

# St. Margaret's Church Westminster Parish



## Vestry Meeting Minutes Monday, November 19, 2007

1. **OPENING.** The meeting was called to order by the Reverend Mark Wastler, Rector, at approximately 7:00 PM in the conference room of the Administrative Building. Larry Lorton offered the opening prayer.

Attendance: The Rev. Mark Wastler - Rector, The Rev. Stewart Lucas - Associate Rector, The Rev. Dina Van Klaveren – Assistant to the Rector, Beth Knorr - Senior Warden, George Saroch - Jr. Warden, George Breeden - Registrar, Stacia Bontempo, Jeff Conover, Phil Graham, Jon Hall, Betsy Lefler, Larry Lorton, Anne Sessions, and Howard Shute.

Guests/Observers: Jim Hall – Finance Commission, Pat Hall – Parish Nurse.

The Rev Mark Wastler requested that a Communications Report be added to the Agenda as Item 4, following the Treasurer's Report. There were no objections.

2. **MINUTES. George Breeden.**

The minutes of the October 15, 2007 meeting were reviewed.

**It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

3. **TREASURER'S REPORT. Jim Hall presented the Treasurer's Report for Gordon Piché.**

Quote

### St. Margaret's Church Westminster Parish Treasurer's Report 19 November 2007

At the end of the month of October, we had \$36,937.51 in the Operating Checking account and \$16,819.25 in our Operating Savings account to meet budgeted monthly operating expenses.

On the income side of the ledger, through the end of the month of October, we are running short \$59,959.48 in total budgeted revenues, an additional short fall of \$4,069.23 from September; however, we are closing the gap. There continues to be no income from fund raising as had been anticipated (deficit is \$5,833). Total income through October 31 is \$520,873.86 (budgeted income \$580,833.34).

On the expenditure side, we are under expended by the amount of \$34,035.64 having budgeted expenditures of \$569,128.42 against actual outlays of \$535,092.78. Expenditures remain within acceptable limits in each expense category. Building and Grounds mid year correction to their budget has resulted in their being under expended by \$9,768.42. Finance has expended \$6,498.90 over the budgeted \$7,500.00 for the whole year and this deficit will increase. The Mission commission continues to be under expended (\$4,941 on a YTD budget of \$12,916).

The net total or bottom line through 31 October is a deficit of expenditures over receipts of \$14,218.92 (vs. \$18,090.54 in September) for the year to date. The financial health of St. Margaret's through the end of October remains good.

The PNC Bank change over from AB&T (Mercantile) that occurred on September 17 has gone quite smoothly. The treasurer and financial officer are learning the idiosyncrasies of the PNC online banking system. As reported in October, the St. Margaret's Day School Board approved having the St. Margaret's Treasurer transfer money from the Day School checking account to the Operating Checking account to cover the Day School payroll. Jim Hall, financial officer, developed an accounting procedure with input and approval from the Day School Trustees and St. Margaret's Treasurer...the procedure works very nicely.

Gordon Piché  
Treasurer

#### **The Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented.**

- a. Jim Hall distributed the Balance Sheet and "Profit & Loss Performance" report to accompany the Treasurer's Report for the Vestry to review. He noted that we were getting caught up on our Diocesan Contribution.
- b. A question was raised for the second month in a row by Anne Sessions concerning the statement in the report and on the Profit and Loss Budget Performance report that there had been no fund-raising monies raised. Anne Sessions noted that somewhere in the vicinity of \$5,400 had been raised by the Joust. Jim Hall responded that he believed the funds are accounted for but not yet in the correct line number (4004). He assured the vestry that the funds would be transferred to the proper line item "this month" (November).

#### **4. BUDGET PROCESS FOR CY 2008. Jim Hall – Finance Commission**

- a. The Rev. Mark Wastler opened the budget discussion explaining to those first year vestry members that this is the first very rough look at the budget for the following year. At this stage it is based on the inputs from the commissions as to what they would like to do in a somewhat unconstrained manner. It has not yet been given a hard look as to feasibility nor has it been subject to serious cutting.

- b. Jim Hall explained the process of collecting commissions' budget inputs, other expenditures, estimating income (donations, pledges, gifts, etc) and the resultant figures. He provided working copies of the figures used to date and PowerPoint print outs of the working figures (2008 Budget Revenue and Expense Review). He discussed the significant attention getting figures such as the Sexton and Admin/Info tech personnel and Buildings and Grounds debt service and maintenance fund, and the Christian Formation program growth.

Estimated Expenditures	\$879,467
Projected Revenue	\$755,700 (with \$650,000 in pledges)
Unconstrained Shortfall	(-) \$123,767

He reviewed the pledge drive status as of 18 November - 115 pledge units pledging \$352,000.

The Rev. Wastler found a double-entry of approximately \$45,000 expenditure, so the Estimated Expenditures are about \$45,000 too high and should be closer to \$834, 467 which still leaves a shortfall of \$78,767 to be addressed.

## **5. LINE OF CREDIT STATUS AND PAYMENT OF INITIAL CAMPAIGN COSTS. Jim Hall – Finance Commission**

- a. Jim Hall provided a handout on the issue and reviewed the status of the endowment and the options for payment of the initial campaign costs incurred to date and yet to be paid. He noted that \$29,014.69 had been budgeted including a \$2500 initial Kloate payment and \$26,643.06 (architect payment) leaving a balance of \$128.37. Additional costs incurred not covered by LRP were \$12,000 (Kloate), \$15,000 (architect payment), and \$500.00 (acoustic consultant) for a total of \$27,506.81.

He stated that we could execute the line of credit or take a loan from the Endowment to pay the costs. The endowment is easy to use, but the Finance Commission as a matter of principle does not want to make a habit of borrowing from the endowment. The Rev. Wastler stated that we don't want to use the Endowment fund as collateral as a matter of principle.

Jim Hall stated that the Lin of Credit option would be to pay \$27,506.81 with \$2,500 settlement costs for a total of \$30,006.81. Monthly interest on the amount would be approximately \$187.33. Or we could pay the costs from the Endowment to be paid back with interest.

- b. In discussion one vestry member offered the opinion that it was better to borrow from the endowment than to borrow from the Line of Credit. A follow-up question concerned the amount to be paid—was it open-ended. Jim Hall replied that it was not open-ended; it was already incurred costs – architect, capital campaign consultant. Jim Hall restated the Finance Commission view that they

did not want to incur interest payments until need to implement LOC. Use of Endowment would only be a stopgap temporary measure. George Saroch noted that there is sensitivity to the appearance of using the endowment as a fund to back long range plan. After further discussion, a motion was made:

**That the vestry borrow sufficient funds from the Endowment Fund to pay preliminary planning expenditures not otherwise part of the current budget such as architectural fees, campaign consultants, acoustical consultants and other related costs.**

**The motion was defeated with 5 Nays to 3 Ayes, with 1 Abstention.**

The Rev. Wastler declared the motion defeated and said that it meant we continue with the current plan to use the LOC to fund the preliminary planning expenditures incurred.

#### **6. Parish Nurse. Pat Hall**

- a. Pat Hall discussed on-going programs including flu shots, walk to Bethlehem, the general health of the parish, and the increasing numbers of aging baby-boomers.
- b. She had become aware of the availability of defibrillators in public places. She provided a handout on the Maryland Facility Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Program which outlines the rationale and requirements for participation in the program. The program would be under a physician's direction (Dr. Elizabeth Parker, MD) and Pat Hall would set up the program, train personnel, and see that all requirements are complied with. She thought that St. Margaret's could potentially benefit from such action, given the numbers of target population (over 50 years generally) attending functions at St. Margaret's.
- c. There was much discussion of the liability issue, the training in its use required, the necessity to inform users of the facilities of its availability, registration with the Emergency Services of its location, etc. It was noted that failure to have one could result in more harm than that of having it. Pat Hall was looking at an automated unit that "coaches" the user through its use. Program Costs would be for \$1800 (AED), Lifepak CR + training system \$350.00 and replacement pads/supplies – ongoing cost. The cost could be covered using the Parish Nurse Restricted Fund (\$1700). The remainder could be covered by monies budget for the Parish Nurse account or from a small fund-raiser.
- d. A motion was made:

**That the Parish Nurse move forward on the plan to purchase and implement the program.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

## 7. Missions Commission. Betsy Lefler

- a. Betsy Lefler reviewed the on-going work and status of the Missions Commission.

Quote:

### **Report to the Vestry from the Missions Commission**

November 19, 2007

St. Margaret's Missions commission has been meeting regularly and building enhanced processes to meet the Vestry-approved goals for this new commission.

The Missions Commission now has in place three ways to provide for funding to meet our church's missions priorities (i.e., to endow the poor and hungry; restore and heal the broken; promote, preserve and sustain the environment; and improve access to educational opportunities). First, organizations and individuals may request funding for up to \$1500 for urgent needs by using a short-form and submitting it to the Missions Commission for timely review, vote, and approval if appropriate. Second, organizations and individuals may utilize our annual process to seek a small or large grant from our endowment allocation. The current open season for grant applications closes November 30<sup>th</sup> and the review process will commence in early 2008. Third, any parishioner (or organization with the help of a parishioner) may seek funding for \$1500 or more anytime during the year. This third category should build on existing work and promote opportunities for St. Margaret's congregation to be proactive in seeking and acting upon our missions priorities.

Consistent with our commitment to good governance, in each case the Missions Commission, or a subgroup for small requests, will review (based upon our missions priorities) and vote on a written application for funding. The Missions commission will also require that any funding be followed-up with a report from the recipient as to when and how the moneys were used.

Most recently, the Missions Commission has reviewed and amended St. Margaret's Holiday Sharing program. This year, as in past years, we will provide turkeys at Thanksgiving and Christmas for parishioners to give, along with the ingredients for side dishes they provide, to at least twelve local families in need. We will not have the traditional gift tag tree, however.

Instead, we will have in place a "Missions Tree" in the Narthex this year during advent. Each week the Missions Commission will include an insert in the Sunday service bulletin describing how parishioners can help participate in the mission of the church. We are asking that parishioners show their interest and support by hanging a "Missions Ornament" (provided in the bulletin) on our Missions Tree. We will begin on the first Sunday of Advent asking for the congregation's prayers for St. Margaret's missions work and for God to guide us all in building our missions plans for 2008. The bulletin insert will include an "ornament" and hook so that anyone who will

share their time praying for our missions work may show this commitment by hanging an ornament on the tree. The bulletin inserts for subsequent weeks during advent will have similar missions themes and opportunities to participate in our missions work and more items for the tree.

End Quote

- b. In the discussion that followed several people raised questions or points. One wanted to confirm that there would be no gift-giving this year which was confirmed by Betsy Leffler. Another thought it would be good to rotate non-members through the commission meetings, both vestry and parishioners. Another pointed out that given recent experience and the missions/ministry debate—are you reaching out to include the congregation in the work of the commission.
- c. The Rev. Wastler emphasized that he thought this is an exciting Commission—both in the concept as developed by Long Range Planning and in its vision in hitting the ground. Rapid response is something most parishes cannot do. It can be proactive in AIDS, MDG in Africa, rebuilding after an emergency, or involvement in the environment.
- d. Betsy Lefler concluded by saying that with the experience base on the commission, they are leveraging on past experience to be more proactive.

#### **8. LONG RANGE PLANNING. The Rev. Mark Wastler/John Sutton**

- a. The Rev. Mark Wastler said that he had two questions that he knew the Vestry all had as well. 1) Where are we? and 2) What possible ways forward can we go? He asked for the views of the Vestry. Various views were expressed:
  - The issues presented didn't sell completely. Growth has happened without effort. People are not convinced that there has been substantial growth.
  - The Rev. Wastler's courageous convictions were praised for raising the issues and for his letter to table the effort.
  - As difficult as it was, we were getting feedback, don't stop getting feedback. Don't lose the conversation. We learned a lesson in communicating—we need to do better. We need to keep it going.
  - If we do nothing we will still face the same set of problems.
  - Concern is that to those in the 7:30 and 11:15 services, there are not real space issues—there is still room. They also for the most part are not affected by educational space issues either.
- b. John Sutton said the Long Rang Planning Commission has been focused for the last 18 months on “buildings.” It needs to reconstitute itself as an LRP process group, not a “building” group. We can do surveys, we did one a year ago that led to the development of a more concrete concept. That survey a year ago was good—it gave answers to what the parish wanted, but people forgot it in the interim. We are in a delicate position, and our building needs outstrip our income. We need to either approach a scaled back vision or go bigger. We need to reconstitute our membership from the vestry and from the parishioners.

- c. The Rev. Wastler said that last week during the staff meeting they spent 45 minutes to trying to solve problem of finding space for both Heretics group and children's chapel. We have 12 classes plus the Forum and only 7 rooms available. 2 Classes are doubled up and 1 class is meeting in the resource area in the basement—which is inadequate. We also have evidence of vermin in the Church undercroft. Discussion followed:
- Vermin should be addressed immediately.
  - What about portable trailers? The cost is about \$40K-\$100K depending on outfitting. Site work is costly.
  - What about having groups meeting in peoples' houses—or the rental property once it is clear of occupants.
  - More services to spread out resource conflicts. Us A/V approach—have parish hall as worship space and beam in the service?
- d. The Rev. Wastler said that he thinks there is momentum to move forward. He had met with most critical parishioners, except for one. He found some still harking back to the "Master Plan" of the mid-90's. In discussions with the architect we had asked for a \$3-4 million concept and got a \$12-13million concept. We need to get more realistic estimate of what we can get for \$3-4 million and not lose concept and foot plan. We need to prioritize our approach. Some things can be done immediately, others can be delayed.
- Need to reconstitute LRP and get action items tin response to issues. We must communicate them and address the issues.
  - Need to de-couple church design from growth issue, but growth is happening. More people are coming. We are getting people because they are coming, not because we necessarily want to grow.

#### **9. SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT. Beth Knorr – Senior Warden**

- a. The vestry nominating committee has been formed. The Vestry Nominating Committee consists of Kirsten Tolley (chair), Jane Piche, Richard Thomas, Larry Lorton, and Jenn Macris.
- b. This Saturday, November 24, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew will observe St. Andrew's feast day with Eucharist and have Chris Halley as the luncheon speaker afterwards.
- c. December 2 will be the visit of the Canon to the Bishop, Mary Glasspool. We will be having lunch with her following the 11:15 service. It will also be advent wreath making day in the parish hall, and at 4 PM Advent Lessons and Carols.
- d. Dec. 15 is the Vestry Christmas Party at the Knorrs.
- e. Annual Meeting January 20.
- f. February 1-2 will be vestry retreat at Claggett.
- g. She thanked the Missions Commission for a great report. She thanked the Rev. Wastler for his courageous conversation and his letter to the parish which seemed to calm things.

#### **10. RECTOR'S REPORT. The Rev. Mark Wastler**

- a. Stewardship. We have 115 of an anticipated 350 pledges in to date.

- b. The Rev. Dina Van Klaveren has a number of items coming up:
  - Rite 13 – Dec 9, vestry support and host dinner.
  - Schedule of Forum topics
    - Nov 25 – Rev Wastler – Tabernacle, Temple, Today - Part I
    - Dec 2, Festive Coffee hour
    - Dec 9 – Rev Van Klaveren - Tabernacle, Temple, Today - Part II
    - Dec 16 – Rev Lucas - Tabernacle, Temple, Today - Part III
    - Dec 23, 30 – Video Divina (film and reflection)
    - Jan 6 – Rector’s forum
    - Jan 13 – Festive Coffee Hour\
    - Jan 20 – Annual Meeting
- c. The Clergy are all involved in one or more commissions as regular attendees.
- d. Keep Nancy White in your prayers. She is undergoing significant back problems and will have surgery on Dec 4. Cards are encouraged. Check first before visiting.
- e. The Rev. Stewart Lucas announced that the new server is operational. The staff now has to get used to the new Windows Vista operating system.

**11. ADJOURNMENT.** The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM with the singing of the Doxology led by Howard Shute and Anne Sessions.

Submitted by

//s//George L. Breeden, Registrar

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*Nota Bene:* Opening Prayer Assignments

December – Annie Coble  
January 2008 – (Volunteer needed)  
February 2008 – Phil Graham