

Vestry Minutes
Christ Episcopal Church
Montpelier, Vermont
November 19, 2018

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

Others in attendance: The Rev. Paul Habersang, Priest-in-Partnership; John Jaworski, Treasurer; Virginia Catone, Vestry Secretary; Helen Bryan, Chair, Capital Campaign Committee; and Beth Ann Maier, Regional Deacon

Bruce called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary, and then Paul read a prayer-poem from The Art of Thanksgiving by John Peterson.

1. **Bethany Church overnight shelter:** Deacon Beth Ann Maier described the role of Christ Church's Social Justice Committee in contributing to the welfare of folks who avail themselves of the emergency overnight shelter housed at Bethany Church. She reminded the members that prior to 2017 year there had been no local shelter or overflow capacity for the people whom the Good Samaritan Haven in Barre could not accommodate. When the Vermont General Assembly authorized extra funds in order to reduce use of motel rooms for emergency shelter during wintry conditions, part of that appropriation was directed to Washington County because of the great need here.

Good Samaritan Haven contracted with Bethany Church, which last winter made a major effort including numerous space adjustments to accommodate 20 people overnight. Due to conflicts that surfaced in use of its space between the hours of 5-8 p.m., Bethany decided against continuing the program this cold season. To resolve the situation, several other Montpelier churches including Christ Church agreed to provide warming space and a meal each night during that time period, leading to Bethany Church's decision to provide overnight sleeping space again. Under the aegis of our Social Justice Committee, Christ Church now opens its doors on Monday nights from 5-8 p.m., with the weekly meal prepared and served by members of that committee.

2. **Consent agenda:** On a motion from Sarah which Shawn seconded, the Vestry voted its approval of the consent agenda, consisting of the November 20 minutes, the November financial statement, and Paul's October-November PIP report.

3. **Capital campaign update:** Helen reported that including a \$5,000 estate pledge, \$599,683 is the amount received and/or pledged to date.

Dave described an internship program at Norwich University whereby students are placed in local businesses where they serve as resources in social media. Two of the students who are his academic advisees have enough time beyond a project on which they have already worked that

they would be willing to serve as a social media resource to the capital campaign committee in its community outreach effort. He suggested connecting them to Helen Bryan and to Sharon Winn.

4. Parking structure and Housing Committee updates: Shawn reported that: (a) the church had received a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the City of Montpelier related to the proposed parking garage. The church has returned the document to the city with some proposed changes and we are awaiting feedback from the city. He remarked that the city has been quite easy to work with and will reimburse Christ Church for the \$15,000 it has incurred for legal and surveying services; and

(b) Steve Dale will meet next week with Eileen Peltier, Executive Director of Downstreet Housing and Community Development, about the status of Christ Church's potential erection of apartments on the site of the current parish house. The hope is to have a full housing committee meeting early in December so the Vestry will have an idea about funding possibilities and timing for our proposed project.

5. Finance Committee update: Josh advised that the committee continues its work on the proposed budget for 2019 and he briefly described the process. They would like to include a 3% salary increase for staff, but that must be balanced against pledge and stewardship offerings.

6. Howland Fund allocation: The Chair reminded the members that the time is approaching when a decision must be made on allocation of distribution of the \$2800 annual interest from the Susan Howland bequest. One-half must be allocated to Diocesan mission(s) and one-half to general missions. There was some discussion of prior vestries' actions. Last year, for example, the \$1,400 for Diocesan missions went to Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center in Chelsea, while the allocations for general missions were \$1,000 to Christ Church's food programs (community meals and emergency food shelf) and \$400 to Camp Agape.

David considered programs for the homeless in the community a high priority and expressed support for an effort to help them in some fashion.

7. Junior Warden position: The Vestry continued its consideration of the subject of a new model for the Junior Warden position and for handling buildings and grounds issues. Ted reiterated some of the points he had made at the prior meeting concerning the need for a regular maintenance schedule for both the sanctuary and the parish house and a budget to support needed improvements. He reiterated his concern over the fact that heating is likely the major parish house cost, describing the dismal state of the windows in the Taplin Auditorium. He also stressed the importance of including on a committee individuals with knowledge in various building-related issues. Joan suggested publicizing the need for people to serve on a buildings and grounds committee. Discussion on this subject will continue.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Virginia F. Catone
Secretary of the Vestry