

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation
February 27, 2024 – Regular Vestry Meeting
Location: Short Hall
Minutes

Attendees: Robert Aguero, Matt Bonacorso, Bill Glenn, Inese Heinzl, Joseph Ferrucci, Karin Dutra, Laura McLellan, Linelle Lane, Mark Neumann, John Torres; Stephen Shaver, Rector; Kathleen Kane, Clerk.

Absent: Rebecca Kendall; David Jasper, Treasurer.

Visiting parishioners: Miriam Casey.

Call to Order: Stephen called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Opening Prayers: Chaplain Laura offered an opening prayer.

Check-in: Miriam, Mark, Bill, Inese, Stephen, and Matthew gave brief personal check-ins.

Comments from visiting parishioners: Miriam expressed appreciation for the church's support of the Green Team and Becoming Beloved Community ministries and for the opportunity to sit in on tonight's vestry meeting.

Consent agenda:

- Approval of February 2-4, 2024 vestry retreat and meeting minutes.

With no objections, the consent calendar was approved.

Parochial Report: In response to a question, Stephen explained that the portion of the report that asks for race and ethnicity information is a voluntary section and Incarnation has not been collecting this data. The question of whether and how to begin collecting the data going forward will require further discussion. Miriam agreed to discuss this with the Becoming Beloved Community team.

A concern was raised about breakdown of congregant ages, which skews significantly towards people who are 65 or older.

Going forward, a copy of the Parochial Report will be posted on the Incarnation website along with the vestry meeting minutes so that it is widely available to parishioners.

The vestry approved the Report as written for submission to the Diocese. (*Moved: Bill. Seconded: Linelle.*)

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Learning/Reflection time - Vestry meetings and roles:

- Meetings & regular business
 - All members will attend meetings when possible.
 - The members will perform the regular business of the vestry.
- Committees and other ministries
 - All vestry members will discern on what committee(s) and/or ministry(ies) they could serve.
 - This is not a universal norm if service is not possible.
 - Invite-Welcome-Connect is a ministry in particular need of vestry participation.
- Leadership and emotional systems
 - We all affect each other.
 - Leaders affect the whole system.
 - When a system is:
 - In crisis
 - Bewildered
 - Stagnant
 - In a new situation
 - A leader can bring:
 - Calm
 - Focus
 - Challenge
 - Change
 - One key element of emotional systems is anxiety. This is:
 - physical
 - transmissible
 - normal
 - The goal is not to remove all anxiety, but rather to have a level of anxiety that is appropriate to the situation.
 - Basic Life Forces:
 - We all have an impulse to closeness.
 - We also have an impulse to distancing.
 - Both forces acting in balance result in differentiation, meaning that each knows their healthy boundaries.
 - A self-differentiated leader focuses on:
 - Staying connected with others in the group.
 - Setting direction for the group.
 - Managing resistance to change.
 - In summary:
 - Thinking systemically is very helpful.
 - We all effect emotional force fields, especially leaders.
 - Anxiety is normal; an appropriate level is desirable.
 - None of this is easy. We all can develop our capacity. God's grace abounds.

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Treasurer's Report

- **Monthly financials:** Joe presented the January Summary Financial Report as an information item and responded to questions from vestry members.
- The Finance Committee meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month. New members or visitors are welcome.

Financial Sustainability - the mandate & forming a task force: Stephen discussed the need for financial sustainability in the church's annual budget and discussed several points regarding Incarnation's path towards achieving this goal. Stephen is forming a task force of 4-5 people who will meet bi-monthly through the summer to formulate a plan that will be recommended to the vestry prior to development of next year's budget. Laura, Mark, and Joe volunteered to serve along with wardens Bill and Inese.

Report from Development Committee: Joe reported that the Committee's plans will overlap with the financial sustainability discussion.

Report from Buildings & Grounds Committee: Steve Layton submitted a written report, which is included in the vestry meeting packet.

Living Room Outreach Grant Request: Linelle reviewed the history of The Living Room's inquiry about whether Incarnation still provides outreach grants. They did not make a specific request for funds. She also reviewed prior vestry discussions, which did not result in any decision to date, and asked for the vestry to finalize a decision about whether or not to provide a grant this year. After discussion about prior Incarnation 100 funding given to The Living Room, which ended with the onset of the COVID pandemic, and the ongoing, high priority funding needs of Sunday Open Table, the vestry approved a one-time \$2,000 grant to the Living Room to be paid from the Outreach Fund. (*Moved: Bill. Seconded: Linelle.*)

Church Bylaws: Discussion – Stephen asked for questions and input regarding the current Incarnation Bylaws. The following topics were raised:

- As currently defined in Sections 1.11 and 5.2, the requirements for voting for vestry members are more stringent than for running for a seat on the vestry, both in terms of length of time attending services and status as a giver of record.
- The vestry might consider implementing the provision in Section 5.1 that allows the vestry to include a youth member.

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- The Bylaws should be revised to ensure that they are in compliance with the recently provided Diocesan template.

More suggestions are welcome and should be sent to Bill by the end of March for future discussion.

Church campout update: Karin reviewed plans for an Incarnation Family Camp on October 18-20, 2024 at Spring Lake Group Campground. She will be putting information in News & Notes so that people can save the date. Plans are growing organically and excitement is building.

Invite-Welcome-Connect update: Inese gave an overview of the Invite-Welcome-Connect program at Incarnation. She reviewed the vestry's role to be visible at services, wear their nametag with blue ribbon, and be available for one Sunday hour per month during coffee hour to connect with both newcomers and regular attendees. Vestry members should be responsive and record information about who was met, what action was taken, and their contact information so that Stephen can send a welcome letter. Inese asked everyone to sign up for specific dates and times.

Daphne's mom - Vestry acknowledgement & gift – Stephen raised the idea of sending a gift basket to Daphne to express sympathy at this time of grieving the loss of her mother. Karin and Inese will arrange for a card and gift to be delivered.

Summing up tonight's meeting for parish announcements

- Discussion about financial sustainability and forming a task force to work on plans for a truly balanced budget.
- Discussion about emotional leadership for vestry members.
- Invite-Welcome-Connect program.

Closing Prayer: Chaplain Laura offered a closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 pm

The next regular vestry meeting date falls during Holy Week. A new date will be determined.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Kane, Clerk