

Minutes of June 18, 2020, Vestry of St. Stephen's Parish

Thursday, 7:15 p.m. Zoom Meeting
Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Present: The Rt. Rev. John Tarrant, interim rector, Co-wardens Tom Dillon and Erin Sullivan; Wendy Coakley, Leah Luczynski, Mark Miller, Angie Moon, Louise Penney, Chris Plankey. Absent: Louise Penney, and John Culver.

Parishioners with questions or comments may contact Vestry members:

Valerie Andersen, canoeval4@gmail.com
Wendy Coakley, wendycoakley72@gmail.com
John Culver, culvie229@gmail.com
Tom Dillon, tdillon45@hotmail.com
Leah Luczynski, leah@leahinteriors.com

Mark Miller, mark@berkshire.net
Angie Moon, amoon@pittsfield.net
Chris Plankey, chris@djchrisplankey.com
Louise Penney (communicate through Tom)
Erin Sullivan—esullypede@gmail.com;

Welcome: Meeting began informally around 7:10 p.m. as members joined from their various locations one after the other and chatted until all who could make it arrived. It started formally at about 7:15 p.m.

Check-In was brief, to keep meeting length within bounds; everyone is OK, or not saying otherwise..

FINANCES: Ahead of time, Leah provided this capsule summary of her quarterly report:

REVENUES AND EXPENSES FOR ST. STEPHEN'S THROUGH MAY 31, 2020

REVENUES:

Actual Income (budgeted and unbudgeted): through May 31 (including assistance from the Diocese due to the coronavirus pandemic.) \$ 220,362.32

Budgeted Income: through May 31: \$ 178,710.42 (over budget by \$41,921.90 or 9.3%)

Pledge Income:

Actual Pledges: (Plate and Pledge Payments) Received: through May 31: \$124,086.91

Budgeted Pledges: Through May 31: \$118,717.08 (over budget by (\$5,369.83 or 2.25%)

EXPENSES:

Actual Expenses: (budgeted and unbudgeted) through May 31: \$167,113.37

Budgeted Expenses through May 31: \$178,710.49 (under budget by \$11,595.12 or 2.7%)

As of May 31: net positive \$58,246.00

Leah says getting assistance from the Diocese, \$27,464 as of May 31, makes up about half of the \$58,246.00 surplus, and “pledges are still doing great.” The Diocese waived our \$4350 per month assessment for April and May and the federal government’s Payroll Protection Program Loan, secured by the Diocese, covered our payroll and benefits for 8 weeks. Parish administrator Sarah Morrison is “still working out some of the kinks” in the bookkeeping system. Tom says liability insurance in the event someone in contact with the church contracts Covid-19 is important. He says a meeting of 42 wardens in the Diocese showed fascinating examples of how churches are operating under pandemic restrictions.

Property: Chris says the new interior lighting is on hold because of virus restrictions, but the electrician will place an order. John T. says Verizon phones lines have all been replaced with Spectrum

lines except one Verizon line that is still open for the elevator; “so we can check that off our list” Pew cushions have been cleaned. Someone has shown interest in renovating the kitchen.

Search Committee: Wendy says committee met on Sunday May 17, on a conference call and a fall follow up will be on zoom. Less mobility? Fewer candidates? Canon Rich Simpson doesn't think so. Wendy says Francis Hills 'talking in the call about what it's like to be a parish priest was a big help. St Stephen's is shifting to a one-priest model, which may make some candidates feel potentially vulnerable. It will be good to see the candidates, among other reasons to get a “spiritual picture”. Next committee meeting is on June 28.

Profile Committee: Chris says Craig Reynolds is the new chair. The committee has responded to all 12 questions of a questionnaire put together by Rich Simpson. The wardens will decide how to communicate this document to the rest of the Vestry members, who will not make changes. Craig has some things he wants to inform the Vestry about. Erin says it will be good to have a date by which Vestry will provide feedback. Rich impressed upon the committee that it works for the Vestry. He has the 12-question profile ready. John T. says the new, later Aug 1 date “takes the pressure off;” and recommends not to invite Vestry feedback. Erin says “ Tie it up in a bow and send it to us.” No wrapping paper necessary. Rich is concerned about potential candidates for rector not having access to the questionnaire before Aug. 1. Chris says the committee did what it was told. Erin said parishioners should see the answers before potential candidates do.

Interim Rector Report: (a) Work has been done on re-opening the church, by John T., Chris, and J.D. Hebert. There's a checklist of what has to be done, and they'll put a proposal together. Reopening “with an abundance of caution” could be around July 15 or Aug.1. What the Bishop says is what we will do.” Seating will be limited in the nave. “Where people can't sit will be marked off.” No singing initially, but there will be organ music and guest musicians. Both 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. Sunday services will be offered, and John would like to do a Sunday 8 a.m. service. In addition there will be a stay-at-home option. For a priest, three weekend services should not be “arduous or overburdening” Responding to a question by Chris about cleaning between 8 and 10 a.m. Sunday services, John said it was a question of proper equipment and proper training. Erin says surface contact is not as big an issue as bits of virus going through the air. There will not be the usual communion. John says there are certain things to do for people's safety and certain things to do for people's perceptions. ”Masks are worn for other people” he says. (b) Cathedral of the Beloved, under Jenn Gregg, will continue with the coronavirus restrictions it has been operating under. (c) St. Stephen's Table continues to serve Thursday and Friday meals weekly and Saturday meal monthly, albeit on a take-out basis with guests served on the Allen Street sidewalk. ”People are eating good, healthy meals because of St. Stephen's.” (d) John T. will develop “a clear plan” for AA and NA meetings. (e) There's an August wedding, for which a plan will be needed.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 14, at 7:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: at about 8:23 p.m.