members were asked to reflect.

6. Comments about vestry going forward. Warren. August 19th meeting has been canceled. Next vestry meeting will be September 16th. Potentially shift to zoom during snowy months. If something comes up that needs a motion and vote, that will be handled by email.

7. Safe Church. Greg reminded us all that we have been charged to complete the Safe Church program, hopefully by September. Greg took down the names of members who still need to complete the program so they can be notified when new training dates are available. Greg will keep us updated as the process moves forward.

8. Property initiatives. Warren updated the vestry on property improvements. The classroom downstairs needs new counter, with sink and faucet; the path from the back of the building to the garage - the patio blocks need to be repaired; looking at heating ventilation contractor to come up with maintenance contract and will be providing quotes; sanctuary walls and ceiling - repairs and paint to peeling surfaces; carpets in infant room need to be cleaned, and a quote is being provided; the alligator pit/drain needs a new membrane and drain; the belfry needs to be cleaned, new chicken wire, and paint; no cost to upgrade the Nativity group due to parishioner's donations; mailroom will be our new supply room - will be painted; shrubs out front and along the side - need some volunteers to help take care of that. Warren will be in touch with Rob regarding quotes, costs, and reimbursements.

9. Consecration Sunday. Connie reintroduced the stewardship program, Consecration Sunday, used by Trinity two years in a row. The program is based on a percentage giving structure - what is God calling you to give. The very structured program requires a guest speaker - lay person or clergy - to provide leadership and training to group of church leaders. There are 3 visits by the guest speaker - training, dinner with leaders, and then presentation to church on Consecration Sunday. The program is entirely scripted. Cards are distributed to the parish members, collected, and then the community receives the total amount on which the budget is based. The wardens have already approached a potential guest speaker who is considering the role. The program is based on the theology of giving.

10. Warren handed around a picture of the heritage plaque so the vestry could see the almost-finished version of the text, graphics, and lay-out. The plaque is due to be installed in early to mid-November.

11. Motion to adjourn at 8:43 – motion made by Greg and seconded by Carol.

12. Greg closed the meeting with a prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by M. Hepburn 8/1/2021