

**Episcopal Church of the Incarnation  
February 24-25, 2023 – Vestry Retreat Meeting**

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

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Allan Bolchazy, Bill Glenn (Friday), Inese Heinzl, Joe Ferrucci, Kathleen Baumgardner (Saturday), Laura McLellan, Linelle Lane, Mark Neumann, Mark Sawdon (Saturday), Patrick Lancaster, Sara Joslyn; Stephen Shaver, Rector; David Jasper, Treasurer; Kathleen Kane, Clerk.

**Absent:** Lois Phillips.

**Guests:** None

**RETREAT**

***Friday, February 24, 2023***

**Gathering and Dinner**

**Discussion: *Gather / Transform / Send***

Three breakout groups discussed the following:

- One of the ways I was gathered into the congregation was...
- One time in this congregation that I was turned more toward Christ was...
- One experience of being equipped for my daily life by this congregation was...

Stephen presented the *Gather/Transform/Send* model from the College for Congregational Development (CCD).

This model mimics the “shape” of the Eucharist. The first part of the service is called the gathering rite. We sit down to be transformed by scripture and liturgy, and we are then sent out into the world to serve.

- Gather
  - Invite, Greet, Orient, Incorporate
- Transform
  - Subconscious, Tangible / Physical
- Send us into the world to...
  - Family & Friends Life, Work Life, Society & Civic Life, Church Life
- Context
  - Congregations do these same things, but the context is different for each

**Compline**

**Social Hour**

## **RETREAT**

***Saturday, February 25, 2023***

### **Morning Prayer**

Stephen led morning prayer.

### **Gather / Transform / Send**

Stephen reviewed the Gather/Transform/Send model discussed on Friday. All discussed how one the morning's readings reflected gathering, transforming, and sending.

The vestry discussed the Incarnation Parish Context for the model:

How does Incarnation gather people in?

- Zoom, Facebook, YouTube
- Press Democrat articles (such as Ash Wednesday)
- Signage in front of church
- Sunday Open Table
  - guests attend services
  - volunteers come in, sometimes attend services
- Non-church-related events on site
  - Concerts
  - 12-step meetings
  - Incarnation 100
- Presence at Pride Parade / other community events
- Personal invitation
- Choir and children's choir, music program
- Special services / events can be easier to invite visitors to

How does Incarnation transform people?

- Morning prayer
- Being a Eucharistic Minister – looking in eyes
- Formation activities
  - Sunday 9 am classes
  - Wednesday evening classes
  - EfM
- Open Table - some guests say “God bless you, this is what Jesus was about” - to feel loved and fed and accepted
- Being invited to participate in these different opportunities
- Inviting others reflects transformation
- Children's ministries transformative for adult leaders
- Ushering
  - the look in someone's eyes
  - welcoming someone
  - helping relieve fear
  - counterbalance to those at front
- Sermons

- Worship space - reflecting on the Good Shepherd window
- All the senses engaged

How does Incarnation send people? (to Family/friends, Work, Civic/Society, Church)

- Go in peace to love and serve
- Deacon Pamela
- Sermons – messages about being drawn forward and outward
- Open Table
  - Guest sent with full bellies and love of God
  - Volunteers sent out with understanding that our guests are people
- Pledging - a commitment that isn't just inward but affects our outward lives
- Ending prayer increases our awareness
  - that wherever we go, Christ is there
  - might increase kindness
  - listen more deeply
- Library sends people with knowledge
- Church kicked me out of the closet as a Christian
- Sending out of Eucharistic Visitors
  - relationship of Joanie and Lila was transformative
  - that prayer hits close to home
- Sermons tying 2000 years ago to today and social justice
- Reconnecting to God when so much of work is done alone holding difficult things

### **New / Old Member Orientation**

- 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 more areas of responsibility that don't stem from the canons
- Rector authority / responsibility per church canons
  - Worship life
  - Christian education
  - Selection and supervision of staff (incl. assisting clergy)
    - Deacon reports directly to Bishop and is assigned to our parish
  - Use of buildings and grounds
- Relationship between Vestry and Rector
  - Rector chairs vestry and has a vote (usually exercised only in tie)
  - Vestry selects Rector
- Vestry / Rector Shared responsibilities
  - Discernment of mission, vision, strategy
  - Visible leaders of the parish
  - Culture and climate
  - Legal representatives of the corporate entity of the church

- Stewards of the property, which is held in trust for the Diocese
- Stephen reviewed the following:
  - Vestry meeting calendar for 2023-24
  - Calendar of other events
  - Online tools for vestry
  - Gradients of Agreement model to assist decision-making processes
- David reviewed the church finances and properties

### **Leadership Discernment**

Stephen announced that he has appointed Linelle to serve as Senior Warden for this year. The vestry used a prayerful discernment process to fill the following positions:

- Junior Warden
  - Allan
- Development Chair
  - Inese
- Chaplain
  - Laura, Mark N, and Patrick
- Buildings & Grounds
  - There was no clear discernment for a vestry member to serve as Buildings & Grounds Chair, so this decision will be tabled for future discussion. Some comments included questioning if the scope of the Committee’s work is now too large for one chair. Mark N and Allan both volunteered to lend their experience in advising a new chair.

**Committees Explained:** Stephen explained that the Finance, Development, Buildings & Grounds, Outreach Grants, and Property Development Task Force are constituted by the vestry and report directly to the vestry. Many other committees are formed for various other efforts (such as Worship and Spiritual Formation), and these do not report directly to the vestry.

**Invite/Welcome/Connect:** Daphne Vernon has been working with Noemi Valdivia and Stephen to develop the current Incarnation Bookstore into a combination gift shop and “welcome center”. People can easily visit on Sundays for various purposes, such as getting information and a name tag. The room in the quad that we have referred to as the welcome center will remain an office area and copy room.

**Required and Recommended Trainings for Vestry Members:** All vestry members must take Safe Church Training, which can be done online. Anti-Racism training is highly recommended. Vestry Essentials is a training that is recommended, but not required. Alison can provide further information.

**Incarnation’s History:** Stephen pointed out a list of some important events in Incarnation’s history, included in the meeting handout. The “red book”, which has a more detailed description of the church’s history through the 1970s is available from Alison.

**Vestry Goals for 2022-23:** The vestry reviewed the 2022-23 goals set by the previous vestry at their retreat in July 2022.

- Complete a healthy transition in our music ministry.
- Improve our ability to attract, welcome, and integrate newcomers.
- Strengthen our formation programs for children, youth, and adults.
- Celebrate our building's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Take steps toward an overall plan for our property.
- Continue to improve our stewardship of parish resources.

A more detailed listing with sub-bullet points is included in the meeting packet.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### **The Year Ahead:**

- **Sabbatical** - Stephen will be going on sabbatical for three months this summer. Stephen, the wardens, and the vestry will need to develop a plan for that time.
- **150<sup>th</sup> anniversary / big party** – The sesquicentennial anniversary is coming up this year. Some plans are set, such as having Bishop Megan with us on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup> for a Festival Eucharist. Other ideas are being considered, such as a neighborhood “block party” on our campus. Plans need to be more fully developed soon.
- **Service schedule** – There is a question about if and when we want or need to add an additional service due to increased attendance. There are many issues to be considered, some of which are more logistical in nature while others are more about maintaining our sense of being one community. A survey of the congregation about service attendance, parking, and other issues may be helpful.
- **Property Development Task Force (PDTF)** – The *Imagine Incarnation* forums last Fall are documented in a summary of this first phase in the PDTF discussions. The PDTF is now embarking on the Phase 2 master-planning process, to be funded with up to \$200,000 previously approved by the vestry. Three prospective planning teams will be interviewed in March. The selected team will lead the PDTF, vestry, and congregation through a process to discern potential ways in which our church campus might be used over many years into the future. The vestry holds the final decision-making authority in this area. Per its Charter, the PDTF is operating under the following over-arching guiding criteria for this work: 1) a major component of any development should be to create a more forward facing orientation of the Church along the Mendocino Avenue frontage, 2) the Church will not sell or move from the property, 3) the Church building must remain on the property, 4) any development must result in at least as much community hall space as currently provided by Farlander

Hall, 5) any development must result in at least as much class room and office space as currently provided by the buildings in the quad.

**Other Business:**

- **Inese and Mark N trade request:** Inese and Mark have requested to switch their terms that were originally agreed on after the Annual Meeting. The vestry approved the change. Inese serve until January 2025 and Mark will serve until 2026. (*Moved: Linelle. Seconded: Kathleen B. Approved unanimously.*)
- **Approval of January 24 and 29 minutes:** Minutes of the January 24 and January 29, 2023, vestry meetings were approved as written. (*Moved: Patrick. Seconded: Inese. Approved unanimously.*)
- **2022 Parochial Report:** This is a standard yearly report submitted to the Episcopal Church by every congregation. Stephen, Alison, and John have prepared this year's draft, which the vestry approved. (*Moved: Mark S. Seconded: Allan. Approved Unanimously.*)
- **Outreach Grants Committee:** Stephen explained that the Outreach Grants Committee was established by the vestry a few years ago when we were receiving numerous grant requests to be funded with proceeds from Heavenly Treasures sales. Since COVID, such grant requests have ceased. This leads to the question of whether the Committee should be disbanded at least for now. The vestry voted to disband the Committee. (*Moved: Sara. Seconded: Kathleen B. Approved unanimously.*)
- **Library Funding:** Sharon Cronan has requested \$1,200/year to fund the church library. The vestry approved creation of a designated Library Fund and seed funding of \$1,200 to be drawn from the Estates Fund. This new Fund can receive designated donations from parishioners and may also be included in future budgets for annual funding as may be deemed appropriate by the vestry. (*Moved: Mark N. Seconded: Inese. Approved Unanimously.*)

**CLOSING**

Chaplains Laura and Mark N led us Noontime prayer.

**Meeting adjourned: Stephen S called the retreat to a close at 3:11 pm.**

**Next monthly meeting of the vestry to be held on March 28, 2023, at 6:30 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Kane, Clerk