

**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Vestry Minutes**

January 14, 2020

Present: Fr. Townsend, Bonnie Bautz, Judith Delaney, Judy DiGregorio, Lew Felton, Jo Kelley, Cyril Meredith, John Murphy, Sandi Robertson, Brent Sigmon

Absent: Nancy Anderson, Barbara Bovee, Liz Herbes,

Guests: Canon Michelle Warriner Bolt

Call to Order:

Fr. Townsend called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Opening Devotion: Fr. Townsend

Fr. Townsend opened the meeting with a prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Fr. Townsend

The agenda was unanimously approved (DiGregorio/Felton)

Approval of Consent Agenda: Fr. Townsend

The consent agenda, as follows, was unanimously approved (Murphy/DiGregorio).

- Vestry minutes of December 10, 2019
- Approval for issuing the call to the Reverend Lynn Bailey Norman to be Priest-in-Charge for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Oak Ridge, TN
- Approval to increase the ceiling for Priest-in-Charge total annual compensation to \$125,000

Development and Support Goals: Canon Bolt

Canon Bolt congratulated the Vestry on a successful call and announcement of our new rector. All parties expressed bold optimism about Fr. Norman's ministry and the future of our parish. Canon Bolt described the reason for her presence at the Vestry meeting as one of helping to establish the foundation for a long term, healthy relationship between the Priest-in-Charge and the parish. She engaged the Vestry in conversation about the Diocese's Priest-in-Charge (PIC) process, accomplishing the following three goals while doing so:

- summarize results of the Vestry's work conducted in preparation for this conversation;
- describe in more detail the Priest-in-Charge role, rationale and implementation at St. Stephen's; and
- draft initial developmental goals (the final version of which will be utilized in the first Mutual Ministry Review, six months into Fr. Norman's ministry).

She reminded the Vestry that the PIC process is a two year provisional, untenured term during which the clergy member functions with all responsibilities and privileges of a head rector (albeit without tenure). Using an established development plan, Mutual Ministry Reviews, intentional and mutual discernment, are conducted semi-annually during the 2 year period by the priest and Vestry, with diocesan facilitation, to reflect on ministry and the status of jointly developed goals. At the end of the two year term, the Vestry will vote whether, with the Bishop's consensus, to issue a call to the PIC to become permanent rector for the parish. The PIC process was selected for St. Stephen's given the dynamic state of the parish within the past 3 years (e.g., multiple changes in clergy, staff, service structure, attendance and participation by laity) and any changes the future will bring. Canon Bolt noted the PIC process provides flexibility to respond to changing conditions within a parish and its environment (in contrast to older models that assume a traditional state of absolute growth).

Canon Bolt and the Vestry refined a draft list of developmental tasks for the Priest-in-Charge period. These tasks will be used to guide ministry and to conduct bi-annual Mutual Ministry Reviews. The developmental tasks will be incorporated into the PIC Letter of Agreement. After refining the developmental task list, the Canon and Vestry spoke, real time via telephone, with Fr. Norman. Fr. Norman reiterated the importance of establishing new expectations and new relationships (as well as revitalizing former relationships) as he begins his ministry as Priest-in-Charge. Fr. Norman expressed the importance of the developmental tasks as both a guide for the work of our parish and as a basis with which to communicate across the congregation.

Canon Bolt mentioned two upcoming trainings within the Diocese. The first will be a webinar on how to complete a parish Parochial Report. It will be conducted on February 20, 2020. The second training will be a Diocesan Vestry School, arrangements pending. The Diocese will provide more information about these events in its communications.

INTERIM RECTOR'S REPORT: Fr. Townsend

Fr. Townsend reminded the Vestry that his last Sunday serving as St. Stephen's Interim Rector will be January 26, 2020. He noted his original agreed to duration of service was stretched from six months to ten months. Fr. Townsend announced that, during the upcoming interval in which St. Stephen's is without assigned clergy, the Reverend Carol Westphal will preach for 3 weeks and the Canon Michelle Warriner Bolt will preach the 4th week. Fr. Bailey Norman's first service at St. Stephen's will be Ash Wednesday, February 26, 2020. Fr. Townsend stated he and Fr. Norman are continuing to discuss how mid-week services and pastoral care emergencies will be addressed in the interval.

Fr. Townsend noted 2020 Vestry members and officers will be installed by the Bishop during his visit on January 19, 2020.

Fr. Townsend acknowledged this as his last Vestry meeting and commented that he has enjoyed his time serving at St. Stephen's.

WARDENS' REPORTS:

Senior Warden: Brent Sigmon

Mr. Sigmon mentioned he and Fr. Norman have had on-going conversations about St. Stephen's priorities and activities. Mr. Sigmon announced the 2020 Vestry Retreat has been scheduled for Saturday, April 18, the first Saturday after Easter Sunday. He communicated that Fr. Norman plans to conduct small group forums "as many as possible, as early on as possible" to re-establish, renew, and make new acquaintances.

Mr. Sigmon announced he and Nancy plan to host a Vestry social at their home in the near future, specific arrangements are pending.

Mr. Sigmon requested participants in the recent Diocesan workshop on Evangelism provide a report of workshop highlights at next month's Vestry meeting.

He reported that Simon Ballintoy, St. Stephen's organist and choirmaster, was contacted by the Maryland State Young Men's Chorus. The chorus will present a concert at Christ Church Cathedral in Nashville the morning of Sunday, February 16, 2020. The group will then travel to Oak Ridge to perform at St. Stephen's that evening.

Junior Warden: Judith Delaney

Mrs. Delaney noted she is actively learning the role of Junior Warden and that one characterization of the role is "a listening post for the Parish".

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approval of the Addition of a Nursery Worker Position: Fr. Bo Townsend

Fr. Townsend discussed the importance of having two paid staff members to ensure staffing levels meet Safeguarding requirements. Funding for both nursery worker positions are included in the proposed 2020 budget. Connie Lane Douglas will be the new worker, supporting Sharon Thomas in the nursery. Connie will also assist by staffing youth Christian Education classes as needed.

Approval of the December 2019 Finance Committee Report: Cyril Meredith

Mr. Meredith presented the December 2019 financial report and stated that the Finance Committee recommends approval. The December financial report was unanimously approved.

NOTE: These minutes were approved at the February 2020 Vestry meeting. Also approved at the February meeting was the January 2020 financial statement. A summary is given here:

January 2020	Budgeted Value	YTD Actual	Actual/Budget %
Total Income	\$460,212	\$36,032	7.8%
Total Expenses	\$507,598	39,931	7.9%

For a more detailed summary click on the following link:
<http://www.ststephensor.org/FinanceUpdate.htm>

Approval of 2020 Budget: Cyril Meredith

Mr. Meredith presented St. Stephen's proposed 2020 budget and stated that the Finance Committee recommends approval. He noted St. Stephen's cost variance at 2019 year end (+\$31,000) was notably better than the year end forecast provided at the beginning 2019 (-\$45,000). A 2% salary increase for full time staff is programmed into the 2020 budget.

Mr. Felton acknowledged value provided by the 2020 budget summary prepared by and distributed to the Vestry by Mr. Sigmon in advance of the Vestry meeting and budget discussion.

St. Stephen's 2020 budget was unanimously approved by Vestry.

Approval of Loan from Clergy Residence Fund: Brent Sigmon

Mr. Sigmon made a motion for the Vestry to approve a loan to Fr. Norman from the Clergy Residence Account not to exceed \$45,000 at 2% interest with monthly payments of \$150. The loan would be secured according to the conditions in Policy C-7, Clergy Residence Account. The loan will be used as down payment for purchase of a new home and expedites the Norman family's relocation to Oak Ridge. The Vestry unanimously voted to approve the loan. (Sigmon/Murphy).

Approval of 2020 Committee Chairs: Brent Sigmon

The Vestry unanimously approved the Committee chair slate (Sigmon/Meredith)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Program Committees

Christian Education: Jo Kelley (for Nancy Anderson)

Ms. Kelley stated the approved 2020 budget for Christian Education supports planned ministry. She said improvements to the youth rooms were progressing. Ms. Kelley noted planning is underway for the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and it likely that adult volunteers will be needed to help cook and serve supper.

Evangelism: Judith Delaney

Ms. Delaney noted that any substantial changes to the Bread Upon the Waters ministry will necessitate a change in the Committee's policy.

Liturgics: Jo Kelley

Ms. Kelley summarized key aspects of the past Liturgics Committee meeting. Fr. Bo Townsend requested the Liturgics Committee discuss recent changes made in the ending of the 10 am service and determine if further changes were advisable. Committee members noted changes in the procession and parishioners clapping at the end of the voluntary created an awkwardness.

Outreach: John Murphy

Mr. Murphy stated Walk Over Wednesdays are going well with 40-45 Oak Ridge High School students participating in the weekly lunch program. He noted the December 2019 Food Basket and gift distribution went well despite a change in format (cancellation of "Christmas tree gifts" and replacement by giving books and clothes). He requested others' feedback about the revised format. He said the Committee will be evaluating whether to change recipients of our charitable giving recipients, noting that some organizations to whom St. Stephen's donates are already financially well endowed. Mr. Murphy noted that St. Stephen's contributed funds to the medical debt forgiveness program sponsored by the Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church. Mr. Murphy noted Outreach Committee membership is increasing with 2 new members and 2 returning members.

Administrative or Support Committees

Buildings and Grounds: Lew Felton

Mr. Felton reported that turnover of buildings and grounds responsibilities from Mr. Sigmon to Mr. Felton will complete this week. Mr. Felton solicited items needing attention.

Bylaws and Policies: Lew Felton

Mr. Felton stated that consideration of absentee voting will be deferred a few weeks, noting that if and when a change is implemented it will likely require a policy change in lieu of a change to St. Stephen's By-laws.

Communications: Sandi Robertson

Ms. Robertson stated a Communications meeting has been scheduled. She noted the importance of having communicating with the Parish about Vestry activities.

Parish Life: Bonnie Bautz

Ms. Bautz noted that Parish Life is actively preparing for the Bishop's visit.

Personnel: Judith Delaney

Ms. Delaney referred to the hiring of Connie Douglas to be nursery assistant.

CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT: The meeting closed with a prayer and adjourned at 9:30 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney A. Manrod
Secretary

Next meeting February 11, 2020