

**Vestry Minutes**

**Thursday, August 12, 2021**

Highlights:

\*Looking to the start of the program year, Vestry discussed various worship and education issues, including alternative youth Sunday School locations due to flood damage to lower-level classrooms and the fact that we’re moving towards, but aren’t yet ready for, live-streaming of worship services.

\*Buildings and Grounds reported on the flood damage, the repairs to the sanctuary foundation, and a number of other projects.

\*Vestry approved setting up a separate bank account related to the upcoming capital campaign, to track money that comes in and disbursements for the campaign and the work it aims to fund.

Present: (in person) Rev. Emily Williams Guffey, Claire Brown, Mary Brown, Denise Crenshaw, Carolyn Maher, Anthony Mitchell, Jim Treece, and Betty Warner; (via Zoom): Ruth Boeder, Howard Matthew, and José Rodriguez. Absent/excused: Rev. Anthony Estes, Desmond Jones, John Leney.

Reports received: Stewardship; Finance – July statement of activities, a memo with several requests for Vestry action, nominees for the Sibley House Foundation, and a letter related to Church Insurance's cybersecurity policy.

After a delicious **dinner** (Thank you, Betty!), Anthony Mitchell led us in an **opening prayer**. Our **Bible study** verses were John 6:51-58.

The **minutes** of the June 24, 2021, meeting were **approved**, with one change.

Emily, noting that we are approaching the beginning of the 2021-22 program year, reviewed issues related to **Worship & Education.**

The worship service shall remain in Ledyard Hall for at least several weeks. The downside is that the Internet doesn’t work well enough there to provide livestreaming. But once we’re back in the sanctuary – or the fiber is installed, whichever comes first – we’ll be in pretty good shape to offer livestreamed services.

On Sept 12, Barbara Cushing’s Bible Study class will resume in person; possibly in hybrid form if we can. They’ll start in Cary Lounge, may move to the large Sibley House room when that is available. Christian education plans for children and youth are in flux. Due to flooding in the lower level, the classrooms there aren’t available, so we’ll need to find new rooms, e.g., toddlers in the courtyard. It’ll start small and slowly and then build on that. rather than starting in mid-September at full speed.

No indication yet that the diocese will change our protocols, but knowing the metrics they follow, that will happen once those metrics go from orange and yellow now, to red. We can take safer steps than those mandated by the diocese. For example, we and the synagogues meeting here are in smaller groups, and following safe practices. But we can go back to requiring masks, for example, rather than encouraging them. The anecdotal evidence is that people are having a

pleasing and satisfying experience, but how can we continue to make sure we’re being as safety-conscious as possible?

The consensus in the discussion was that a tightening of protocols feels inevitable, but we’d like to keep our doors and options as open as possible, before going back to closing the building again. We could add another service, if that will help to limit the per-service attendance.

Turning to **Buildings & Grounds**, Emily invited Vestry to look at the opening under the sanctuary floor before leaving, then launched into the following topics:

\*Sanctuary floor. We have a proposal to increase the scope of the work contract with W-3 Construction to add additional supports for the floor joists in eight locations and do related work at an additional cost of $32,706. (Proposal was distributed to Vestry.)

There are some small windows at the base of the floor to keep the crawl space from getting too moist. Originally, the ground outside of those windows sloped away from the church building. But with the settling of the building, water now runs into, not away from, the building. Part of the work both inside and (by Giffels Webster) outside is to restore that slope. It’s dramatic to watch rivers of water cascading down those aisles under the floor.

In addition, former Facilities Manager Barry Dickson asked, now that the floor is open, whether we could add some insulation. He had previously stuffed some vents down there with temporary insulation, but they need proper foam or other insulation. This would make the crawl space less drafty, saving on heating costs. Finance Chair Jane Forbes says there are funds available if it costs only several thousand. But we’re not sure if doing that would hold up the floor work, which they’d like to start on Saturday. Any floor-work delay could adversely affect a scheduled wedding. We have asked Quinn Evans for advice as to how adding insulation work might affect the project and its timing, but haven’t heard back yet. We also may need to look into taking actions to reduce the volume of water flowing off the sanctuary roof. After discussion about the possibility of including a conditional approval of insulation work, we decided to keep the motion focused solely on W-3’s proposal for additional work.

Motion: Vestry accepts the proposal for additional work that W-3 wants to do for $32,706. **Approved**.

\*There are other ways and places where water is coming into the building, e.g., in some areas where there was some historical damage, and down the atrium wall by the elevator. All lower-level rooms are affected and can’t be used until we remediate the mold. It probably goes pretty deep into the foundations of the Ledyard buildings, especially where newer sections meet older ones. The Reconstructionist congregation has suffered water damage to one of their valuable possessions in the room they use.

\*Sanctuary internet/electricity/AV upgrades. Internet wiring now goes to the whole campus. Bandwidth is still the same, though, and remains slow. But once fiber is installed, it’ll immediately get much, much faster.

\*The Woodbridge Avenue parking lot now is staffed daily, morning to early afternoon, including Sundays. They’re also cleaning it up. We’re seeing more use, so trusting more revenue will come.

\*The water-heater installation saga continues. But Sibley House’s air conditioning has been fixed!

Howard reviewed the June and July 2021 **Finance** statements of activities. Motion: To accept the June and July financial statements. **Approved**.

We then dealt with a number of motions from the Finance Committee:

\*Motion: Vestry approves (with the adoption of standard corporate banking resolutions for) opening a new commercial checking account at Comerica Bank for use in connection with the capital campaign with the same signatories and procedures for check approval as are applicable to the current general checking account. **Approved**.

\*Motion: Vestry authorizes the Secretary or another officer of the parish to execute a written consent resolution on behalf of the Church in its capacity as only member of The Sibley House Fund, electing Jane Forbes as a trustee of that corporation for a term ending in 2024, Deborah Gillespie for a term ending in 2023 and Seth Lloyd for a term ending in 2023. **Approved**. Secretary Jim Treece signed the form.

\*Motion: Vestry authorizes the purchase of cybercrime coverage through Church Insurance, and affirms the “Declaration of no known claims or circumstances” as part of that coverage purchase. **Approved**. Senior Warden Denise Crenshaw signed the form.

\*Motion: Vestry authorizes the transfer of the funds currently held in the Christ Church Detroit's UTO special purpose fund to The United Thank Offering. **Approved**.

\*Motion: Vestry approves a pledge of $54,229 to the Diocese of Michigan for the full 2022 apportionment. **Approved.** Rev. Emily and Senior Warden Denise Crenshaw signed the form.

\*Motion: Vestry approves the proposed computer service agreement with The Computer Guy and the agreement with UniVoxx for telephone services. **Approved**.

Discussion: The former is for tech support, and will help to validate our cybersecurity insurance. The latter is a Voice Over Internet service that will save us considerably: It calls for a monthly charge of about $125 and an installation fee of $500, vs. the $2,500 currently budgeted annually for telephone services.

As for **Capital Campaign Preparations,** Emily will sit down in the next few days to review the contract with Partners for Sacred Places’ Gianfranco. Work on Bell Tower Phase 2 of the Bell Tower project may start in September, rather than July, which may affect the funds we need to have on hand then, so as to honor the quote that RAM Construction is holding for us.

Vestry gave a round of applause for Ruth and Jim for drafting the majority of the NFSP grant application. We hope to hear good news on that front in October.

Claire reported on several **Pastoral-care** areas. Claire has notified the shepherds of various things to discuss with their flocks, including the need for help with coffee hour, details about the annual picnic, and our adoption of Realm software. For those unsure about how to get to the picnic, Google maps will take you straight to Shelter 3 on Belle Isle. The state park service could charge $12 to go on the island, and Emily’s Angels will reimburse parishioners if needed.

Lucy Bergin wants to resume the Knitting Ministry.

Claire also has a lead on a breakfast team coordinator.

Betty added that **Emily’s Angels** felt they hadn’t been doing as much as the pandemic slowed and wanted to do more. So, they picked 20 people who can’t go to church, collected flowers from Jon Miller’s farm, and started delivering the flowers to those folks.

We were asked to remember Fa. Anthony’s grandmother, Phyllis, 91, who is in hospice.

In closing, Denise asked each Vestry member to speak of one person that touched them this past week. After that, Emily led our **Closing Prayer.**

**Upcoming Vestry Meetings** (4th Thursdays from 6:00-8:00 p.m.)

* **September 23**
* **October 28**
* **November 18** (3rd Thursday due to Thanksgiving 11/25)
* **December 16** (3rd Thursday due to Christmas)

**Additional upcoming events & committee meetings:**

* **Parish Picnic, August 22, Belle Isle**