

**HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING MINUTES**

December 13, 2023

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. [Isaiah 43:19]

OPENING PRAYER Lorraine Brumskine

PRESENT: Susan Howland, Eileen DeMings, Mother Judith, Robin Yates, Lorraine Brumskine, John Grant, Jean Frost, Nancy Waugh

REGRETS: Lana Pieczynski, Cat Reith Lowery, Lynn Garland

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR MINISTRY: Interview with the Rev. Vicki Ix

Vicki gave us an overview of her position as a ¼ time priest at St. John's in Ashfield, MA. It works well for them. They looked at what the priest HAS TO DO, and then divided up the rest between the Vestry and committees that report to the Vestry. There are a lot of similarities between St. John's and Holy Trinity. St. John's is in a more rural area than Holy Trinity, but ASA and Total Income are very close, both have strong lay leaders and things get done.

OPENING BUSINESS

Acceptance of Minutes: November 8, 2023 – Jean Frost **A motion was made to accept the minutes from the November meeting, it was seconded and carried.**

Treasurer's Report: Nancy Waugh Financial reports were sent out via email. The Finance Committee recommends a 3% cost of living increase for our three employees. **A motion was made to provide a 3% cost of living increase for our three employees, it was seconded, and carried. A motion was made to accept the treasurer's report, it was seconded and carried.**

PRIEST'S REPORT

Pastoral Care Update

Approval: Liturgical License Renewals: Advent 2023-Advent 2024 John Grant's name will be added to the list. **A motion was made to approve the renewal of Liturgical Licenses, it was seconded, and carried.**

Update: December 24th there will be two services - Fourth Sunday of Advent at 9:30 am and Christmas Eve at 4 pm. A Christmas Day service will be held at 9:30am, and an Epiphany Celebration will take place on Sunday January 7th at the 9:30 am service.

Debriefing: What have we done well? Clarinet Concert went well,
What could we have done better? Nothing noted

NEW BUSINESS:

Update: 2024 pledges to date & review of the 2024 Budget Not all the expected pledge cards have been returned. Nancy has called on some of the 16 missing pledges. At this time pledges are \$20,000 less than expected. If what people have said they would probably give come in we would be looking at a deficit budget of \$5785, rather than \$20,000. When the rest of the pledges come in the budget will be revised as necessary. By the first week of January whatever pledges are going to come in should be in and the budget will be addressed.

Resolution: 2024 Housing Resolution for Mother Judith **A motion was made to accept, it was seconded, and carried.**

Discussion: Next steps for the transition

Debriefing: Conversations with other clergy – What we heard during the conversations: People make it work, we are not alone, there is no shame – let's see what we can do as opposed to lamenting what we can't do. Frees up resources to use in mission. One priest who worked ¼ time and ¾ time – felt she spent more energy with the ¼ time church. Vicki Ix has a good game plan for how to use the lay leaders at the church so she spends her time doing the things the clergy has to do. She does her part in the other pieces as well.

Proposal: Beginning a Conversation with Bethlehem Lutheran –BLC leadership team has been talking about a partnership with us, and are in favor; Mother Judith and Pastor Dan have spoken informally, and are both in favor; Rich Simpson and the Lutheran counterpart have spoken, and are in favor. If as a vestry we agree Susan will call Canon Simpson and he will start the ball rolling – the next thing to occur will be a meeting with Canon Simpson, his Lutheran counterpart, Mother Judith, Pastor Dan and the two lay leaders (i.e. Wardens) from each church, ideally in January. Canon Rich Simpson and the Lutheran Synod representative would also meet with the “vestry” of each church. A Pulpit swap could be used to help Holy Trinity get to know Dan, and there are other ways as well.

A motion was made to start a conversation with Bethlehem Lutheran Church about a partnership, it was seconded, and carried.

Planning: Annual Parish Meeting: January 28, 2024

Candidates for Vestry & Diocesan Convention Delegates Lynn has spoken with a few people about joining the Vestry. We need to have two delegates and two alternate delegates for the convention, at least one from each category has to be from the Vestry.

Annual Reports & Agenda Chris McTigue will reach out to the people who need to submit reports.

Discussion for a Vote on next steps

Building – on the back burner for the moment

Clergy search – we will move forward with starting the conversation with Bethlehem Lutheran Church about partnering with them.

What do we need to learn and how will we learn it? For now, we will stay in our building, but it will still be a year of transition.

Plan A – things go smoothly with the first steps, and we continue the process or Plan B – things are not moving swiftly, and we adjust.

Debriefing: Blue Shades Clarinets Concert on December 10 – The Free-will offering was \$194 and there were about 40 people present. The reception was catered using money given by the sponsors. There were a lot of leftovers because we were expecting more people. Would we want to do it again? Maybe

MINISTRY REPORTS

- Communications – Susan Howland – Susan continues to do the website, checking in with Chris, but she and Chris have not been able to work together on the website. New equipment for microphones, etc. has been ordered.

- Building Committee – Tamsin Lucey A report was sent out via email.
- Cooking for Life – Tamsin Lucey - the grant is being utilized.
- Landscaping Committee – Lynn Garland no report
- Family Worship/Faith Formation – Eileen DeMings Things are going as scheduled. The teen outing -a trip to go bowling in South Hadley at a place called Pinz - was well attended, about 10 went, and they had a good time. Faith Formation finished VBS for this session. They have started thinking about next semester. The Advent event went well. For January 7th (Epiphany) there will be a dramatic reading of the gospel, celebrating Epiphany in church, with cookies.
- Daughters of the King- Lorraine Brumskine, Robin Yates – St. Monica Daughters of the King in Hartford contacted our DOK that they have 10 boxes of books to give us to be sent to Liberia. Arrangements will be made to pick up the books. They finished their study last Friday. The thought is to have the induction in the beginning of April. Discussions among the participants were wonderful. There are 3 candidates, 2 have finished, 1 will finish before April. Daughters of the King bank account has been closed. It is now part of HTC. They may need more than three barrels for shipping the supplies that have been collected so far.
- Stewardship – Nancy Waugh, Lynn Garland – report given earlier; Nancy reported that there are more pledge cards available at back of the church.
- Praying Hands Ministry – Susan Howland –11 more shawls were blessed last Sunday, Prayer Vigil occurring today.
- Hospitality – Cat Reith-Lowery – no report

ADJOURNMENT at 9:05 pm

Closing Prayer of the Magnificat

Housing Resolution for the Rev. Judith Lee

December 13, 2023

Whereas the Rev. Judith Lee is compensated by Holy Trinity Church in Southbridge, Massachusetts exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, Holy Trinity Church does not provide the Rev. Judith Lee with a rectory; therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that the compensation paid to the Rev. Judith Lee for the calendar year 2024 shall be \$30,182 (\$25,250 salary + \$4932 health insurance benefit) of which \$25,000, is hereby designated to be a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended; and it is further

Resolved, that the designation of \$25, 000 as a housing allowance shall apply the calendar year 2024.

