

Vestry Minutes
Tuesday, October 18, 2016
Calvary Episcopal Church

Present: Terre Sullivant, Claudia Haltom, Fred Piper, Celeste Herburger, Nicky Hitching, Donovan Smith, David Leigh, Julie Bethel, Margaret Craddock, Raymond Spence, Chris Bird, Jan Gwin

Not-Present: Tony Graves, Palmer Jones, Sarah Squire

Clergy, Staff, Other Guests: Buddy Stallings, Paul McLain, Neil Raman, Hall Gardner
Kristin Lensch

Call to Order

Rev Buddy Stallings called the meeting to order and opened with a prayer. Before proceeding to the agenda, Buddy Stallings asked that the vestry keep the family of Katie Owen in their prayers, as her uncle has passed away suddenly. Kristin Lensch spoke to encourage vestry to attend the October 28 performance at Calvary by the internationally-known singing group Chanticleer. She noted Calvary is the group's only stop in Memphis, and of the 60% of tickets sold, most are non-Calvary people, making it a good outreach for the church. (Kristin left after making her presentation and answering questions.)

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of September's Vestry meeting was made by Claudia Haltom and seconded by Terre Sullivan. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report for September was presented by Hall Gardner. Pointing to the actual and budgeted figures for the year as of 09/30/2016, he noted that we are a bit behind on pledges but this is not a big concern. He noted that the event-costs line item looks high, with the kitchen over budget by \$40,000, but that these expenses were offset by revenues from events.

In an update on stewardship, Buddy Stallings said the zip code parties, where he asked parishioners to increase their pledge at this time of transition, have all taken place, and were a great success. To date, the church had received 90 pledges that together were 40% ahead of last year, with the average increase at 18%. He says this is a positive thing to show rector candidates. He noted that about 160 more needed to come in. The most telling number, he concluded, will be how total pledges compare with last year's. Donovan Smith noted the number of pledges sounded low for a church our size, but Buddy said this level is normal for churches. There was discussion about, in addition to listing the names of those who pledge in the Sunday bulletin, maybe listing them on the bulletin board near the elevator like last year.

The Treasurer's report was approved.

Hall also gave an update on the Endowment Board, where three people including two very long-time members (Rose Johnston and Giles Coors) are leaving. Penn Owen has agreed to be chair, and three new members are being recruited. The assets will stay at Stephens Inc., where outgoing board chair Giles Coors is senior vice president.

Search Committee Report

Hall Gardner provided a search committee update. The committee is moving from the planning phase to the phase of seeking candidates. There are two profiles, a drier version for the Diocese [[national or west Tennessee??]] website and the one for Calvary's website. Both will go live on Friday, and at that point Calvary will have the "help wanted sign" on the door, so to speak. He added that May would be the earliest the new rector would arrive, since it is not in anyone's best interest for the rector to come during waffle shop.

Working Group Reports

A Ministry Group report was presented by Nicky Hitching. Two outreach ministries, Room in the Inn and the new program Work Local, will begin in the next few weeks. Nicky and Margaret Craddock discussed Waffle Shop, about possibly making changes in the future (such as eliminating takeout and Wednesday nights) and taking steps so it is not so dependent on a few key leaders. One issue is control: under the bylaws the ECW has control of Waffle Shop. She noted they would be talking with ECW President Camille Gamble about shifting the control to those who actually operate WS. Nicky suggested that Lent 2017 might be a good time to evaluate takeout and Wednesday nights, to see if who these two programs are actually serving.

Tony Graves submitted a report for the Administrative group via email to Buddy Stallings. Tony reported that Hall Gardner informed him that the Endowment Committee has identified 3-4 folks to approach to fill the 2 spots that need to be filled at year-end. They will report back when they have settled on the 2.

The Formation Working group did not submit a report.

Warden Reports

Senior Warden Terre Sullivan vigorously thanked Rev. Stallings and Stewardship Chair Peg Wahl for attending all the zip code parties. She asked that the vestry to pledge early so the parish sees we are on the board.

Fred Piper and Julie Bethel had no updates.

Associate Rectors' Reports

Paul McLain reported that the September blessing of the animals was a great success, with 150 dogs as well as their owners. The crowd included lots of downtown young adults, some of whom took information about Calvary. He noted that the more we project ourselves downtown, the better, because many who live there are looking for a church home. Adult education classes are off to a good start, kicked off by Mitzi Minor, with 20 people attending the Sunday morning Bible class and 10 attending Jim Bailey's end of healing class (including a hospital administrator who may return to worship at Calvary).

Pastoral Care has been very busy with serving parishioners with pastoral needs. The annual Scarborough Fair takes place October 23 featuring numerous honey products made from Thistle & Bee hives. The fundraising event supports and raises visibility for this ministry.

He noted that Associate Rector Eyleen Farmer officially returns from sabbatical on Sunday, October 23.

Neil Raman reported that the 20-something group has planned a series of parties, and a costume tour of Elmwood Cemetery. The group also decided to make after-church brunch at the Brass Door Restaurant a monthly event. He noted his main goal for this group is building community, by providing opportunities so they can get together and get acquainted at other times besides seeing each other at church. He notes that the 30s-40s group already seem to have developed a sense of community.

Priest-In-Charge Report

Buddy Stallings encouraged the vestry during this interim period to be as active and visible at Calvary as possible, including attending the Chanticleer concert, and the November 5 Lobsterpalooza fundraiser (\$20,000 goal) to benefit Work Local. He encouraged the vestry to pledge ASAP, to set an example and boost our numbers, and to come to church whenever in town. A full church is a good optic and feels better, he added. He noted our numbers have not dramatically fallen since Chris Girata left, and while he hopes they don't drop, this will become more likely as time goes on. Finally, he asked vestry members to make a note of who's there but also who's not there, and to check on the people they don't see on Sunday mornings. In general, things are going well during this interim period, he concluded.

At the next meeting Buddy says he expects to have a recommendation about hiring a youth minister (depending on our annual giving level, and his thoughts about whether it's appropriate staffing for a church of our size).

New Business

There was a discussion about the parish's response to the vestry's move to nominate five people for five vestry seats, as opposed to eight nominees of whom five are chosen through parish voting at the annual meeting). Three or so people have complained, and they were told they can propose a candidate to be voted on at the Annual Meeting on October 30. (The five nominees have been told this might happen.) We have been careful not to ignore any who asked to be nominated, and these five were the only ones who asked to be nominated. It was concluded that for this unusual year, doing it this way is a good experiment to try. Since we have not changed the bylaws, it is easy to go back to the previous election method if we so choose. The vestry was asked to wear name tags and expect to be introduced at the annual meeting, where Search Committee Chair Hall Gardner will update the parish on the search process.

Margaret Craddock reminded the vestry the walking tour of downtown would take place as scheduled on October 23, and a moderator-led discussion would follow the tour.

Hall Gardner gave an update on the Grizzlies classrooms being built in the former Nachos building. An entrance with a landscaped reading space/teaching courtyard area will face inward toward the church, to help create a sense of campus for the Calvary block. Permits are being pulled, demolition is scheduled for after the new year, and everything is on track to be completed by the time the 2017-2018 school year begins in August.

There was a discussion about security at Calvary. Our no guns sign will go up soon, and there was a discussion about the pros and cons. It was pointed out that the vestry voted unanimously to add the sign. There was a discussion about Calvary's emergency plan, which is actively being updated and implemented by Calvary's Emergency Preparedness Committee. Buddy Stallings said security is not

taken lightly at Calvary, and that from a theological standpoint he believes we should be on the record as a house of worship that we don't accept that it's an acceptable choice to bring in a gun. Terre Sullivan talked about the 8 a.m. Sunday service feeling vulnerable, with no security guard at the Second Street front entrance. Buddy Stallings said he would look into the possibility of adding one. (At the 10 a.m. service there is one at front and back, but the back only for 8 a.m.)

Celeste Herburger asked if there is anything new on Columbus Park. Hall Gardner said Calvary has had conversations with Strickland team (staff of new Mayor Jim Strickland), and the option to buy the land negotiated under former Mayor AC Wharton is still good. If we buy it, we would be required to create a memorial that honors African American lawyers. Calvary has asked the proponents of this memorial to consider the fact that if it is located at Columbus Park, it will be next to a Nathan Bedford Forrest plaque that by law cannot be removed. Other locations, such as the courthouse and University of Memphis campus, have been mentioned. The next steps are to decide about the memorial, and to get a real estate appraisal to set a value on the property.

Motions

No motions were made.

Adjournment

With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Fred Piper and seconded by Donovan Smith. The motion carried unanimously.

Sincerely,
Nicky Hitching