

## St James Episcopal Church

### Vestry Meeting

November 19,2024

#### **Present:**

Barbara Bateman, Ryan Collins, Sarah Deacle, Gene Goff, Marilyn Hastings, Kathy Hutchinson, Tanya Millet, Sue Rice, Mark Schultz, Francois Springuel, Janice Tabbut, Phil Tatem

#### **Absent:**

Sharon Hansen, Fr. Mike Sowards

The Meeting was opened with a prayer by Sarah.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. October minutes were approved as written, with Tanya abstaining as she was not present at the prior meeting.
2. Following the October meeting, Rob Santmann resigned from the vestry. He has offered to continue to help Sue with the fellowship agenda and to lend his professional expertise on an as needed basis.
3. One e-vote was taken since the last meeting. A **Motion** was made and unanimously approved to appoint Tanya Millet to the vestry to serve Rob's term until April elections.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. New Treasurer - The following **motion** was made and unanimously approved: That Mark Schultz be named Treasurer of St James' Parish (Collegeville) and is authorized to conduct business on the Parish's behalf. This includes authorization to request any updates, changes, or withdrawals/deposits to the Church's fund(s) at The Church Foundation and to serve as the administrator of the Ada D. Hofsas Trust FBO St. James' Episcopal Church, Phoenixville Federal Bank & Trust Trustee.
2. Finance Monthly Reports
  - a. Phil clarified that fundraising revenue from the chicken BBQ was recorded gross, not net of expenses.
  - b. Francois informed the new members of the vestry that the cemetery expenses are part of a 3-year plan to improve the conditions of some of the headstones that were rated the worst. We will be entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. This probably needs to be reviewed every 5 years to prevent extensive projects in the future.
  - c. A **motion** was made and unanimously approved to accept the August and September statements.
3. 2025 Proposed Budget
  - a. Line item discussions:
    - i. Phil stated that Miscellaneous receipts is a "catch all" revenue bucket, some of which will get moved to a dedicated fund. Some examples for this year included insurance reimbursements not spent, ECW fundraising.
    - ii. Education was simplified to 2 buckets now called Christian Formation, split between Youth and Adult.

## St James Episcopal Church

### Vestry Meeting

November 19,2024

- iii. The budgeted amount for Pledges/Donations includes the full \$30,000 match offered by an anonymous donor for increases in pledge amounts from prior year. Phil reported with 40% of pledge cards returned, \$18,000 in increased pledges has been received. Based on this, there is high confidence that the full \$30,000 will be met.
  - 1. A conversation was held on how we could improve the timeliness of pledge returns. A future discussion will be held on the potential formation of a stewardship committee.
- iv. In anticipation of property expenses, Gene indicated there are 2 large trees in the cemetery that will need to be removed next year with an estimated expense of \$6,000.
- b. Church Foundation Investment Income
  - i. This is conservatively invested to maintain the principal.
  - ii. The recommended diocesan withdrawal rate is set to keep pace with inflation and is set at 4%. PA state law allows a withdrawal rate up to 7%. The vestry determined that we will continue to follow the diocesan set rate. If any additional cash is needed in 2025, a separate vestry vote will be held.
- c. Staff Salaries
  - i. Diocesan set COLA for 2025 is set at 3.8%. A **motion** was made and unanimously approved to increase Father Mike's salary by 3.8% and both Lauren and Sara's by 5.0%.
  - d. A **motion** was made and unanimously approved to accept the proposed budget with the pending revisions discussed in the meeting. Phil will send the revised budget to the vestry and a subsequent evote will be held regarding Father Mike's total compensation, including housing allowance.
- 4. Diocesan transformation team and Glebe House Update
  - a. No updates have been received from the diocese following submission of Tanya's sketch.
  - b. Tanya did inform the group that there is a non-profit funding available for these types of projects, but acceptance could have some restrictions on type of housing permitted. Additionally, St. James would be responsible for zoning regulations.
- 5. Vestry Membership – Temporary bylaw waiver
  - a. A **motion** was made to allow a one-time waiver of our bylaws to permit a parishioner to serve on the vestry until April elections without meeting the one-year membership requirement. This member would have supported Sharon on the New Member Ministry committee. This motion did not pass, with A final vote of 3 in support, and 7 opposed.
  - b. One thought was that any waiver to our bylaws should be reserved for emergencies and having one open position does not qualify as an emergency. Additionally, the coming months are usually slower for the vestry and waiting until April elections is acceptable.

**St James Episcopal Church**

**Vestry Meeting**

**November 19,2024**

6. Property – Cleaning

- a. Sue discussed the need for deeper cleaning of the floors in the kitchen and Platt’s Hall. The cleaning company cleans twice a week, but just damp mops. Not all the dirt comes up that way & the company sometimes leaves parts of the floor sticky. Part of the problem with Platt’s hall is the floor needs to be refinished (not budgeted) before any cleaning effort really is effective. Sue is going to try a scrubber she had to test effectiveness and possibly explore deeper cleaning 2x/year.
- b. Phil received a letter from the cleaning company that they are raising their rates effective January 2025, even though their contract runs until May 2025 at the current rate. Sue will discuss with Father Mike, possibly use the rate increase to help resolve the issues with existing cleaning.
- c. Given the late hour, a review of the Eagle Scout Project approval process was deferred to a subsequent meeting.

Committee Updates:

1. A **motion** was made and unanimously approved to accept the Outreach House Report.

**Next Vestry Meeting will be held December 17, 2024.**

A **motion** was unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting.

The Meeting was closed with a prayer by all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Hutchinson

Vestry Secretary