

Vestry Check-In May 21, 2020 Minutes

Highlights:

Vestry discussed:

*ways to welcome a (surprisingly large) group of new members at our May 31

Pentecost Sunday worship and coffee hour;

*our desire to use Trinity Sunday, on June 7, as a day to affirm our long connections to the now-closed Trinity Church; and

*a number of Outreach and mission partnerships, including other groups we might work with as we re-imagine Reading Camp, our neighborhood drop-off bins for donations to Crossroads, and the installation of a Blessing Box, which would provide shelf-stable foods for homeless people, on our property.

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

Action items underlined.

Opened with prayer at 6:07: The collect for the mission of the church, by Emily.
Minutes from May 14 meeting **approved**.

Pentecost & 175th Anniversary. Emily reviewed plans for the May 31 service. Choir has been invited to record two pieces: an anthem and a hymn (with descant!). Yesterday, she heard from another person who wants to join the parish, which we typically do on Pentecost. She's exploring how to welcome the five or so new members, at the service or during coffee hour. Last year, we gave gift bags to new members. Roger will put together a packet to mail to new members, to get basic church information to them and form initial impressions.

The coffee hour team also is working on plans, e.g., encouraging people to wear red and have a "festive beverage." Beth Ann will provide instructions for creative Zoom backgrounds. The Heritage "trailer" video will premier during coffee hour, then go up on YouTube. We want to talk up the coffee hour in advance. But some folks can join the service, yet can't get to the coffee hour because they can't manage Zoom.

Emily is gathering ideas for a gift list: directions for small gifts that might have an anniversary theme. Ed Maki-Schramm, for instance, has suggested we provide a list of some current costs – such as licensing for software – that someone might want to pay for as a 175th gift to the church. For the church's 170th, there was a gift list comprised entirely of opportunities to serve. Could we put a particular spin on this? Jim: If we're focused on technology/online needs, we might label it "Into the 21st Century." Christine: Since we've received many comments about the music, we could invite people to adopt a song or pay for an anthem. "This anthem donated by..." Betty agreed with the music

focus, saying, “It’s almost an incentive to dial in every Sunday, because the music becomes even more impressive every week.” Christine noted that “it’s the music that’s pushing our need for technology.”

The collection of video interviews continues. Clarke Mason has a list of eight or nine people he wants to invite to be interviewed. We might have three of them ready for Pentecost. Requests went out yesterday. We’re waiting to hear back, but may need to place calls to make them happen. The ones selected represent a cross-section of the parish. Roger: It’s kind of a teaser for the Heritage committee to collect more interviews, ahead of the homecoming celebration in the fall. Two simple questions: What brought you to Christ Church? What would you tell others about Christ Church? Roger will provide an update next week.

Committee Updates

Finance. Vestry discussed the revised budget draft, an earlier version of which had been sent just before the prior week’s meeting. George: Although this is mostly a projection, it still would be better to include YTD actuals for comparison. Emily: Overall, this shows we anticipate some decrease in pledges and offering, and other areas where revenue will fall, such as parking rentals. [Note: The revised budget sees overall operating revenue down from the \$530K in the original budget to \$445K, which includes \$55K from the McElroy Curate Program, through which the diocese will cover budgeted expenses related to adding an Associate Rector to our staff.] George said he hopes to hear by next week’s meeting from someone inquiring about possible interest in our parking rental. We need to know the level of interest, market rates, and so on. Emily: In operating expenses, the other pattern in the budget revisions reflect changes due to Sunday-only personnel positions. The agreement to continue paying for those positions for 90 days will expire at the end of June. We won’t be needing a nursery or porter. Emily and Ed have discussed ways to reimagine what’s expected of staff singers in the video format. The effort to sing and upload on a camera is more work than it looks. We’re repricing it, but it’ll be lower. The original budget of \$28K for the choir reflected what we thought would be more services; the revised budget drops that to \$24K.

Denise: As a shepherd, I’ve been asked when the church might reopen. Emily: Moving to Phase 2 will depend on the availability of testing, and other measures which other groups also are following. Phase 2 will be very limited. Looks like it’ll be longer and longer before we reopen in person. Christine: When people ask when will we reopen, I suggest you reply, “I don’t know, but is there something we can do for you?” The question implies they’re missing something, and we should determine what’s needed. Roger: They see the Catholic church opening, and wonder when we will. Christine: I know we put the Bishops’ statement in the newsletter, but not everyone clicks a link. Maybe we need to send more information to these people through the mail. Roger: Some people don’t do it visually. They want to hear it. Roger will talk to Denise

about what shepherds should be saying, in addition to the biweekly advice he sends to all shepherds.

Community Outreach, Education. Reading Camp is being reimagined to meet current needs. We are connecting with entities with similar goals. Emily has met with Brilliant Detroit, an early education group, and some friends from Sts. Peter and Paul. Emily: I think this year we'll see our partnerships build up. We're all trying to put our energies to where it will help. For example, Detroit public school district students got devices to allow at-home classes, but charter schools' students didn't. Brilliant Detroit also is doing something like Tutor Mate, as well as providing support to the whole family for food and more.

Crossroads collections are under way! Emily praised the creative effort to have neighborhood drop-offs. Also, we should get our Blessing Box next week. We're working on a location that's more visible, now that our parking lot isn't creating traffic on Woodbridge. Our friends at Blessing Box have noted a strong interest from the community in contributing, so filling the box won't be an immediate need. We just need to keep an eye on it.

The Rite 13 Celebration of Adulthood will be June 21. As part of our video worship that morning, we'll be working on some summer classes for new and non-new members. Although it's been delayed, our one high-school graduate this year still plans to do a senior speech.

Worship. Trinity Sunday, June 7, we will highlight our relationship with Trinity. Anthony: I have reached out to the folks at Trinity during our Bible Study, to let them know Christ Church is willing, able, and eager to welcome them with open arms. The only question he has received: are we bringing Trinity's hymnal (of African-American music) over? Anthony: I was pleased to tell her that Christ Church has a full diet of music, including songs from the Lift Every Voice and Sing hymnal regularly. He has invited Trinity members to pray about it, and to contact him with questions or concerns. For June 7, he may need to volunteer some people to do the readings that day, or find ways to involve Trinity parishioners in ways that don't involve a camera. Overall, he's trying to make sure they know the olive branch is there.

Some "Behind the scenes" videos may wait until summer; everyone's at full capacity preparing for Pentecost.

Communications and Connections. Chuck, at the urging of a parishioner, brought up Amazon's "Amazon Smile" program, whereby with every purchase from Amazon, a charity can accrue 0.5 percent of the purchase price. We could encourage our members to designate Christ Church as the recipient of this. Funds are electronically transferred. Lisa will look into this. Denise: Great idea, especially if we earmark it for Outreach.

Coffee hour this Sunday (May 24) will include 5-10 minutes in Zoom break-out rooms for small-group conversations, with a couple of prompt questions. This came from a discussion among Emily and staffers about how to open more communications channels. On Wed, May 27, Emily will host a Q&A with the Rector.

The Technology Ministry begins next week, thanks to Carolyn, Megan, and the J2A! Lisa: I'm curious as to what questions they get, and what the need for assistance beyond what the J2A crew can provide will be.

The Shepherds have been contacting flocks every two weeks. This week they'll provide information about Pentecost. If there's anything else we should be telling the flocks, let Roger know. Christine: Ask the flocks if they have extra tech equipment they could donate.

New ideas for connections? Christine: Is there a way to get our service on TV? Emily said she has heard of an Episcopal priest on the east coast who got his service onto a cable channel that was looking for content. Upon suggestions from Christine and Denise, George will check with Rev. Chris Yaw and Lisa will ask Carolyn to talk to Kevin. Lisa: There are some people who won't get beyond TV, so we may need to do this to reach them.

Vestry expressed prayers and regards to Howard upon the death of his mother, with several saying they were impressed by the writeup about her life. Howard: I'm trying to live up to that.

The meeting adjourned at 7:13.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Treece, secretary