



St. David's Episcopal Church & School

May 24, 2023

Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved 6/21/2023

This Vestry meeting was a hybrid meeting with options for in-person or virtual attendance via Zoom.

Attending: Vestry members: The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (Interim Rector), Jim Tracy (Sr. Warden), Jenifer Bluhm (Jr. Warden), Katherine Beckett-Goodwin (Treasurer, Register), Margot Culhane, Mike Gibson, Bobbie Johnson, Tanya Kerr, Dave Schmidt, and Jim Tracy. Additional representatives attending: Carol Bonifant (Chaplin to the Vestry) and Sharon Easley (Clerk to the Register). Former Treasurer John Mellish (attended to present the April Treasurer's report). Also attending: Maureen Carey, Christopher Smith, and Marilyn Tracy.

Call to Order – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (Interim Rector), called the Vestry Meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Dwelling in the Word: Attendees participated in the Dwelling in the Word exercise discussing the scripture for the evening (Luke 10:1-23), led by Carol Bonifant.

Parishioner Comment Period, Parishioners

- None

Administrative Items

Discussion: May 24, 2023 Vestry Meeting Agenda – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton, Interim Rector

- Are there any adjustments to the agenda? None – agenda stands as is.

Discussion: April 19, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes – Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Register/Sharon Easley Clerk to the Register

- Are there any comments? One change on page 6 in Warden's report, picnic is June 14, 2023 – Minutes stand with this one correction.

Discussion: May 7, 2023 Special Vestry Meeting Minutes – Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Register/Sharon Easley, Clerk to the Register

- Are there any comments? None – Minutes stand as they are.

Property Items

Discussion: April 2023 Property Report – Marilyn Tracy, Property Steward

- Marilyn went over the highlights in the report submitted for April.
- Property team welcomed Richard Haddad, Property Administrator.
- We are still having problems with the front door to the preschool. Richard Haddad has called the vendor to come back out and correct the issues.
- April focus was on spring cleaning and preparations for Easter.

Discussion: IT update – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- Looking at two options for extending internet to the Annex and Education Room, either under the asphalt or transmitter/receiver option.
- The Vestry will have proposals for consideration at the June meeting.
- St. David's submitted an application for a security FEMA grant in the amount of \$140,000 on 4/17/2023.



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Discussion: Security Cameras – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- We have disconnected all cameras because company is banned from doing business in the US and partially owned by PLA.
- Rather than just replacing current cameras, recommend convening a task force in June (week of the 12th). Members to include Chris Smith and Jim Tracy. Jim would like one or two Vestry members to serve on the task force.
- They will do an evaluation of security needs and meet over the summer to determine what to do.
- Recommendations will be available in July or August.
- Richard Haddad is looking into alternatives for the cameras. Today's cameras have many more capabilities compared to the ones we are replacing. Also, prices have gone down for cameras with more capabilities.
- ADT is no longer supporting our security systems. St. David's will pursue this issue with ADT. Their position is that the cameras work and we can use them if we want to or not. Will try to recover some money if possible since the security agreement was made in good faith.

Decision: Establish a Task Force for Security to re-evaluate the need for cameras as well as other security questions.

Motion: Move the Vestry approve the establishment of a Task Force to evaluate the full range of security needs of SDECS, evaluate possible solutions, and bring those alternatives to the Vestry for a final decision. Motion seconded and approved.

Committee/Ministry Reports

Ministry/Worship & Children & Youth Ministry - Maureen Carey, Lay Pastoral Assistant and Director, Children & Youth Ministry submitted her report for inclusion in the minutes. Highlights of her report are below.

Worship

- Ten youth and one adult were Confirmed on Sunday May 14th. Good feedback from several of the kids on how good it was to be back at St. David's.
- Eight youth are returning to volunteer at VBS.

Children's Ministry

- VBS registration is closed at 52 participants.

Youth Ministry

- Pentecost on Sunday plus celebrating two graduates on June 4.
- Susan+ noted that the kids have missed two years together and pulling them back together is a lot of work.
- We have several youth volunteering for VBS even though their parents no longer attend St. David's.

Discernment Committee Update – Items below provided by Mathew Verghese (co-chair) for the minutes.

- We have extended the original closing date of the Parish Survey to June 16th, primarily to allow those who were 'WIP', (i.e. started but did not complete survey) to do so.
- We had a very encouraging response, approximately 140, based on our average attendance of about 150-180 (this is about 77-93% depending on which baseline is applied). Either way, very encouraging.



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- Next steps are to crunch this data into meaningful bits so as to develop a high-level report, with a few data points of interest to share with the congregation.
- At the next Discernment Committee meeting we will be discussing which questions of the 39 will help us tell that story above in 5 mins or less.
- Katherine Beckett-Goodwin shared some information she received from Mathew: in addition to the items above, the committee noted that they received about 50 email bounce backs of the 600 emails sent out. They are evaluating how many households have responded. Also evaluating those emails flagged as "opting out."
- There are another 36 people that will be receiving the survey link that were not included in the first group of participants (due to the conversion over to Realm).
- Susan+ noted we could keep hard copies in the office for people that want to fill out a paper survey.

Outreach Update /Backpack Buddies - Margot Culhane

- Susan+ and the Vestry received an email from Nancy and Jim Quinn (current Backpack Buddies ministry leaders) to advise them that they would be stepping down from their leadership role in June 2023. She also provide a status update for the ministry as it stands today, items included:
 - St. David's has faithfully supported two local schools for 14 years through the Backpack Buddies program.
 - Keith Korin, is stepping down after 9 years.
 - Margot has expressed an interest in managing this program next year, but requires help with funding and purchasing food.
 - Average # students served weekly:
 - 2019-2020: 88
 - 2020-2021: 105
 - 2021-2022: 93
 - 2022-2023: 76
 - Average cost per student has increased this past year from \$5.50 to \$8; 2022-23 school year cost: \$8 x 76 students x 36 weeks = \$21,888.
 - St. David's community food donations vary by month and aren't enough for more than a week.
 - Grant money from BPB Foundation: 2019-2023: \$18,100 over past 4 years (approximately \$5K used in 2022-23).
 - Concerns:
 - Food costs continue to rise. BPB Foundation grants have been significantly reduced, with the maximum available next year: \$2000. Students in need projected to increase in 2023-24 school year due to rising inflation.
 - Small number of St. David's community support packing and delivery process
 - Shopping needed to properly support the BPB ministry (weekly shopping, large vehicle, heavy products).
 - Plan needed to cover any financial shortfall.
 - If the Vestry decides supporting these two schools is not feasible in the next school year, we would like to give the schools as much notice as possible to identify sponsors. The Parent-liaisons that oversee this program for each school are off from June 8 until the start of school in August.
- Margot reported that she feels she can take over the leadership position from Nancy and Jim, but is not able to take over the shopping support responsibilities.



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- Budget is an issue to supporting this ministry in addition to volunteer resources. Can we support one small school? Possibly work with other churches? (Margot researched this and it doesn't appear there are a lot of churches providing support in this area.)
- A Vestry Member suggested to task a team to determine the viability of this ministry. Susan+ agreed that evaluation by a committee (to look at all Outreach) to determine what is viable was a good idea. Look at the questions of what our church should be doing at this time in the church's life for Outreach.
- Schools need a decision in the next two weeks if St. David's will discontinue support.
- Margot will ask Nancy and Jim to notify both schools that St. David's is unable to continue support for this program at this time.
- This ministry is currently self-funded.
- St. David's does not currently have an Outreach plan nor a leader.
- Mike Gibson and Margot Culhane volunteered to co-chair the committee to evaluate St. David's Outreach ministry. Since Outreach falls under Maureen Carey's responsibilities, Mike and Margot need to coordinate with Maureen on the committee's meetings and discussions. They will also reach out to the congregation for committee participation.

Financials

Discussion: April 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report - John Mellish, Treasurer

Revenue:

- Pledge offerings April: \$57,255 (110% of budget) which is about 34% higher than March.
- YTD actual pledge offerings was \$187,233 (90% of budget) and 7% higher than March.
- Total Revenue for April was \$71,089 to a budget of \$65,454 (109% of Budget) and was 30% higher than March.
- Total Income YTD was \$222,035 to YTD Budget of \$241,641 (92% of Budget) and was 6% higher than March.
- YTD Total Unpledged Offerings = \$14,219 (88% of budget). Loose Cash Offerings was 265% of budget YTD.
- Pledged income is back up and Easter collection was above expectations for April. This may be an indication of a positive trend to come.

Expenses:

- April YTD total expenses = \$254,006 (94% of budget) and 1% higher than the same time last year.

Net Income:

- Net Income for April was \$21,004 to a budget of \$350 (6001% of budget).
- YTD Net Income was -\$31,971 to a budget of -\$28,295.
- March was good month revenue was up and expenses were down.
- The church operating cash account has \$189,110.

Notes:

- Health insurance expense was unpaid in April due to issue with the Diocese billing system. Problem fixed and April invoice was paid on May 1. There will be two insurance bills paid in May.
- Music payroll compensation is high due to having a sub for the Music Director.
- Total expense YTD is under budget but keep in mind the fact that electric, health insurance, musicians and landscaping services were not billed on time. *This will make expenses for May higher.*
- Compensation and benefits expenses will also increase in May given the expansion of hours to 30 for the Music Director position as of May 1, 2023.



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Decision: Approve April 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report

Motion: Move to approve April 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report as presented.
Motion seconded and approved.

Discussion: Transition of bookkeeping operations update – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden/Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Treasurer

- The level of expertise required for the bookkeeping function at St. David's has exceeded in-house capabilities.
- Researched how other churches were staffing for the bookkeeping and accounting functions. Reviewed potential service firms and narrowed the list down to three firms. Halstead and Halstead was the only firm with existing Episcopal Church clients in Northern Virginia (three such clients). References were checked with the treasurers of two of the three churches and they provided very positive reviews of their experience with the firm. Negotiations were conducted with Halstead leading to a signed engagement letter on May 3, 2023.
- Based on the research the decision was made to outsource the accounting services function. The staff in the accounting administrator position was notified of the change and a severance agreement was created to ensure the transition to the new accounting services firm would be smooth.
- The existing Quickbooks Desktop software-based accounting records were converted to the QuickBooks Online software version by the accounting services firm. There is also a plan for adding an automated bill process.
- The formal procedures for requesting, approving and cutting checks is continuing. There are three people authorized to sign checks: Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Treasurer, Jennifer Bluhm, Jr. Warden, and Marilyn Tracy. Any checks over \$1,000 continue to require two signatures.
- This change to outsource the bookkeeping and accounting services will result in an \$18,000 annual savings for St. David's beginning in 2024, and the selected firm provides access to greater accounting expertise than we had previously.
- Jim reported a parishioner is interested in leading the audit committee for the 2021 and 2022 audits. Discussions to continue.

Discussion: Transition of pledges to REALM – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- Due to a report from a parishioner about erroneous ACH deductions (double amount being deducted) an investigation showed that the old Vanco/ACS automated payments account had not been turned off. This instance has been corrected.
- The issue affects 36 families. Thirty-five of the 36 families have been contacted via email.
- Next Steps - To prevent any further occurrence of this type of error, we expect to completely turn off the Vanco/ACS service and terminate the account with them on May 31, 2023.
- Finally on June 7, 2023, a final reminder will be sent to those who have not yet activated their Realm accounts for contributions.

Discussion: Diocesan Executive Committee meeting June 17 – Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Treasurer

- There will be four Diocese of Virginia Executive Committee Meetings held on 6/17/2023 to discuss the Diocesan Covenantal Giving Plan and congregational pledges for 2024. The Interim Rector, Sr. Warden and Treasurer will attend to represent St. David's.
- This process happened for the first time in 2023 based on the plan being approved at the 2021 Diocesan Annual Convention. St. David's was granted an exemption by the Diocese for 2023 based on its situation.



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(See 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes or the updated Diocesan Canons for details of the plan requirements.)

Discussion: Quarter 1 2023 Church Operating Budget Review – Tabled for June meeting. Jim Tracy, Budget Subcommittee Chair

- When the Vestry approved the 2023 Church Operating Budget it specifically called for a review of that budget at the end of the first Quarter of 2023.
- During the first Quarter of 2023 there was significant turnover in the administrative staff. With all of these activities the review did not take place. First review meeting was held May 22.
- Next Steps – The Budget Subcommittee will meet in early June to review the next Draft of the 2023 Church Operating Budget R0, which if approved by the Vestry will be R1 (Revision 1).

Decision: Delay of 2023 Church Operating Budget Review until the June 2023 Vestry Meeting.

Motion: Move the Vestry formally approve the delay of the 2023 Church Operating Budget Review until the June 2023 Vestry Meeting.

Motion seconded and approved.

Prayer for Discernment – Offered by Carol Bonifant, Chaplain to the Vestry.

REPORTS:

Interim Rectors Report – Rev. Susan Pinkerton

- Susan+ is in the process of working toward a consent agenda for the Vestry meetings. She would like all of the reports and to have the packet prepared the Friday before the Vestry meeting so the Vestry members have the weekend to review the materials and prepare for the meeting. Rather than taking time during the meetings to read. This leaves more time for discussions during Vestry meetings.
- Security Committee workshop will be in June.
- Current childcare provider is not working out. Problems with staffing consistently. Childcare is a very important part of hospitality. St. David's is trying a different approach for the summer. An area inside the sanctuary will be designated a "Soft Space" with pillows, quiet toys, etc. where small children and their parent(s) will have a welcoming comfortable space during service. Will be located in the area near the columbarium. Will temporarily move some of the pews and relocate the candles. We want to make sure families with small children also feel welcome.
- This is an opportunity for Vestry members to engage parishioners about this new project, be prepared to educate them, and that it is a pilot.
- The Music Director has been asked to separately support the music program for the preschool. She has agreed to take on the additional position for the preschool, about ten hours per month.
- Susan+ will be meeting with the Loudoun/Fauquier County community foundation to address affordable housing. Looking at bringing faith leaders together to look for ways of providing affordable housing in the counties. Susan+ is very passionate about this. She will report back to the Vestry.

Wardens' Report – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- Most items have been previously discussed earlier in the meeting.
- GRS Technologies has reviewed the IT infrastructure of the campus including the Annex. They have presented a proposal for more robust firewalls and are preparing a proposal for bringing stable Internet bandwidth to the Annex and Education Room. Both proposals will be evaluated by the Vestry in June.



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- St. David's Employee Retention Credit (ERC) application is still in processing with the IRS. We have been advised it could be summer before we get official notification regarding approval. After the 10% tax accounting service fee, if approved by the IRS, St. David's should receive net around \$110,000.

Stewardship – Jenifer Bluhm, Jr. Warden

- Will meet June 1st or 8th to discuss philosophy and look at the communications schedule.
- Will begin meeting intentionally in July.
- In 2022 the Stewardship started a week early, the week after "Back to Church" Sunday. This year "Back to Church Sunday" will be on Sept. 17, 2023 so looking to launch the 2024 campaign the following week.
- Jenifer will support the new co-chairs. Margot will serve as one of the co-chairs. Having co-chairs has worked well so this leadership option will continue.
- Just a reminder that all Vestry members are part of the Stewardship Committee.

Preschool report: Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Preschool Board Member

- End of year class parties are this week, kids are excited!
- Teacher evaluations have been completed and teaching contracts for next year are being signed.
- The School still needs to hire 2 assistant teachers and a 3-day, Extended Day 4's Lead Teacher. Assistant teachers need to have a college degree but not necessarily in education. Lead teachers require an education degree.
- If you know anyone that might be interested in these positions, please refer them to the Preschool Director, Meg Antwi. This is a difficult endeavor to find and hire qualified teachers.
- The Church is hosting an end of year luncheon for the School staff on June 5th at 12:30 pm to thank them and show our appreciation for all their hard work this school year. This is at the end of their cleanup day/last day, which is 9 am-12 pm that day.
- Camp is 5/30-6/2 "All Creatures Great and Small" - 25 kids. More would have liked to attend, but didn't have the teacher resources bandwidth to accommodate more than 25.
- The Preschool End of Year Celebration Party and Silent Auction was held on Friday, May 5, 2023, 5-7:30 pm. The auction is POPS's (Parents of Preschoolers) main fundraiser for the year. Great news, the auction raised about \$10,000 (before expenses deducted)!

Closing Prayer: The prayers were created by Carol Bonifant, Chaplain to the Vestry.

Adjournment – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton, Interim Rector, adjourned the Vestry Meeting at 8:48 pm.

NEXT VESTRY MEETING: June 21, 2023 at 7:00pm in the Christian Ed. Room & Zoom. (Hybrid Meeting)

Respectfully Submitted:

Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Register
Sharon Easley, Clerk to the Register
St. David's Episcopal Church & School
June 20, 2023



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Motions & Items of Note:

- Approved: Establishment of a Task Force to evaluate the full range of security needs of SDECS, evaluate possible solutions, and bring those alternatives to the Vestry for a final decision.
- Approved: April 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report as presented.
- Approved: Delay of the First Quarter 2023 Church Operating Budget Review until the June 2023 Vestry Meeting.
- The Accounting Administrator position was eliminated and the bookkeeping and accounting functions are outsourced to an accounting services firm.