



St. David's Episcopal Church & School

June 21, 2023

Vestry Meeting Minutes

Approved July 19, 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), Katherine Beckett-Goodwin (Treasurer, Register), Margot Culhane, Mike Gibson, Bobbie Johnson, and Tanya Kerr. Additional officers attending: Chaplin to the Vestry, Carol Bonifant. Also attending: Sharon Easley, Christopher Smith, Allan Steed, and Marilyn Tracy. Richard Easley attended for the Discernment Committee update portion.

Call to Order – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (Interim Rector), called the Vestry Meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Dwelling in the Word: Attendees participated in the Dwelling in the Word exercise discussing the assigned scripture for the evening (Nehemiah 2:16-20; 6:15-16), led by Margot Culhane

Parishioner Comment Period, Parishioners

- None

Administrative Items

Discussion: June 21, 2023 Vestry Meeting Agenda – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton, Interim Rector

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

Discussion: May 24, 2023 Vestry Meeting Minutes – Register/S. Easley

- Are there any comments? Two changes regarding Soft Space description and work hours for preschool music director. – Minutes stand with these corrections.

Property Items

Discussion: May 2023 Trustees and GM Property Report – Allan Steed, Sr. Property Steward

- To support Susan's consent agenda format, Vestry members read the reports prior to the Vestry meetings so going over the highlights in the report was not necessary.
- In response to a question from Carol Bonifant, Jim Tracy gave an update on the status of getting the stained glass windows repaired.
 - We expect to have an estimate soon (in next two weeks) from Epiphany Studios.
 - They will take down the windows and repair them in their studios. It will take approximately two months to make the repairs.
 - While the stained glass windows are out, the support structure in the window area in the Narthex will be addressed. The horizontal supports will be reinforced (they are currently not strong enough) and vertical supports will be added.
 - Since the stained glass is actually attached on the inside of the exterior glass windows, there will be no issues with having to board up the area where the stained glass panes are.
 - Jim has seen the work that this company does in a church in Maryland and their work is good.
- Prior to the meeting Richard Haddad reported the issue has been resolved and the preschool front door is working.

Committee/Ministry Reports

Ministry/Worship & Children & Youth Ministry – no report this month.



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Discernment Committee Update – Richard Easley Committee Co-Chair

- Committee met 6/21/2023
- Received 143 completed surveys
- The committee is going over the survey results to determine which of the 41 questions will be included in a five-minute report back to the congregation during services. The committee wants to be brief but also have substantive information to report.
- They will also be doing a written report.
- Working to condense the full report into a digestible format.
- Still determining the best way to distribute the results.
- Responses to open-ended questions will not be shared.
- Susan+ would like to follow up the report during services with a paragraph in Happenings' weekly email so everyone hears the same message.
- Susan+ asked Richard to thank the entire committee for all of the work they have put into the survey process.
- Katherine asked if the committee was still planning for additional information gathering through small groups. Richard said they were but right now they are focusing on the survey results. Then they will turn their attention on how to best conduct the focus groups. The Vestry may have a role in these. The Committee is still deciding about Susan's+ participation in the groups (in terms of people feeling comfortable expressing what they do or don't like in a priest).

Financials and Property Items

Discussion: May 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report – Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Treasurer

- The format for the Treasurer's report is a little different this month due to the transition going on with the Church's accounting functions.
- We received 4 of the 5 checks for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC).
- There are a lot of activities going on with the software conversion.
- There were some misclassifications that are being corrected. These will affect the May financials. Won't affect income but will affect some line items. Once corrected the pledge income line item will be more accurate.
- Working to reduce the number of credit card transactions and invoicing more where possible. Doing this makes it cleaner when audits are performed.
- At the Diocesan level there was an incident of fraud from the TOTF fund. It has been decided by the Diocese to spread the loss across all of the churches. St. David's is trying to determine how to book this loss since we didn't actually incur the loss.
- St. David's has a question out to the TOTF managers. How is the substantial loss from the stolen funds incident being reflected as a loss to the churches' investment funds? How is it calculated, how much is it, and is law enforcement still pursuing recovery? The question has been escalated to a supervisor, no answer yet.
- Because of the fraud incident Jim Tracy suggested that we evaluate where St. David's investment funds should be placed. Maybe look at other options that are better insured.



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Decision: Approve May 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report

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

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

- Attendees representing St. David's: Rev. Susan Pinkerton, Interim Rector, Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden, Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Treasurer
- The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia sent out letters to parishes reminding them of the resolution on Covenantal Giving passed at the 2021 Annual Convention, what the calculation for our parish is based on the past three years' Parochial Reports, and inviting parishes to regional gatherings for parishes seeking an adjustment to the Covenantal Giving standards.
- The number calculated for St. David's Diocesan pledge for 2024 is \$70,433, or 9% of the three year average from the Parochial Reports.
- We attended the gathering in Falls Church. Morning Prayer was held. Then a short presentation and a video message from the Bishop highlighting the activities underway at the Diocese. Then a discussion was held with parish representatives expressing general and specific challenges, and asking questions of the Diocese. A repeated theme was communicate more often and more clearly with parishes.
- Take-aways:
 - Churches cannot make a \$0 pledge.
 - There are 179 churches in the Diocese.
 - The Executive Board will hear requests for adjustment from churches through packages in September 2023 for 2024. (note when we spoke with an individual Exec Board member, he said if we submitted information about our situation in the registration for today's meeting, there was nothing else we needed to submit other than the commitment by Oct 5, 2023.)
 - The ERC is not "counted" in the calculation.
 - Many rural and mission churches are especially struggling to get even a part time priest.
 - Communication and messaging needs to improve from the Diocese – more clear and more often.
 - Congregations are shrinking – what does Diocese plan to do to support the revival of churches?
 - Request for documents and guidelines for property management and use.
 - Grants are available from the Diocese for specific projects.
- Next step: Submit St. David's 2024 Diocesan Pledge by October 5, 2023.

Discussion: Safety & Security Taskforce update – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- The Committee initially planned to look at two proposals for camera replacement; now also looking at two additional alternatives which are:
 - Have ADT restart the Hikvision cameras and recorders and use the existing system for coverage.
 - Have ADT submit a proposal to configure a system using the Hikvision components where possible. (Since ADT no longer sells or installs Hikvision components, this alternative may turn out to be a full new proposal.)
- ADT is coming July 5 to restart just the office and see how image capture works. Hoping to demonstrate the results at the next committee meeting to determine if the camera resolution is acceptable.
- ADT will submit a proposal but they no longer install equipment.
- If we are successful with the FEMA grant we may be able to use that money for upgrading the security system.
- The Task Force asked the Chairperson and the Property Manager to work with the two potential vendors to configure cameras to meet the defined requirements and to insure that their proposed configurations



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would allow easy installation of additional cameras in the future. The Task Force will then review the configurations and their costs prior to making a recommendation to the Vestry.

- The committee will also weigh the risks of using the current cameras vs. the cost to replace them.

Discussion: Internet Capability in Annex – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- The solution that was proposed by the IT support company seemed high so evaluating other options.
- Verizon is coming out to evaluate and make a recommendation (with cost).
- Will also get another estimate from a second company.

Discussion: Q1 2023 Church Operating Budget Review - Jim Tracy, Budget Subcommittee Chair

- Jim reviewed the budget Excel spreadsheet
- Updated budget with actual numbers for:
 - 95% of actual 2023 pledges
 - Actual 2022 Christmas gifts
 - Actual 2023 Easter gifts
- Updated to reflect the ERC payment we will receive of \$133,405 (may want to set some of this aside for the preschool since data for their teachers was part of the application). Also added the expense for the firm that did the application (10% fee).
- Updated personnel cost line items to reflect the staff changes that have occurred since the budget was first drafted.
- Updated costs for GRS and Halstead & Halstead to include only 2023 expenses (rather than the contracted amounts which include 2024 as well).
- Bottom line: we moved from a projected loss of approximately \$110,000 to an updated projection of a \$34,000 loss. Still a loss, but a big improvement.

Decision: Approve draft 2023 Budget R1

Motion: Move the Vestry approve the draft 2023 Budget R1 and direct Halstead and Halstead to update QuickBooks so the new budget will be shown in the reports for June 2023 at the July Vestry meeting. Motion seconded and approved.

Mission and Vision

- Susan+ reviewed why she has changed the meeting format to working with a consent agenda, in order for the vestry to have more time to use their creative energies for being faithful to the mission given to us by God. Our work is to better determine what this mission is. Use some of the time at the Vestry meetings to discern where God is calling us.
- She encouraged the vestry members to go back to the Vestry book and review the information on the work of the Vestry.
- Susan+ discussed a couple examples:
 - The **Juneteenth** celebration – maybe next year St. David's can participate more fully in the celebration. Start planning what this participation looks like a few months before the event.
 - **Sacred Ground** – Bobbie Johnson provided some information on this program – This is part of the national church, part of the same program that the Becoming Beloved Community (BBC) program comes from. It is an 11 part program which has films to watch and discuss. This is done virtually (via Zoom for example). St. David's has completed the first six sessions. St. James did this program



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last year. There are resources for facilitators for the program. This is a good program for community building.

- Susan+ noted that she just sent out five letters to newcomers, and these are the kinds of things it would be nice to invite newcomers to. These are the sort of things that people are looking for. The more we have to offer, the better.

Update on Mission/Outreach committee – Margot Culhane, Mike Gibson

Discussion:

- Mike provided an update on the St. David's Men's group activities
 - Meet 2 times per month (hybrid meetings) which includes fellowship, Gospel readings, and discussion
 - Personal sharing and supporting each other
 - Have a fairly lengthy mission objective
 - Outreach projects within St. David's and also outside
 - Have helped out with various projects at St. David's
 - Have a very engaged group of men, looking forward to sharing this enthusiasm with the rest of the church
 - Want to do more outreach as a group, for example Bromley Mission in Liberia
 - Created all new by-laws, have other churches looking at what the St. David's men's group is doing.
- Margot and Mike want to bring back the excitement with Outreach at St. David's. Outreach has always been a cornerstone at St. David's.
- Don't want to over-extend. Pick a couple of things per year and do them really well. Working on what these should be. The goal is quality not quantity.
- Want to support the outreach groups at St. David's that are currently active.
- Margot would also like see more interaction between groups.
- Maybe some events centered on Margaret Mercer?
- Margot and Mike would like to hear what other ideas the Vestry has. Would like to do a brainstorming session with the Vestry to explore new ideas. Margot will send out some ideas for Outreach for vestry members to review.

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

Heavenly Father, Your plans for our Discernment Team is coming together! For that we are very grateful. Encourage everyone on the Team reminding them that Your best work for St David's is manifested in them. When they are tired, strengthen them. When they are disappointed remind them, You are still working. When they need inspiration, please Holy Spirit illuminate their thinking. All that is being done is by You Jesus because all authority is Yours! Have Your way with Your servants Lord so all of us can celebrate You Glory! In the Name of Jesus we pray, Amen

REPORTS:

Interim Rectors Report – Rev. Susan Pinkerton

- Susan+ reported that she is planning to reach out to St. David's teens that participated in VBS to investigate interest in their becoming the new childcare providers. They would do the safe church and Red Cross safety course. Get paid for 2 hours.
- "Summer Soft Space" for children in lieu of childcare for summer going well with \$1000 donation from a parishioner.



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- Realm website – Jane Cunningham is heading work on the new website and will be scheduling a meeting with the staff to organize and delegate work on the site.
- Worship Committee – working with Ginny and Maureen to expand the work of the committee.

Wardens' Report – Jim Tracy, Sr. Warden

- The Jr. Warden Jenifer Bluhm is out of the country.
- All prior information about giving in the former ACS database has been moved and updated in Realm. The former ACS system has been shut down completely. Mike Gibson asked that we make sure that everyone is aware of the change as he personally experienced some issues with the change. Want to make sure that everyone has converted their giving and no one has been erroneously removed.
- After the 10% fee, if approved, St. David's should receive around \$110,000 through the ERC program.
- An Eagle Scout candidate and parishioner completed Phase 1 of her Eagle Project and uploaded pictures of headstones, names of the deceased, and relevant dates to the Billion Graves Project.
- Phase 2, signage for the cemetery, is proceeding. These will focus on way finding and etiquette when walking through the cemetery.

Other items:

Digital Giving

- Bobbie Johnson reported on her research on digital giving options (Text to Give).
 - Givebutter.com - 100 % free with a mobile app. Used for many fundraising efforts comes with a free demo
 - Tatango.com - Text to give platform for non-profits; seemingly used by a lot of political groups
 - Vancopayments.com - Free church app
 - Qgiv - go.qgiv.com
 - Get.tithe.ly - Free giving solutions for everything including a mobile app
- Checked local Episcopal churches:
 - St. Peter's offers text to a number or scan a QR code
 - Epiphany does the same
 - St. Mathews uses Venmo
 - St. James and St. Timothy's have the donate on line option, but no text
- Susan+ noted that we need to be sensitive to the generational differences in how people choose to give.

Stewardship

- The committee met with Jenifer Bluhm, Bobbie Johnson, Margot Culhane, Jane Cunningham, Rev. Susan Pinkerton, and Susan DeMar in attendance.
- Focusing on "Deep Gratitude" theme. Not sure yet what the Diocesan theme will be this year.
- Discussed Grateful for St David's postcard writing campaign to ripple out into the congregation – this should start mid-August if we want to have an impact in September.
- Decided on video "Grateful Testimonials" from parishioners rather than in person.
- Margot reminded the Vestry that they all are on the Stewardship Committee.
- Beginning August 1, the committee will begin meeting weekly on Tuesdays at 11.
- Launch is on Sept. 24 and concludes on Oct. 22.
- Carol Bonifant asked about having year-round stewardship. Margot noted that this is something that the committee would like to do.



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- Susan+ noted that it's important for the congregation to see the Vestry involved in Stewardship. This demonstrates how important it is.

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

Thank You Lord for all the work, energy and joy that took place on our, Sacred Grounds during Vacation Bible School. Holy Spirit Your Presence was felt! We are grateful for all who serve You at St David's. Tonight, we spoke of Worship, Security, Finances, Children, Outreach and Discernment, woven together by Jesus to make St David's what it is. Thank You for taking pleasure in us as we work beside You for the Glory of Your Name, Amen.

Adjournment – The Rev. Susan Pinkerton, Interim Rector, adjourned the Vestry Meeting at 8:45 pm.

NEXT VESTRY MEETING

- **July 19, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the Adult Christian Ed. Room & Zoom. (Hybrid Meeting)**

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Register
by Sharon Easley, Clerk to the Register

Katherine Beckett-Goodwin, Register
St. David's Episcopal Church & School
July 17, 2023

Motions & Items of Note:

Approved: May 2023 Church Organization Treasurer's Report as presented.

Approved: Approved the draft 2023 Budget R1 and will direct Halstead and Halstead to update QuickBooks so the new budget will be shown in the reports for June 2023 at the July Vestry meeting.