

**Episcopal Church of the Incarnation
September 27, 2022 – Regular Vestry Meeting**

Location: Short Hall

Minutes

Attendees: Connie Sinclair, Kathleen Baumgardner, Linelle Lane, Lois Phillips, Mark Sawdon, Michael Del Vecchio, Patrick Lancaster, Sara Joslyn, Stephen Little, Steven Layton; Stephen Shaver, Rector; Kathleen Kane, Clerk.

Absent: Allan Bolchazy, Bo Simons; David Jasper, Treasurer.

Guests: Inese Heinzl.

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

Opening Prayers: Chaplain Stephen Little offered opening prayers, and shared the history of “bible boxes”, which at some time in the past were used to hold family bibles and histories over the generations.

Check-in: Patrick, Sara, Linelle, Mark, Inese, Stephen Little, Lois, and Kathleen B. each gave a brief personal check-in. Stephen S offered a prayer.

Comments from visiting parishioners: Inese commented that the first Imagine Incarnation meeting was “spectacular” and enjoyed the great level of participation.

Consent agenda:

- **Approval of August minutes:** Minutes of the August 23, 2022 vestry meeting were approved as written. (*Approved unanimously.*)

Learning/reflection: Stephen S asked people to reflect on what is happening in the life of the church, what they are enjoying, what they are looking forward to, etc.

- Sara commented on her Music Discernment committee participation and excitement about Jun Kim coming as our new Music Director. All agreed.
- Mark mentioned Sunday Forum and zoom features (baptisms).
- Michael said that he’s heard from young parents that there is a lot of energy towards children’s ministries.
- Linelle raised question about who’s doing Invite/Welcome/Connect. She’s seeing a lot of new faces and doesn’t know who they are, if they are visitors or new members. She would like to see some intentional “coming together”, names, etc.
 - Kathleen B thanked her and mentioned some things that are being done and noted how ushers could help to disseminate information to new faces.
 - Stephen S suggested that perhaps someone might volunteer to do newcomers party at their home in November. He noted that so much is

going on right now that Invite/Welcome/Connect is taking a little bit of a breather.

- Sara noted that having a meeting of the ushers would be helpful, and to have name tags available right as people come into the church.
- Kathleen B noted that the racism workshop was great.

Treasurer's monthly report

- Steven Layton presented the August Summary Financial Report.
- Stephen Little noted that the Finance committee is making a couple of changes for the church's investment management. One is to potentially move money that we know we will need during the year into lower risk instruments. The other is to start prioritizing investments in "Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)" funds.

Discussion of pledge campaign: Inese is leading this year's pledge campaign. Because there is no formal committee helping her, she is asking vestry members to sign up for tasks on an ad hoc basis.

The theme is "Dare to Dream - With God all Things are Possible" (Matthew 19:26).

The goals for the pledge drive are:

- Pledges of \$500,000
- Increase pledges over last year
- Increase in household pledge amounts of 20% on average

Schedule for pledge campaign:

- Oct 9 - Kickoff
- Oct 16 - Vestry Pledges
- Nov 6 - Parish Forum
- Nov 20 - End of Campaign – light refreshments
- Dec 4 - Parish Celebration - 2nd Sunday of advent. Big celebration of end of pledge campaign and 25th anniversary of organ installation with organ recital.

Strategy:

- Sermons
- Appeal to parish constituencies
- Weekly News & Notes testimonials and pledge updates
- Enlist parish ministry leaders to engage membership
- Recruit ministry members and parishioners at-large for in-church and online testimonials
- Include youth and children in pledging and testimonials
- "Why I Pledge" signs (website, Facebook, Incarnationians, Farlander Hall)
- "With God all Things are Possible" banner

Inese laid out dates for asks to vestry.

- Vestry pledge statement for News & Notes 10/2
- Senior Warden testimonial 10/16
- Vestry members present their pledges in church 10/16
- Vestry support – passed around sign-up sheet

Inese also needs help with pledge packet assembly, follow-up calls, thank you cards, and in-gathering logistics volunteers.

Stephen S noted that we're beginning the budget process before knowing our pledge level this year. We haven't set a numerical goal for pledging in past years, and while we want a gratitude-based process, we're setting an ambitious \$500,000 goal this year. We do have reserves so will be thankful for whatever level we meet, but there is nothing wrong with a "big ask".

Discussion of budget process: Stephen S opened the discussion with an overview of the first draft budget for 2023, which assumes total income of \$542,080 comprised of: \$500,000 in pledges, \$26,000 from "givers of record", and combined \$16,080 from loose plate change, holiday offerings, and other donation income. With these income levels, the draft budget shows that the vestry's goal of reducing the Green Fund draw from 7 to 5% would result in a \$21,000 deficit. A 6% draw would result in a \$9,000 deficit.

Other considerations for upcoming budget discussions:

- **Staff salaries; COLA and potential merit raises:** Questions about Eric's salary and housing costs, as well as merit and COLA increases for all staff, will be discuss at the October vestry meeting.
- **Update on rectory rental status:** The Dawood family has gone from 10 to 4 residents at the rectory. Several family members have started a restaurant, and have found jobs and other housing. The remaining residents need to find housing with a lower rent. The lease ends soon. There was a consensus amongst vestry members to work out a transitional period with the family while they look for a less expensive rental, perhaps by going to a month-to-month lease at the current rent rate. No decision is required at this meeting, but we need to make a budget assumption to move the rent level up to a market-rate rent for 2023.

Discussion and potential decision on closure of St. Andrew's Mission:

Stephen S advised that he doesn't see St. Andrew's as a viable mission anymore. Services have been suspended since the beginning of the year, we do not have a priest able to lead services regularly, nor are there any longer any lay people who see St. Andrew's as their congregational home. Bishop Megan has advised that it is our decision regarding closure. Stephen S recommends closing the mission with a celebratory liturgy.

A decision is also needed regarding the food pantry ministry, which might be spun-off to the food bank. The hot supper program is more questionable. We need to give notice to the property owner. He may be willing to allow the AA programs and hot meal program to continue using the space and we can connect them to discuss that.

The vestry voted to close the mission before the end of 2022. (*Moved: Patrick. Seconded: Stephen Little. Approved unanimously.*)

A closure ceremony with Bishop Megan will be held on Sunday, October 30, 2022 at 4 pm. Afterwards, there will be work needed for physical packing and moving. It is appropriate to donate the vessels and vestments to another congregation in need, and this will be researched.

Other items for general discussion (DDDD¹)

- **Update on congregational care coordinator search:** Stephen S reported that we have some applicants who seem to be suitable candidates and they will be interviewed on Thursday.
- **150th anniversary celebration:** Kathleen B shared a handout about a survey for the celebration planning and solicited feedback. She is thinking of Sunday, October 23rd as a kick-off for survey distribution.

Summing up tonight's meeting for wardens' announcements

- Pledge campaign – Inese in lead, kick-off date preview
- St. Andrew's Mission closure (with announcement in N&N first) and prayer in church when announced
- Budget prep

Closing Prayer: Chaplain Lois offered a closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned: 8:50 pm

Next monthly meeting of the vestry to be held on October 25, 2022.

Note: Due to Thanksgiving Holiday, the November meeting will be on the third Tuesday, November 15, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Kane, Clerk

¹ Discuss, discern, don't decide.