

St Francis Episcopal Church
Potomac Parish
Vestry Minutes
September 15, 2009

The Vestry convened on Tuesday, September 15, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Kincaid Library, the Rector presiding. Vestry members present: Mr. Wilson, Ms. Hoke, Mr. Burr, Mr. Bachman, Mr. Gardiner, Ms. Tendall, Mr. Daly, Mr. Maroulis, Ms. Austin, Ms. Tozer, Mr. Ellsworth, Ms. Wallace, and Mr. Harper. Not in attendance: Mr. Baker. Also in attendance: Mr. Bassett, Ms. Riddle, Mr. Hirsch, and Ms. Tabner Thayer.

The Rector opened with a prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June meeting had been previously approved by electronic mail. The Rector noted that the minutes should reflect the date of the September Vestry meeting as September 15, rather than September 22.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Bachman distributed an income statement for 2009 year-to-date (attached). He noted that year-to-date pledge revenue is both under budget and less than the comparable 2008 year-to-date figure. We will not know if this reflects the annual seasonal variation until we review September collections. The finance committee met in July to review the budget, cash flow and balance sheet. The parish's liquid assets have increased over the past six months, primarily because of the stock market recovery. Mr. Bachman stated that the quarterly payment received from St. Andrew's Episcopal School (SAES) was higher than budgeted because the budget did not reflect the contract's mid-year escalation clause.

Mr. Bachman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Burr, and approved by unanimous vote that the Vestry authorize the expenditure of an additional \$3,305 pursuant to change order from Architectural Trim Products to complete the cladding of the bell tower, with such amount to be charged as a capital expenditure item to the appropriate reserve account and further, that to the extent that some or all of this amount has already been charged to the building repairs and maintenance subaccount of the operating budget, that appropriate accounting adjustments be made to implement this motion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Mr. Wilson stated that the work on the church's front entry, the chapel entry, the chapel window, the exterior railings, and the interior ceiling is nearly completed. Ms. Tozer thanked Mr. Wilson for all of the good work done by the Property Committee, and other Vestry members commented on how beautiful the church looks. Mr. Wilson further reported that contractors looked at the physical plant of the church over the summer. Mr. Bachman noted that the approximate estimate for needed capital improvements is \$1 million over 5 years. With respect to the drainage issue at the rectory, Mr. Wilson has located an engineer who will advise us on the source of the problem.

Ms. Wallace thanked Ms. Tendall and Françoise Williams for the wonderful ice cream social on Renewal Sunday. Concerning SAES, Ms. Wallace stated that enrollment is at 528 students and still growing, with a full preschool program and 15 students in the inaugural fourth grade

class. Pat Talbert Smith is still recovering and hopes to return at the end of October. In her absence, Spring Swinehart and Carol Parent are fulfilling her duties.

Ms. Austin reminded the Vestry that Outreach Sunday is September 27, the week before the Potomac Country House Tour. Parishioners will be able to learn more about the outreach recipients at tables staffed by the organizations and in spoken remarks.

Ms. Hoke stated that several new families have been attending church since the summer. The Lay Committee (Ms. Young, Cathleen Blanton, Matt and LeeAnne Jillings, Lt. Shanker and Mellicent Singham, and Ms. Hoke) will work with our new seminarian, Josiah Rengers, over the next two years. They are having two days of training, and will meet with him monthly.

Mr. Harper reminded the Vestry that the third annual golf outing and dinner is October 16.

Ms. Tendall stated the Parish Life Committee's next meeting is September 17 at 8:30 am, and they will discuss having a presence at the annual Potomac Days event.

Mr. Gardiner stated that the Communications Committee might also have a table at the Potomac Days. The committee is finalizing the electronic version of *Sounds*. An e-mail version of *Sounds* will be sent to all parishioners on the email list, with an option to unsubscribe.

Mr. Hirsch stated that the summer youth trips were challenging yet offered the most opportunity for growth than in any previous year. The focus of the mission trip to Philadelphia was to begin a Vacation Bible Study in a previously abandoned church in the very poor, northern part of the city. Sean Mullen, rector of St. Mark's in the inner city and a good friend of Craig Windham's, has sought permission from the Diocese for many years to establish a school at this church and believed that a VBS would be a good way to introduce the community to the project. Attendance was very high and the neighbors were delighted with the VBS, as well as the youth group's extensive clean-up of a nearby park and the installation of a play set and two benches bought by our group. Seven youth from Philadelphia churches and another youth minister joined in the effort. The greatest challenge for the St. Francis group were some of the liturgical choices embraced by the Diocese that are very different from our own, and the hectic pace that did not allow for much quiet time or reflection.

Summer Bible study attendance was very high, and looks to continue that way during the school year. The Glenholden house will be repainted and re-carpeted in the basement. Confirmation classes begin on September 27.

NEW BUSINESS

Stewardship Committee

Mr. Harper will be the chair of this year's stewardship campaign. The Rector and Ms. Tozer encouraged Vestry members to think about the principles and priorities that we wish to convey to the congregation this year, and to email the Rector and the wardens with their thoughts. Mr. Harper reviewed the timeline for the campaign. *Sounds* articles will be written by each of Mr. Harper, Ms. Tozer and Mr. Wilson (in that order) and Ms. Austin offered to locate a parishioner to speak to the congregation during the church services. All Vestry members will help with follow-up phone calls to parishioners who have not returned pledge cards.

Rector's Memorandum to the Vestry

The Rector stated that he would like to give the members the opportunity to seek clarification of the points he made in the memo (attached hereto), as well as to voice agreement or disagreement. The Rector also invited the Vestry to talk about how we should proceed, stating that we need to look ahead so that we can work to strengthen our parish. Ms. Tozer concurred, stating that we cannot be complacent, but must think about the future and our long term growth. Vestry members offered their thoughts at length, agreeing that while the culture is not conducive to or encouraging of active church participation or membership in general, and perhaps in the Episcopal Church in particular, St. Francis can and should continue to convey to others that our center is the worship of Christ. Ms. Hoke agreed with the Rector's suggestion to build upon the work of the 21st Century project. All Vestry members are urged to read this document, and Ms. Tozer, Ms. Hoke and Ms. Wallace will work to summarize the goals it articulated and our progress to date on each to help the Vestry further contemplate the topics raised in the memo.

Mr. Ellsworth closed the meeting with a prayer.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 7:30 pm in the Kincaid Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Jody Tabner Thayer
Clerk of the Vestry