



St. Margaret's Church

Westminster Parish

Vestry Minutes

Monday, November 17, 2008
Approved on Monday, December 15, 2008

1. Opening: The meeting was called to order by Bud Billups at 6:32 pm in the conference room of the Administrative building. The opening prayer followed Mark Gatza's discussion with us about the search process.

Attendance: Dina, Stewart, Nancy, Bud Billups – Senior Warden, Gordon Piche – Treasurer, Stacia Bontempo – Registrar, Steve Brennan, Jeff Conover, Leah Drooff, Phil Graham, Sarah Hyde, Missy Kelly, Larry Lorton, Emilia Nardi, George Saroch, Jerry Smith, Carly Wilson and Arvilla Wubbenhorst
Guests: Kent Pagoota, Jim Hall and Mark Gatza

2. Discussion with The Rev. Mark Gatza – Diocesan Deployment Officer

- a) Mark Gatza reports that the rector search process is much easier to navigate than it was several years ago.
- b) The ultimate decision with who we call to become our rector is the vestry's decision by Canon law. It's not the bishop's appointment. We want to move quickly since people become anxious if it takes too long, but we want to take our time as well to do the process correctly. Some vestries ask the search committee to do the bulk of the work and present final candidates and some vestries take a bigger role – it's our decision. We also decide if we use a vote by quorum or by some other special set of rules.
- c) Mark's role is as a funnel for information for the vestry and search committee. Some vestries use a consultant, although Mark does not see a trend with using one.
- d) Right now, Mark sees the first of the new year as a good time for an interim to start. Since we have clergy on staff right now, it's not critical to get one any sooner. Most clergy who do interim ministry specialize in that. There are training programs for interim clergy.
- e) There are 17 congregations (out of 116 in MD) in transition. Some of the churches have had no trouble finding rectors and some have. Nationally there is a deployment shortage. However, Maryland is usually a 'destination' diocese.
- f) We should use this time to really figure out who we are and where we are going (profile/search process) as we search for a rector.
- g) 12 months is the average time for an interim rector to serve. Mark uses our profile from 6 years ago as a 'how to' with other churches for doing a profile. He says that it was quite good. The factor that drives this time frame is how frequently the search committee can meet. Mark thinks that since our profile is so current, we could get up to speed quickly and possibly have someone on board in September. Mark gives an example of a

parish that stipulated that their search committee members be able to meet every Sunday after church and every Tuesday night which cut their search time dramatically. They did not make short cuts; they just met more frequently.

- h) The typical number of search committee members is 13. You want an odd number so that there's never a voting tie. Profile committees tend to be smaller – about 7 or so. He states that no more than 2 vestry members should serve on a search committee. The search committee can work without vestry members on the committee if there is a strictly adhered to communication method. There is strict confidentiality in a search process – clergy tend to keep discernment to themselves as they listen to what God is calling them to do. The names will stay in the hands of the search committee. The vestry will only meet the final candidates in more of a social affair.
- i) The search process expenses come out of the operating budget. Mark recommends allotting \$20,000 for a nationwide search. That does not include moving expenses. Parishes are currently saving money with the profile printing. They are usually not printing one. Instead, they are sending it in a PDF report online. Many profiles are online – in fact there are 250 online right now.
- j) The names for potential interims for St. Margaret's are from all over the country.
- k) Do Bishops have any say in this selection process? In the Episcopal church, the bishop has the right to choose who can serve in their diocese. In Maryland, as long as you promise not to take the church out of the diocese or disrespect the bishop in public, then the bishop does not interfere. The Bishop usually recommends a couple candidates for a parish since they know their diocese and parish pretty well.
- l) The diocese does do some background work including a full background Oxford check (credit, criminal, driving, etc.) on the final 4-5 candidates before a vestry makes a final decision.
- m) Mark will be meeting with our profile and search committees as soon as they are up and running.

3. Minutes: Stacia Bontempo

The minutes of the October, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved with the following amendments.

- a) Emilia Nardi was not in attendance at the October meeting, so her name was removed from the attendance list.

MOTION: The minutes of the meeting were approved with the change. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report: Gordon Piche

Quote

**St. Margaret's Church Westminster Parish
Treasurer's Report
17 November 2008**

At the end of the month of October, there was \$36,934.20 in the Operating Checking account and \$22,962.42 in the Operating Savings account to meet budgeted monthly operating expenses. The Designated account had a balance of \$45,368.30 and the Endowment checking account balance was \$328,194.75. It is noted that as of Friday November 14, there was \$37,860.73 in the Operating Checking, \$22,962.42 in the Operating Savings and \$277,726.46 in the Endowment checking account. The Endowment checking account will be reduced by \$196,890, as the check was written in November to pay off the loan balance as directed by the Vestry at the October meeting.

On the **income** side of the ledger, the deficit through the end of the month of October was \$29,754.54 under total YTD budgeted income (*note: YTD = January 1st through October 31st*). Actual yearly income through October 31 was \$590,080.36 against a budgeted income YTD of \$619,834.90. There were no donations received during the month of October; therefore, the Donations line item continued to grow short of YTD budget, standing at a negative \$29,979.66 (\$11,687.00 vs. budgeted \$41,666.66). Income from pledges continues to fall short of budget, showing a short fall of \$29,131.99 (\$489,718.81 vs. budgeted \$518,850.80). The deficit from pledges has not reduced significantly as expected at this time of the year. Plate offerings continue to be well above expected (\$17,397.56 over budget) at \$34,064.22, which exceeds the budget estimate for the whole year by over \$14,000. It is noted that if members who made a 2008 pledge meet their commitments by year end, we will be essentially on our income budget for the calendar year.

On the **expenditure** side, through the end of October, we have expended \$620,637.65 having budgeted expenditures YTD of \$619,003.30. No one line item within any of the cost centers shows an unusually large or unexpected delta from budget.

The **net total** or bottom-line for the year to date ending 31 October 2008 shows a net negative income of -\$30,557.29.

Gordon Piché
Treasurer

End Quote

- a) We need to acknowledge the Caltrider's contribution (bequest) to SMC in paying off the loan to the endowment for the parish hall renovations. Stewart remarks that we need to have a committee to acknowledge contributions and process memorials (i.e. trees).
- b) There are some sizable funds at SMC that are earning no interest, so the finance committee is going to review this and bring recommendations to the vestry.
- c) Other bequests are coming to SMC but we do not know when, so we need to set up a process for this. Some of the bequests that we received this year were earmarked by the givers for building and ground projects.
- d) Is there a projected income for the end of the year? Right now, there is not. Mark Wastler's salary, pension and medical expenses will not be incurred in November and

December. We will probably fall short of the pledge budget, but probably not significantly.

- e) Stewardship update – 182 pledges for an amount of \$546,619 so far. There are 163 repeat pledges and 19 new pledges. There are 84 outstanding pledges (2008 pledgers who have not pledged yet). If they pledged the amount they did last year, the total would be \$664,822.

5. Review of the Budget for 2009

- a) Kent Pagoota presented the first cut of the 2009 budget. It was intentional that everything that we'd like to fund is in this budget, so that we know what we are not going to fund. Currently, the first draft of the 2009 budget shows a total request of \$909,315 from all commission heads and that's 21% above the 2008 expense budget. The initial projection for 2009 pledge income is \$654,466.
- b) Currently, clergy salaries are not at diocesan standards. As we consider bringing in a new rector, we need to think about bringing the rector salary in line with other parishes of our size.
- c) It will be a red flag for potential rectors that we don't have a second administrative staff assistant and a sextant.
- d) Should we have a sub set of the vestry that will take a closer look at the budget to pare it down? Yes, we will. And, Kent Pagoota will get prioritization from the commission heads by November 28 on their budget line items.
- e) We need to look at our personnel configuration and see if we need 3 clergy and one lay staff or 2 clergy and 2 lay staff or whatever it needs to be. Should we employ cheaper labor instead of using our clergy to mail newsletters, for example? We, the vestry, need to add a few more people to the personnel committee to look at this. Bud will take the lead on this. This issue represents the largest chunk of our 2009 operating expense.

6. Discussion of Search for Interim Rector

- a) Larry Lorton updated the vestry on the interim search. We're on a fast time table. If all goes well, we'll start interviewing this week. He is still waiting on some information from some of the candidates. 8 candidates are under review – 1 came from the diocese and the other came from an agency that Stewart Lucas is familiar with. From as far away as CA and GA, we have candidates – some are veteran interims, and there are both men and women. The January target date poses a bit of a problem with 1 or 2 candidates that appear to be good candidates – they could start in February. The Personnel Committee will be back in front of the vestry in December with 1 or 2 final candidates.
- b) How do we compensate an interim rector? We do not compensate them as a head rector. They will be compensated for less than what we paid our former rector.
- c) Will these candidates accept a shorter term (like 8 months) if we find a head rector quickly? The personnel committee will address that with our candidates.

7. Clergy Report

- a) Dina van Klaveren discusses her new position as priest in charge at her new parish in Glenwood, MD (just south of route 70). It's a church plant without a church building (just a parish house). Dina points out that financially SMC is doing very well compared to her new parish. She's becoming a priest in charge since her new parish could not

afford a formal rector search or an interim. If the parish likes her after 2 years, Dina could be hired as the rector. This arrangement allows this parish to move ahead quickly. Dina is very thankful that she's had this experience at SMC. She feels that God has given her this experience at SMC to prepare her for her next challenge.

- b) Transition issues: Dina has a plan for her transition. She is putting in place a hierarchy for the Sunday school teachers to divert some of the burdens from Stewart Lucas. This hierarchy will filter issues up to Stewart. We will need a coordinator for some of the youth activities, including some of the mission trips.
- c) Stewart remarks what a joy it's been to work with Dina, and he intends to be a resource for Dina, since that's what we're called to do in a resource size church. Stewart reports that he is doing very well and there was a large crowd at yesterday's services. The concert is coming together for Thursday night – 200 attendees expected. We're having a planning day to get us through Lent and Easter. Ruth McDaniel (office staff) is being a tremendous help as well. He ponders how to incorporate more of the lay leadership and he seeks our guidance on this.
- d) Stewart wants us to think about who we (SMC) are and how we can look better to prospective rectors. He reminds us that our sound system is terrible and it's hard to hear in our church. Stewart wants Al Todd, George Saroch and a few others to research this issue and report back in December. He presents the current rendition of the 2008 endowment budget showing available funding for possibly a sound system and carpeting for the church.
- e) Stewart present candidates for the May 2009 Delegates to the Diocese of Maryland Convention. We get to send 3 candidates. Spencer Johnson, Christiana Holyer, Jim Knorr, Maggy Cullman (alternate) and John Willard (alternate).

MOTION: It was moved and seconded that we send Spencer Johnson, Christiana Holyer and Jim Knorr as our candidates to the May 2009 Delegates to the Diocese of Maryland Convention. Maggy Cullman will serve as first alternate and John Willard as the second alternate. The motion passes unanimously.

f) December 28th will be Dina's last Sunday and we'll have a reception for her.

8. Wardens' Report

- a) George Saroch reports that the temporary classrooms are in place and operational.
- b) We lost power to the church on Tuesday and the day school had to close for the day. A transformer is to blame for that. We had to have our HVAC system checked for issues and there is cost incurred with that.
- c) We need to have some vestry personnel come to the next work day at SMC. It may be this Saturday – an email will be sent if it will happen.
- d) Bud Billups has asked Spencer Johnson to chair the Profile Committee and he has accepted. Bud has drafted a list of possible candidates for the committee. The goal is to form a tight group while addressing key areas of the church. We don't want this group to get too large.
- e) A number of people have come forward and asked to be on the search committee; more than can serve on the committee.
- f) We also need to have a committee formed for the election of new vestry members.

- g) We do not have a stipulation of more than one signature on our checks. We need to have a policy that any check of \$5,000 or more needs 2 signatures. The guideline from the diocese is any check over \$500. We have 3 authorized signatories currently – Spencer Johnson, Gordon Piche and Bud Billups.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded that we approve the requirement of a 2nd signature of any check of \$5,000 from any SMC account. The motion passes unanimously.

- h) There are no funds for traveling to visit prospective interims during our search. Bud would like to have up to \$2,000 (mainly airfare) available for travel for either a committee member or for the candidates.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded that we amend the 2008 budget to add \$2,000 for travel for our interim rector search. The motion passes unanimously.

9. Other Business

- a) When is the vestry retreat at Claggett? February 2-3, 2009

10. ADJOURNMENT. There being no objections, the meeting adjourned at 9:17pm with the singing of the doxology.

Submitted by

//s//Stacia Bontempo

Stacia Bontempo, Registrar

Nota Bene: Opening Prayer Assignments
November, 2008 – Phil Graham
December, 2008 – George Saroch
January, 2009 – Arvilla Wubbenhorst
February, 2009 – Leah Drooff
March, 2009 – Missy Kelly
April, 2009 – Steve Brennan
May, 2009 – Jerry Smith
June, 2009 – Phil Graham
July, 2009 – Stacia Bontempo