

MINUTES

Vestry Meeting – Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 7:00 PM

Present: Fr. Richard, Nancy Waugh, John Grant, Susan Howland, Peg Nelson, Mary Bridget Burns, Lynn Garland, Diane Nichols, Rose Reith, Bill Pieczynski, Tamsin Lucey

Meeting opened at 7:05 P.M. Fr. Richard offered an opening prayer.

Book discussion brief comments – Slow Church Chapter 10 Hospitality. An item will be added to the April 8 retreat agenda to think about an opportunity for an open discussion among parish members to discuss their fears about what we are hearing in America today.

Motion made to accept the minutes from the February vestry meeting emailed February 11, 2017, seconded and carried.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer's report. Susan explained that all financial decisions are made in line with our mission. It is important to keep the treasurer in the loop regarding collection and/or distribution of money for specific purposes.

The diocese is offering to print and laminate at no cost to us 200 electronic giving cards (sample included with these minutes) for use by those giving electronically or through bill pay or who prepay for the year. Diane and Nancy volunteered to help Susan rework the wording before we place our order. The diocese is pushing congregations to use electronic giving.

Building Committee:

A motion was made, seconded and approved to move \$3,000 from the building fund into the organ fund. There was no discussion. This puts us in a position to replace a rank of leathers and to repair the crescendo pedal. Susan will continue to work on organ maintenance with Anne Bouvier-Monroe and Chris Walton, the organ builder. Susan reminded us that we currently have about \$26,000 in reserve from the YMCA rent. After the Y moves out, we can move the money in that line item to the building fund. We should consider asking the Wells Fund for a grant for our organ.

Tamsin is working to contact the 5 applicants for the Sexton's position to set up interviews.

Tamsin continues to work with the Southbridge Board of Health and the Plumbing Inspector to resolve a difference of opinion regarding regulations for the installation of a grease trap in the kitchen.

Fr. Richard has proposed the installation of a piece of artwork in the Meditation Garden. He presented his concept of a metal sculpture (copy attached) that would represent the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. John Grant will contact a relative who works in bronze to learn of any interest she may have. Another possibility is to purchase a statue of St. Francis. It is necessary that we consult with those who work in the garden.

Beautify Southbridge is 8:30 A.M. Saturday, April 22, 2017, with a rain date of May 1, 2017. Although locations are assigned to workers, Tamsin and Karen Bodamer, BLC community garden coordinator, will contact those

who worked in the gardens last year about clean. It was also suggested that our Family Worship children may be interested in helping.

Tamsin explained the recent history of the St. Luke's House building as a homeless shelter and shared with us the organization and structure of today's St. Luke's homeless shelter, established by John and Susan Howland. Tamsin is working as a community coordinator, and St. Luke's has employed a guest advocate whose goal is to help guests become self sufficient. St. Luke's is incorporated in Massachusetts and has applied for 501(c)(3) status, allowing them to accept tax-free donations. Tamsin is asking us to pray for St. Luke's. Down the road, there may be opportunities for churches to become involved. It was suggested that Tamsin may want to possibly make a presentation to the parish at a coffee hour in a month or two.

Fr. Richard would like to host an evening or two for people with immigration issues to work with invited professionals, such as the ACLU, Legal Aid Society and Ascentria, who have knowledge about immigration processes. It was suggested that he first reach out to agencies such as Southbridge Community Connections and United Way to learn the needs and how we might help, perhaps in a roundtable session. The consensus of the vestry was to move forward with the idea.

Thanks were extended to John Grant for cooking and Susan Howland for preparing the batter for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. About 30 attended.

Attendance at Ash Wednesday services was light.

Leadership Day is March 18. We will meet at BLC to carpool.

Susan Howland has graciously agreed to attend the March 24-25 Northeast Ecumenical Stewardship Conference with Nancy. Diocese will pay if two attend.

The Southbridge Savings Bank conference room is not available for Vestry Retreat on April 8, 2017. Other options are the parish hall, OSV at a small cost, and Diane offered the North Brookfield Senior Center if we want to go offsite.

Eileen will not be available to do a Good Friday children's program. Nancy will check whether either Heather Bousquet or Susan Grant would be available and willing.

The VBS team has met to discuss possible dates and ideas.

Tamsin passed out the pew cards and asked that she be told of any suggested changes by Tuesday, March 14. Chris will contact the Center of Hope to see about printing.

\$9,000 was budgeted for oil for this calendar year. On March 8 Susan bought 3,500 gallons at \$1.99 a gallon, which fills the tank. Thank you to Tamsin for dipping the tank.

Susan will position a plastic mail slot for Fr. Richard for the office.

The next vestry meeting will be held in conjunction with the vestry retreat on April 8.

Closing prayer at 9:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Peg Nelson, Clerk