

**Vestry Minutes**  
**Christ Episcopal Church**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**  
**August 20, 2018**

**Members present:** Bruce Story, Senior Warden, Chair; David Blythe, Shawn Bryan, Josh Fitzhugh, Sarah Hofmann; Diane Holland, Ted Long, Junior Warden; and Joan Murray

**Others attending:** The Rev. Paul Habersang, Priest-in-Partnership; John Jaworski, Treasurer; Virginia Catone, Vestry Secretary; Denise Womer, Youth and Families Director; Helen Bryan, Chair, Capital Campaign Committee; and Sharon Winn, Capital Campaign Manager

Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary, after which Rev. Paul imparted “a little wisdom, a little contemporary folklore, and a little history” and concluded with reading of an eloquent and inspirational passage from Ecclesiastes.

**1. Consent agenda:** On a motion from Shawn which Sarah seconded, the Vestry approved the August consent agenda, consisting of the minutes of the July 16 meeting, the Priest-in -Partnership report, and the July financial statement. Paul elaborated on how crucial it is for the following four “S’s” to become integrated and formulated into Christ Church’s decision making throughout congregational ministry leadership and among the parish’s congregational leadership teams: ***Spiritual Discernment + Strategic Thinking + Succession Planning = Sustainability for the Future***

**2. External accountant - amendment of prior action:** With reference to the Vestry’s action at the last meeting authorizing employment of the local firm Abacus to manage the church’s financial books with the caveat that the company be bonded for that work, Shawn explained that the bonding requirement is needless given that Abacus will have no access to church funds. He therefore moved to amend the July action by eliminating that stipulation. Diane seconded the motion, which carried.

**3. Youth and Family (Y&F) ministry plans:** Y&F Director Denise Womer distributed a comprehensive written report describing this ministry, its functioning and composition, what is working, challenges, philosophy regarding inconsistent attendance, recent updates on past and current participants including teachers, and working with other ministries of Christ Church.

She said that due to the very young ages of most of the Y&F population, for now the monthly Y&F Sunday program will be discontinued. Denise also mentioned that two families with children active in Y&F have recently moved away from the area. One of those parents as well as a young member of the congregation who is now at college were Sunday School teachers, so now just Denise and Ethan Parke remain as regular teachers.

Paul complimented Denise for her flexibility and for developing a curriculum that encompasses both teaching and service projects, recurring programs for fall and spring, and that intersect with other ministries and church activities.

**4. New Vestry members:** Bruce observed that with the expiration in January 2019 of the terms of three current members - Liz, Josh and Ted - it is time to start thinking about successors to join the Vestry for the new three-year terms. He described some of the qualities he regarded as essential to serving in these leadership roles.

Various members suggested numerous people among the congregation who might be excellent candidates.

**5. Stained glass window:** Helen reported that the cost of removing the window where the new stained glass "Hearts on Fire" window will be installed was significant, requiring considerably more removal and repair time and at a much higher cost than expected. In view of these unexpectedly high auxiliary costs as well as some perceived conflicts with the church's other current and imminent fund raising efforts, initiatives such as a silent auction to repay the members of the congregation who guaranteed the cost of Chris Jeffrey's creation of the new window will be postponed until next spring.

There was brief discussion focusing on the fact that if there is damage to the surround of one window, likely all the church's stained glass windows are in a similar condition.

**6. Housing committee:** Shawn recently had an extended conversation with Fred Bashara about the family's proposed hotel-parking garage complex. Shawn repeated to Mr. Bashara the church's strong disinclination to pay for any part of its engineering, legal and other such costs associated with that project and that it will not agree to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) without that clarification. Apparently the Basharas are equally adamant on their side of this dispute. If the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) application is approved and everything moves forward as the family intends, there must be an agreement between Christ Church and the Basharas. Shawn described a possible fall-back position for the church, but for now his stance is "wait and see."

**7. Capital Campaign update:** Thanks largely to the efforts of two members tasked with an "ask" during the past week, Sharon reported that gifts and pledges to the capital campaign have passed the one-half million (\$500,000) mark. She estimated that the approximately one-half among the church family have been canvassed, with just under two weeks left in the time period allotted for the intra-parish fund-raising. The community phase of the campaign begins on September 5.

**8. Finance Committee update:** Josh advised that the Abacus firm is ready to move ahead with Treasurer John Jaworski and Recording Treasurer Kathy Preis regarding the church books.

**9. Signature authorization for Capital Campaign bank account:** On a motion from Joan Murray, seconded by Sarah Hofmann, the Vestry voted unanimously to authorize the addition of Treasurer John Jaworski to Christ Church's Capital Campaign account at People's United Bank.

Then, for the second month in a row, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Virginia F. Catone  
Secretary of the Vestry