

**Episcopal Church of the Incarnation  
February 2 - 4, 2024 – Vestry Retreat & Meeting**

**Location: St. Dorothy's Rest**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Matt Bonacorso, Bill Glenn, Inese Heinzl, Joe Ferrucci, John Torres, Karin Dutra, Laura McLellan, Linelle Lane, Mark Neumann, Rebecca Kendall, Robert Aguero; Stephen Shaver, Rector; David Jasper, Treasurer (Saturday); Kathleen Kane, Clerk.

**Absent:** Dan Sands.

**Guests (Saturday afternoon):** Generational Plan Task Force Members Allan Bolchazy, Diane Schoenrock, Elizabeth Wright, Judy Velasquez, Pamela Layton; Generational Plan Consultants Susi Marzuola, Madison Jackson of Siegel & Strain; Chelsea DeWitt of Einwiller Kuehl; Jim Heid of Urban Green.

**RETREAT**

***Friday, February 2, 2024,***

**Gathering and Dinner**

Stephen led Evening prayer.

Stephen announced that Dan Sands could not attend this weekend's retreat and would be stepping down from the vestry due to health issues.

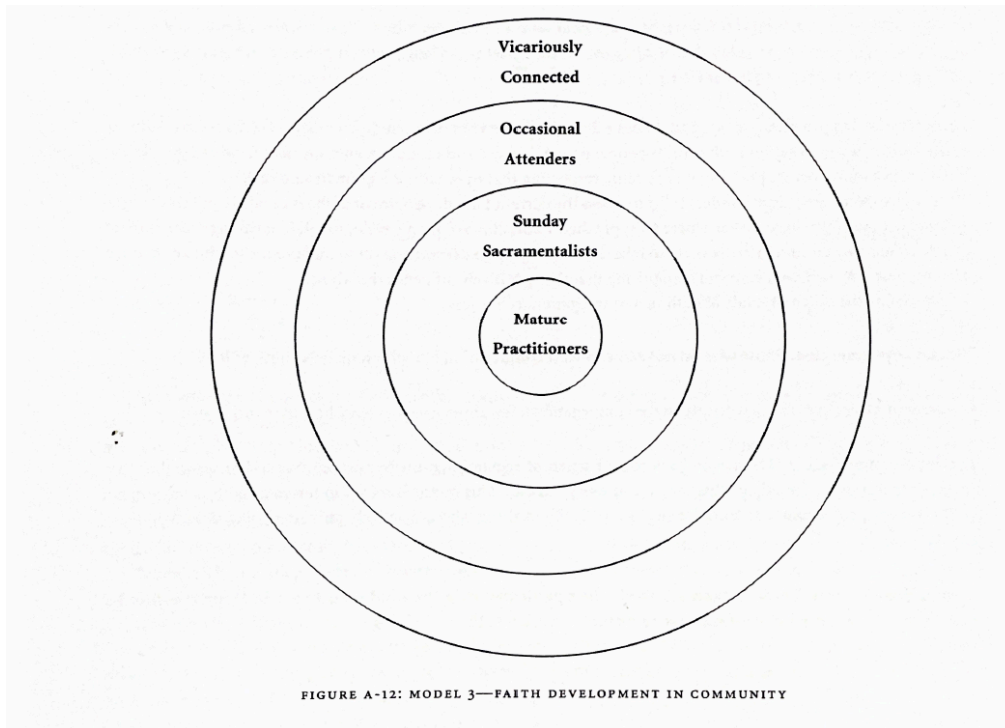
**Group Session: Faith Development in Community**

Stephen gave an overview of the weekend. Vestry members then broke out into three small groups to share about their faith stories:

- What was your path to this congregation?
- Where and how were you met; by who or what?
- How have you been drawn in or invited deeper into your practice of faith here?

Stephen presented the *Faith Development in Community* model from the College for Congregational Development (CCD).

- This model is a framework for thinking about the different ways in which people relate to a faith community. It portrays the life of the parish community in concentric circles.



*Diagram copied from the CCD handbook, page 38.*

- The outermost circle is people who are Vicariously Connected to the parish. They don't go to the church but see themselves as having some sort of connection or relationship to the church. This is the "church that they don't go to".
- The next circle is Occasional Attenders of worship, bible study or other activity. We are a meaningful congregation in their lives and they attend a few times a year.
- The next ring is Sunday Sacramentalists. They have some pattern of regularity in attendance – maybe monthly, weekly or other regular rhythm. In most healthy church communities this is the largest number of people. They are the lifeblood of the community.
- The center circle is Mature Practitioners who have a regular pattern of worship and actively make use of the church to develop their faith practice and as a core of their faith life. They are the leavening for the loaf of the parish.
- People can go in and out of the circles and may have different relationships vis-à-vis different parishes.
- A healthy congregation needs all four types of people to some extent and must pay attention to all four. The vestry's job as leaders of the congregation is to meet people where they are and also to ensure that there are pathways between circles. (A caution about using the model: we don't want to "diagnose" people or to be judgmental about where they are in the various circles.)

## **Compline and Social Time**

*Saturday, February 3, 2024*

### **Morning Prayer**

Stephen led morning prayer.

### **Group Session: Vestry 101**

Stephen gave an overview of the Episcopal church structure:

- The church has been governed since the American Revolution as an independent church organization. It is both the transcendental Body of Christ and a human institution with governance procedures. Both the humanity and the divinity are part of it.
- The church is led by a partnership of clergy and laity. The canons of the church lay out the division of responsibilities and authorities.
- Parishes and Missions.
  - A parish is financially self-supporting and sends contributions (17% of income for Incarnation) to the Diocese. Parishes have Rectors.
  - Most missions are formed and financially supported by the Diocese. They have Vicars who are acting on behalf of the Bishop. Missions have a Bishop's Committee, while Parishes have vestries.
  - Sometimes, a Parish can set up a Mission that it supports financially, such as St. Andrew's in Monte Rio, which was first established by St. Stephen's and then transitioned to being supported by Incarnation.
- Sometimes, when parishes are in transition, priests are appointed temporarily to a church to serve as priests-in-charge.
- There are several monastic orders in the Episcopal church. Ordained clergy in these orders are responsible to the Diocese.
- Seminaries, which are accredited academic institutions, are independent from the Diocese.
- The Canon to the Ordinary is a position of leadership who works as the close assistant to the Bishop (the "Ordinary" or person who ordains).
- Vestry authority / responsibility per church canons
  - Budget and finance
  - Care of buildings and grounds
  - Relationship with the Rector
  - Nominations for holy orders, etc.

There are some other areas of responsibility that don't stem from the canons that are not listed here.

- Rector authority / responsibility per church canons
  - Worship life

- Christian education
- Selection and supervision of staff (including assisting clergy)
  - Deacon reports directly to Bishop and is assigned to our parish
- Use of buildings and grounds
  
- Relationship between Vestry and Rector
  - Rector is a member of and typically chairs vestry.
  - The Rector has a vote on vestry actions, usually exercised only to break a tie
  - Vestry selects Rector (with Bishop's approval)
  
- Vestry / Rector Shared responsibilities
  - Discernment of mission, vision, strategy
  - Visible leaders of the parish
  - Culture and climate
  
- There are three areas of leadership for the Vestry:
  - Fiduciary
  - Strategic (short-term)
  - Generative (strategic at a deeper level with broader perspective)

### **Group Session: Church Finance / Property Orientation**

David reviewed the church properties:

- Mendocino Ave campus
  - Note: Farlander Hall has an upstairs apartment for Sexton, which is a non-taxable part of his pay. This arrangement may or may not continue following current Sexton's retirement.
- Mackey Frame Shop: Lease ends December 2025. No obligation or decision yet about future renewals.
- Heavenly Treasures building: Deteriorated and may not be worthy of repair. Rental income goes to Outreach programs, with the exception of \$1,000/month that comes into the church's operating budget.
- Corner gravel lot: Previously a gas station. Cleaned up through Superfund monies prior to our acquisition.
- Rectory on Gaddis Court: May be occupied by Rector as a non-taxable portion of their pay. Now that Stephen has purchased his own house, the rectory is being rented out to other families.

David reviewed the church's year-end financial report and responded to questions. He explained the sources and uses of pledge and other income, reserves, and other designated funds.

## **Group Session: Discernment of New Leaders - Introduction**

Stephen gave an overview of the various leadership roles on the vestry that will be filled through a collective discernment process: Junior Warden, Chaplain(s), Treasurer, Clerk, Finance Committee Chair, Buildings & Grounds Committee Chair, and Development Committee Chair.

Stephen noted that the incumbent Treasurer and Clerk continue to serve until they resign or are replaced. David and Kathleen have agreed to continue in these roles, respectively, if that is the will of the vestry. He noted also that Steve Layton has agreed to continue on as Buildings & Grounds chair if the vestry desires. He recommends no changes for these three positions this year. He asked all to think about how they may feel called to serve in the other roles ahead of the decision-making to be taken up on Sunday morning and explained how that process will proceed.

Stephen announced that he has appointed Bill Glenn to serve as Senior Warden for this year.

## **Work Session with Generational Plan Task Force and Architect Team**

The Imagine Incarnation consultant team presented results of the paper and online surveys that were completed by 46 and 68 members of the congregation, respectively. While there were some variances, the responses were substantially similar. The team also gave an overview of input received from affordable housing developers and early childhood development (ECD) providers.

The team prepared an analysis of the church's existing and proposed space needs and assumed that the church building would remain the central feature, existing mature trees would be preserved, and the need to ensure a smooth connection for pedestrian flow through the campus. They then looked at locations of development opportunity and considered the values and priorities expressed by the congregation at prior work sessions and through the surveys before generating four schematics for potential redevelopment of the campus. The vestry and task force members discussed the four schemas and the new input received from housing developers and ECD providers.

Stephen explained that, due to receipt of so much more new information, it seems that we should have another congregational meeting before having the consultant team bring back a recommended plan for presentation to the congregation. The cost of the additional session is already included in the consultant contract as an additional option provision. March 17 is suggested as a good date for a workshop session after the 10:15 service. We would bring the congregation up to date on the process and invite them to give more input ahead of the previously planned session on April 14, 2024.

Vestry and Task Force members are asked to submit any comments and questions about what they heard today through the Generational Plan email address: [generationalplan@incarnationsantarosa.org](mailto:generationalplan@incarnationsantarosa.org).

## **Evening Prayer**

Stephen led evening prayer.

## **Game Night / Social Time / Compline**

*Sunday, February 4, 2024*

## **Morning Prayer**

Stephen led morning prayer.

## **Group Session: Discernment of New Leaders – Collective Discernment**

The vestry used a prayerful discernment process to fill the following positions:

- Junior Warden – Inese
- Chaplains – Matt and Laura
- Music Chaplain – Rebecca
- Treasurer – David
- Clerk – Kathleen
- Committees:
  - Finance – Chaired by David as Treasurer
  - Buildings & Grounds – Steve Layton
  - Development - Joe

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

**Approval of December 12, 2023 minutes:** Minutes of the December 12, 2023 vestry meetings were approved as written. (*Moved: Inese. Seconded: Linelle. Approved unanimously.*)

**Signer’s Resolution:** Resolution adding Bill and Inese as signers of church accounts. (*Moved: Robert. Seconded: Laura. Approved unanimously.*)

**Vacant Vestry Seat:** Stephen explained that the seat vacated by Dan Sands, with a remaining one-year term, may be either 1) filled by appointment of the vestry, 2) left vacant until the time of the next annual meeting election, or 3) left vacant permanently by shrinking the size of the vestry pursuant to the terms of the Bylaws. Kathleen Kane noted that according to our current Bylaws, the vestry must have an even number of members, so shrinking the vestry to eleven members is not available without revising the Bylaws. The vestry took no action at this time.

**Vestry Norms:** The vestry reviewed some norms for their work together.

**Required and Recommended Trainings for Vestry Members:** Stephen explained that all vestry members must take Safe Church Training, which can be done online. Anti-Racism training is highly recommended. Alison can provide further information.

**Summing up tonight's meeting for parish announcements:**

- Imagine Incarnation Workshop
- Leadership discernment
- Team and relationship building

**Holy Eucharist**

Stephen led the Holy Eucharist service.

**Stephen called the retreat to a close at approximately 12pm.**

**Next monthly meeting of the vestry to be held on February 27, 2024, at 6:30 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Kane, Clerk