

## **St Simon's on the Sound Episcopal Church**

Vestry Meeting

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

**Clergy:** The Rev David J Knight, Rector

**Vestry Members:** Senior Warden Van Fuller, Junior Warden Paul Wheelless, Gene Correll, Elle Estes, Anne Hall, Cathy Halprin, Lori Lawhorn, Frank Milhous, Rob Newton, Barbara Smith, Debbie Vaughan

**Clerk:** Ellen Dodson

**Treasurer:** Carter Caywood

1. **Call to Order** by the Senior Warden at 5:33 pm
2. **Opening Prayer** by Barbara Smith
3. **Roll Call – Confirmation of Quorum (Van Fuller)**
  
4. **Consent Agenda** – motion to approve by Frank Milhous with a second by Gene Correll.  
Motion carried by acclamation. Items included:
  - a. Minutes from January 14, 2017 vestry retreat business session.
  - b. December 12, 2016 Vestry Meeting minutes and January 5, 2017 Called Vestry Meeting minutes previously approved by telephone/email vote, 8 aye votes on January 16/17, 2017.
  - c. Motion by the Junior Warden to Vestry members via email on January 31, 2017:  
“Urgent Request for \$4959 to pay for the replacement of the presently inoperable AC unit serving the chapel. Discussion: Two HVAC units serve the chapel, the East one has failed and the repair estimate for this unit is \$1,100. The unit is just over 12 years old and exposed to the coastal climate. Often multiple repairs become very expensive due to approximately \$700 going to refrigerant costs. St.Simon's averages 2 unit replacements per year of the 19 we have operating. Recommendation is to replace this particular unit with a more efficient one.” This expenditure request was approved by a Vestry vote on January 31, 2017, 7 aye votes via email and 1 aye vote via telephone. Fr Knight reported that the Finance Committee voted at the February meeting to use Columbarium Funds to pay for this expenditure.
  
5. **Committee Break-Out Sessions** – 15 minutes
  
6. **Committee Reports**
  - a. **Admin/Finance (Gene Correll)**
    - 1) Finance Report: As of 1/31/2017, total expenses were about \$3,500 greater than total income, while combined plate & pledges were behind by about the same amount.
    - 2) By-Laws Revision/Adoption: The latest draft revision provided by Gene Correll contained proposals by the 2016 Vestry as well as proposals by the Senior Warden based on coordination with Chancellor Michelle Anchors. After administrative items, the last page wording, “adopted at the annual meeting” was changed to read “adopted at Vestry meeting on February 21, 2017”. The vestry has discretion over any changes to the By-Laws except for the number of vestry members which is determined by the congregation at the annual meeting.
      - a) Cathy Halprin had concerns about Section 4.03 “Vestry Vacancies”, as she prefers to select the next person in line as currently written. After discussion, an amendment to Section 4.03 was proposed with a motion by Cathy Halprin and seconded by Frank Milhous to read:

“the person who obtained the highest number of votes by 50% or more at the preceding annual meeting of the parish, shall be considered as the next person to be selected to the vestry, unless ineligible, unable or unwilling to serve.” 3 Aye votes, 7 Nays, motion fails.

b) Lori Lawhorn had concerns about ARTICLE X with regards to By-Laws being able to be changed at special meetings with no restriction on these meetings possibly being a spur of the moment action. After vestry discussion, she moved that “or any special meeting of the vestry” be removed along with the word “present” (which had been added in the first revision), and “special meeting” in line 3. Elle Estes seconded and the motion carried, all votes in favor.

c) Fr Knight pointed out the only other major By-Laws change is that delegates to the Diocesan Convention will be chosen by the vestry instead of during parish voting at the annual meeting.

**A motion was presented by Frank Milhous and seconded by Anne Hall to approve the By-Laws as revised on this date, February 21, 2017. Vote to approve the motion by Acclamation, By-Laws revision as amended.**

3) Capital Campaign Update: We'll be ready to move on with that after Easter.

4) Fall Stewardship Campaign Update (Rector and Treasurer): From those present on Consecration Sunday, there was a \$134,000 increase in pledges from previous year's pledging units. That also includes 34 new pledges and 54 who increased their pledges. A conservative estimate after all pledges have been received, is possibly an \$80,000 increase from last year. Debbie Vaughan reported that she did not receive her card until Saturday, so that might explain why we've not had much response yet from letters and pledge cards which were mailed last week to parishioners from whom we've not heard. Fr Knight reported that the effectiveness of the “Consecration Sunday” program dips after year two, so we will probably find an alternative for next year.

5) Spring Membership Drive Update: “Project Resource” - more details to come.

**b. Ministry (Cathy Halprin):**

1) Becoming a Welcoming Congregation: Elle Estes has begun working on ideas and strategies for newcomers, from the parking lot to the parish hall, with the first line being parking lot to ushers. She has team leaders set up for each service thus far. Her goal is to have a three month rotation of teams so that each person will serve one Sunday each six weeks. Designating some parking spaces for visitors is also a goal.

2) Christian Education: Lori Lawhorn is putting together a survey for parents and would like to have a comment box available somewhere in the building – stay tuned.

3) Parish Life Update: Cathy Halprin sent an email to vestry members today with suggestions and ideas for parish events and fellowship possibilities. She hopes to receive input from vestry members with more ideas, and is confident that the committee will be proactive.

**c. Property/Communications (Paul Wheeless) (Attachment 1)**

1) Website Refresh (2017 - \$3,000): Request for Proposals has been drafted by Fr Knight and the next step is to send it to qualified developers for proposals. (Attachment 2)

2) Consolidated list of proposed facility requirements/timing/priorities: As a point of reference in regards to roof leaks, the flat roof problems are being addressed with the contractor's guarantee.

a) Urgent or prevention of further damage: Bell Tower repair to halt leaks and repair exterior soffits, south and east side need to be addressed before nave ceiling repair can be done. Since the nave repair will require closure, it is an opportunity to execute other additions such as the installation of a Hearing Loop, which is an update to hearing aid additions/upgrades. The

scope/cost of the installation should be determined so the vestry can consider approving the work while the nave is closed for repairs.

b) High Priority items include Bell Tower repair not leak related. Even though the Junior Warden mentioned that the Bell Tower problems will require different “repair expertise,” thus may need to be done independently of each other, discussion yielded the suggestion that these be contracted concurrently (for example, hire one bucket truck).

**A motion was presented by Rob Newton and seconded by Lori Lawhorn to approve repairs described in paragraphs a(i), a(ii), a(iii), b(i) and c(vii) repairs listed on attachment 1 and not to exceed \$105,000. Vote to approve the motion, all Aye votes, motion carried.**

3) Outdoor Chapel work: Funding is self-financing with the majority of funds coming from brick paver sales and a large anonymous donation recently. There are some big issues with infrastructure and managing the parking lot, but things are going fairly smoothly. Fr Knight reported that the palm trees will be removed so be prepared for some parishioners to be unhappy about that. Phase I of III on the project should be completed by Easter. The Senior Warden requested the details of the project be presented at the next vestry meeting.

4) Parish Hall Worship Plan: There are many details to be worked out during the 6-8 weeks that the nave will be closed. We need to begin working on communication with the church leadership and all parish ministries. Sunday services will be held in the parish hall along with other large events, and the chapel will be available for smaller events. There will be much impact on many different facets of parish life, so we need to include everyone in the planning.

## **7. Old Business**

a. Stewardship Campaign: About \$4,800 has been spent thus far with the lunch and the children's program, and there will be some smaller expenses such as postage, but it appears that the total will be less than last year. Remaining tasks include the mailing of thank you notes to pledging parishioners and vestry members potentially making telephone contact with those yet to pledge. The goal is to close out the campaign by the April vestry meeting.

b. Montessori Expansion Update: There hasn't been an official final decision yet, but it looks like the expansion will happen. They're getting bids on moving/creating some doors, one which will be a new one from the parish hall to the nursery. A decision will need to be coordinated as to whether that should be done before or after nave closure, since we'll be using the parish hall so frequently at that time. Probably the primary time line will be to have Montessori work completed before school starts in August, all construction to be paid for by the school. A new lease is presently being worked on to reflect the additional space being used.

c. REALM – a web based church software for which all parishioners need a login. It is a work in progress so stay tuned.

**8. New Business:** With the resignation of vestry member Hank Rabby, a decision needed to be made about replacement or not. Discussion yielded some consensus that after vestry retreat and the past month of community building, it would be a disadvantage for a new vestry member to come in. Since this was Hank's last year, he/she would be serving for less than a year. In addition, it has been Fr David's experience that a vestry with fewer members is not a negative since it provides a need to include more people to get things done.

**A motion by Elle Estes was to leave the vestry at eleven members, for the rest of the year, seconded by Barbara Smith. All votes in favor, motion carried.**

**9. Rector Comments/Announcements**

a. Cajun Fest will be held next Tuesday, with Ash Wednesday services and Lenten programs to follow. Holy Week will be new and different along with radical changes for the Easter sunrise service.

b. Diocesan Discipleship Day will be held on Saturday, March 25 at St Jude's in Niceville. Sign-up is on the diocesan website with four different programs available that day. It is open to parishioners of any church in the diocese.

c. Parents' Morning Out Program: The State of Florida has informed us that we are in violation of the law. If any reimbursement is received for services, monetary or tangible, we have to be a licensed daycare facility. Thus we have three choices: cancel the program, offer it free of charge, or get licensed (which isn't a possibility because the Montessori School is housed under our roof). Data provided by Fr David yielded staff cost of \$140 weekly, with \$60 in income, so it is an \$80 deficit per week. Parish impact is minimal since primarily two families are taking advantage of the program.

**A motion was presented by Debbie Vaughan and seconded by Frank Milhous to fund and continue the program free of charge until the end of the school year. Vote on final disposition at the May vestry meeting (or earlier). Motion carried, all votes in favor.**

**10. Vestry Member Comments/Announcements:** Fr David is preaching on Friday morning at the Diocesan Convention. Morgan Lawhorn will be the Youth Delegate to the convention from our convocation.

**11. Closing Prayer** by Cathy Halprin

**12. Adjournment** at 7:35 pm by the Senior Warden

a. Next vestry meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2017.

b. Debbie Vaughan is scheduled to offer the opening prayer.

c. Elle Estes is scheduled to give the closing prayer.

Respectively submitted,

Ellen Dodson  
Clerk of the Vestry