



Vestry Minutes Thursday, April 15, 2021

Highlights:

- * Christ Church was awarded a \$3,000 grant from the Covenant 5, a social-justice collective in the Diocese of Michigan, towards our Racial Justice initiatives.
- * Vestry praised the online Holy Week services, while Emily offered thanks to the Worship Commission for its creativity and effort. We are looking ahead to our next focal point: Sunday, May 23, which will be Pentecost and Christ Church's 176th Anniversary. Several Episcopal Dioceses also plan a memorial service for George Floyd, Jr., on that day.
- * Finance Chair Jane Forbes is working with the diocese to reorganize the funds we hold with the diocese. For some, the dividends are reinvested, while for others we receive the dividend. With the switch to our new accounting software, Realm, we are reviewing where all of those funds show up in our accounts.

Present: Rev. Emily Williams Guffey, Rev. Anthony Estes, Ruth Boeder, Claire Brown, Mary Brown, Denise Crenshaw, Desmond Jones, John Leney, Howard Matthew, José Rodriguez, Jim Treece, Betty Warner.
Absent/Excused: Carolyn Maher, Anthony Mitchell. Action items underlined.
Reports received: Associate Rector, Outreach.

Claire Brown led us in the following **Opening Prayer**:

Leader: Jesus, thank you for enabling us to gather for this meeting.

ALL: Thank you, Jesus.

Leader: Jesus, help us to deal with the challenges which face us.

All: Help us, Jesus.

Leader: Jesus, help us to approach each other with kindness and respect.

All: Jesus, help us.

Leader: Lord, help us create an environment of cooperation in our endeavor today.

All: Lord, help us.

Leader: Lord, may you enlighten us in discovering the needs of our fellow parishioners.

All: Lord, enlighten us.

Leader: Lord, thank you for the hard work our ministers, Emily and Anthony, perform in Your name.

All: Thank you, Lord, for Emily and Anthony.

Leader: Thank you for the energy, creativity, and grace of our many members who contributed toward the beauty, spirit, and faith of our recent Holy Week and bless those generous persons.

All: Bless them, Lord.

Leader: God in heaven, bless us who strive to discern how best to serve Christ Church.

All: God in heaven, bless us.

Leader: God in heaven, help us to deliberate among ourselves with wisdom and charity.

All: God in heaven, help us.

Leader: God in heaven, Jesus said that where two or three are gathered in your name, you are in their midst. Thank you for being with us today at this meeting and help us to accomplish your goals.

All: God in heaven, help us.

Amen

After our Bible study, which looked at Luke 24:36b-43, the **Minutes** of the March 4, 2021, meeting were **approved** as amended.

Following up on a matter left from the last meeting, we had a **Motion**: *To approve the Parochial Report as presented at the last meeting.*

Discussion: The final, latest version will be posted in the Vestry's Google Drive folder. **Approved.**

Turning to **Fundraising & Stewardship**, Emily notified Vestry that during Holy Week, she learned that Christ Church was awarded a \$3,000 grant from the Covenant 5, a social-justice collective in the Diocese of Michigan, towards our Racial Justice initiatives. In addition, on April 12, Calebria Webb and Revs. Anthony and Emily submitted an application for a \$10,000 grant (the maximum allowed) also for our Racial Justice efforts, to the national church's Building Beloved Community. If approved, we'll hear in June. Both of these are to bring in preachers and guest speakers, and included, from our Heritage Committee, an effort to dig into our church's history of racial justice.

Jim reviewed the completed and pending sessions in the Faith, Legacy, & Dignity series: the completed ones focused on funeral/memorial preparations in these pandemic times, while the next two will look at medical and financial planning for the end of one's life, including planned giving to the church.

There are a number of financial/stewardship webinars and other educational opportunities in the coming weeks, offered by the diocese and the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes, as well as Earth Stewardship ones in the form of sessions on stormwater projects and the Riverfront Conservancy's annual Dequindre Cut Clean-up. Jim briefly noted dates and topics; interested Vestry members can contact him.

Howard then led us through an overview of questions related to the financial statements, continuing our drive to ensure that our finances are fully transparent to all Vestry members. While some answers were deferred until we see the March statements, some other topics covered included: *We are still collecting and reviewing the cleaning services contract. One month we seem to have been billed twice. *Finance Chair Jane Forbes is working with the diocese to reorganize the funds we hold with the diocese. For some, the dividends are reinvested, while for others we receive the dividend. The location where they show up in our statements will change later. *Pledge income is up substantially, though we still lag for the year. *The Parish Development figure was a donation covering registrations for the CEEP conference, and therefore was not an expenditure. *Nancy vom Steeg, a former parishioner, left the church a gift of \$77,065 from her estate. These funds have been received. Because the gift was unrestricted, per our guidelines 10% shall go into the Outreach portion of our accounts. Finance Committee will discuss this at its next meeting, and will submit to Vestry a motion on

how to use these funds, along with a motion related to a gift from the Millie Stennis Trust which is restricted for music. The quarterly statement summary of restricted and unrestricted funds should reflect clarification of these funds. *We are in compliance with diocesan policy on church audits because we have a financial review (not a full audit) done annually. *Our Bylaws show no need to solicit multiple bids for the role of capital-campaign consultant. We are double-checking the Vestry financial policies on this, but the open question is whether we've already vetted more than three when we were selecting an entity to conduct a capital-campaign feasibility study. We hope to resolve this by next week's Finance Committee meeting, and get the Committee's recommendation. *Bookkeeper. Yesterday we sent the candidate a letter of agreement, and hope to finalize it next week, with a May start.

Desmond reported that the **Buildings & Grounds** Committee will meet on Sunday, April 18, after which it should have information on a possible new arrangement for our parking lots, a quote for upgraded church Wi-Fi, and perhaps the results of the Facilities Assessment from Quinn Evans. Work on the roof and bell tower is slated to begin soon, depending on the weather.

In a **Worship Update**, Emily offered applause for the glorious outdoor Holy Week services. Vestry praised the online services as well. Emily offered thanks to the Worship Commission for its creativity and effort.

We are looking ahead to our next focal point: Sunday, May 23, which will be Pentecost and Christ Church's 176th Anniversary. That also is the anniversary of George Floyd's murder; there will be a multi-diocese remembrance service that day. Emily will convene the worship commission to discuss plans. We hope to employ a similar model to what we used for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday: an online service + outdoor opportunities. We also hope for at least one more outdoor worship opportunity yet this month (though we're watching rising Covid cases in Michigan closely) and then one in May (Pentecost). The last time we added outdoor services, cases were stable or declining. That's not true in Michigan today.

In **Other Business**, *Betty sought Vestry representatives for services in May, and noted efforts to support Youth Choir Director Katrina van Maanen, whose partner just had surgery. *Claire will have reverse shoulder replacement surgery next week and asked for prayers. *We briefly discussed last meeting's question about whether Richard Thomas should be paid for his services as floral iconographer, or whether he might prefer that money go towards expanding that entire program, paying other artists as well as himself. (On any matter of compensation, the topic needs to be raised first with Emily and then with the Finance Committee.) A small group was formed to chat with Richard about his vision for that ministry. *Vestry's summer schedule, we hope, will entail meeting only once a month – and skipping one month. There will be only one meeting in May.

After a **Closing Prayer** by Emily, we adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Treece, secretary

Upcoming Vestry Meetings

- **Thursday, April 29, 6:00-7:30pm (Opening Prayer: Mary)**
- Thursday, May 13, 6:30-8:00pm Mutual Ministry Review (subcommittee of only 13 people, but every Vestry member will be asked for input before then. Evaluation of both Emily's ministry and of our Vestry and our ministries.)
- **Thursday, May 20, 6:00-7:30pm (Opening Prayer: Ruth)**

- **June date(s) TBD**

Additional upcoming events & committee meetings (Zoom unless otherwise noted):

- **“Fun Money” Stewardship Day with Bishop Perry and the Rev. Chris Harris:** Saturday, April 17, 10:00am-12:00pm ([Registration required](#))
- **Buildings & Grounds Committee:** Sunday, April 18, 1:00-2:30pm
- **Clergy & Lay Finance Workshop with Bishop Perry and Canon Mark Miliotto:** Wednesday, April 21, 7:00-8:30pm ([Registration required](#))
- **Finance Committee:** Thursday, April 22, 5:00-6:00pm
- **Faith, Legacy, and Dignity, Session 4: Planned Giving with Seth Lloyd and Edwina Simpson:** Sunday, April 25, 9:15-10:30am
- **Outreach Committee:** Tuesday, April 27, 7:30-8:30pm
- **Faith, Legacy, and Dignity, Session 5: End-of-Life Decision-Making with Hospice of Michigan:** Sunday, May 2, 9:15-10:30am (almost confirmed)