

Vestry Check-In May 14, 2020 Minutes

Highlights:

*Vestry approved buying computers for Rev. Anthony and Youth Choir Director Katrina van Maanen, who has become our de facto music video editor, along with new software for the staff that will support better video editing and increase our storage capacity – all in support of our online worship needs.

*To help restock Crossroads' pantries in this time of need, Outreach Committee is setting up donation bins at four members' homes – in Detroit, Troy, Huntington Woods, and Grosse Pointe Park – where donors can leave shelf-stable foods, personal hygiene items, and diapers. This replaces, for now, the donation baskets at the entrance to the sanctuary.

*The Journey to Adulthood (J2A) teens have agreed to serve as tech support for members who have trouble getting online to participate in the life of the church. If they can't solve a problem, the member's name will be passed along to someone else who can help. Details will be published in our e-newsletters.

Present: Lisa Jones, Emily Williams Guffey, George Port, Chuck Atwater, Christine Galli, Howard Matthews, Betty Warner, Anthony Estes, Carolyn Maher, Roger Basse, Denise Crenshaw, Desmond Jones. Absent/Excused: Phil Brown.

Reports received: Finance Committee minutes of May 12 meeting; proposal for technology purchases for Katrina and Anthony. Action items underlined.

Opened with prayer by Emily at 6:05.

Minutes from the May 7 meeting were **approved**.

Finance. Thanks to Christine for the April financials, and to Emily and Sarah Tribelhorn as well for the revised budget draft, which shows some areas where income and expenses are forecast to change due to the pandemic. Since both were just distributed today, Vestry members were urged to go through them and prepare questions and thoughts for discussion later.

Note that the April numbers are based on cash in/cash out. Everything that needs to be paid, has been paid. It's overly simplistic to look at one month and say, "We're way down in X, Y, or Z." It may be that we haven't paid something yet that we are about to pay. A lot of month-to-date actuals for office, maintenance, and such are down because we're not in the office. Each major repair payment was approved by multiple people.

Once the Payroll Protection Plan loan (We got about \$49K.) hits the bank, we'll create a spreadsheet to show what's been used on payroll, utilities, mortgage interest and such, all of which must be tracked to ensure it is then forgiven. Christine will stay on top of this. Lisa just signed it; we have to pay it out within eight weeks from signing. George: I'm sure we can use it all according to the rules of the loan. Jim: let's tell the parish how long this will cover us, so folks don't think it solves all our payroll needs.

Emily: Sarah created the revised budget draft based on the Finance Committee discussion. Sarah and Emily walked through the budget line by line, and estimated where we think things will come out by year-end. Expenses down about mid-\$40K. This draft adds Anthony. The Diocese reimburses Christ Church monthly, from the McElroy Fund, regarding expenses related to Anthony. It's a set fee, which is supposed to cover car/transportation, cell phone, etc. If the actual amounts differ from the set reimbursement, we either pay the difference or keep the surplus.

George: We have some major issues. First, UDM isn't going to renew its parking agreement, so about \$64K has disappeared from gross revenue; net after taxes, revenue is down about \$44k. I'm in contact with some guys, seeking new tenant possibilities. Second, we still have major Buildings & Ground expenses. On an operating basis, we'll probably get by, but on a cash basis, we'll need a lot more cash than we have now. What we really need to do, is raise a lot more money. The capital campaign will have to proceed, even if it's more difficult without face-to-face contact. I'd hope that in the next month or so, we'll have a plan to go forward. We hope to raise a substantial amount by the end of this year during the

“silent” part of the capital campaign, before the campaign’s formal launch. Fortunately, we’ve gotten very good responses from parish, in terms of the number of people fulfilling their pledges, and the number of people tuning in for online worship. But everyone will have to think generously. Who starts a capital campaign amid a pandemic? Only fools or those of unbridled enthusiasm and faith. We’re the latter.

Building and Grounds. Most projects are on hold, probably to mid- or late-June. Longest discussion at the last meeting was about replacing the water heater. We may look at an alternative way of getting hot water, possibly one that’s more cost-effective. For example, do we really need a 100-gallon tank? Repairs to the current unit seem to be not a good idea. Most vendors want to quote for a replacement, rather than repairs. A meeting tomorrow will look at the stormwater project with both Quinn Evans and Giffels and Webster, to find out what’s being done in this interim, so startup can be fast once we can begin work.

Reading Camp. Calebria is making contacts with potential partners – e.g., Brilliant Detroit (an early education group) and Horatio Williams Foundation – to tap their expertise in creating a virtual program. Denise is exploring some programs tied to the Detroit Public Library and the Grosse Pointe Library Association, and has passed those along to Calebria. We don’t want to reinvent the wheel. Lisa is confident we’ll find a way to help the community with this.

Crossroads. They re-opened this week, and have an acute need to restock the pantry. Outreach may try to set up drop off locations among some members. Christine: Please provide a list of what’s most needed.

Education. Bible studies continue. Two options now: Wednesday noon and Tuesday evening. Rite 13 Celebration of Adulthood is coming up, and they’re trying to figure out how to do that.

Worship. We need a lot more online storage – we keep maxing out every week. Beth Ann researched what we need in both hardware and software. Her proposal is for G Suite for Non-profits, and an iMac for Katrina. Anthony and Katrina will be doing more video editing for both worship and 175th Heritage needs. All of us are using personal computers at home. Anthony and Katrina’s home computers can’t support the volume of work required. Anthony saw a great deal yesterday – last one, buy it now or miss it. He bought it, for about \$2,400. Emily also expects to need a new computer within a year, if this goes on.

Motion: Vestry agrees to pay for all of the hardware and software as laid out by the proposal, as well as to pay the full price of Anthony’s new computer. Approved.

Jim: Let’s make a ‘how it was done’ video of how Katrina puts together multiple voices in a worship-music video, when the singers are sheltering at home. There was huge interest in this at the coffee hour after the first time we had a quartet, and it will show people how their gifts are being used.

We have about 70 logins (couples and families) during the online Sunday service, but 300 over time for each service on average (Some tune in later.), and 900 for Easter. Desmond, Chuck, and others: We need to look at permanently broadcasting the entire service, even after in-person worship resumes.

175th Anniversary. The Heritage team plans to have video interviews of some folks of the church, representing different demographics. Donna Gloff is working on church history. We requested historical photos from the parish. There’s a presentation that’ll come to the church in May, and something more in-depth for November. We’re also working on a complete timeline of the 17 decades: what was happening in the city, nation, and world each decade and what was going on in the church. Emily: The video will be brief, maybe 5 minutes, for Pentecost, but other material can roll out over the year. St. Matthew’s and St. Joseph’s church also is coming up on their 175th. We’ll have a joint call to share ideas.

What can vestry do? Emily needs help in developing a particular ask or way that people can contribute financially. Specifically, how can we link that with our heritage and anniversary? What does that giving opportunity look like? “This is a very unique anniversary year. Here’s how to contribute in a very real and legacy way. Here’s how your gifts will help with sustaining our parish life, this year and forward.” We will discuss this further next week. The goal is to know what our needs are by May 31. Roger: Some funds to meet our capital needs, but presented as a way to celebrate our 175th. Howard: One idea is to press the idea of building for the next 175 years, e.g., the drainage project as a sustainability effort. Betty: Is Roger the liaison between Vestry and 175th? Roger: Not really. I’m more the presentation of the heritage. Emily: It’s more a constellation of conversations, rather than a single 175th committee.

Communications and Connections. Thanks, Carolyn, for setting up a technology ministry! Three girls from J2A have agreed to be available 2 hours/week each, to help parishioners with tech issues. Carolyn:

God bless Megan Norris, who made it sound very positive to the J2A members. Their biggest concern is what happens if they can't help a parishioner. In that case, we'll get the parishioner's name and someone else will contact them. We will advertise the girls' email addresses, not cell phones. Someone would be available on Sunday mornings. We could start advertising this as soon as Carolyn gets a consistent day and time from each of them. Carolyn will pass along info for advertising this to Jim.

Lisa asked for ideas on connections/planning for the future, for our next meeting. Denise asked a few questions about being Vestry rep this Sunday.

Adjourned at 7:05.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Treece