

St. Stephen's Vestry Minutes

March 15, 2016

Attendees: Mother Susan Anslow Williams, Don Ingersoll, Katy Allen, Margie Armstrong, Kathy DeCiantis, Richard Kenefic, Paul Hardy, Alice Moss, Patrick Roberts, Norma Ross, Roy Waters

Opening: Senior Warden Don Ingersoll called the meeting to order at 7:05, members recounted important events/issues in their lives over the last few weeks.

Prayer: Roy led us in a prayer

Bible study: Matthew 18:15-17. Lessons to be learned are if you are wrong, repent. Keep trying for reconciliation, conflict has been happening since the very beginnings of the church, work for community consensus. How can the Vestry be a welcoming, conflict-positive place? People expect reconciliation through us.

Vestry Communication Rules of Engagement (handout): We must **accept conflict**, affirm hope and commit to prayer. To build trust, don't reject a person if you reject a solution, focus on agreements, not polarizing factions. **Avoid defensiveness** and taking things personally, have to actually negotiate and evaluate if not judge. No assumptions other than assuming good faith/positive intent, build up not tear down, listen, encourage engagement, allow time to heal, practice forgiveness. What is the line between gossip and news? As **vestry we must take responsibility to disseminate information in our our friend groups** or as liaisons to committees, support the mutual decision even if there was dissenting discussion, be able to explain our rationale. We must involve everyone in the decision, ensure all have input and present their perspectives to come to a well rounded agreement and decision, nonetheless strong opinions may need to be registered as dissent in records. Don't fight someone else's battles or allow yourself to be manipulated, do you give permission for people to speak directly to you with a problem, reconciliation is not optional but must be aware that there's a problem, **don't create a triangle or be a conduit**, use strategies to pass on information to the person concerned. Upcoming meeting: homework and committees about evangelism and communicating.

Consent Calendar: Roy moved to approve and Alice seconded the minutes, carried without dissent.

Financial Report: Jim Trask representing financial committee (Dave Stein is still chair) gave an overview of how to read St. Stephen's Financial Reports (handouts), different months have **weather, salary, holy day variations which affect income**

and expenses. Currently we are **down year on year and not meeting projections to hit budget target**. Members asked can we think about five year projections and how to make reliable contributions by egiving attractive (consider if fees for Square or Paypal are less). Members are welcome to analyze posting journal data for your committee in case there are mistakes or possible waste.

Parochial report: Covers attendance numbers (active members vs. members in good standing) needs to be submitted to the Diocese. Roy moved to approve and Alice seconded, carried without dissent.

Coming events: check calendar on website

Updates: Fr. Dick Hamlin, stewardship expert, will come for Spirituality of Stewardship weekend of Oct. 1-2, meeting with Mo. Susan on 3/31 at 3:00pm Alice will attend, and Mo. Susan will invite Paula

Ken's Report: Vestry appreciates Tyler Braidwood's work in the nursery. Need to check on carpet not attached; building liaison Roy will pursue this. Should send a card.

Closing comments: Alice working on labelling pictures on board; some new parishioners need to get pictures taken; people are invited to email announcements to Mo. Susan so someone can repeat at other services; mark your calendars (dates from Paul) J to A Auction May 7th, VBS June 17th-19th, Youth Sunday, Church Picnic June 5th, Boot sale July 7th (shall we have an appraiser? email Jackie Ingersoll), proposal to bring people into the church retire flags, use brass grommets as recognition rewards.

Closing Prayer: Led by Mo. Susan

Adjourned: 9:40