



St Philip's
episcopal church

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Vestry Meeting Minutes

Monday July 22, 2024

Attendance

Vestry Present: Lowell Dargbeh
Sue Guptill
Sarah Johnson
Wes Newman
Shamieka Rhinehart

Erin Gasch
Rebecca Hix, *Sr. Warden*
Marty Nelson
Jeff Pitts
Liz Sappenfield, *Jr. Warden*
Richard Williams

Vestry Absent: Mike Uhl

Clergy: Rev. Maryann Younger, *Rector and Chair*

Guests: Matthew Snider, *Treasurer*
David Kneeburg, *Clerk*
Duncan Krause

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church convened on July 22, 2024, at 6:03 PM in the Parish Library with the Rector presiding. Jeff led the group with an opening prayer for global understanding.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes of the June Vestry meeting
- Treasurer's Report and Simplified Financial Report covering July
- Rector's Report
- Senior Warden's Report
- Junior Warden's Report

Liz moved approval of the Consent Agenda, Shamieka seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Discussion

Convention Delegate

Maryann introduced that Freda Tucker has volunteered to be a 2024 Convention Delegate for St. Philips along with Rebecca Hix and Alec Motten. Shamioka moved approval of Freda Tucker as a delegate for 2024 through 2026 with Duncan Krause as an alternate. Liz seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

2025 Budget and Stewardship Campaign goals

Duncan led a walkthrough of the budget committee's work to date. The committee is on schedule to draft a budget by December 10th.

The Vestry began a Q&A session and discussion with Duncan. The following topics were mentioned:

1. **Outreach Committee:** The committee was encouraged to be bold with proposals.
2. **Internal and External Outreach Groups:** External outreach requires more support from parishioners beyond financial contributions.
3. **Underspending in Outreach:** Funds allocated for outreach often remain unutilized.
4. **Energizing Outreach and Raising Awareness:** Strategies were explored to reinvigorate outreach efforts.
5. **Transparency in Finances:** There was a desire to publish line items, track money movement, and understand endowment sources.
6. **Discounts for Non-Profits:** Consideration was given to discounts provided to non-profits using church space.
7. **Endowment vs. Variable Funds:** Discussions centered around endowment-sourced versus pledge-dependent funds.
8. **Identifying Impactful Actions:** Determining small actions with significant impact.
9. **Linking Pledge Amounts to Activities:** Connecting pledges to specific initiatives like outreach and music.
10. **Vision for St.P:** Highlighting what the church could achieve with adequate funding.
11. **Managing Expectations:** Acknowledging potential disappointment if goals aren't met.
12. **Main Stewardship Goals:** Focusing on music, youth, and community.
13. **Emerging Interests:** Grief groups, anxiety support, and 20's & 30's groups.
14. **Physical Plant Concerns:** Addressing emergency repairs and contingency plans.
15. **Sustaining Programs:** Pledges need to increase to maintain church programs.
16. **Investing in the Church:** Advocating for practical future needs.
17. **Broadening Awareness:** Encouraging parishioners to explore different services.
18. **Showcasing Success:** Drawing attention to visible signs of impact.
19. **Inclusive Events:** Mixing youth and adults in church activities.
20. **Musical Announcements:** Pre-announcing visiting musicians.
21. **IT Investments:** Considering regular IT budget allocations.
22. **Budget History Questions:** Addressing concerns about deficit budgets.

The Trees Update

Marty presented an update from The Trees. Notch Design has started work and hopes to be completed by the end of August. There are no surprises in expenditures to date, and the committee is still on track for a plan proposal in November.

Parental Leave Policy Change

Maryann introduced a new parental leave policy. The Vestry discussed the changes and financial impact. Members were very complementary in the changes; the policy is generous, represents our values, and good for employee retention. Wes moved to approve the policy change, Liz seconded, and the policy was approved unanimously.

Shower Ministry

Maryann proposed a restart of a Shower Ministry for the homeless in downtown Durham. She explained how the Covid pandemic and other concerns halted previous planning. *Fresh Start* administers four showers in a mobile trailer that currently visits St. Joseph's and Trinity Methodist churches once a week. St. Philip's could be the third stop during the week. She asked the vestry to continue exploring the opportunities and ask the right questions regarding logistics, water, and energy use. Shamioka agreed to lead the exploration from the vestry. Liz agreed to start determining the water and energy impacts to the church.

Episcopal Housing Ministry

Matthew reviewed the EHM proposal from the last Vestry meeting. The EHM funds are estimated to be in the range of \$260,000 to \$300,000, with the precise amount to be determined by month-end. Additionally, a committee will be formed to manage fund disbursements, and their initial meeting will outline the requirements. During the discussion, there was clarification on how the funds would be spent for homeless initiatives, and there was a suggestion to include a Vestry member on the committee. Erin moved approval to accept the EHM grant, Shamioka seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Visioning

Rebecca led a visioning exercise, asking the vestry to list four things they value about St. Philips. She also asked members for availability for future in-person visioning dates as well as the production of short videos for testimonials.

Standing Committee Reports

Staffing

Sarah reported that second Interviews are complete for the 2nd Sexton position. They are narrowing down to one candidate and checking references. Maryann noted that we will continue with the current security team for 45-90 days and keep the relationship with the Deputy Sheriff. Liz introduced an idea

to share a security team with UMD – they already know the St. Philips property and some individuals may need more hours to reach a full-time work week.

Finance

Matthew gave updates regarding the ongoing audit, the Hamilton Point Investment Committee, and the 2025 budget.

Directory

Jeff discussed ongoing efforts to roll-out directory software. The Realm application is not suitable for ministry scheduling, so St. Philip's will continue to use MSP for weekly planning. The vestry discussed how the Epistle and Realm directories (mailing lists) are not formally linked. Some administration will be needed to monitor the differences. Realm may be able to help introduce online pledging this year. Maryann noted that we should focus the software rollout message as a tool for accessing the church directory.

Executive Session

An executive session was not required.

Epistle Talking Points

As published in the week following the meeting:

The vestry unanimously approved expanding the Parental Leave for Lay Employees policy, which the staffing committee recommended. The changes expand coverage criteria and benefits for both birth and non-birth parents and lay out the intersection with short term disability insurance.

The vestry committed to taking the Introduction to Dismantling Racism course offered by the diocese. Vestry members, staff, and clergy pledge to complete the course by the end of 2025.

Maryann presented an opportunity to offer a shower ministry to serve our unhoused neighbors. The vestry will begin studying the logistics and engagement needed to join two other downtown churches in an existing partnership. Will you volunteer to help? Stay tuned!

A 2025 budget discussion provided an abundance of ideas and feedback for St. Philip's future! Music, worship, youth, infrastructure, community – no category was too big or too small. Vestry members spoke with gratitude of these many outward and visible signs of a healthy church. The finance committee will continue honing the details of our budget goals in time to dovetail with the fall stewardship drive.

Adjournment

Maryann ended the gathering with a closing prayer, and the vestry meeting concluded at 8:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

David Kneeburg, Clerk of the Vestry