

Holy Spirit Vestry Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

Members present via Zoom: Mark Dvarishkis, Kent Watson, Clem Work, Terri Grotzinger, Warren Gartner, Torian Donohoe, Jocelyn Siler, Nancy Errebo, Kevin Borg, Caitlin Sherman.

- 1) Opening prayer led by Clem
- 2) Consent Agenda
 - a. **Motion to approve the consent agenda items, seconded, approved.**
- 3) No parishioner correspondence or concerns
- 4) No Memorial Board report
- 5) Financial report
 - a. There is a possible error with the salary adjustments in the projected budget which Mark will discuss with Connie
 - b. 2021 report
 - i. The budget projected a \$71,000 deficit but we ended the year with a ~\$35,000 surplus. This is due to an almost 10% increase in plate offerings, impressive intake from the Rummage Sale and Holiday Market, the forgiveness of PP loan, rent from the Montessori School, and ~\$58,000 in unrestricted gifts. Our expenses were also ~\$9,000 under what we had budgeted for.
 - c. 2022 budget
 - i. The budget reflects a ~5% increase in pledges and a 1.45% raise in staff salaries. As usual, interest from the Church's investments are not included in the budget.
 - ii. We cannot estimate the possible savings that the new solar panels will provide but they have already generated ~200 kw hours.
 - iii. The projected shortfall for 2022 is ~\$60,000.
 - iv. **Motion to approve the projected 2022 budget with the understanding that Connie and Mark need to review the staff salaries, seconded, and approved.**
 - d. **Motion to approve budget report, seconded, and approved.**
- 6) Old Business
 - a. The Rio Grande Border Ministry pilgrimage for January has been postponed due to Covid concerns.
 - b. Properties committee – Kevin is working on contacting electricians and James is taking the lead on getting Spectrum in to upgrade the internet in the church.
 - c. Solar panels – how can we share with people how they are working and how much they are saving us?
 - d. Diocesan Convention – Nancy has negotiated rates for rooms at the Broadway Inn, Holiday Inn, and Stonecreek Lodge.
 - i. The Diocese is looking into holding back funds to use for scholarships for anyone needing help financially to attend the convention.
 - e. Landscape Master Plan – Kent plans to have sketched plans available in March.

- f. Tech upgrades – how are we going to help parishioners understand what we are doing and how we came to this decision? A write up in the Paraclete?
 - i. Clem is taking the lead on keeping the project moving forward. Kevin will assist even while leaving the Vestry and Terri will reach out to Bob Wattenburg to see if he would be interested in being involved.
- 7) New Business
 - a. Vestry input on the parochial report – narrative of how we responded to the pandemic and what we see for our future.
 - i. Clem will send out a prompt to Vestry members and they will send their responses to Jocelyn to tie all together.
 - ii. The Bishop is looking into changing the parochial understanding of attendance as bodies in the physical building of the church. The digital and hybrid models of church necessitate a change in our understanding of our church community.
 - b. **Motion to accept Clem as Senior Warden for a second year, seconded, and approved.**
 - c. Thank you to our departing Vestry members: Torian Donohoe, Jocelyn Siler, Kent Watson, Kevin Borg, and Jeff Serviss.
- 8) As our next meeting is scheduled for only a few days after the Annual meeting, the Vestry will not have its typical short meeting on that Sunday but will next meet February 9th at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted

Caitlin Sherman
Clerk of the Vestry

January Rector's Report to Vestry

No report.

January Assistant Priest's Report to Vestry

Spiritual Formation: Sacred Ground had its final sessions for the fall. I participated in the monthly social concerns meeting. Co-facilitated the Advent retreat with Willie Hoffer (we had over 20 participants, including some new folks from the community). I did some planning for adult formation classes for February.

Volunteers: I coordinated volunteers for the Advent mini-retreat.

Communication: Met with Terri regularly. Wrote articles for the *Paraclete* and *The Spirited Times*. I completed an Annual Report.

Pastoral Care: Provided pastoral care/visits for 9 parishioners in December. I provided on-call coverage the week after Christmas while Terri was on vacation.

Worship: I presided at services one time during December.

Community: I did some coordination of services and then a visit with a community member needing support at the Poverello Center.

Diocese: I taught a 3-hour modern church history course to the school for deacons. I participated via zoom with Clericus (a meeting of clergy in Western Montana).

Study & Self-Care: I met once with both my spiritual director and my spiritual direction group. I completed some study about the season of Advent.

Submitted by: Rev. Gretchen Strohmaier

January Vestry Ministry Reports

A) Communications – Judy Parock, Chair

It has been a busy month at church preparing for the Christmas season and looking ahead to the events happening in January and February. Here are the highlights of what has been happening since the December Vestry meeting:

- **Christmas Events:** Much of our work this past month focused on getting out our message about our Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve services. In addition to updating our homepage on the website to make sure that it contained all the information regarding our services in an easy-to-find format, we made use of our sandwich board sign with our service posters and the Christmas services rack card we created to have out on the sidewalk throughout the Christmas season. We also had the Christmas services rack card available to the parish by the bulletins, and all of those disappeared. For the week of Christmas Eve, we featured information regarding the new outdoor Christmas Eve service on the sandwich board in order to attract neighborhood folks to the service. Frank Sherman put up the Christmas banner in church courtyard.

The Google My Business site also provided us with another site to advertise our Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve services, and our Christmas posts received many views on this free site throughout the month of December.

- **iContact:** In addition to our regular Sunday service announcements that are sent out weekly, we used it during December to send out notices for the Lessons and Carols service and our online and outdoor Christmas Eve services. We sent out two notices for each of these events, one a reminder a day ahead of time concerning the event and one the day of the event shortly before the event was to air with the direct link included to make it easy to find. That was our plan; long upload times for the Lessons and Carols service made it necessary to send out the initial service announcement the morning of the event instead of the day before.

Attendance was good for both online services with 138 views for Lessons and Carols and 131 views for the online Christmas Eve service. The in-person outdoor Christmas Eve service was warmly received with nearly the same total of people attending it as viewing our services online. Our thanks to Warren Gartner who took a number of wonderful photos of this outdoor event that we have used on the church Facebook page and on the church website.

- **Facebook Events:** We created Facebook events for each of the special seasonal services: Lessons and Carols, our online Christmas Eve service and our outdoor Christmas Eve service. We used the Facebook events to invite parishioners to participate in the events and to create interest on our Facebook page.
- **Upcoming Events:** We've been busy developing posters and rotators for upcoming events in January and February including the Annual Meeting, the request for Diocesan Convention Delegates, the Good Book Club's reading of the Book of Exodus, Rev. Tom Lee's class called "Scribes, Scripts and Scrolls, Parchment and Papyrus: The Bible from then until now," our "Warm Hands, Warm Feet" annual warm clothing collection for residents of the Poverello Center, and the winter blood drive. We've kept the website up to date with information about these activities, and we've also shared that information in the weekly Spirited Times, in the Sunday service leaflet and on the Pushpay app. We have created Facebook events for each of these events as well. We will use these Facebook events to create more interest and to invite people to the events.
- **Pushpay:** We continue to update weekly the content on our Pushpay app so that it is fresh. We use it as another way for people to connect to the Sunday and special Christmas services with the direct links included on the app. We've utilized the push notification feature as an additional reminder for the start of Sunday services and for the times of our special Christmas services. We have 356 unique users of the app. About 27.5% of our givers are giving online through the app. 72% of our donors have been making offline contributions through checks, online bill pay from their banks or donor-advised funds. We are continuing to make available

the information about the different ways to access Pushpay for giving through the Spirited Times and on our website.

– Judy Parock

B) Holiday Market/Outdoor Fall Festival – Caitlin Sherman (Marva Gallegos)

No report.

– Bob Wattenberg, Chair

C) Parish Life – Don Gisselbeck (Kathy Swannack, Coffee Hours; Anne Cohen, receptions)

Reception committee report: There were no receptions this month.

– Anne Cohen

Coffee Hours: No return to after church hospitality is planned at this time.

– Kathy Swannack, Coffee Hour Coordinator

D) Properties – Kevin Borg and Kent Watson (Margaret Borg and Kevin Borg, co-chairs)

Properties/Buildings Report: Temp Right performed our routine boiler inspections.

E) Rummage Sale – Holly Swartz (Marva Gallegos, Chair)

The Rummage Sale has nothing to report this month.

– Marva Gallegos, Chair

F) Social Concerns – (Jim Wiley, Chair).

**Social Concerns Committee Report
From Meeting on December 7, 2021**

The meeting opened with prayer led by The Ven. Dorcie Dvarishkis.

1) Report on Borderland Ministry of the Diocese of Rio Grande (Clem Work)

- Dates for the January Pilgrimage are Jan 24 to Jan 29; dates for the March Pilgrimage are March 6 to March 12
- The January group met online with RGBM for introductions and discussion.
- All pilgrims... and the SCC... were asked to think about what they would like to learn on their pilgrimage, and to communicate that to Clem and Audrey.
- Clem will extend this invitation to the entire Holy Spirit congregation at an upcoming service.

2) Community Ministries (Dorcie Dvarishkis)

Parenting Place

- Thus far in 2021, 86 parents have accessed our parent education opportunities and 88 community members have participated in trauma training.
- New website is in place that allows for parents to register and pay for classes.
- Giving Trees are up at Southgate Mall and Donation Warehouse to fulfill some holiday wishes for 250 foster care families. (Gifts due back to the Trees by 12/18).
- Permanent endowment will be established at the Montana Community Foundation by month's end.

- PP working with The Family Tree in Billings and Prevent Child Abuse America to determine a workable model for delivering more education and services across the state.

Hellgate HS

- Hellgate Sunday is 12/12; greatest current needs identified by the School are \$25 gas cards, \$50 gift cards at Target and Walmart, and laundry support.
- Two Traffic Ed Scholarships have been provided, and more applications are being distributed by Tracy.
- New part-time FRC Coordinator left for full-time job in district, so the position is reposted. Tracy is assisting A'Lisa with information and current stats to share.
- New rack card developed to have in the church and in the FRC room.

MIC/Common Good

- The second follow-up for Wrestling 12/1 gathered 60-70 of us for additional small group reflection and indigenous leader story/feedback. All were encouraged to complete the reading of the two initial resources, continue relationship/story building, and watch for engagement opportunities from All Nations.
- The Delegates Assembly followed in the second hour 12/1. We were 70-80 strong, and after some story and update sharing, were encouraged to
 - firm up our core teams, have any who are not Leadership Intensive trained to become so in January (1/20 and 1/22),
 - to invite another group to the February Wrestling sessions (which will be tweaked a bit),
 - and finally, to bring people out for the May 19th Common Good founding event.
- I spent some break out room reflecting, then joined Laure Pengelly for some brainstorming. I have moved to believing that our updated version of a core team should be our Vestry, joined by the leaders of our committees/ministry teams. Framing the core team as the carriers of keeping church and the scriptures/our traditions/experience relevant and Gospel-focused, I think this fits. The more we normalize regular listening sessions across the parish, then having each ministry move within their church/community focus based on what we're learning.
- Laure and I also feel a real desire to resurrect a fuller-bodied relationship with all of MIC, not just organizing/advocacy with Common Good. The organizing work and relationships are important, but so is our ability to work across congregations on other parish and MIC programs. Laure and I will carry this to MIC and will let you know where it leads.
- Holiday gathering 12/14 at Atonement, outside, 5:30-7:30 – stop by to visit.

3) Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization/MIC-Common Good (Several)

Gretchen Strohmaier, Lucia Solórzano, Dorcie Dvarishkis and Warren Gartner discussed their reactions to and take-aways from this Common Good program. Most agreed that

the subject is not appropriate for a large, impersonal, Zoom crowd... efforts like True Colors and Sacred Ground are much more effective and meaningful to participants.

4) Video on The Episcopal Church's Role in Indigenous Boarding Schools (Gretchen Strohmaier, Lucia Work)

The video will be shown at Holy Spirit on November 22nd, with around 18 attendees. A second showing will be programmed in the New Year and the link will be shared, to encourage Holy Spirit parishioners to learn about this difficult chapter in Episcopal Church history.

5) Plans for 2022

- February Blood Drive – Elizabeth Drummond has volunteered to coordinate this effort, planned for February 3, 2022, with the help of Audrey Murray and Jim Wiley.
- Poverello Hat/Sock/Glove Drive – Lucia will once again lead this effort, having determined in a talk with Jesse Jaeger that the need continues to exist. Donations will be accepted on January 9, 16 and 23
- Borderland Ministry Follow-Up – plan to show video and hear stories from those who went on a Pilgrimage, together with a Fund Raiser dinner, date TBD
- Celebration of 20 Years of SCC:
 - Bob Deaton presented a copy of the minutes from SCC's first meeting, Nov 12, 2002!
 - Jeanne Twohig has volunteered to interview SCC members to collect stories about the work done over the past two decades
 - Plan for a Parish Celebration, date TBD

6) Budget Update (Jim Wiley)

Upon receiving an email from Connie Gerke that some funds were still available, the Committee decided by email vote to allocate an additional \$125 to Hellgate High School Ministry.

7) Other Business

- Creation Care Ministry (Warren Gartner)

Solar panels are completely installed; we are just waiting for Northwest Energy to change the meter. In addition, further education on solar panels is planned, from the company which did the installation.

The Creation Care Ministry is working to involve more youth.

A winter walk at McClay Flats is being planned.

Warren will contact Lailani Upham of Iron Shield Creative to explore the possibility of Blackfeet Walks, which combine enjoyment of nature with an understanding of why certain areas are sacred to indigenous peoples.
- Dedicated Plate Offerings

Clem Work confirmed this request, written and presented by The Ven Dorcie Dvarishkis and aligned with the Canons of the Episcopal Church, had been approved. Dorcie will present a recommendation for monthly celebration of our ministries (much like Parenting Place and Hellgate High School Sundays...).

The next Committee meeting and the first of 2022 will be Tuesday January 11,, in the Parish Hall

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

– Jim Wiley, Chair

- G) Spiritual Formation – Glenn Hladek (Gretchen Strohmaier, Chair)
See Assistant Priest's report.

- H) Stewardship – Torian Donohoe (Barb Hosier, Chair)
The Vestry has the latest Stewardship figures
– Barb Hosier, Stewardship Chair
Torian Donohoe, Stewardship Committee Vestry Liaison

- I) Creation Care Ministry – Warren Gartner (Karen Simons Gartner, Chair)
Creation Care Ministry did not meet in December so there is no report.
– Karen Simons Gartner