

Church of the Good Shepherd
Vestry Meeting – September 13, 2017

MINUTES

Present: **Members:** Charlie Bering, Angelita Caceda, Jim Donna, Jaclyn Ford, Kate Gyllensvard, Melva James, Jeff Lyons, Amy McCreath, Brad Parsons, Sandy Steinberg,
Also attending: Pat Ahern, Sharon Bogue, Rob Flynn, Sally Hajjar, Sandy Lampert, Carol Roberts, Ken Schmidt, Steve Steadman
Absent: Melanie Sullivan, Rachael Thames

The meeting began at 7:00pm

Opening

- Gathering Song: Amy led the group singing the Doxology.
- Prayer: Charlie
- Review of the Norms: Amy reviewed the section on meeting management.

- Announcements & Updates:
 - Meeting Format: Amy reported that the Executive Committee had discussed the change of eliminating the Timekeeper, Decision Driver, and Parking Lot Attendant from the meeting format, and decided to try it out for a few more months. All agreed this was a good idea.

 - Areas of Ministry: Amy reported that she had spoken with the Ministry Coordinators, and reviewed the results of the Coordinators' Survey. The Coordinators report that they feel the system is working well, but could use a few tweaks. All mentioned that they would appreciate more opportunities to meet with Amy, and to meet with the Vestry as needed. In light of Jean Ann's report on the Liturgical Ministries, there was general agreement that the size and scope of the Liturgical Ministry Coordinator's role should be re-defined.

 - Stewardship Season: Amy announced that the theme for Stewardship Season this year is " Journey to Generosity" , and that Marianne Iauco and Bridget Simonson will be the co-chairs of the Stewardship Committee. The goal this year is to reach a total of 60 pledges giving \$175,000. The group discussed the possibility of forming a committee to look at long-range financial planning.

- Accessibility Project: Brad reported that, so far, Pat Ahern, Jon Spector, Sandy Steinberg, and Steve Steadman have joined the Project Committee, and will be meeting later this month.
- Anti-BDS Legislation: Jeff reported that the deadline for submitting a resolution to the Diocese had passed but that work continues on a draft to be presented in the spring. Jeff explained that the resolution is a statement against the legislation that would prevent citizens from exercising their First Amendment rights to boycott the State of Israel as a non-violent way to advocate for a just peace in Palestine. He also explained that Ken is leading a small group to draft the resolution, and that, when presented, the resolution will not be officially sponsored by the church unless the Vestry chooses to do so.
- Homecoming Sunday: Jeff announced that CGS will be holding a Homecoming celebration on Sunday, October 29, with special music during the 10:00 service, followed by a sing-along and potluck lunch. Anyone wanting more information or willing to help out can contact Jeff or Beth Zwick.
- Review of the minutes from July 12: Amy
 - Amy reviewed the minutes from July, sent out prior to the meeting.
 - ❖ **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY THE MINUTES FROM JULY 12 AS PRESENTED.**
- Treasurer's Report: Jim
 - Jim reported that the budget is still running a healthy surplus. He noted that the Sabbatical Fund had been a highly successful tool for funding Amy's time away.
- Reflection: Amy
 - Amy asked the group to think about their roles on the Vestry, and to find a word that described how they see themselves in the group and how the group sees them.

Old Business

- Revisiting the Role of the Vestry: Amy
 - Amy presented a brief overview of the Vestry, using a chart with "Mission" in the center of the page. She explained that the Mission is derived from the hopes and prayers of the parish, and that the Vestry's role is oversight and fiduciary responsibility. The Vestry consists of the Rector, two Wardens, the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, the Clerk, and six Vestry representatives. The Deacon is not a member of the Vestry. Vestry meetings are convened by the Rector. The agenda for monthly meetings is generated at a meeting of the Executive Committee prior to the Vestry meeting, then drafted by the Clerk and distributed to the Vestry

members. Anyone can request that an item be placed on the agenda by communicating the request to a Vestry member. It is not a rule but a general policy that all are welcome to attend Vestry meetings. The Vestry provides oversight, but the Mission is carried out by the parish and others in the community. There is a Strategic Plan in place, but this is not a daily guide. It is hoped that discussions about the Vestry's role and the mission of the church can continue.

- Theological School Donation: Jim
For many years, CGS has presented its annual Theological School donation to the Episcopal Divinity School, but now that EDS has closed, a new recipient has to be identified. After some discussion, the group chose to make a donation to the Bexley-Seabury School, where many of the displaced EDS students are completing their studies.
- ❖ **APPROVED MAKING THE ANNUAL THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL DONATION TO THE BEXLEY-SEABURY SCHOOL AS PRESENTED.**
- Early Service review: Amy
Amy reported that, although the 8:00am service had started out with a lot of clergy and lay ministers, there are now only two clergy and four lay ministers. Still, she believes current resources are sufficient to continue through the end of the year. It was noted that the early service, with an average attendance of six to eight people is not alleviating the crowding problem at the 10:00am service as originally intended, but the core group is strong, and the stripped-down contemplative nature of the service seems to be filling an important need. There was a suggestion that those attending the Hidden Brook service on Thursday nights should be made aware of this Sunday morning option. The group agreed to re-assess the service's future later in the fall.
- Meeting Format review: Amy
Amy reviewed the changes made to the Vestry meeting format – eliminating the selection of a Timekeeper, Decision Driver, and Parking Lot Attendant each month, with each meeting's Facilitator assuming those responsibilities. All agreed that the changes seemed to work well last month, and that the new format should be continued for a while. The question was raised: How do we start our meetings off right? Members felt the Opening Prayer and Mission Reflection were good ways to begin, but wondered if there are other possibilities. One suggestion was that the Closing Prayer could still be chosen by rotating members, but the Opening Prayer could be the same every month, chosen or drafted by the group.

New Business

- **Sabbatical Reflections: Amy**
 Amy spoke about her experiences with different churches while she was on sabbatical. She hadn't made a deliberate plan to do so, but wound up going to thirteen churches of various denominations in thirteen weeks. She was eager to see what other parishes were doing, and curious to know if, in comparison, CGS is really as radical and innovative as we think we are. She found it very interesting to be a newcomer after being an insider for so long. She noted that she was rarely greeted upon entering a church, was never invited to coffee hour, and had only two real conversations, both of which she initiated. There seemed to be a great sense of anxiety among the preachers she heard, but sermons never brought up current events. Hymns were often lovely, but didn't seem to be rooted in the liturgy. She read through several websites for non-denominational churches in order to get a sense of how other churches do outreach, and wondered what new approaches might be tried at CGS.
 In conclusion, she noted that she returned greatly appreciative of the CGS community, feeling she is serving the right parish in the right denomination for her.

- **Rector's Salary update: Jim**
 Jim reported that the annual adjustment to the Rector's salary is typically made effective October 1. He recommended that the Rector's salary be raised \$3,000, from \$87,000 to \$90,000. He noted that this adjustment is in line with the Diocesan guidelines, and that he had discussed the adjustment with Amy, who is comfortable with the proposal. Amy abstained from the vote and left the room during the discussion.
 ❖ **APPROVED ADJUSTING THE RECTOR'S ANNUAL SALARY FROM \$87,000 TO \$90,000 EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1 AS PRESENTED.**

- **Housing Allowance update: Jim**
 Jim proposed that \$30,000 of the Rector's salary be designated as a housing allowance, in accordance with current tax laws.
 ❖ **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY DESIGNATING \$30,000 OF THE RECTOR'S ANNUAL SALARY AS A HOUSING ALLOWANCE AS PRESENTED.**

Closing

- **Review of the meeting: Amy**
 The group was pleased that so many guests had attended, and appreciated the large chunks of time for discussions. Some commented that full-group discussions were preferable to splitting into pairs. In regard to the new format, Amy noted that it might be difficult for the Facilitator to lead the meeting and keep track of the time simultaneously.

- Decisions: Amy
 - Approved the minutes from July.
 - Approved the Theological School donation to Bexley-Seabury.
 - Approved continuing the 8:00am service through the end of the year.
 - Approved the Rector's salary adjustment.
 - Approved designating \$30,000 of the Rector's salary as a housing allowance.

- Parking Lot:
 - Vestry meeting development.
 - Mutual Ministry Reviews.

- Prayer: Charlie

The meeting ended at 8:55pm.

Minutes submitted by Jeff Lyons.