

VESTRY RETREAT MINUTES

FRIDAY February 18, 2022 – St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Savannah

Attendance: Rev. Kelly Steele, Rev, David Wantland, Kathy Field, Trevor Walker, Susan Homar, David Neises, Chris Good, Sally Robinson, Phil Snyder, Aubrey Brawner, Pete Kastner, Doug Eberle, Suzanne Thomas, Kathleen Turner, and guest Rev. Michael White.

Absent: Kathryn McLearn

David led the opening prayer before dinner. A discussion topic over dinner was to include each person's origin of their name, what they are most proud of in their life journey and what did you want to see for future generations.

Kelly then created a Fishbowl: Each team of two would discuss what is a good vestry.

Aubrey/Trevor: The Vestry shows up, are supportive. They are good ambassadors and good liaisons.

Pete/Sally: Vestry is the eyes & ears of the parish, voice of the parish & Lay leaders of the parish. They lead by example. Beehive analogy – busy workers need leaders.

Susan/Dave: The vestry is the board of directors, the legislative body. It is the communications conduit to and from the parish. It has a variety of roles inspiring and engaging people creating a comradery among parishioners.

Kathy/Phil: The vestry is the headquarters that runs the church to build the church up. Respect & mutual respect of vestry members. Leaders of the church where everyone steps up to do jobs. Volunteerism & Leadership

Doug/Kathleen: The vestry is a collaborative body with different skills, great listeners, visionaries. Governing body which must have integrity.

Suzanne/Chris: Grow the church. Sorry didn't take notes here.

Kelly & David: Mission keepers of the parish, spiritual leadership through discernment.

Michael White discussed the Canonical Role of the Vestry: See job description in the Vestry Resource Guide, pg. 73. In essence the vestry is deputized to set policy and is the legal entity of the church. It must choose the leadership and nominate persons for holy orders. The vestry must trust one another, trust clergy and staff. Trust needs relationships. Essential to respect decisions, especially voting issues. The vestry must hear one another and believe the Spirit is leading them. It must create a non-anxious presence in the parish. The vestry is not to act as the complaint board. And being on the vestry is not a popularity contest.

Pragmatic Role of the Vestry: The church is a “non-profit” board. The Parish ministry should be a shared experience of worship/worshiping community. Experience grows out of shared worship allowing different thoughts on politics to worship together. St. Peter’s is a large diverse group that worships together and assists on outreach.

Michael’s Experience – discussion. A vestry cannot have success without successors. A vestry works well with trust and humility. St. Peter’s has been focused on worship. Biggest concern of the future is not that people don’t want to go to church. People want to go to St. Peter’s. Interesting stat – 85% of Episcopalians go to 15% of the churches. Biggest challenge is the division within the church population. Need to find a way to worship and welcome everyone.

Dave closed the evening with the Compline.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19,2022 - Christ Church, Savannah

Attendance: Rev. Kelly Steele, Rev. David Wantland, Kathy Field, Trevor Walker, Susan Homar, David Neises, Chris Good, Sally Robinson, Phil Snyder, Aubrey Brawner, Pete Kastner, Doug Eberle, Suzanne Thomas

Absent: Kathryn McLearn

Morning Prayer Devotion was led by Trevor Walker.

Leadership Discussion: Free association leadership & spiritual

Spiritual: prayer, communion, faith, peace, intrinsic, community, purpose, forgiving, strength, self-discernment, personal journey, eternal, path choosing, inward reflection, Jesus/God, morality, giving (of themselves)

Leadership: strength, direction, commitment, focus, example, listening, discerning, ideas, vision, long-term future, fortitude, understanding, shared mission, competition, fiduciary/legal, caring, forging consensus, being positive, negotiating, democracy, back-stabbing, strategic

Combined: Truth, harmony, respect, trust, welcoming, advocate vs advocate, enthusiasm, communicate, rules (canons/Bible), tradition, GRACE

The Vestry is both spiritual and leadership.

Kelly reviewed the *Holy Currencies: Time & Place* – leads to certain type of leadership which is tradition rooted in Savannah. Money – cannot focus on too much. Truth – can be painful to convey and may not be received well without a better relationship; need to build rapport to help create relationships.

What would you change to the Vestry Covenant? Discussion. Reviewed covenant.

Add - Grace. God gives us grace. Parishioners need to give grace. Add to 1st sentence.

Add – Unity. To seek God’s will by striving for unity in all manors.

Add - Respectfully. Add to 2nd paragraph.

Kelly – Asks Do you feel ready and able to fulfill this covenant?

With God’s Help!

Susan – suggests creating a congregational covenant with a renewal of congregational vows. Renewal has creed, will you follow, will you resist evil, will you strive for justice & Peace, will you respect the dignity of every human being? Need to first practice amongst ourselves.

Discussion on where you see the church 20 years from now.

Discussion on Strategic Plan – Aging & Youth

Children & Families: Attract & grow – you need to go where they are. Be specific. Need youth. Determine how Living Waters fits in, Hesse School. We need to bring children to our church. Music programming reaching out. Kathleen will help fill this role. She brings new ideas with her. The Acolyte program is aging out. Hiring a children’s minister Aug 1st – 20 hours a week. Children’s Art Camp may bring new people, end of June.

Elder Care: Have not formatted a committee for Elder Care. Pete/Trevor form an ad hoc committee. Perhaps having a Golden Hour program, lectures. Maybe start a care givers group with Steve Peirsol. Create support groups at their locations. Invite, Welcome, Connect is reviewing ideas too. Kelly & David to see Chuck Keopke to discuss options. Teach elders to use technology & view online. The Christmas Carols at the Marshes was a great event. Create other events & consider Thrive. Remember purpose of engaging elders may not turn into parishioners.

BY-LAW REVIEW:

Reviewed Secretary job description & Finance Chair job description. Kathy to edit and insert “ability to delegate”. Hal to revise and submit to vestry.

Motion by Pete Kastner: Accept by-laws as submitted and amended for final approval at March meeting. Second by Sally Robinson. All Approved.

VPOC Selection: Kelly to update. Will include in email.

VPOC should attend meetings for their area. File reports monthly to Kelly even if it's only one sentence 8 days prior to the Vestry meeting. Send annual budget requests to Finance by September 5th, 2022. Send annual report to Susanne O'Day by December 14, 2022.

Finance: Pete Kastner moved to waive the reading of the resolution. Doug Eberle seconded.

Motion: Pete Kastner motioned: The vestry requests that the Endowment Committee allocate the distribution of approximately \$25,000 2022 contribution to the initial funding of the new Child & Youth Ministry. The funds will be stored and distributed from the Child & Youth Ministry TRA in accordance with the conditions of that TRA. Dave Neises seconded. All approved.

FINANCE 101: At every vestry meeting Doug will share the monthly & YTD financial information. Vestry reviewed Dec 2021 information. Report included budget vs spending. A report is being created budget vs spending for every committee. These reports will be sent three times a year to committee chairs and VPOC's. Discussion of base budget vs aspirational budget. Key role of VPOC is to look at aspirational stuff and create a vision for what we could do with more. The budget year is January through December. July will have a mid-year review and allow for adjustments. In September the finance committee starts review for the next year.

ELECTIONS:

Secretary: Pete Kastner nominates Suzanne Thomas as Vestry Retreat Secretary. Kathy Field seconds. All approve.

Jr. Warden: Kathy Field nominates Phil Snyder as Jr. Warden. Pete Kastner seconds. All approve.

Delegation to Diocesan meeting: Trevor Walker, Kathryn McLearn, Sally Robinson nominated. Doug Eberle seconds. All approve.

Finance Chair: Kathy nominates Doug Eberle as Finance Chair. Dave Neises seconds. All approve.

Secretary: Pete Kastner nominates Suzanne Thomas as Vestry Secretary for 2022. Chris Good seconds. All approve.

Treasurer: Kathy Field nominates Pete Kastner as Treasurer. Suzanne Thomas seconds. All approve.

Stewardship Chair: Kelly will act as the chair and delegate. Jim outlined the entire process. Kelly, Pete & Doug will work together on existing program. Suzanne Thomas and Dave Neises will create brochure, do PR and find speakers. Susan Homar has volunteered to speak. We will meet the first week of May to start the process.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion from Chris Goode to direct the HR Committee to draft an offer to Rev. Kelly Steele to become the Rector at St. Peter's. Pete Kastner seconded. Discussion. All approved.

March 24th, 2022 is the next Vestry meeting. 4:30 p.m. -6:30p.m. at the church.