

**ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
2020 ANNUAL MEETING  
January 26, 2020

MINUTES

**Call to Order.** Senior Warden Holly Sargent called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**Minutes.** On a motion by Shona Taplin, seconded by Marilyn McLaughlin, the meeting agreed to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the 2019 meeting and accept them as submitted.

**Service Begins.** The meeting then proceeded to the processional hymn and the first part of the service of Holy Eucharist.

**Sermon.** After the Gospel, Rector Ryan Mails gave his "state of the parish" address as the sermon. Mr. Mails commented that, while this practice may be unusual, it is fitting. That is because a sermon is an encounter with the living Lord, and the meeting is a response to that encounter.

He drew out the themes of the morning's **lessons** that were applicable to the meeting:

- In the calling of the fishermen to share in his work, Jesus asked them to be what the world needed, and reassured them that they could do that.
- Paul was called for who he was, with his particular weakness. He was aware that God's love shown on the cross was powerful enough to include not only him but anyone.
- These calls gave Paul and the fishermen a home, a plan, an identity.
- Our entire process of dreaming and deciding here is our witness, our response to the call of God.

This must begin with **thanksgiving**. Mr. Mails recounted his own thanksgivings:

- The Search Committee, who were his partners in discernment,
- Those who got the rectory ready for his family,
- The vestry, deacons, Ivan, wardens and treasurer, and
- The whole congregation in making space for his family and making space for him as a priest.

Mr. Mails then made some **observations about the parish**:

- Our community is generous in making space for people. That is gift of ours, probably based on our own memories of being welcomed by St. George's.
- We seem to like each other.
- He is drawn to our commitment to inclusivity. and our sense of ministry in the wider community.
- He sees our church community as adaptable - as with our sojourn and relationship with the Methodist church during our construction at St. George's.
- He believes we will draw people back.
- He is getting to know us.

Mr. Mails then laid out some **priorities for the year ahead.**

Re-imagine our support for **families, children, and young people.**

- It is very important to **include** children in worship, especially in taking on roles in the service. We need to support our kids to wonder about their experiences of God and to see themselves as part of the congregation. For here, now, we have freedom and flexible space and people to bring to our re-imagining. This is creative work. Our most immediate need is “space” for children on Sunday. He invited people to speak up if they have ideas to share, or want to join the conversation. He is happy to welcome any child to be involved in the worship service.
- He urged us to welcome kids as they really are - to notice them, ask questions, help us see that God care for us by modeling God’s love. We need to signal to people who are here that we are going to welcome people, make space for them, in part by asking them what they need.
- He pointed out that our hopes for the congregation must not rest just on one generation. Our mission is to carry good news to our neighbors, to be a place where God’s love unfolds.

Work hard on **communications.**

- We need to share our story via the website, new ways to share with newcomers, new methods for informing people about all that is going on here, via print and social media, and the use of our space.

Grow our mission to innovate in **worship.**

- Do this inclusively, leaving space for our own tradition.
- We are all moved in different ways.
- Diversity in our worship is a strength of our church.
- We need to hold on, and keep innovating.
  - Where can we grow something new?
  - Keep the Thursday Eucharist, which uses the prayer book but is really a dialogue.
  - Where can we open up new worship space to connect people more?

**Christian Formation**

- Our lay leadership is a strength in this area.
- Mr. Mails is offering a new opportunity after the services to meet with him and select together on the morning’s scripture, sermon, or whatever else is in one’s heart.

**Report of Wardens and Treasurer.**

Holly Sargent, Bobbie Miller, and Julie Littlefield offered their top 10 reasons why 2019 was an adventure:

1. We fixed up the rectory, including new windows and lead paint removal.
2. The grounds received extensive work led by Charlotte Hefford.
3. We sent Barbara Early and Nancy Daigle to Kentucky to continue our ministry there.
4. We welcomed a Haitian choir and orchestra.
5. We continued our ministry with the Jamaican summer workers.
6. We held a fundraiser for those on furlough from the federal government.
7. Time of Wonder Early Learning Center set up a four-year-old program at Village Elementary School and also received its license to expand special education offerings,

8. Fred Reynolds and the retired clergy sustained our ministry during the interim.
9. We hired Katie Doucette.
10. We found and called our new rector, the Rev. Ryan Mails.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Julie Littlefield began by expressing her gratitude to the parish for our "astounding" generosity. She went on to explain our financial situation.

- Our income for 2019 was less than it was for 2018. There were several reasons for this:
  - The pledge income was over budget.
  - But other restricted income was under budget.
  - We did have some designated gifts' income: net income from the Haitian choir; gifts for replacing items stolen from sacristy.
  - Other income included amounts received for building use by groups such as AA and Yoga classes and Time of Wonder, and some investment income.
  - Transfers were mainly amounts covered by capital vs. operating funds.
  - As to expenses, we saved money because of the absence of a rector for many months. Outreach spending was over budget because the amount included income received through special fundraising done for some of the initiatives.
  - Nonetheless, we ended 2019 with a surplus, a portion of which will be transferred to reserves.

Julie reviewed some of the cuts made in the 2020 budget, including the following: there will be no allocation for children and families, the Christmas plate will go into operating revenues rather than being given away, and there will be no special musicians at Easter or Christmas. Even with these cuts, the 2020 budget shows a \$12,800 deficit

Julie reviewed the status of the capital campaign funds. We owe a remaining balance of \$153,656 on our \$500,918 construction loan for the (to date) \$1,268,546 project. The remainder of the funds from the project came from pledges and memorial gifts.

Barbara Diamond challenged parishioners to increase their weekly pledges by some amount - e.g., \$20 - to wipe out the deficit.

On a motion by Charlie Bergeron, seconded by Nancy Davison, the annual meeting approved the proposed budget.

### **Ministry Highlights.**

Barbara Diamond and Sharon Talbot reported on the activities and progress of our **Time of Wonder Early Learning Center**. They expressed gratitude for the church's support, and invited parishioners to stop by and/or to volunteer in one of the classrooms.

The **Hospitality Team** was honored for the wonderful community meals it organizes for us.

Mr. Mails called out the **Eucharistic Visitors**, for their closeness as a group and for the “missional community” they have created at their Sunday service at Sentry Hill, between our two services.

### **Election.**

Bill Yorston presented the slate of nominees from the Nominating Committee. (See p. 11 of meeting packet.)

On a motion by Barbara Early, seconded by Fred Lynk, the meeting elected the slate to fill offices of wardens, vestry, treasurer, delegates to Diocesan Convention, and alternates to Diocesan Council.

### **Departing Leaders**

Holly Sargent honored outgoing vestry members Alice Ker Laird, George Wilson and Tiffany Roberts with a card and contributions in their names.

Then Bobbie Miller honored outgoing Senior Warden Holly Sargent, and gave her a gift, - an original watercolor of St. George’s sanctuary by Nancy R. Davison. The meeting gave Holly a standing ovation.

### **Return to Service**

The meeting concluded with the Nicene Creed and the completion of the Holy Eucharist.