

## Church of the Epiphany

### Vestry Minutes

June 21, 2017

#### Attended

Chuck Burg, Bea Dermer (*senior warden*), Kathrine Ebert, Glenn Greene, Linda Grigsby, Michele Hutt, Caroline Klam, Catriona Laing (*interim associate rector*), Tricia Lyons (*associate priest*), Mary Sebold (*secretary*), Brian Stecker, Duncan Stevens (*treasurer*), Jennifer Walsh, and Annie Wright

6:30

Trin led Eucharist in the sanctuary.

7:00

#### Definition and Roles of Vestry (see PDF)

Tricia delivered a PowerPoint presentation based on canon law of the Episcopal Church. (Virginia Theological Seminary is well-known for studying what makes vestries healthy.)

Vestries are like families; some are healthy, and some aren't. In many churches, the rector dominates. The rector communicates individually with people, and a lot of people get left out. This model gives way to factions, Tricia said. In healthier churches, the people lead, according to a better model of baptism. Canon law accords the vestry and the rector different responsibilities. There needs to be engagement, fueled by God and prayer, between the vestry and rector. Their relationship sets how the church will function for the community. Some church vestries leave a chair vacant for God.

In the early days of the Episcopal Church, the "vestry" was the parish robing room. Twelve men served lifelong terms once elected. From 1720 to 1890, tombstones showed vestry membership. Today, vestries lead discernment and formation, set a church's mission and vision, identify new leaders, and steward resources. Vestries serve as agents and representatives of the parish, must follow standard business practices, have ecclesiastical authority in the absence of a rector, and identify and nominate leaders for holy orders.

Tricia led a discussion after her presentation. Brian asked what the difference was between serving on the vestry during an interim and when there is a permanent rector. Tricia said that a rector has more power than an interim. The rector, as the ecclesiastical authority, could, for example, start a new service (even though there should be consultation with the vestry); an interim cannot. The diocese would support the rector, not necessarily the interim. Because churches/vestries call rectors, they should trust them. The vestry's role will change once Reverend Glenna is in place.

Bea asked how the vestry—so exhausted after a two-year interim—could stay engaged. Trin suggested volunteering to work on Reverend Glenna's December installation. Tricia suggested picking a book to read together, planning liturgical-season retreats, and picking prayer partners (which the vestry did at the end of the meeting). Vestries should start

retreats and then spread them to the parish, Tricia said. The more time a vestry spends together, the more connected it will feel. Kathrine said her Benedictine group had bonded well by reading books together.

Kathrine wondered if the church knew what the vestry did. Trin said the minutes were now on the bulletin board and website. The office plans to post pictures and emails of members.

Jennifer asked what Trin's and Tricia's roles would be once Reverend Glenna arrived. That is largely a question for Reverend Glenna, they said. As of August 1, she will review every staff member's contract, and she and they will sign new ones, if she wishes. On average, it takes about a year for everyone to get to know each other.

Caroline suggested everyone read the bishops blog post on the [four things to do with a new rector](#).

8:00

Treasurer's Report (see handouts)

Duncan presented an Excel version of the budget that separated operational and capital expenses. After Caroline voiced her desire for a budget year-to-date column on the new format, Duncan said he'd ask the accountant for a way to separate capital and operational expenses and allow vestry members to compare budget reports month to month.

Duncan presented a document on the new endowment. It is deliberately broad in order not to tie the vestry's hands. Income from the Green Estate is supposed to go to an endowment, but a certain portion of it will probably be spent on the property. The wording of the estate documents is vague.

**MOTION APPROVED:** To accept the document to set up a new endowment for the Church of the Epiphany

The Washington Area Community Investment Fund (WACIF), set up in 1996, was rolled over in 2007 and matured in 2016. Duncan recommended asking them for repayment and using the funds to help set up the endowment (along with \$100,000 of the recent \$200,000 gift).

**MOTION APPROVED:** To ask WACIF to repay the funds it owes Epiphany

**MOTION APPROVED:** To move the WACIF funds and \$100,000 into the new endowment

Duncan passed out the 2014 and 2015 audit report. The church has not yet hired an auditor for 2016. Most of the church's assets are in property. There may come a time when someone will ask for an explanation of restricted and unrestricted funds.

**MOTION APPROVED:** To accept the 2014 and 2015 audit report

MOTION APPROVED: To accept the May vestry minutes

Trin said that Reverend Glenna wanted to establish a stewardship committee before she arrived. Trin asked the vestry to consider who—vestry and church members—should join the group.

Future vestry meetings may not concentrate so much on reviewing budgets. If members have questions about the handouts, they should, of course, ask them.

8:15 p.m.

The meeting concluded with evening prayer.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 19 at 6/6:30 p.m. Reverend Glenna will attend. See Caroline Klam if you can help provide food.

*Minutes submitted by MNS, 7/11/17*