

St. Margaret's Church
Westminster Parish, Annapolis MD 21409

Minutes of Mutual Ministry Review & Vestry
Meeting

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Peter Mayer

Attendees: Rev. Peter Mayer, Canon to the Ordinary Rev. Scott Slater, Rev. Jane Hague, Ann Lallande, Wendy Gargano, Jim Hall, Dalyn Huntley, Teresa Todd, George Saroch, Mark Torrence, Anne Sessions, Charlie Lang, Doug Castonguay, Kyle Morgan, Willie Williamson, Doug Seybert, Ernie Tucker, Elizabeth Bowers, Kirsten Tolley, Valery Weekley, Trish Schilling, Julia Droof, Liesl Wheeler. Absent: Kathy Polk, Karen Engelke, Tom Wenz

Rev. Slater outlined the steps in the Mutual Ministry Review as it would take place in this instance. After reviewing the data sent to him from the MMR committee, he drew up:

- Affirmations
- Recommended growth areas (for Rector, for Vestry, for both)
- Key symptomatic statements.

General discussion before reviewing Rev. Slater's analysis:

- Need clearer lines of accountability and responsibility for Vestry.
- Need better understanding from where those lines develop, e.g. historical norms (outdated?), Rector's norms (based on different congregation?)
- MMR is to look forward for path to better operations.
- Vestry needs to decide what that path is and how to get there.

Affirmations:

There is a relatively strong sense of support for one another. There is a strong intent and commitment to support one another in leadership. Discussion: This is an above average sense of Vestry support, which is a strength. There is an indicated desire to continue this support.

There is strong commitment to improve communication and clear evidence that significant improvement has occurred in the past year. Discussion: While there have been significant strides made in the last 12 months, events have driven these steps, they are not necessarily intentional. There is lots of room for improvement, and there are still some communication failures.

Peter Mayer is continuing to mature in his identity and role as rector and demonstrates willingness to learn and improve as a leader.

Anne Sessions is highly respected and admired for her leadership this past year.

You all built a new building! This is indicative of health.

Recommended growth areas for the Rector:

❖ Leadership development:

- how to manage self and others
- how to inspire, empower, and support other leaders through more effective delegation and trust

- Be willing to let go

Discussion: There was discussion of better management skills such as time management, delegation authority, follow-up/follow-through, and preparation. Vestry members Willie Williamson, Doug Castonguay, and Doug Seybert will follow up with Peter on improving these areas.

- ❖ More attention to pastoral care needs
 - especially of leaders
 - delegate other pastoral care to staff

Discussion: The Rector and Vestry need to decide if this is an important area for Peter. Is it a best use of the Rector's time? What does Pastoral Care look like today at St. Margaret's and what does the congregation expect of its Pastors and leaders? has the definition and need changed?

- ❖ More consistent interpersonal communication
 - follow-up to communications
 - communications via email are unanswered – tactics?

Discussion: The Rector and Vestry need to decide protocols for email expectations, and other methods for communications. What can reasonably be expected for the Rector to respond to, and what are methods for evaluating messages, and responding or forwarding messages for others to respond. Not answering emails, not responding on discussions is frustrating Vestry and congregation. Peter feels overwhelmed by the number of emails he receives daily. Who is slipping through the cracks? What are the consequences when something slips through the cracks? Who else can respond on behalf of Peter?

Recommended growth areas for Vestry:

- ❖ Commissions/Commission structure:
 - Organize
 - Develop
 - Recruit
 - Empower commissions

Discussion: Vestry is unclear what a commission structure is and what has been developed for St. Margaret's. Former Sr. Warden George Saroch has drafted recommendations for commission structure that has not been well communicated. The Rector and the Vestry need to work closely on evaluating the commissions outlined, assigning them Vestry leaders to represent, and opening better lines of communications with them. Rev. Slater suggests there may be too many, don't be afraid to trim the number of commissions and replace some with task force teams. Vestry and Rector need to agree on what is expected of Vestry as they communicate with commissions, and what value the Rector sees in Commission reports. Do they achieve results?

- ❖ Increase (Vestry) visibility:
 - Sunday mornings
 - at events
 - at special forums
 - through regular written communication.

Discussion: What is the value of this visibility, Vestry needs to know the goal. How can Vestry become more visible? Is this an issue the Communications Director can promote?, e.g. “Better know a Vestry member...”

Recommended growth areas for Vestry and Rector:

❖ Vision!

- Peter needs to articulate his own vision/passions personally and in “I” language.
- Vestry members need to do the same. (Profile language: “[rector] should be adept at building broad support ... of a commonly share vision...”).
- Common threads can then be identified, fleshed out and (most importantly) prioritized.

❖ Prioritize!

- *Prioritizing is one way to define the vision. Why aren't you using your mission statement from the 2009 profile?*

Discussion: Rev. Slater recommends Vestry work on their vision now, based on Peter's draft. Every Vestry member, what is your vision? Rev. Slater recommends each Vestry member submit their vision to one person, to organize the ideas. Vestry has to hold Vestry accountable on all these issues. Create, again, the action items lists to track topics, accountability.

Vestry Task Forces for action:

Developing Rev. Mayer's leadership/management skills – Willie Williamson, Doug Seybert, Doug Castonguay will lead this. Points to work on: delegation, prioritizing, communication, planning.

Developing the Vision statement – Doug Castonguay will take the next steps with this, based on Peter's latest draft.

Personnel job descriptions for staff, rectors, wardens, officers – Anne Sessions will develop these.

Improving Vestry visibility – *needs volunteers*

Understanding and communicating the commissions structure – Ernie Tucker, Liesl Wheeler, George Saroch will clarify these and develop steps for utilizing the commissions, improving communications and accountability.

A clearly defined Pastoral Care plan/task force is needed, with Rector participation. – develop pastoral care definition for St. Margaret's today, goals, accountability reporting. *Needs volunteers*

General discussion: Willie Williamson firmly believes only the Rector can define the vision. Rev. Mayer has created the latest vision draft. The next Vision Discussion needs to be at the top of the agenda in the December meeting. Create a firm deadline for agreeing on the vision statement. Create a plan for communicating the vision, and living the vision.

The final issue Rev. Slater discussed: problems with trust. He suggested the comments indicated an improving atmosphere but there was definitely a sense of mistrust or lack of trust that needs to be talked through honestly and addressed at key decision making points. How to improve conditions of trust between Rector, officers, Vestry?

At 8:45p Rev. Slater closed the MMR with singing of the doxology.

Officers and wardens reports were noted.

Valery Weekley discussed issues of better communication with staff, and how to improve those conditions.

Clarification needs to happen about when Vestry meetings are in Executive Format, and when they are open.

Kirsten Tolley requested, again, that Wardens and Officers have their reports to the Vestry no later than 5p the Friday previous to the monthly meeting.

Trish Schilling suggested timely reports will help meetings move more quickly, and more allow more time for new business discussion, like items from the MMR.

//s//Anne Sessions, temporary Clerk