

**HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING MINUTES**

February 7, 2024

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]

HOLY EUCHARIST

Present: Susan Howland, Nancy Waugh, Cat Reith-Lowery, Eileen DeMings, John Grant, Robin Yates, Lynn Garland, Dave Monroe, via Zoom, Ryan Bousquet

Regrets: none

OPENING BUSINESS

Acceptance of Minutes: January 10, 2024 – Jean Frost **A motion was made to accept the minutes from January, it was seconded, and carried.**

Treasurer's Report: – Nancy Waugh, there were no questions for Nancy. **A motion was made to accept the treasurer's report, it was seconded, and carried.**

PRIEST'S REPORT

Debriefing: Annual Parish Meeting Vestry members were pleased with how the Annual Meeting went. Many preferred having it after the service rather than during the service. Doing the whole service first and then holding the meeting in the same room helped to frame the meeting in the Holy Eucharist.

Response to Parochial Report Narrative Questions: **The Parochial Report is a summary of the year given by every church in the Episcopal Church. All aspects of each congregation - statistics, demographics, finances - are included. All together this data along with other data helps give insight into the state of the church.**

1. What opportunities and challenges did the congregation face in 2023? We reviewed a number of models for a new way to do ministry, the CAT survey was a huge part of it. Financial challenges of how to sustain a large building with a small congregation. Speaking with other churches that have gone through a transition.
2. Looking forward to the future, what changes do you hope to see in your faith community? - involvement of members as they are able, continued involvement of youth, acceptance of the decisions we make in our transition to new ministry. What does your community need in order to bring about these changes? Communication and teamwork.
3. We invite you to tell stories of how you have spent the last year naming, addressing, and dismantling the injustices of racism in yourselves, congregations, and your communities. Three parishioners have started in Sacred Ground this year. We participated in an ecumenical effort to help refugees and homeless families placed in Sturbridge.

Signup: Closing Prayer (March through December) A sheet of paper was passed around.

What have we done well? Annual Meeting, communicating well with the parish on the process of the possible partnership with Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Youth involvement in the Sunday service, the dramatic Gospel performance during the Epiphany service on January 7th.

What could we have done better? Move more slowly and deliberately with the younger youth Faith Formation. Staying current with Safe Church Training and Cori checks.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mother Judith strongly recommends that all Vestry take Safe Church Training.

Verification of Information: Diocesan Parish Officials Report – a list was sent around the table to be updated and home addresses added. The clerk will send the information to the Diocese.

Designation of Souper Bowl of Caring Funds: The money collected from the sale of homemade soup will be donated to a local organization addressing food insecurity – there was a brief discussion before a **Motion was made to donate the funds to Food Share, it was seconded and carried.**

Update: Boiler update – from Tamsin – two new 400-gallon, above ground tanks were installed today behind the church. They will be filled with oil from the underground tank. The remaining oil from the underground tank will be removed and we will receive credit for that oil.

Planning for Partnership with Bethlehem Lutheran:

Preparing for February 25th & Vestry Interview We will need to find a time to meet with Pastor Dan, if possible, after the service, after coffee hour. We should think about questions to ask Pastor Dan. On the diocesan web site – under transitions and new ministry – there may be some sample interview questions.

Preparing for March 10th Retreat - We will need more preparation for this -

Review: Mutual Ministry Covenant (June 2022) A copy was sent with the agenda for us to look at and then, after our March 10th meeting, see if that needs to be revised.

Engaging the Congregation – in order to help us prepare for the March 10th meeting with the Council from Bethlehem Lutheran Church we will encourage parishioners to have conversations with vestry members during coffee hour; announcements can be made to let them know that we are looking for feedback on this process, questions, concerns; a Google-form can be used to gather information electronically; placing a white board in the Parish Hall with markers nearby or securing large sheets of paper to the wall as a place where questions or comments could be written down for those who aren't comfortable with digital options.

Orientation: New Vestry Members Lynn went over some information and will be sending other information via email to the newest members.

Appointment of Standing Committees A motion was made to accept the members of standing committees as listed; it was seconded and carried.

- **Finance Committee:** Susan Howland, chair; Nancy Waugh, Treasurer; Josh Spooner, Lana Pieczynski Pledge Secretary; John Grant – ex-officio member.
- **Endowment Committee:** Susan Howland, Chair; Robin Yates; Ron Texiera; ex-officio members: Priest and Treasurer
- **Parrette Committee:** Lynn Garland, Sr. Warden; Susan Howland, Jr. Warden; Lana Pieczynski, Barbara Kalber, Tamsin Lucey; Priest and Treasurer, ex officio

- **Pastoral Relations Committee:** Priest, Lynn Garland, Susan Howland, Tamsin Lucey, Robin Yates
- **Stewardship Committee:** Nancy Waugh & Lynn Garland
- **Building and Grounds Committee:** Co-chairs: Tamsin Lucey & Jean Frost, Ron Teixeira, David Monroe, Nate Lowery
- **Mission and Outreach Committee:** Susan Grant, Chair; Suzanne Sharp; Rose Reith, Anne Bouvier-Monroe, the Daughters of the King
- **Hospitality Committee:** Lynn Garland (Chair); Susan Grant; Karron Lacey
- **Communications:** Susan Howland (website), John Grant (technology: virtual communication & meetings), Tamsin Lucey (Facebook administrator); Cat Reith-Lowery (special emails/Mailchimps/evites); Parish Assistant Administrator (Tidings, weekly e-news, collection of information)
- **Faith formation Steering Committee:** Eileen DeMings (chair), Heather Bousquet, Lorraine Brumskine, Cat Reith-Lowery, Rose Reith, Robin Yates, Dave Monroe

MINISTRY REPORTS

- Communications – Susan Howland, John Grant, Cat Reith-Lowery Susan explained the reorganization of the Communications ministry – no chairperson, each has their own piece, and they will communicate with each other as needed.
- Building Committee – Tamsin Lucey Two 400-gallon tanks have been placed behind the church. Tomorrow oil will be pumped out. Jean announced that she will be a co-chair of the Building Committee with Tamsin.
- Cooking for Life – Tamsin Lucey – no report
- Landscaping Committee – Lynn Garland – no report, Cat asked Lynn to keep her Girl Scout Troop in mind for help with Landscaping.
- Family Worship/Faith Formation – Eileen DeMings – They have not set any dates for Sunday School; their model is not quite gelling yet. The Youth Sundays are going well. Winter is tough, weather and illness interfere.
- Youth Group – Dave Monroe and Ryan Bousquet are mentoring the group.
- Daughters of the King- Robin Yates April 7th Installation of Rose and Tracy as DOK, Monday and Tuesday (Feb 12 & 13) next week they will be packing the drums. Prices for the barrels and shipping have increased so they are taking a pause in collecting and shipping items for now.
- Stewardship – Nancy Waugh, Lynn Garland Nancy had talked about getting envelopes just for Christmas and Easter, but one place she called 500 envelopes was the minimum you could order, the other had a minimum of 250. Another idea is to buy a box of envelopes and have the kids decorate them or use a stamp or sticker.
- Hospitality – Lynn Garland – no report
- Souper Bowl Cat Reith-Lowery reported that there will be 4 or 5 soups available for sale on Sunday.

CLOSING PRAYER The closing prayer was a group prayer, with everyone contributing a sentence.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:59 pm

Respectfully submitted

Jean Frost, clerk