

Vestry Minutes
The Church of St. Michael and St. George
6345 Wydown Blvd., Clayton, Mo. 63105

Friday, February 21, 2020

Vestry Members in Attendance: The Rev. Andrew Archie, Craig Anzilotti, Betsy Panke (*Jr. Warden*), Lulu Stribling, Joe Sheehan (*Sr. Warden*), Mary Ann Cook, Stephanie Nash, Ian Mackey, Bruce Springer, Ruth Ezell, Ian Hagemann (*Clerk*), Ian Mackey, Jan Jacobi, Carl Eichenberger

Clergy Assistants in Attendance: Fr. Peter Speropulos, Fr. Tom Albinson

Guests: Laurie Brown (*Parish Life*), Rob Lehman (*Organist*), Kyle Tallman (*Youth*), Alexis Posnanski (*Stewardship*), Jim Holbrook (*Strategic Plan*), Tom Horlacher (*Strategic Plan*), Mike Zaccarello (*Finance Committee*)

Vestry Members Not in Attendance: Todd Glass, Kate Harris, Harrison Hagan Heil

Attachments/Handouts: “Sizing Up Your Congregation” (pamphlet), Strategic Plan Final Report—Overview, Committee Assignments

Proceedings: The meeting was convened by the Rector at 8:00 p.m. after dinner in the Chalet.

Sizing Up Your Congregation: Most Episcopal churches are small, but most Episcopalians worship in large churches. We are a Resource parish, with 300–400 souls in worship on a Sunday. Such a parish operates differently from one of 50 or 100. At 50 people, parishioners are validated by their presence. In larger churches, parishioners are validated by their relationship with the pastor. Above 140, parishioners are validated by their activities; and above 300, finding validation becomes a challenge. Some will come to such churches for the anonymity that they afford. Others will come for the quality programming—which is more costly to provide than smaller parishes realize.

The group got to know one another by completing a timeline of each person’s arrival at CSMSG, with three accompanying questions: Who is Jesus? Why church? Why this church?

The evening was closed with the saying of Compline.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Saturday, February 22, 2020

Proceedings:

The meeting was convened at 9:15 a.m. after celebration of the Eucharist.

Strategic Plan: Joe Sheehan, senior warden, introduced the topic. We love this church—developing a plan to change it doesn't mean we don't. It is a five-year plan, not a five-month plan. Since activity tends to be motivated by meetings, the Steering Committee will meet regularly.

Jim Holbrook: A year ago at the retreat, we announced that we would spend a year on the Strategic Planning process, and it is now complete. We are not changing the vision or mission statements. There is one major goal: to increase spiritual formation at our church. This will be accomplished by two subgoals: letting clergy fulfill their roles most effectively, and enlisting more parishioners to use time and talent to build spiritual formation.

The committee determined that most large churches use parishioners more actively for spiritual formation, with the clergy supporting them. Instead our habit has been to let the parishioners be more passive, relying on the clergy for formation. It is recommended that we reverse this tendency.

Tom Horlacher presents items A–G from the slide deck. One of the changes in the Operations area will be replacing Carol Rosales, business manager, who is retiring this spring. She has been doing more than one job. A consultant has been retained. It is recommended to start with a new business/operations manager, who then might clarify additional roles that are needed.

Another area of operations will be forming a task force of qualified parishioners to build a church master facilities plan based on the 2017 assessment.

Community development was scored as the most highly functional component of the church and therefore the lowest priority for changes; but it is recommended that we relaunch the Faith in Action steering committee. Churches with one marquee outreach program more easily become known in the community.

To improve parishioner engagement, Laurie Brown has constructed an Invite/Welcome/Connect plan. Other recommendations are to strengthen lay leader training and adult education.

The Church/School connection needs to be strengthened. It is pointed out that Fr. Peter is not currently conducting chapel (*contra* the slide deck).

The group has recommended adopting the summer schedule year-round. This is not only to change the times, but to re-energize adult education in the 9–9:45 time slot. If

this decision were made, it would take effect in September. The 10 a.m. service would become a family service.

Joe Sheehan: The priorities for the next year would be operations, worship, and parishioner engagement—all tactics for improving spiritual formation.

A list of tentative committee assignments for implementation of the strategic plan was distributed.

A question was asked about how we will measure what we have achieved. Is the best measure going to be Sunday attendance? Some people participate in ministries, but never come to worship. Can we count up the number of lives transformed?

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Strategic Plan. There is discussion of what approval would mean. It would mean acceptance of the recommendations, but not necessarily implementing all of them. Amendments are requested in part E and G (the latter to clarify that adopting the summer schedule is recommended for study, not yet for adoption). With these amendments, the motion was adopted unanimously.

Finance: Mike Zaccarello, treasurer, presented. 2019 was a good year in that our net loss was only \$25K, essentially breakeven. This was due in part to acceleration of 2020 pledges, as well as some special gifts. Details are available in the slide show. A question was asked about whether there have been effects of new tax laws on the timing of donations. The answer is that no specific effect has been observed, although anecdotally, some individuals are bunching. (Those bunching in even-numbered years should cancel out those bunching in odd-numbered years—*Ed.*) The proposed budget for 2020 requires pledge receipts of \$1.817 million, a 0.4% increase over 2019. There are some anticipated contributions from bequests/special gifts. \$345K would be drawn from unrestricted funds of the endowment in accordance with policy, and \$212K from restricted funds. Risks to the budget include fulfillment of pledges and variable expenses. The 2020 budget is \$2.994 million. A question was asked about pledges to date: they are close to \$1.8m.

The Finance Committee is recommending an increase in the line of credit to \$1.2m. However, it was noted that this was previously approved (2/8/19 Vestry retreat). It has not been implemented because of ongoing discussions between the committee and bank regarding collateralization of the line of credit.

A request was made for a more functional budget, similar to one published by the diocese. More specific line items are desired. It was noted that percent effort estimates will take some time to assemble. After discussion, the 2020 budget was tabled until a functional budget can be provided.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m. and the Vestry and guests were dismissed for lunch at the Town Hall. Of note, Vestry members will be invoiced for the cost of the retreat once it is known.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Hagemann, Clerk of the Vestry