

St. Stephen's Vestry Minutes
June 18, 2024

Present: Fr. Norman, Fr. Sims, Leah Bailey, Craig Brent, Adam Cavender, Tom Clary, Emily Doane, Betsy Ellis (Secretary), Cleon Hartman, Ashley Hillis, Alan Liby, Courtney Manrod, Beth Reed, Ben Shassere, Tyler Walker

Call to Order: Fr. Norman

Fr. Norman called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

Opening Devotional: Beth Reed

In Beth's absence, Fr. Norman opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of the Agenda: Fr. Norman

The agenda was unanimously approved as submitted (Bailey/Hillis).

Approval of the Consent Agenda: Fr. Norman

The May meeting minutes were approved unanimously as submitted (Clary/Bailey).

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Rector's Report: Fr. Norman

There are many children from the parish at Grace Point this week. Fr. Bailey had a productive Christian Education meeting with interested parents last Monday. Ashley Hillis and Linda Twohig are co-chairs of the Christian Education Committee. The parents suggested starting the Christian Education program on the Sunday after Labor Day. Staffing for Children's Chapel requires two adults. The suggestion was made that the second person be the head usher who will keep track of time and help keep the children focused.

Fr. Norman wants to plan the calendar for the rest of the year, working with each Vestry member and Committee Chair as well as the envisioning Committee to do so. The goals are to facilitate accomplishment of goals and to avoid conflicts in the calendar.

Fr. Norman's will be vacation the first week of July, a few days at Clearfork the next week, and then here for the remainder of the summer.

Assistant to the Priest in Charge: Fr. Sims

Fr. Sims reported that the Camino trip is coming along nicely.

Senior Warden: Courtney Manrod

Ms. Manrod stated that in performing her role as Senior Warden, she is working to help ensure St. Stephen's has the appropriate resources (personnel, finances, and work processes) it needs to be successful.

Junior Warden: Leah Bailey

Ms. Bailey is setting up the Technology Committee. There is a desire to use our current software to set up TEAMS. One team will be set up for the Vestry which will be a living team that evolves as things change. Each Vestry member will receive an email from Microsoft 365 sometime this week with the subject "account information for <name>" which will contain your username and temporary password. If you want help setting up a TEAM, come 30 minutes before the next Vestry meeting.

Parish Life events planned to date for the remainder of the year:

- June 23 Tex Mex potluck
- July 7 American as Pie. More bakers are needed.
- July 9-10 Leigh will be at Clearfork camp
- July 14 Some mores in the Grove
- July 28 Mass in the Grass at Melton Lake Pavilion at 10:30 with a potluck afterward
- August 4 Luhau on the Lawn
- August 11 Rally Day. Posters should be given to Leah.
- November 2 Lobster Fest (tentative)

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Approval of May 2024 financial statement: Tom Clary

Dr. Clary stated that income is tracking at 54% and expenses at 38%. Finance Committee recommended approval the May financial statement. Vestry approved it unanimously.

Approval of new/edited policies: Courtney Manrod

Ms. Manrod presented a new fiscal policy, C-12 Clergy Discretionary Fund. The policy outlines best practices for administering the Clergy Discretionary Fund in keeping with Church canons, Diocesan guidelines and tax law. Finance Committee approved it. Vestry approved it unanimously.

An amendment was made to the 2023 policy on the Loose Plate Offering to remove reference to 5th Sunday loose offering use. As amended in 2023, the policy stated the loose plate offering from the 1st and 5th Sunday of each month would go to the Clergy Discretionary fund. In practice 5th Sunday loose offering funds are directed to Outreach activities . The Finance Committee approved the change. The Vestry approved it unanimously.

Service time changes: Fr. Norman

Fr. Norman has received positive feedback on the change of Sunday service times to 8:00 am and 10:30 am. Christian Education will be 9:30-10:15. The new service start times will begin August 4. Both Christian Education Co-chairs approved the change. Additional Christian Education offerings are being considered to support those who cannot meet at the new time (e.g., choir members and others). Social/coffee times will continue after each service.

ITEMS.FOR DISCUSSION

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NOTE: Unless noted below no reports were submitted.

Building and Grounds: Cleon Hartman

Volunteers are doing painting and odd jobs around the church. The mowing is going OK.

Bylaws and Policies: Courtney Manrod

Personnel policies are under review with a goal for presentation at the Vestry meeting next month.

Christian Education: Ashley Hillis

A leader is needed for Children's church. When the current nursery worker is on maternity leave, a replacement will be needed.

Parish Life: Leah Bailey

Baseball at the Smokies ballpark was lots of fun—except the Smokies lost to the Barons. We avoided the torrential rain until the trip home. The first Parish Potluck was a success, and another is planned for June 23rd. After many rain delays, we had our first Lemonade in the Grove!

OLD BUSINESS

Developmental Goals: Fr. Norman

Vestry was given a handout titled “Your Church Welcome Audit.” An audit team of 6-8 people will be formed to go out in teams of 2 to different churches. Using the form, the team will evaluate how welcoming the church is. After the visit to the other church the team will come back to St. Stephens and do the audit. The audit team will report back to the Vestry.

Challenge Progress: Tom Clary

The challenge at the beginning of the year was \$127K. The corrective action tracking sheet indicates income will increase during 2024. It is estimated increased giving will total \$64K for the year. Expenditures are estimated to reduce by about \$80K for the year. The best guess now is that the remaining challenge is \$20K. John Cox and Tom Clary will make a presentation to the parish on June 23 followed by a written report to the Parish.

Going forward, staff replacements include a Christian Education Director and a Parish Administrator (the latter replaces the Church Secretary position). Vestry stated their support for the parish having a curate as well as the need to plan for it to ensure funds are available to do so.

Status of the HVAC: Cleon Hartman

The system is 99.9% back to normal. A few air handling units are not working properly.

NEW BUSINESS

Building Security: Fr. Norman

There have been some unusual things happening around the grounds and in the building. Some have required funds to repair. A donation was given to the parish for surveillance cameras. A plan will be developed for camera placement in the building including the camera to purchase.

Ben Shassere will review the old security plan and begin to formulate a new plan.

Employer Contribution to Lay Pension: Courtney Manrod

There is a mandatory 4% employer contribution to employees’ pension. It was recently realized that St Stephens has been paying 9% since 2012. Options going forward are being considered and will be subsequently discussed with Vestry.

Freezer Replacement Request: Cleon Hartman

The upright freezer in the kitchen is having intermittent issues. The estimate to replace it with a similar freezer is \$4500. This item was tabled until next month.

The meeting closed with the Lord’s prayer at 8:30 pm.

Next Vestry meeting is July 16, 2024

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Ellis
Secretary