

# St. Stephen's Vestry Meeting

## August 23, 2022

The meeting began at 7:15 and was held via Zoom.

**Present:** Rev. Nina Pooley, Leah Luczynski, Chris Plankey, Josie Ellis, Suzanne White, Craig Reynolds, Wendy Webster Coakley, David Nevin, John Garinther, Christina Wynn, John Culver

**Welcome/Call to order and opening prayer:** Josie called the meeting to order. Nina read from Matthew, chapter 9 and opened with a prayer.

**Clerk Report:** Craig Reynolds (for Angie Moon)

Action items from the last meeting (July 26, 2022):

- **Item:** John G. to get 3D rendering cost estimates and contact Vestry about a vote via email.  
**Action:** Cost estimates were received, the vote was taken, and the motion passed. See addendum to [minutes from the July 26 Vestry meeting](#).
- **Item:** Vestry to consider possible events for [Faith and Blue weekend](#).  
**Action:** Discussion topic at this meeting (August 2022).

**Approval of Minutes:** Suzanne White moved and Leah Luczynski seconded and the Vestry voted unanimously (with four abstentions due to absences last month) to approve the minutes, as amended, from the July 26, 2022, Vestry meeting.

**Discussion - New Format (please see individual reports for standard updates)**

**Gwen's Funeral:** Saturday, September 10, 1 PM. A large crowd is expected. Won't be able to maintain social distancing, so masks will be required at all times. Communion: people will come forward in two lines; bread only. Help will be needed to greet, direct, and generally organize attendees before, during, and after the service.

**Action item:** Vestry members to email Nina, Josie, and Craig about their availability to help at the service for Gwen (no matter whether yes or no) by Saturday, August 27 at 5 PM.

### **COVID Protocols:**

- Begin having people come forward to receive communion - just bread - starting Sunday, September 4. Sue VPOD, greeters, and sexton to keep people safely spaced.
- Bring Crucifer and acolytes on board on Sunday, October 9.
- Choir? Will bring that along slowly but surely.
- Wine/Chalice: still a work in progress - considering options. ("Tiny cups" are not favored by the Bishop. Would require an initial investment for an option that could be short-lived since our goal is to return to the "common cup." There are neighboring Episcopal parishes that are offering the chalice now but few "takers." Looking to make a decision by Advent.

### **Additional Worship Opportunity: Sunday Evening Service**

- Saturday nights are hard for clergy, families, travelers, etc. Saturday is based on the Roman Catholic model, not a deep Episcopal tradition.
- Sunday evening seems like it could be more amenable for many.
- Parish-associated and local Episcopal clergy (Bill Loutrell, David DeSmth, Tom Damarosch) are on board.
- Nina will "launch" the service to the parish via standard communication channels and with personal invitations to those who had attended the Saturday evening service rather regularly.
- Time? The initial thought is 5 PM. Open to shift to earlier in the afternoon (4 PM?) if that works better for people.
- Chapel or sanctuary? Depends on numbers.
- Looking to start in October.
- Looking for an "attractive" service that is simpler, quieter, and more intimate than 10 AM Sundays.

### **Faith in Blue (FiB) Weekend in October (7 - 10)**

The Executive Team wants to support this event with vigor and enthusiasm. What are Vestry's thoughts? Level of support? Interest in participation?

*Initial ideas:* Chief Wynn mentioned inviting off-duty officers to the service. Specific prayers for law enforcement will be offered at the 10 AM service. Food could be offered after the service. Could this be the parish's first "social" event?

*Discussion:* Wendy suggested exploring an ecumenical approach. John and Suzanne agreed that this could boost participation. Wendy mentioned seeing on

the FiB website that one church prayed at the police station - could we do that? What is the Pittsfield PD planning? Josie noted that Cathedral / Campus has a meeting on Sept. 1 where this could be discussed. David noted that we've had ecumenical gatherings on Park Square in the past. Could we do that before services on that Sunday? Wendy suggested publicity (e.g., notifying the Eagle). Christina mentioned being aware of the prevailing community context which is emotional and complex. John Garinther wondered what the goal of the event was and how St. Stephen's could fit into that picture. Additional discussion ensued about our responsibilities and capabilities - what's our call? What's possible?

**Action item:** Nina, Josie, and Craig to ask that this event/issue be discussed at the Cathedral/Campus meeting on September 1.

### **Stewardship**

Wendy to get in touch with Dan about his fall schedule and flesh out possible event details. Stewardship was thinking of October 16 or 23 for a kickoff including an event of some sort. Committee member Bill O'Neil (a retired lawyer) is producing a series of general, informational articles for the First Order about legacy giving/financial planning. The committee is also planning to ask people to speak at services again, perhaps with a slightly different take.

### **Property**

No Property report in the folder yet. Will be coming. The HVAC consultant will meet with church leaders once to outline requirements. John will gather the committee and executive team to prepare for this important meeting.

Front lawn changes: trees and bushes are gone. Grinding stumps and spreading topsoil/seeding will happen in the next week or two.

Additional door locks in the Allen Street stairwell are being installed soon. This will allow the Allen Street door to be unlocked during business hours.

### **Vacations**

Nina and Ken will be on vacation in September and early October. David DeSmith to cover for Nina; a team of parishioners will cover streaming. Ken is working on a book of instructions.

Nina and Josie outlined Nina's time off as per her clergy letter of agreement (2 weeks of continuing education, 4 weeks, and 5 Sundays of vacation) so that

Vestry members can address any questions that might come up when Nina is away. Nina wants to be as transparent as possible about time off.

Josie “went rogue” :-)) and raised the issue of lectors not using the microphone as effectively as possible, particularly important for the live stream. Reminders should/will be issued.

### **Community Worship**

Scheduled for Sunday, September 18. It’s happening while Nina is away. The plan is for worship to take place on the Common with Zion as the rain location.

### **New NA Meeting**

FYI so Vestry knows about an additional building use: a new NA meeting is being held on Saturday evenings in the Dining Room. A request may be coming to use the Auditorium for a larger Monday evening NA.

### **Next Meeting**

Nina will be on vacation when the next Vestry meeting is scheduled (Tuesday, September 27). The group consensus was we should go ahead and meet as scheduled.

### **Action Items:**

1. Vestry members to email Nina, Josie, and Craig about their availability to help at the service for Gwen (no matter whether yes or no) by Saturday, August 27 at 5 PM.
2. Nina, Josie, and Craig to ask that the Faith in Blue event be discussed at the Cathedral/Campus meeting on September 1.

**Closing:** Nina+ closed with a prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Reynolds on behalf of Angie Moon, Clerk