

St. Stephen's Vestry Minutes

April 12, 2016

Attendees: Mother Susan Anslow Williams, Don Ingersoll, Silvia Karlsson, Katy Allen, Margie Armstrong, Kathy DeCiantis, Paul Hardy, Alice Moss, Patrick Roberts, Norma Ross, Paula Somerville, 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: Paul Hardy led us in a prayer.

Bible Study: Luke 10:1-9 "Sending of the Seventy" What is the message of the kingdom of God? Vestry members were encouraged to summarize what the Good News of Jesus is, in their own words. Peace, love, hope. Jesus will be near you, as part of your life. We have to know the joy of our relationship with Christ in order to spread the message. It has to be personal from the heart, not just our brain to be life-changing.

Retired Flag Collection Box: Paul proposed the church as a location to dispose of used flags and create foot traffic, help publicize. **Any flag can be donated; once or twice a year collected banners will be blessed and burned.** Paul moved to acquire donation box and place in front hall, Pat seconded. Discussion: how are they disposed of? The Scouts have a ceremony items are blessed, explanation of significance, unfurled, then burned, grommets retrieved. Suggestion to do ceremony close to patriotic holiday. Motion carried without dissent. Norma will fund in memory of her late brother. **Plan to publicize** on website, Facebook, sign on door or box with date of next ceremony.

Message from Diocesan Retreat: Silvia spoke of learning about reconciliation beyond the church community, all creation being reconciled to God. The beloved are sent to preach the message. **Mission is universal** (not just Episcopalians, but all Christians; how do we welcome diversity? how do we recognize God's work?). Diversity of relationships (three aspects of God; mirror that Godly relationship, loving, giving; **what kind of people in your neighborhood/personal sphere would Jesus seek to engage?**). Incarnations of God's relationship with us (recall the declaration of human rights: nourish not just the body with food but the whole person; **emotional nourishment through marriage, family, leisure, education**)

Norma spoke of branding, what is our niche? We must create a reason to come to church, not just say “show up” (suggestion for a marathon event). Demographics handout indicates **parish neighborhood is wealthy, not a lot of ethnic minorities**; area doesn't yet reflect the full diversity of God's creation. How can we **add events/elements with broader appeal without dividing the congregation** into separate services?

Strategic review: Three focus areas:

- 1- evangelism
- 2- communication
- 3- team building (leaders, doers, organizers)

Vestry motivates and provides structure, committees + congregation engage and do the work

Committee Strategic planning (handout):

- Mutual ministry cycle: review/prepare/do, review/prepare/do
- structure of meetings: see change as organic: plant, grow, fertilize, prune, lie fallow
- event planning: pray/review/plan/do!

Vestry reviewed how to put an event in the calendar, each liaison reminded to please sign up for a week of coffee hour.

To be effective this understanding of focus areas noted above must spread beyond the Vestry. Need to communicate church vision to them then facilitate incorporating it into their work. Mo. Susan agreed to see if we could arrange to have Jim Gettel provide a workshop for us, the committees and other leaders.

Consent Calendar: Roy moved to accept March minutes as amended, seconded by Patrick and carried without dissent.

Financials: March was a surplus (thanks to Easter)

Stewardship: Meeting of Mo. Susan and Don with Rev. Hamlin at end of March was good. He will come to Oct 1-2 weekend services as well as a Vestry dinner (Saturday evening) with Brunch workshop after 10AM service (Note: These dates now have to be changed due to overlap with our SOS week.)

Upcoming Events:

- 5/7 Auction: looking for donations (live auctionable: tickets, wine baskets, paintings, vacations, gift cards)
- 5/14 St. John's Royal Oak 11AM, we will have 10 confirmands
- 4/22 American composers concert, 7:30
- 5/7 Ministry Fair at the Cathedral downtown
- 5/13 senior recital chamber music, Margaret Williams' graduation recital, donation to anti-human-trafficking organization "Thistle Farms"

Committee Report: Building & Grounds: Alan Giles and Sexton Nikki Kamicka considering using the capital fund to replace the HVAC unit over the admin area and the water heater serving the Sunday School wing bathrooms. A meeting will be set up with parishioner Tom Vida, a lieutenant with Oakland County Sheriff's Office, to review security measures around the church.

Closing prayer: Led by Mo. Susan

Adjourned: 9:21p.m.