



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Christ Church Detroit January 26, 2020

Rev. Emily Williams Guffey opened the 174th Annual Meeting with prayer at 12:14. Senior Warden Christine Galli thanked the Vestry for the food and Donna Gloff for the decorations, which foreshadowed Christ Church Detroit's 175th anniversary.

The Minutes of the 173rd Annual Meeting, held January 27, 2019, were **approved** as printed in the annual report.

Reception of Reports from the Committees

Galli called the written reports evidence of people's efforts to serve in different ways. She then invited a few committees to add to their written reports with a verbal presentation.

Buildings & Grounds Report

Patrick Warner

After thanking his committee members, Warner reviewed three major projects.

*Tuckpointing of the bell tower. Stage one will start in April and should end in December, with Stages 2 and 3 to follow.

*The sanctuary flooring. Water has come into the crawl space on both the eastern and western sides, rotting away the substructure and causing the floor to sag.

*The stormwater project. Work should begin this spring. Christ Church already has received grants for part of the project's expense from both the city and the Diocese.

Outreach Report

Seth Lloyd

Galli introduced Seth Lloyd, Outreach Committee chair, by noting that our church's early founders said its three pillars would be hospitality, music, and outreach to our community.

Lloyd cited examples of Christ Church Detroit's support for Outreach. Shelter Week had over 50 volunteers. Reading Camp, led by Denise Crenshaw, had over 60

volunteers. We regularly send a full complement of people to volunteer days at Gleaners. We collected 21,000 diapers during the Advent diaper drive. "If the degree to which we do outreach is representative of the faith of our congregation, then I'd maintain that our faith is strong indeed," he said.

Each month, we send eight or nine people to the Pope Francis Center, to work from 6 – 11 a.m. We hope to add some Saturday work sessions to allow those with day jobs to help. The Center serves 200-300 homeless people, six days a week. In addition, in Ledyard Hall on Wednesday mornings during the winter and when the weather is bad, we host the Center's Holy Spokes program, which makes bicycles available and repairs them for the homeless. They work outside in good weather.

Outreach has been funded from our endowment: church policy assigns 10 percent of all undesignated bequests to Outreach. That fund has declined from more than \$100,000 a few years ago to about \$30,000 now. We use no more than one-third of that fund each year, but bequests have been fewer of late, hence the drop. To rebuild that fund, we'll be looking to help people with their planned giving to the church, i.e., their bequests.

Financial Report

Jane Forbes

Forbes called 2019 one of the most successful years financially for the church in the last 40 years. In 2019, pledges and other contributions were \$40,000 more than we budgeted and \$60,000 more than in 2018.

In 2019, we replaced two staff positions with three, and added additional staff. What we previously paid Office Administrator Dawn Gordon (Esse) and Facilities Manager Dick Rubens is approximately what we now pay staffers Sarah Tribelhorn and Beth Ann Tesluk, plus the additional amounts we now pay former groundskeeper-turned-facilities manager KaClarence Haynes. We also added a full-time position in education and community engagement, a part-time bookkeeper, and two part-time nursery workers. The staffing changes came late in the year, so the impact wasn't as great in 2019 as it will be in 2020.

Our bottom line – the difference between operating expenses and operating income – was once again in the red. The shortfall was covered by withdrawing \$100,000 from our endowment, \$78,000 of which was a "prudent draw," i.e., an amount which would not reduce the purchasing power of the invested funds. In contrast, the beyond-prudent-draw amount in some years has exceeded \$200,000. Our investments posted "remarkable" valuation gains of \$240,000 last year, she said. Our endowment now is about \$1.7 million, even after the \$100,000 withdrawal. But that is less than at the end of 2017.

The Vestry-approved 2020 budget includes a modest raise for Music Director Edward Maki-Schramm, "since he was the person who's been here the longest and hasn't had a raise in a while," Forbes said. The 2020 projected shortfall is \$172,000, rather than \$100,000. It calls for us to withdraw about \$85,000 from the endowment, or about \$87,000 more than a prudent draw.

We may be asking for additional donations this year to help pay for extraordinary building repairs that are not included in the budget and to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the church.

She closed with thanks to Glenn Olivache for his voluntary work as an accountant to review our financials, and to the Finance Committee: Megan Norris, George Port, and David Faust, as well as Rev. Emily and Jan Weir.

Senior Warden's Report

Christine Galli

Galli opened by asking first committee chairs, and then all who served on committees, to stand and be recognized.

While Galli is stepping aside as Senior Warden, "The play isn't over," she said. "We've just had Act 1. The finale isn't the 175th anniversary. It's going to take a lot of effort to prepare for the next 175 years."

Christ Church has begun working with Partners for Sacred Places, a Philadelphia-based group that helps mostly urban, historic churches to preserve their buildings. One way they do that is by helping churches determine the value they bring to their community, in terms that civic leaders, politicians, philanthropists and others outside of those churches can understand and appreciate. Articulating how, if we weren't here, the neighborhood would be affected, is one way to raise financial and other support from outside the church's own congregation. As Rev. Emily later added in her remarks, studies have shown that the average urban, historic church pours \$1.7 million a year into its neighborhood via events, aid to other community groups (e.g., Gleaners), and so on. Determining our economic halo effect gives us a tool for talking to others about why Christ Church Detroit matters. As downtown Detroit changes, we need to learn what our neighbors need and want, so we can serve them better. The process of determining our value to the community, Galli said, "Brings us into clarity of what our purpose is."

Saying goodbye to Dawn, our office administrator, prompted an overhaul of our staff. While the church looked for individuals to replace Dawn, Galli and others stepped up to help in the office. Galli was trained on new software and worked on the finances and bookkeeping. The upside of doing that, she said, "was sitting in that office and watching it grow. The ladies in that office – you have no idea how much they bring and how much they support the church with their skills, heart and soul."

She also thanked the vestry for being "solid, wise and supportive," and thanked Rev. Emily. "We are a beacon of hope and a servant community, and you [Emily] have served us well."

Galli closed by donating a three-volume set of Hebrew Bibles to our library, a response to a request from member Jon Miller. "I'm donating them to the library in honor of all of you."

Rector's Report

Guffey

Rev. Emily Williams

"Christine and I took notes on the front and back of the same paper. That's a metaphor for our partnership," Rev. Emily said. "This year, I'm most proud of our vestry, and its investment in our community and our families." One example was the development of our staff, including the creation of the position for Christian Education and Community Engagement, and contracting with Partners for Sacred Places for workshops.

A small group from Christ Church – and our yoked congregation, Trinity Church – have met once already and will meet twice more with folks from Partners for Sacred Places.

Through the development of partnerships between our congregation and others, we will talk candidly about the condition of our buildings and our finances. If our buildings were renovated – perhaps assisted by our partners – could we do more for our neighbors?

We already do a lot beyond our worship services. Consider what happens now in our space on any given Saturday. The longest-running Detroit AA group meets here, as does Gamblers Anonymous. Opera MODO rehearses and Ed practices. Richard Thomas often is creating floral icons. Some meetings have to happen in Sibley house because we're bursting at the seams.

Rev. Emily reviewed the past year's staff changes. A year ago, the staff consisted of KaClarence as grounds keeper, Brendan Correa as Sunday morning porter, Rubens as facilities manager, and Dawn as office administrator. The first two are still here. Rubens had come on board to help an organization that he saw as in transition, and left when he thought we had stabilized. When Dawn left, Galli, Junior Warden Roger Basse, and Lisa Jones – whose background is in human resources – helped with job-candidate interviews and evaluations. KaClarence stepped up to facilities manager. We added two nursery caregivers, to make sure our nursery was always there for young parents and to stay compliant with our Safe Church policies. Rev. Emily thanked the vestry for making sure that parents can come at any time.

The Holy Spirit aided our search. Beth Ann Tesluk joined us first, as associate for communications (and assistant for stewardship). Next was Sarah Tribelhorn, who oversees much of the day-to-day in buildings and finance, as associate for operations. Calebria Webb took the position of associate for education and community engagement. That position reflects Rev. Emily's holistic vision of education within the church and in our neighborhood. When Jan Weir said she wanted to step back from her volunteer bookkeeping, we brought on Lurdes Arambula as a part-time bookkeeper. Katrina van Maanen continues as youth choir director. This Saturday, we'll celebrate four years of Edward Maki-Schramm as our director of music.

She then praised and thanked each Vestry member, especially those concluding their terms or stepping down for personal reasons: Alan Dib, Edwina Simpson, Josephine Powell, and David Faust. She also offered special thanks to Christine Galli, who continues on vestry but is concluding her time as Senior Warden.

Election of the Vestry Class of 2023 and Delegates to Diocesan Convention

Galli introduced the nominees – Denise Crenshaw, Carolyn Maher, Howard Matthew, and George Port – and thanked them for agreeing to serve. In a quick vote with no dissension, the congregation **approved** them as incoming vestry members. Similarly, the nominees for delegates to diocesan convention – George Port, Josephine Powell, and Jim Treece, with alternate Lucinda Keils – were **approved**.

Other Business / Questions

*Member Deborah Gillespie, a Sibley family descendent, noted the Green Team's report of a meeting that discussed habitat gardens for native species. "On the east side of Sibley house, we created a native species garden. It tends to be overlooked," she said. "You're all welcome to visit it." *Phil Brown, on behalf of the breakfast teams, said the congregation thanks Lisa Staif who has been leading that ministry for many years. *Seth Lloyd appealed for Shelter Week volunteers.

Adjournment

Rev. Emily accepted a motion to adjourn at 1:44. **Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Treece, secretary