

**St. James Vestry Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 25, 2018**  
**5:30 pm**

Participants: Fr. De Freeman, Sr. Warden Bob Keyser, Jr. Warden Bruce Stone, Drew Downey, Effie Thompson, Jim Daniell, Sallie Smith, Callie Grissett, Mary Hopkins Chamblin, Travis Youngblood, Bill Goetter, Parish Administrator Meghan Fancher, Clerk Mary Mullins Redditt

Guest: Rev. David Johnson

De opened the meeting in prayer at 5:34 pm.

**Opening Prayer & Recitation of the mission statement**

Those present recited the St. James mission statement: “We are a community anchored in Christ, seeking God, sharing His love and serving others.”

Meditation—Callie Grissett

Callie is filling in for Terry Moore, who could not be here this evening. He provided a handout entitled “Keep watch,” a Compline prayer from the BCP. He has been listening to Bishop Russell’s weekly meditations on the Collects. Terry wanted all to reflect on the words that touch them personally and what is difficult to interpret. The vestry then read “Keep Watch” together.

**Introduction to Mutual Ministry Review—Rev. David Johnson**

Rev. David Johnson is a consultant for this important review work. De says that 18 to 24 months into a new priest tenure we should engage in this process to make sure we are on the same page. David Johnson is the former Canon to the Ordinary, Diocese of Mississippi who is our guest here this evening. He is retired and living in Fairhope. The mutual ministry review started in the Diocese of Mississippi as a way to call or not to call a priest to serve as rector after a trial period. They found it effective in assessing ministry in congregations and began to apply it to all new calls within the first two years. David’s partner is Bill Livingston, who is retired to North Carolina. He was the Bishop of Mississippi’s appointed representative in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. They developed a process to assess the ministry of congregations and clergy. A result was finding a reduction in conflict. Conflict is often the result of non-communicated expectations between one another (clergy and laity). They reviewed canonical requirements and developed a survey. David has now been involved in 47+ surveys in various southern dioceses. Bishop Kendrick had David do one for him after his first years in office. The survey (a summary of which was handed out), is grounded in Baptismal vows and grounded in the canonical requirements of the vestry and ordination vows De took as rector, as well as reflective questions. After tonight, David will send the link to De who will forward it to the vestry who can access it directly through Survey Monkey. There are 53 questions total. Entering your name is the only requirement. David encourages us to look at the pdf of the survey questions before we go online. Must

complete the survey once we start taking it or results are lost and must be begun again. The average length of time is 32 minutes to complete the survey. Names will not be attributed to results or comments made so encourages us to speak as freely as we possibly can. Will set a timeframe of 2-3 weeks in which the survey must be taken. Will also set a time for David to come back and report out with an executive summary and discuss next steps. David will send to De the link to the entire completed survey with the exception of names. Then we should develop a 1) rector position description and 2) a vestry position description. Should address 4-5 key areas with attainable, concise actions that are to be completed over the next 1-3 years until the next 3-year survey. Recommends we communicate the overall summary to the congregation. At future vestry meetings, we should review the objectives and make sure we are making progress toward them. This is the followup to the clergy search process. Is the vestry aligned with where we thought we were going? Is De aligned with where he thought he was going with St. James? David would come back 6-8 weeks after this evening to report out to us. Even if vestry members are rolling off, those viewpoints are important and critical to looking back at where we've come. The new vestry members coming on board will not have that perspective. Even our most recent members will have an important perspective. We will set the goals and objectives as a vestry and all will answer the same questions. All viewpoints are important to take an honest assessment for how things are going. David and De will talk about instituting a similar process with De and the staff. Plan to open the survey next week and close it the week of November 12. Need to schedule a separate meeting from the vestry meeting because this will be a 90 minute report. David said in preparation we should look at our Baptismal vows (BCP, p 299) and also at the ordination vows (BCP, p 530).

David will send the survey link to De this evening, 10/25.

We can begin to take it 10/26.

Deadline is 11/15.

David will report out to us on Wednesday, December 12, 5:30-7 pm.

The vestry thanked David for coming.

### **Financial Update & Vote to Approve—De Freeman**

#### *Vote to approve financials from September*

Pel could not be here, so De reviewed the financials. The total income was \$112K for the month of September versus a budget of \$95K. The school budget is now combined with the church budget as they are not separate entities.

Operating expenses were \$111,585. Made \$485 for the month (school and church).

We are \$48 K in the hole for the year, but we are coming off the summer so this is expected. We are still \$87 K better than we thought according to the budget.

The remainder of the report is virtually unchanged since the last month.

We paid \$43,095 for additional startup fees for the school (bridge behind Wilson Hall) and upkeep for the buildings. We expect another \$25 K to pay off the remainder of the playground by the end of the year.

Bruce Stone made a motion to approve the financial report, Drew Downey seconded ,and all approved.

**Discussion & Decision**—De Freeman

*Parish meeting—nominees to vestry, time of meeting, Sunday, January 13, 2019*

De is considering having an abbreviated 11 am service and then having the annual meeting right after. Another option would be to have it in conjunction with Compline that evening. Will also offer absentee voting again. There was consensus that we abbreviate the 11 am service and have the parish meeting with an 11:45 am-12 noon start time. Will have the breakfast that Sunday to give folks something to do between the services. Will review and see how this works.

Bill Goetter said the Nominating Committee would have a substantial report for the next meeting. All those nominated must be vetted to ensure they are members in good standing of the church.

*Updates*

*--Sound system update*

Have a contract with Alpha Sound and Lighting. They will begin the project November 2 and hope to have it completed before Christmas. The bid changed a little bit because of tariffs.

The vestry then moved to Executive Session.

*--Compline update*

We had the first evening Compline a couple of weeks ago and we were pleased with 60-70 folks who came out on a Sunday night. Was very well received and people have been talking about it. Expect we will do it once a month, but will alternate with Taize. One or the other will be the second Sunday in the month at 7 pm.

*--Attendance*

Averaging 420 on a Sunday through end of September

*--Reschedule November meeting date*

Need to reschedule the November 15 meeting because it is the Lighting of the Trees and is also very difficult to get into and out of the church with the traffic. The consensus was to move our November meeting and merge it with the one in December, which must also be rescheduled. **That will be Thursday, December 13 at 5:30** (the day after the Mutual Ministry Review session). Mary Hopkins volunteered to take the minutes since Mary Redditt will be out of town on this new date.

*--Review Hurricane Michael response*

Have sent two trips of people from the church down since the storm. St. James has raised \$22 K in response and relief to Hurricane Michael victims. Church of the Nativity is doing well. May send the overage to Port St. Joe. Many of the small

churches will not be able to pay clergy salaries and the Bishop would like us to keep this in mind. Don't feel like relief money should go toward this but St. James needs to prayerfully consider and keep this in mind. They do not want any more supplies. The response has been so great, they are overwhelmed with supplies and don't want any more at this time. St. James at Port St. Joe is acting as a temporary shelter for a lot of families. The greatest need remains financial. Power is being restored. Hospitals were hit very hard, as well as the Air Force Base. Many of these professionals are being relocated. Also many churches are faced with paying huge deductibles with many parishioners away or vacated.

*New Admin. Position--De*

He has hired Elizabeth Phelps and she is working 9:30 am-1:30 pm, Monday through Thursday. Stop by and meet her!

*Stewardship Letter—Bob Keyser*

Bob distributed a draft stewardship letter and says this should be going out early next week. The letter stresses the value of intentionality in thinking about stewardship and giving not as an afterthought. This year, as we get pledges back, will be asking the vestry to send short personal handwritten notes of thanks. There was discussion about when the pledge card should be completed by parishioners.

## **Decision**

*Vote to approve September Minutes—Bob*

Effie, made a motion to accept the meeting minutes, George seconded and there was discussion. In the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, the number should be \$1,000 below budget (instead of \$100). Mary Redditt said she will make some small grammatical corrections and send a final copy of the meeting minutes from September to Meghan. All approved.

## **Closing Prayer**

Bob closed the meeting in prayer at 7:02 pm.

*Submitted by Clerk of the Vestry Mary Mullins Redditt*