

Meeting of the Vestry
Chapel of the Cross
January 17, 2018

Present:

Molly Meeks, Senior Warden
The Rev. Ben Robertson, Rector

Vestry Members Present:

Amy Barker
Amanda Camp
George Ezell
Oscar Hartman
Dick Lawrence
Debbie Lominick
Brian Martin
Richard Robison
Bob Williams

The meeting was called to order by Ben Robertson, followed by prayer.

Approval of Minutes

1. Bob made the motion to approve the December minutes, with the following amendment:
 - a. Under "Building Report (Guest: Chuck Barlow), #7 was added to read "There is a request to ensure the road that runs to the South of the education building is sufficiently wide enough to support two-way traffic."The motion was seconded by Richard, and the motion passed unanimously.
2. Bob made the motion to approve the January 10 minutes, with the following amendments:
 - a. Under 2018 Stewardship (Dick Lawrence), the date was corrected to read 1/10/18.
 - b. Under 2018 Stewardship (Dick Lawrence), the amount pledged in 2017 by the 39 people who have not yet pledged was corrected to read \$86,880.
 - c. Under Finance Reports (Oscar Hartman) a correction was made to reflect that the vestry had anticipated a \$26,547 loss that was to be covered by the rainy day fund.
 - d. Under Finance Reports (Oscar Hartman) clarification was added to indicate that the policy moving forward is that additional funds paid above a pledging

member's commitment will be reclassified from pledge income to non-pledge income.

The motion was seconded by Brian, and the motion passed unanimously.

Finance Reports (Oscar Hartman)

Oscar Hartman walked through the 2017 year-end financial reports. There were notable improvements from the Jan. 10 review due to the fact that \$40,000 of income had been incorrectly classified as "Capital Campaign" income as pledge funds were combined with a capital campaign contribution.

Revised numbers are as follows:

- Pledge income collected was \$529,364 (\$60,636 below our budget of \$590,000.)
- Non Pledge income collected was \$164,479 (\$15,521 below our budget of \$180,000.)

This puts us at \$76,157 behind on income for 2017. The vestry had anticipated a \$26,547 loss that was to be covered by the rainy day fund, so that's an unplanned variance of \$49,610.

These revised numbers improved our collection rate for 2017 to 93%.

It was noted that the collection rate for the past several years could have been artificially impacted due to excess pledge income being classified as pledge income rather than non-pledge, so it makes it difficult to compare a year-to-year collection rate. As an example, looking back at 2016, there was a deficit of \$55,000 that was underpaid toward pledges but \$24,000 was overpaid. The correct collection rate should have been 90% collection rate.

The desired target for collection rate is 95%.

There was a discussion about further research into ACH and Easy Pay options, and Ben will evaluate ways to make it easier for members to donate electronically to fulfill their pledge obligations.

As follow up to a previous action item, Oscar provided a comprehensive view of 2017 income including:

- Pledge, Non-Pledge, and Plate income - \$750,000
- Capital Campaign income - \$660,000
- Designated gifts - \$81,766

It was also noted that \$58,895 in prepaid pledges for 2018 were paid in December. For 2017 accounting, these funds were logged as both income and liabilities, but in January 2018, the funds will appear only as income.

Collectively, giving was at \$1,492,000 for the year between these three types of contributions.

Bob made the motion to accept the financial reports. Richard seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

2018 Stewardship (Dick Lawrence)

Dick Lawrence provided a status for 2018 stewardship. As of 1/17/18:

- 124 pledges had been received
- Total amount pledged was \$583,432

This was an increase of 9 pledges and \$31,700 from the prior week.

Actions:

- Vestry members reviewed open pledging opportunities and will follow up with individuals prior to the annual meeting. We would like to have the numbers as current as possible prior to annual meeting.

2018 Budget Process

The following budget process was reviewed for 2018:

1. At such time the stewardship committee and rector deem the stewardship activities have been completed, the budget documents will be updated with anticipated income.
2. Oscar will send out the requested budgets and the anticipated income, and either a separate vestry meeting will be held or this will be a topic for the February vestry retreat.

Senior Warden's Report (Molly Meeks)

Shirley Abney would like to thank the vestry for their approval regarding her burial request.

Junior Warden's Report (Jon Woodward)

- Despite the cold weather, there have been no reports of broken pipes at the chapel.

- The lights in the parking lot are not working. Entergy has been contacted, but there is no ETA for resolution at this time.
- Jon is still waiting to meet with Mario with respect to the performance of the cleaning crew.

Building Updates (Amy Barker)

Follow Up Cost Information

- Insurance
 - Estimated annual premium for new space - \$10,000 annually (not firm)
 - Potential savings for sprinkler system - \$1,000- \$1,500 annually
- Cost to install a sprinkler system (High Level Estimate Only)
 - Sanctuary - +/- \$40,000
 - Children's Chapel - +/- \$5,000
 - Wood concealment in sanctuary and vaulted ceiling in children's church space - \$15,000 (Carpentry and materials)

Actions:

1. Amy will contact the architects and ask for their safety recommendation regarding the necessity of sprinklers in either the sanctuary, children's chapel, or both.
2. Amy will contact 2-3 churches in the area to find out if they have sprinklers in their public spaces.

- Stained Glass Window
 - Estimate for window - \$14,000
 - Estimate for removal/transport - \$5,000
 - Estimate for added insurance during transport - \$160
 - Potential re-leading cost – Depending on the state of the window, there could be a cost to re-lead the window. One unofficial estimate was that it could cost up to \$25,000.

Actions:

1. Amy will proceed with getting a formal appraisal of the stained glass window to present to the vestry.

Decisions Made/Projects Completed

- Acoustician report has been shared with Michael, Ben and organ consultant
- Construction documents have been completed!
- Postcard communication to parish

Upcoming Milestones

- Bidding and Negotiation.
- Annual meeting update

Actions:

1. Amy to update the annual meeting presentation and send to the vestry for review.

Decisions Needed

- Purchase of Itta Bena Methodist church stained glass window vs. clear glass
- Sewer vs. Septic: This is not a required decision for bidding. High level estimates indicated a cost of \$15-\$30 per square foot to connect to sewer. Jon will pursue a more formal quote with a contractor.
- Total Project Budget/Financing (Pending Jan. 10 meeting)

Prior to beginning the bidding process, the vestry would like to get an unofficial statement from at least three banks to ensure they will be willing to fund the project.

1. Molly, Bob, and Brian will each contact their banking associates and arrange an informal review.
2. Amy will communicate an updated bidding process to begin in late February or early March, and will request an updated timeline from the architects.

Rector's Ramblings (Ben Robertson)

Personnel

- The Parish Communicator Julie Ray Brown is on leave of absence due to personal reasons. In the interim, the staff and a slate of volunteers will be handling her responsibilities.
- Ben is going to reach out to the Diocese of Mississippi to ensure that medical coverage may be maintained during her unpaid LOA and that the church has no legal or fiscal liability with her coverage extending.

Nominating Committee Updates

The warden nominating committee met on January 10, 2018. They presented the following candidates for warden:

- Senor Warden: Molly Meeks
- Junior Warden: Jon Woodward
- Dick Lawrence made the motion to appoint Molly Meeks as senior warden. Bob Williams seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- Dick Lawrence made the motion to appoint Jon Woodward as junior warden. Bob Williams seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The vestry nominating committee met on 1/15/18. They presented multiple nominations for vestry. Ben is waiting for the final nominees to accept or decline the nomination, and he will send out a list to the parish on 1/18/18.

Associate's Associations (Will Compton)

- 8 individuals will be commissioned as lay worship leaders on Friday 1/26/18 at Annual Council:
 - Becky Herren
 - Stan Herren
 - Pam Manor
 - Sloan McKellar
 - Michael Medlin
 - Ruby Medlin
 - Robert Pooley
 - Grace Simmons
- The pastoral care committee has been refreshed. Thank you to everyone who is involved! Please send any pastoral care needs to Will.

Old Business

- 2017 Day in the Country proceeds will be reported via Oscar's annual report in the annual meeting.
- The picture directory will still be distributed, but it may need to wait until Julie's return.

New Business

- The annual meeting will be held on 1/21 at 10:00 am.
 - Outgoing vestry will be recognized
 - All vestry is asked to help with the elections or collecting ballots along with the ushers and to assist with transforming the meeting space into lunch space following the meeting.
 - Former youth coordinator Courtney Baker created the slide show for us
 - Agenda will include:
 - Elections
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Junior Warden's Report

- Building Committee Report
- A new youth delegate to the vestry will be selected soon.
- Annual council will be held January 26-28 at Lander's Center in Southaven. All churches are welcomed to worship on Sunday, and the only service at the Chapel will be morning prayer held at 10:00 am.

Richard Robison made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Williams seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously with aye.

Respectfully Submitted by Amy Barker