

**Vestry Minutes**

**Thursday, May 20, 2021**

Highlights:

\*We reviewed a survey of the congregation on how they feel about in-person and online worship, which will inform plans for Pentecost and the 176th anniversary service.

\*The Buildings & Grounds Committee has set up a subcommittee to determine what equipment and other needs must be met to allow livestreaming the 10:30 service when we return to in-person worship. That will allow those who aren’t able or willing to attend in person to be part of the same service as those who can, while eliminating the hours of video editing that Rev. Emily currently does for the online service.

\*Vestry approved contracting with EZ Parking to manage the south parking lot, pending finalizing a few details.

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

Reports received: Rector, Staff, Buildings & Grounds, Finance Committee (April statement of activities, plus resolution and accompanying memo), latest parish-survey results, three quotes for replacing the water heater.

After an opening prayer led by Ruth Boeder and our Bible Study (Romans 8:22-27), the minutes of the April 29, 2021, meeting were **approved** with corrections.

The **Mutual Ministry Review** occurred May 13 with Rev. Emily Williams Guffey, Senior Warden Denise Crenshaw, Junior Warden Betty Warner, and Mary Brown and Anthony Mitchell representing the rest of the Vestry, plus a facilitator. Draft minutes of the meeting are being circulated among those who attended, with a full report to Vestry to come later.

Emily updated us on **Worship** plans for Pentecost & Christ Church Detroit’s 176th Anniversary on Sunday, May 23. A processional service around the church buildings will recognize two cornerstones and two other stones which represent stages in our heritage. We’ll gather outside, pause in the atrium, which connects our different buildings – each from a different era of the church – and take time in the sanctuary while socially distanced. We will return to the Woodbridge lawn for communion. Bishop Bonnie A. Perry will attend.

The results of the latest survey on parishioners’ views about reopening were distributed, with thanks to staffer Beth Ann Tesluk for preparing them. They show an interest and energy for meeting in person. We discussed how to communicate the worship plan, as shaped by the survey results, to the parish. In-person services will begin in June on Wednesday evenings from June 2, and Sundays at 8:15 and 9:00, from June 6. Having two services should reduce the number of people at any one service. At first, services may be inside, even though comfort levels are higher if we meet outside, because the floor repairs won’t have begun yet. This would allow us to to gain insights as to how indoor services go. Once floor repairs begin, we may find that all services need to be outside. The 10:30 online service will continue. The 8:15 service will, as always, be spoken only; the 9:00 service initially will have only organ music, but the music staff is looking into additional instrumentalists and/or solo vocalists. Our plans for in-person, indoor services may need to be approved by the Bishop’s office.

We’re moving towards a hybrid service, i.e., live-streamed, which allows in-person and online worship at the same time. But currently there are a number of limitations to that, particularly the lack of internet/Wi-Fi service in the sanctuary. Also, to live stream we’d need more and different audio equipment and more than one video camera, and to power that, we’d likely need electrical upgrades in the sanctuary. There will be a meeting with

sound engineers at the church tomorrow to assess what all is needed. By the autumn, we expect to end the pre-recorded online worship service.

On that note, we segued to the **Buildings & Grounds** report. Desmond noted that, in anticipation of live-streaming services, we had started with adding fiber-optic internet capability in the church, which should be in place in June—but that’s not where we finish. We need improved audio-visual tools, equipment, and more electrical outlets where we can plug in that equipment. B&G has set up a subcommittee to study these issues. We have a quote for internet service, but nothing yet for electrical infrastructure. The committee might come back to Vestry before the June 24 meeting for additional funding in order to keep these inter-related projects on track, but that remains to be seen.

On other topics: \*The East wall work is expected to finish in seven weeks. We hope to do as much as possible without having to start-and-stop the work for worship services. \*The roof work has been completed. The invoice being reviewed. \*The final steps of Phase 1 of the Bell Tower project are wrapping up.

We reviewed the three quotes to replace the water heater, which were distributed to Vestry*. Motion: That Vestry approves a contract with Flame to replace the water heater at an estimated cost of $8,000.* **Approved.**

*Motion,* endorsed by both B&G and Finance committees*: That Vestry approve a contract with EZ Parking to manage the south parking lot, pending finalization of the contract by the Vestry officers*. EZ’s terms are somewhat better than those offered by our previous contractor, and EZ has been notably more responsive to us. In addition to a split of any parking revenue, the EZ contract calls for a monthly guaranteed payment of $1,500 to the church, and they will staff the lot and clear it of snow. EZ has contracts with other churches and understands that church events will have to take precedence over commercial parking. After discussion, the motion was **approved.**

Our **Capital Campaign Preparation** continues, though Vestry was not asked to take any action at this time. We’re still waiting for the Facilities assessment, in part because of delays in getting cost estimates. We received a draft consultancy proposal from Partners for Sacred Places, but we are awaiting responses to questions about that draft. Finance Committee has plans for how to pay for Phase 2 of the Bell Tower project.

The **Finance** discussion focused on the April 2021 Financials. Our pledge deficit is closing, in part because of gifts and pledges that arrived during Easter. This is the first statement that shows the diocesan quarterly dividends as revenue. Associate Rector fringe benefits are higher due to family insurance coverage, but that’s covered by the diocese, so it is not a problem. We’re still trying to reach someone from DTE to review the high utility charges. Cleaning services still show a December payment cashed in January, but there are no changes planned in that contract. Vestry was referred to Howard’s notes in the online folder for further details.

The bookkeeper is now on the job and going through onboarding.

Although the Finance Committee had sent a resolution about the allocation of our accounts in the diocesan Growth & Income Fund, Howard suggested, and we agreed, to table this for another meeting.

In **Other Business**, Claire reported that José and she are splitting Denise’s Shepherds flock. Emily’s Angels continues to deliver gift bags and send cards, e.g., to our school graduates. In other personal news, a number of Vestry members said they will be meeting family members, often after a long time, as we enter the summer, vaccinations continue, and lock-down orders due to the pandemic continue to ease.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Treece, secretary

**Upcoming Vestry Meetings**

* **Thursday, June 24, 6:00-7:30pm**
* **Thursday, August 12, 6:00-7:30pm**

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

* **Pentecost & 176th Anniversary:** Sunday, May 23, 10:30am Worship at Home video service, outdoor/in-person options
* **Diocesan Book Study, *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson:** continues Wednesday, May 26, 7:00pm on Zoom (link in CCD eNews and diocesan Weekly Connection e-newsletter)
* **Spring Rogation Service:** Saturday, June 5, 4:00pm, Jon Miller’s Farm (RSVP for address/directions)
* **In-Person Evening Prayer:** beginningWednesday, June 2, 6:00 p.m.
* **In-Person Eucharist:** beginningSunday, June 6
* **End-of-School-Year Event:** June TBD
* **Gardening Workshop:** June TBD
* **Parish Picnic, August 22, Belle Isle**