

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation
April 25, 2023 – Regular Vestry Meeting

Location: Short Hall

Minutes

Attendees: Allan Bolchazy, Bill Glenn, Inese Heinzl, Joseph Ferrucci, Karin Dutra, Kathleen Baumgardner, Laura McLellan, Linelle Lane, Mark Neumann, Mark Sawdon, Patrick Lancaster, Sara Joslyn; Stephen Shaver, Rector; David Jasper, Treasurer; Kathleen Kane, Clerk.

Absent: None.

Visiting Parishioners: Miriam Casey

Call to Order: Stephen called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Opening Prayers and check-in: Chaplain Mark N opened with the question, “How has God touched your life since we last met?” and led the vestry through prayers.

Stephen and vestry members welcomed Karin Dutra as a new vestry member who was invited by the vestry to serve for the remaining term of Lois Phillips.

Comments from visiting parishioners: Miriam Casey, a new member of Incarnation expressed gratitude for her time as a member of Incarnation.

Minutes of the March 2023 meeting minutes: Approval of March 28, 2023, vestry meeting minutes. The vestry approved the minutes as revised to clarify that Paul Mallatt is a postulant for the diaconate. (*Moved: Bill. Seconded: Patrick. Approved unanimously.*)

Update on sabbatical coverage with Rod McAulay – Stephen reported that he, Linelle, and Allan met with Rod McAulay to work out details of his sabbatical coverage. The Bishop approved his letter of agreement and it is now signed. Rod will work an average of 12-16 hours each week, including Sundays and half-days during the week. He will also attend vestry meetings, though they will be chaired by the wardens while Stephen is away. Rod’s pay is expected total \$10,000-\$11,000. He requested that his pay be designated as a housing allowance, as clergy can write off on taxes the portion of their income that is spent on housing. The vestry approved an Annual Housing Resolution designating up to \$12,000 as housing allowance. Rod will only be allowed to claim a deduction for the actual amount that he is paid. (*Moved: Linelle. Seconded: Inese. Approved unanimously.*)

Update from our Going Beyond Land Acknowledgments team

- **What we did and learned last year**

Stephen noted that the Diocesan Commission invited Incarnation and Trinity Cathedral to become involved in conversations with the Redbud Group, which works with organizations to help make connections with the native community. Stephen, Laura, Daphne Vernon, and Miriam Casey are Incarnation's representatives for this work. Miriam spoke about her experience over the past year, explaining the goals of their work: establishing a meaningful relationship with the native community, adopting a "land acknowledgment" recognizing the original stewards of the land on which Incarnation sits, and speaking of the native community's status in the present not just the past. Three values that are centrally important: respect, reciprocity, and sovereignty. The group learned about the history of local tribes and native culture, which has a world view is different in many ways, and how to be an ally in a positive, life-giving way. Miriam felt that involvement in this discussion provides an opportunity to grow, love, and express our baptismal vows. Laura added that she learned about the importance of place, which is brought home by imagining that a special place for any one of us, such as Incarnation, is obliterated through no choice of our own.

- **Upcoming Sunday forums**

May 7 is first forum to introduce this information and these ideas to the larger community at Incarnation. The second forum will be on May 14. Daphne is leading up an on-going effort.

- **Proposal for land acknowledgment statement to come to vestry next month**

Miriam and Stephen shared a draft land acknowledgment for the vestry's consideration. The vestry is not being asked to take any action tonight. This is educational at this point. Next month, the vestry will discuss whether they want to adopt the draft acknowledgement for Incarnation. If adopted, such a statement might be used as a posting on our website, in printed materials, as a teaching tool, possibly a plaque on campus, etc. So far, the discussion hasn't yet led to possible actions beyond the acknowledgment. Any next steps will take time and involve in-depth conversations.

Treasurer's Report

- **Quarterly financials:** David presented the financial report for the quarter ending March 31, 2023. Though pledge income is about 14% below budget, an encouraging number of parishioners have since caught up on their pledges

after receiving their quarterly pledge statements early in April. On the expense side, our cost for natural gas is 95% higher than budgeted for the quarter. The cold weather and substantial increase in PG&E rates could not have been predicted. Though the solar panels lower our electric charges virtually to zero, the total utilities cost puts our operating expenses over budget.

150th celebration: clarifying goals and allocating funds – Kathleen B reported that 4-5 people volunteered to work on the planning committee. The idea generating the most enthusiasm for them is a neighborhood block party in October to introduce Incarnation to surrounding residents and businesses who are impacted by our presence. We would need to determine how many we can accommodate and who should be invited. Kathleen also reviewed other tasks and volunteer roles that would be involved. Bishop Megan will be here for a Eucharist service on November 30. We need to determine what type of reception to have in conjunction with her visit. On the first Sunday of Advent there will be a service of commemoration and Thanksgiving. We will need to decide if this should include a choral presentation and luncheon or another event. Kathleen also provided a “miscellaneous” list of other ideas.

After a lengthy discussion, vestry members expressed strong support for a big party, but decided that more time is needed to thoughtfully plan and prepare for it. Suggested timing is to have the party in Spring 2024. So, the 150th anniversary year will kick off with Bishop Megan’s visit in November and the first Sunday in Advent events, with the party to follow.

Report from Development chair - Inese reported that the Development Committee (currently comprised of Inese, Joe, and Bill) will be focusing on creating more name recognition and public awareness of Incarnation so that, as we look for more development fundraising opportunities, the groundwork will be laid. They also plan on partnering with Incarnation’s various ministries to enhance their resources within the parish. Sunday Open Table is an important example. Inese posed several questions to be considered: How is Incarnation perceived in the larger community? What role do we play in the community: religious, secular, social justice, greater connection with native community, LGBTQ? What do we expect to give to the community and what do we expect in return? The answers to the questions help us to put together a development strategy going forward. Inese also noted that the annual pledge drive is coming up in October and how the Committee is looking at ways to make it more robust. Inese welcomes new members to the Committee.

Update on Invite-Welcome-Connect - Inese reported that the Invite-Welcome-Connect team is focused on the “welcome” piece this year. She distributed the informational booklet given to newcomers with lots of information about

Incarnation, and information sheets about the Welcome Center, which had a soft launch on April 25. Incarnation's directory of ministries is being revised and will be both posted and printed. Each ministry will have its own email address.

Update on Pride Festival - Allan reported that the Pride Parade and Festival is Saturday, June 3. The goal for this year is to have more deanery-wide participation, so he is reaching out to all other churches.

Summing up tonight's meeting for parish announcements

- 150th planning
- Invite-Welcome-Connect initiatives
- Karin new vestry member
- Sonoma County Pride Parade and Festival

This week, Stephen will send out information about his sabbatical and Rod McAulay's coverage arrangements.

Closing Prayer: Chaplain Mark N led closing prayers.

Meeting adjourned: 8:56 pm

Next monthly meeting of the vestry to be held on May 23, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Kane, Clerk