

**St. James Vestry Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 20 2018**  
**5:30 pm**

Participants: Fr. De Freeman, Sr. Warden Bob Keyser, Jr. Warden Bruce Stone, Terry Moore, Callie Grissett, Mary Hopkins Chamblin, Travis Youngblood, Bill Goetter, Jim Daniell, Effie Thompson, Drew Downey, Treasurer Pel Henry, Parish Administrator Meghan Fancher

**Opening Prayer & Recitation of the Mission Statement**

De opened the meeting at 5:33 pm in prayer.

The vestry then recited the mission statement together:

*We are a community anchored in Christ, seeking God, sharing His love, and serving others.*

**Meditation—Mary Hopkins Chamblin**

Mary Hopkins provided a meditation that embraced the St. James mission statement along with stewardship. She focused her theme on the book The Treasure Principle and scriptures Matthew 6:20-21 and Psalm 56. She ended by focusing on putting more trust in your relationship with God and personal spiritual growth and how that is directly related to stewardship in the church.

**Financial Update & Vote to Approve—Pel**

Church income in August was good at \$72,472, below budget by \$22,528, but good for the summer. We are ahead of last year by just over \$13,500. The total income was \$78,287. We are now \$69,700 below budget for the year. We are still doing well on expenses spending \$92 K in August, \$1,000 below budget. The Finance Committee reviewed the August expenses. We are still incurring a staff salary savings and expenses are below budget. Building and Grounds expenses were over budget due to landscaping, the needed maintenance on the irrigation system and plumbing expenditures in Wilson Hall. Outreach expenses show an increase due to timing of sending out the approved funds to the various agencies. Our expenses continue to come in below budget. There is nothing new in the Cash accounts. A transfer was made to the Endowment fund from restricted cash.

The School income for August was \$5,815 for a year to date total of \$11,662. School expenses are looking good. Shelley Miller is to be commended on keeping costs down through staffing and supply ordering. A completed / remaining expenditures spreadsheet was reviewed for the school where all of the expenses are broken down into three categories: playground, building, and school. The total projected expenses are \$142K versus a budget of \$150K. Jim also prepared for the Finance Committee and the Vestry a Steady State of School Finances sheet – showing a steady environment (full capacity of students and staff). We are not to this point yet but may be to full capacity of students by October. The report shows that the school falls \$5K below budget on salaries. The cash flow is currently \$3K and will grow with the addition of 3 students in October. A steady state cash flow is \$5000. The

Finance Committee would like to reserve any positive cash flow for the use of purchasing additional school equipment in 2019.

All in all, finances are healthy. We still have 3 1/2 months cash reserves. Terry made a motion to accept the financial report, Jim Daniell seconded and all approved.

**Discussion & Decision of the financial committee's recommendations:**

**Alpha Works sound system – De**

Three bids were requested; two were submitted and reviewed for the upgrade to the church sound system, including lighting upgrades, and camera upgrades. De asked a number of people specializing in sound systems to review the proposals. Alpha Works owned by Mike Evans in Satsuma, AL submitted the approved proposal. Bob asked that the Vestry recommend the release of funds to pay for the system upgrades in the amount of \$35,000 to cover all expenses. Jim Daniell asked for specifics on what will be done in the church sanctuary and De explained the plan by Alpha Works to use our current speaker and supplement with new microphones, electronics, and two supplemental speakers. Bruce made a motion to accept the recommendation to release funds in the amount of \$35,000, Bill seconded and all approved.

**Endowment Fund Option – Pel**

The Episcopal Church Foundation sent St. James a letter with a new investment option for our endowment called the ECF Balanced Fund. Currently, St. James has chosen an asset allocation between the Growth Fund and the Income Fund at a 60/40 allocation. The managers cannot execute trades between equity and fixed income assets. The new option takes advantage of the expertise of the investment managers in responding to market conditions. Pel described it as a Tactical Fund. The fund continues to follow a 60/40 long-term target while allowing the managers more discretion in managing the funds. Pel on behalf of the Finance committee would like the vestry to approve the movement of our current fund to the new Balanced fund managed by Episcopal Church Foundation. Pel also expressed that this was very common in the industry. Bill made a motion to accept the finance committee's recommendation, Effie seconded and all approved.

**Discussion & Decision**

**The Vestry went into Executive Session regarding a discussion of surrounding property—Bob**

**Church Doors- Bruce**

The wooden doors (qty 8) all need to be refinished before convention in February. Bruce explained that when the doors were worked on eight or so years ago, they were finished incorrectly which has led to the peeling and bubbling that is now visible. He has acquired three reputable quotes for the work to be done on site.

Estimate 1 includes sanding and refinishing only for \$4400. Estimate 2 & 3 include sanding, chemical stripping and refinishing for \$5200 and \$5500 respectively. Bruce suggests that we accept estimate 2 from Shane Pickle for \$5200, the work will take 18 to 20 days to complete and he can begin mid October. Callie made a motion to accept the quote from Shane Pickle for \$5200, Bill seconded the motion and everyone approved.

### **Window Repairs –discussion only –Bruce**

Fine Home building began the approved repairs on the sanctuary windows this week. More repairs have been found during their work. De and Bruce found it necessary to evaluate the long history of repairs to the windows on the St. James campus. The windows are getting close to the end of their life span due to harsh weather conditions that we face in south Alabama and the need for more and more repairs more often. It has been determined that instead of spending more money on repairs except where deemed absolutely necessary, that a plan needs to be formulated for a more energy efficient option with guarantees.

### **Updates—De ASA**

Current average Sunday attendance for the year is 420.  
2018 Summer Sunday average attendance was 366 as of the end of August (378 month specific) For the last few weeks of September the ASA has been 478.

### **Programs**

There are new adult formation options for both Sundays and weekdays. Also, a group of adults have been meeting to discuss and implement small groups in the church. De is hoping to have 2 or 3 small groups of 25-55 year olds begin in October. These groups will meet in homes and childcare will be provided if needed.

### **School**

De wanted to emphasize that Shelley is doing a great job. The interim school board has met once and is working on different responsibilities. Two ideas that have been discussed are a summer program and adding a Kindergarten class. Shelley has polled the current families and they were very favorable across the board for both ideas. De said that he was certain these issues would be coming back to the vestry for approval in the future.

### **2017 Audit**

The Audit has come back from the accountants – included in packet. The audit is supposed to be returned to the diocese by September. Five of the six procedures and their findings were traced and agreed upon with supporting documentation and verified adherence to procedures. There were differences in the wages procedures. Actions are being taken to remedy and amend the W-2's for both De and Eric as they overpaid taxes due to an overstatement of income. Also, the W-2's for the lay staff had some problems. The staff overpaid taxes in the amount of \$674.74 total. The staff will be issued checks for the specific amount that was overstated instead of re-issuing W-2 forms. Jim Daniell asked that a resolution be approved to send the 2017 Audit to the diocese, seconded by Drew Downey and all approved.

### **Beckwith request**

Eleanor Reeves the Director of Beckwith Camp and Conference center has contacted St. James requesting help with their extensive pothole repairs. She has asked for a \$2500 donation, this is the amount that they are short after a diocese wide fundraising effort. There was some discussion as to why St. James is being asked for half of the expense. Bill made a motion to approve the expenditure, Drew seconded the motion and all approved.

### **Stewardship - Bob**

Bob discussed the plan for stewardship this year. The campaign will be similar to last year with a mailing focusing on the ministries and activities of the parish (how we use our treasure) and a letter focusing on the spirituality of stewardship for every parish family.

### **Decision**

#### **August Meeting Minutes—Bob**

Bruce made a motion to accept the August meeting minutes, Jim seconded and all approved.

### **Other**

--Bruce announced that there would be an open meeting in October for the parish to learn about the volunteer opportunities for the upcoming Convention.

-- De announced that the St. James School will be dedicated during the 11am service on September 23.

### **Closing Prayer**

Bob closed the meeting at 6:55 pm with a prayer.

*Submitted by Meghan Fancher, Parish Administrator. The Clerk of the Vestry, Mary Mullins Redditt was not present at this month's meeting.*