

St. James Vestry Minutes

Thursday, July 18, 2019

5:45PM

Participants: Fr. De Freeman, Mother Mary Jayne Ledgerwood, Jr. Warden Bruce Stone, Treasurer Pel Henry, Drew Downey, Kris Bradley, Roger Guilian, Ed Shell, George Huckabay, Mary Hopkins Chamblin, Sallie Smith, Terry Moore, Callie Grissett, Elizabeth Orr, Frances Patton, Parish Administrator Meghan Fancher, Clerk Anderson McKean.

Opening Prayer & Recitation of the mission statement

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

Meditation

Mother Mary Jayne led the group in a meditation that she gave during the Community of Hope Lay Chaplain retreat. She shared two passages from the book ALWAYS WE BEGIN AGAIN. The passages provided insightful reflections on Leadership and Community, and the Vestry's role to be leaders with the community and St. James.

Jr. Warden Report

Bruce Stone provided an update on the following initiatives:

- 1) Signage – Our formal application to the City was not approved due to the sign's size. We are determined that is the size we want, but the individual we are dealing with has issue with the signage size and location. The sign could be closer to Section Street if made slightly smaller. Bruce explained that several people trying to help get the application approved. Roger Guilian asked for recap regarding the rezoning issue. Bruce explained that Rezoning is not necessary because as a church, St. James is considered non-conforming; Roger shared that his company is doing the design of the planned roundabout; they are happy to show the Vestry their plans if that helps with signage initiative. Bruce explained that the sign needs to be in place before roundabout is constructed, then moved if necessary when the roundabout is underway.
- 2) Community involvement – Bruce reminded the Vestry that a committee was formed to look into getting St. James more involved in the community. Planned initiatives include parish wide t-shirts by Rally Day; attending team events such as the Chili Cookoff, Backpack Initiatives and Turkey Trot. The goal is to increase St. James' visibility in the community events by having parishioners wear t-shirts at the events. The committee is in process of targeting upcoming fall events and get a calendar of events scheduled for the year. Bruce asked the Vestry to email him their thoughts on events he should add to the list.
- 3) Wednesday Night Bingo night - Approximately 50 people are expected to attend the next Family Night on July 24. Kris Bradley will emcee the Bingo. Food will be provided by the Vestry. Bruce is handling the groceries; Vestry members will prepare the meal, serve and clean up. Bruce asked the Vestry to coordinate food drop off with Meghan.
- 4) T-shirt design - Frances Patton commented that the low turnout for t-shirt designs may have been because it was marketed as a contest. The Vestry is tasked with voting on a t-shirt design; but may not have enough options at this time. Many of the proposed designs look too similar to other churches. Regardless of what design is chosen for the back, the St. James logo (words only) will be on the front. Bruce noted that he would like the design to

incorporate the mission statement. He suggested we use the designs submitted but get some help from artists in congregation to polish one up. Elizabeth Orr suggested getting help from t-shirt design vendor. Frances Patton agreed to help finalize t-shirt design.

Stewardship – Consecration Sunday - De

Father De directed Vestry members to Page 9 of the NEW CONSECRATION SUNDAY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM booklet which outlines the step by step implementation of Consecration Sunday. It is an 8-week program, culminating with Consecration Sunday. Father De is targeting October 6. Each Vestry member will have to make a commitment to being in town and at the church the two Sundays prior to October 6 (Sept 22 and Sept 29) because of roles they agreed to play. Those assigned must be nailed down before Father De starts to put the initial steps into play. See March retreat / Apr minutes for roles assigned.

Step 1 – *Guest Speaker*. A guest speaker must be identified. Several candidates were discussed. Bruce Stone asked if moving Consecration Sunday further back into October was an option, but calendar may restrict that. Alabama and Auburn football schedules were checked and look clear.

Step 2: *Three visits*. Guest leader decides on and schedules three trips to the church three weeks prior to Consecration Sunday

Step 3: *Publicity*. Letterhead must be prepared for communications related to Consecration Sunday. For this purpose, a person needs to be identified to handle publicity. Teddy Faust and Travis Youngblood Pecot have tentatively agreed to serve as co -chairs for Consecration Sunday;

Step 4: *Celebration Luncheon*. A catered luncheon is called for in the book; but a small brunch is also suggested after each service. Father De emphasized this step's execution is very dependent on vestry. The book mentioned that 20-60% higher participation should be expected at a Consecration Sunday luncheon. Additional seating will need to be set up outside to accommodate. Terry Moore asked if you could have a single service and then hold lunch at Nix Center. Father De explained that the goal is to reach attendance comparable to Christmas and Easter Sundays, approximately 1200 people total. To achieve that we need to maintain our normal service times. Mary Hopkins Chamblin noted that the luncheon needs to be convenient to parishioners; occurring immediately after the service and on site. To accommodate the high attendance and appeal to families, several Vestry members suggested reception style vs a sit-down meal.

Step 5: *Sunday Service Announcements*. On September 22 (two weeks prior) and September 29 (one week prior) a Consecration Sunday announcement and request for luncheon RSVPs is required of those assigned to those tasks. De explained that an organized effort is needed to call people to get them to RSVP. De reiterated that this is a Vestry-led stewardship drive.

Step 6: *Guest speaker dinner*. This should occur one week prior to Consecration Sunday.

Step 7 – *Consecration Sunday*. Guest speaker scheduled to preach.

Step 8 – *Celebration Luncheon on Consecration Sunday*

Father De wants team leaders on board and Vestry needs to get organized regarding what needs to be done. Terry Moore suggested creating a timeline with assignments. Father De referred to

booklet which contains step by step instructions. Must read the book! Father De is confirming Consecration Sunday team leaders and cochairs. He noted that everyone is following this program for the first time, so it is important for everyone to be on the same page.

It was suggested that an organizational meeting be scheduled on Aug 25 including the guest leader.

Church Updates

Father De explained that fellowship gatherings have been planned in an effort to get people together to talk about church *before* Rally Day. He requested Vestry members attend the fellowship gatherings and interact with parishioners. The Mill in Fairhope has offered to let us host these family-friendly gatherings on Sunday afternoons. The goal to connect with parishioners on a more personal level, especially new members. Sallie Smith mentioned that the 60s and up age group is seeking more opportunities to connect with one another. Information collected in the small groups revealed people want to be with others in their same stage of life / age range, and they looking for other communities within the church. Vestry members are encouraged to attend all of them or just their own age category. Father De reiterated it would be good to have as many Vestry members as possible. The fellowship gatherings are as follows: 20/30's on August 18; 40/50's on August 25; 60's and up on September 22 (this social will be headed up by Sallie Smith.) All events are 3:30pm – 5:30pm at the Mill. Ice cream provided by St. James; wine and beer will be available for purchase.

Father De reminded Vestry members of the Seminarian summer send-off on July 28; a party to celebrate Kenneth before he heads to Seminary.

Executive Committee Meeting Update

School Expansion progress

St. James School is expanding to accommodate the Kindergarten class. Carpet has been removed from upstairs and from the stairwell to revamp that area. School expansion is on a tight budget, but these updates will enable the Kindergarten class to move into the first room upstairs. We are also creating a hallway so people can access the upstairs level without disrupting that classroom. The library is being revamped to be more intergenerational. The plan is to redo the library; then move Godly Play into library area, add more children's books and move the large table to provide more space.

PA system in Green Hall

We are plugging the old PA system into Green Hall so we don't have to set up and put down each time we use it. The bid of \$5,000 is very reasonable. Executive Committee gave Administration a green light to move forward. Terry Moore moved approve spending \$5,000 on the PA system. George Huckabay seconded the motion; all approved.

AC maintenance program

Routine maintenance is needed on AC units. Administration has talked to two companies regarding their maintenance programs; goal of those programs is to keep the units clean and in good condition.

Father De provided an attendance update. Average Sunday attendance was 366 in June and 356 in July. Father De noted June and July are historically the two lowest attended months of year. The average Sunday attendance is 422 for the year; 47 at the 7:30AM service; 250 at the 9AM service and 187 at the 11AM service. In June, we had an average of 92 at the 830AM service and 266 at the 10AM service.

Financial Update

Treasurer Pel Henry provided a review of the financials for May. Pel reminded Vestry members that we operate with a monthly budget for 13 months. Church income was \$105,288 vs. budgeted income of \$94,308 budget. YTD actual income of \$530,842 is up 10% over last year. Pel reported that the school is operating right at budget with YTD income of \$678,543 vs, budgeted income of \$657,723. Pel noted that we are having a strong July, up \$70,000 with two weeks left in the month. On the expense side, we are \$9,000 under budget but that is due to funds set aside for hiring a third clergy. De updated the group stating that a candidate for the third clergy position has not been found.

It was noted that the Outreach Committee met with Director of Finance Jim Ketchum; their plan is to save, let the funds build up this year, and then start with a larger amount and allocate accordingly. Total operating expenses were \$108,485 vs. budgeted monthly expenses of \$129,553. Pel noted we have over three months of unrestricted cash if needed, \$343,693. In summary, June was a promising month as we look toward Consecration Sunday.

Mary Hopkins Chamblin asked if St. James was reimbursed the \$40,000 owed by the Diocese from Convention; De confirmed the church was reimbursed.

Decision

Pel requested a motion to approve the June financials. George Huckabay motioned to approve the financials as presented. Drew Downey seconded the motion; all approved.

Father De requested a motion to approve the May Vestry Minutes. Roger Guilian made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Sallie Smith seconded the motion; all approved.

Frances Patton closed the meeting in prayer at approximately 7pm.