

Vestry Meeting February – Father Mac, Gary, Marilyn, Phyllis, Billy, Brian, Liz, Janice, Jon, Gini

Approval of January minutes up for discussion. Motion to approve by Gini. Second by Marilyn. Majority say's AYE. Minutes approved.

Mike Flood, Lana Green, Jim Lunden, and Rodger Ludwig from St James' Earth Future Committee have joined us for a presentation. Welcome. They are planning to do a carbon footprint audit of the building and grounds w/ New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light. Interfaith Power & Light has funding and low interest loans available for any capitol investments we might need to take to reduce St Jame's carbon footprint. The Earth Future Committee are planning Earth Day activities and they will also write the Prayers of the People starting after Lent. Please join them on Wednesdays for the Lenten Series 5:30-7:00.

Phyllis brought up the current furnace situation at St James. She thinks we need to consider replacing these furnaces with electric units (timeline is in the next 12 months). Incentives to help with the initial costs are available from the Episcopal Church and New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light. Father Mac explained using electric vs natural gas to heat/cool our building. And, the road to a lower carbon footprint is to use electric, generated by solar/wind, instead of natural gas. Thank you Phyllis for bringing this issue up.

Solar panel funding is available from the federal government for non profits and churches if we wanted to go down that road in the future.

Rodger Ludwig suggested the next step for St James is to do a comprehensive energy audit of the advantages/disadvantages of furnaces/water heaters, any improvements that are made need to be paying for themselves with reduced energy bills. St James' energy bills are currently really high. We need to evaluate what kind of furnace will be good for the church/ save us money! And we do not want to detract from the architecture of the building. The team will also audit the Parish Hall kitchen- gas vs induction for our stove?

We need to do a better job at the Food Pantry- with the doors being left wide open all the time. It's an incredible waste of energy. It's a habit left over from the pandemic. **We need to adjust the heat/cool settings for the thermostat on Thursdays.**

Billy has been working with Jude on the fundraising committee and Bingo is in discussion. We could do it legally four times a year. The Knights of Columbus recently hosted a Bingo and raised \$2,000. Marilyn added that the fund raising committee has met and there are three pages of notes on fundraising.

Up next Paul with his Treasurers report. If there are no questions about his report we will move on. Budget- 2023 needs to be approved by the vestry. Do we move to a resolution? Paul asked for a resolution to approve the 2023 budget. Billy resolved to approve the 2023 budget. Brian seconded that resolution. Discussion about 2023 budget? St Jame's 2023 budget is approved by the vestry.

Appointment to Endowment Committee Resolution to appoint Cissy McCrary to a three year term. Gini makes the resolution. Gary seconded the resolution. All in favor say Aye. Approved.

Resolution to divert interest and dividends from the endowment fund to pay our debt in the operating account for one quarter. Paul has mixed feelings on this one. We are \$41,000 in the hole and we need to make that up. Gary wants to know how much money would one quarter be? Paul is not sure about that exact number because of the way interest/dividends have been reinvested in the past. Fr Mac is curious about the quarter returns- It's hard without a number... Paul's hope is we do this for one quarter and then this will help get some of the debt out of the way. Most of our debt is owed to the Diocese. Fair Share is our biggest debt. (This idea came from some parishioners who have served on vestries before.) Vestry agrees we don't want to get into a habit of doing this. The priority is paying off our Fair Share debt. Our loans are at a low interest rate they are not in the same category as our Fair Share debt. Our loans are in the budget. The Diocese needs our money for the Fair Share. We are delinquent with Fair Share and we need to pay it off.

Resolution to divert interest and dividends earnings from the endowment fund to our operating account for one quarter. Do we have a resolution to approve? Marilyn moved and Gary seconded. All in favor of resolution say Aye. Resolution passes.

Thank you for all your work Paul.

Paul asked, Do we need rules for fundraising? Marilyn added that there is a book of fundraising policy. It's probably above Krystal's desk. Liz asked if we have rentals for the Parish Hall on the books. Currently we do not. Phyllis added that the **fire sensors in the nave have not been changed yet. We need a scissor lift to access these sensors.**

Rector's report addendum- All delegates were present at our deanery meeting. Yeah! Do we have an alternate delegate for convention? Vestry will nominate someone.

Thanks to Father Alan for filling in when I was out sick.

Hospitality and fellowship update from Gini. We don't have a welcome person/greeter at our 10:30 service and this is an issue. New people coming through our doors sometimes have questions and direction. I think it would be helpful for the vestry to be more visible and perhaps one person from the vestry needs to be a greeter on a volunteer rotation. I know its a little complicated for those on the choir. Marilyn suggested choir/vestry members be present at the coffee hour. Fr Mac suggested the coffee hour is out till 10:30.

We discussed coffee hour and changes that could possibly happen in the summer- extending coffee hour to after the service. (Like it was in the before times, Covid) we need to be mindful of our limitations as we move forward and try to get back to "normal". Father Mac added that other churches in the Dioceses have not brought back their coffee hour. We are not back to our 2019 church attendance numbers. Things changed and they have not gone back.

Gini makes a motion that vestry members sign up to take on Greeting before the 10:30 service. Greeter should be available from 10-10:30. Jon suggested adding this ministry to the rota. It would be easy to do.

Gary brought up an item that was not on our list- Designating a bathroom a Family Bathroom. Discussion ensues. Phyllis asks if we can have a resolution to designate one of our bathrooms a family bathroom. Marilyn adds that we make it the women's restroom by the office. All in favor of the resolution say, Aye. All voted Yes to resolution. And, the resolution is passed. Thank you Phyllis! You are empowered to order the parts!

Vestry meeting is adjourned and we will meet again on March 21, 2023 at 5:30.