

June 2019 Vestry Minutes
June 18, 2019

Present: Fr. Patrick Funston, Joe Barbercheck (Treasurer), Yvonne Amanor-Boadu (Clerk), Marian Fuller, Candie White, Phil Ryan, Mary Vanier, Landon Leiker, Katie Dempsey

Absent: Deb Lamb (Senior Warden), Betsy Barrett, Rebecca Burton (Secretary)

Start time 7:00 pm

Fr. Patrick led worship: Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families, Early Evening

The vestry engaged the spiritual practice of Dwelling in the Word, Luke 10.1-12

Review of May vestry minutes; one correction made by Yvonne re. location of last meeting; Yvonne moved to accept minutes; Landon seconded; unanimously approved.

After Fr. Patrick reviewed structure of subcommittees, scopes of work, vestry broke into subcommittees.

Subcommittee Reports

Mission and Ministry: planning a fall kick off with blessing of the backpacks and school supply donations with ice cream social on Sunday of Labor Day weekend (September 1); ministry fair a couple of weeks later on a Sept weeknight with pie; Fr. Patrick to pick a day for ministry fair; subcommittee to host coffee hour for Sept. 1 fall kick off and to talk with Deacon Sandy about identifying groups to invite to participate. Subcommittee will settle on dates and invitations will be extended after July meeting. Joe moved to accept report, Mary seconded; unanimously approved.

Property: continued discussion of furniture, members of subcommittee will talk to others in the parish to gather historical information; discussion of re-establishment of building and grounds committee, subcommittee members will take next 2 months to talk with individuals and to parish as a whole to recruit members, with view to having both a building subgroup and a grounds subgroup; Mary moved to accept report; Phil seconded; approved.

Administration: Joe will work on pledge-actual trend lines to present to finance committee for further discussion re. budget; reviewed and accepted treasurer's report; discussed highlighted items from timeline for stewardship campaign and budget process including annual giving kick-off event. Subcommittee expressed concerns about away football game on Sept 28. Would Sept 21 be a good kick-off date? Does the value of having the Bishop in attendance outweigh the possibility of lower attendance per football? (Game time decided about a week out). Questions left hanging, Fr. Patrick will visit with Bishop and David Littrell (Annual Giving/Stewardship Chair). Yvonne moved to accept report; Landon seconded; unanimously approved.

Fr. Patrick gave **Rector's Report:** new Deacon Carolyn Garwood will be with us for her internship until Sunday, February 16th, Letter of Agreement in process, hope to share at July Vestry. Fr. Patrick reflected on and recapped Biking Across Kansas last week. Reminded vestry of his continuing education absence in St. Paul, MN, June 24-28. Upcoming preachers and calendars on the monthly agenda.

Mission Focus: Strategic Plan, Mission/Vision Priorities brainstorming. Fr. Patrick opened the discussion with prompts: “What does the Roxburgh (*Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World: The New Shape of the Church in our Time*) discussion/learning mean for us in 2020 as a congregation? Are there any potential budget implications?” The hope of our Budget/Strategic Plan process is to narrow in on a few ideas to communicate to the congregation in a September vestry letter kicking off the annual giving (stewardship) campaign. The hope would be to nail something down at the July 16th vestry meeting to send to the Finance Committee as they develop an aspirational budget at their August meeting.

The vestry wondered about how a budget-less idea could be supported by a budget. Fr. Patrick suggested that a way to communicate the vestry’s support of these ideas is to include line items in our aspirational budget. Budgets show where an organizations values lie. How do we communicate that?

To further guide the conversation, Fr. Patrick suggested that the vestry think in terms of a three-pronged approach for priorities. He’s been thinking about the Roxburgh learning and the Lent 2019 Congregational Survey as inspiring three potential foci: Out-Reach, In-Reach, Other. ***The minutes from this point are organized topically rather than chronologically for better organization.*** During the brainstorming catalogued below, Candie made the observation that doing too much is a recipe for burnout, a few focused experiments might be better than a broad swath of too much. Fr. Patrick agreed and suggested that the process should start broad and be narrowed down to communicable goals at the July meeting and then the realities of the Annual Giving (Stewardship) campaign could potentially demand further narrowing of priorities as the 2020 budget comes into focus.

Out-Reach: Roxburgh-ian Missional Out-Reach. Not attractional “come get help at church” charity. Empowering/Encouraging others to move outside the bounds of the building, into the neighborhood (broadly defined).

- Fr. Patrick made the suggestion that, while this is the most important practice of a Missional Congregation, it is one that only a few people at St. Paul’s are currently equipped for and excited about. Still, it is the most important practice and supporting those who ARE ready, would bear fruit. Fr. Patrick suggested a budget for “Missional Micro-Grants” to remove any cost-barriers associated with truly missional activities. If a member of the congregation wants to begin a practice of regular attendance at a coffee shop, the church should buy their coffee. If a missional practice of neighborhood walking turns into a small group bringing Cokes or Sandwiches to neighborhood teens playing basketball, the church should buy that food. Etc. The vestry was broadly supportive of the idea; obviously there’s a lot to flesh out around process.

In-Reach: Out-reaching missional activity is best rooted in individual and corporate depth of relationship with God in Christ. The Congregational Survey indicated a low degree of personal spiritual engagement and connection between parishioners, God and each other. To ultimately support ongoing development of out-reaching mission (described above), perhaps St. Paul’s needs to invest in practices of interpersonal and spiritual connection and deepening?

- Landon suggested budgeting to support individual or parish retreats.
- Mary remembered and inquired about activities like *Beer & Boardgames*, *Chili Cook-Offs*, *Movie Nights*, etc. could that be a budget priority? Ongoing discussion brought out the idea of a micro-granting process to encourage/empower individual parishioners to develop social/spiritual community-building within the congregation instead of relying on ordained

parish leadership to make those things happen. If you would like to do a *Beverages & Boardgames* night or a movie series, St. Paul's could pay for that.

- Fr. Patrick also informed/reminded the vestry of some work the deacons are doing in this area.
 - Sandy is developing a plan for an internal lay ministry discernment team to support those who are feeling God's push to ministry.
 - Charles is working on a grief group.
 - Charles is also interested in having St. Paul's engage the resources and training of Stephen Ministries, an ecumenical Pastoral Care and small-group program used in over 13,000 parishes. Fr. Patrick has encouraged Charles to put together a small team to attend an informational meeting in Omaha on November 9, 2019 with an eye on a group attending the more rigorous week-long "Leader's Training Course" ("train the trainers") seminars in 2020.
 - This resource could help St. Paul's Pastoral Care ministries develop their skills and could be a good way to encourage/equip others to engage smaller groups of care/connection.

Other: Mary suggested that the congregation would probably want to see priorities that speak to specific areas of interest/desire the vestry learned about through the Lent 2019 Congregational Survey, especially since so much of the Roxburgh encourages a different tack. (St. Paul's, like many/most congregations being more concerned and interested in Maintenance/Management/Sustainability of the church (buildings, worship, and people) than engaging in Mission/Ministry.) Fr. Patrick agreed as suggested that many of the items addressed in the out-reach brainstorming attend to the survey as well as Roxburgh, one of the big learnings from the survey being that St. Paul's is neither as spiritually nor as interpersonally connected as it imagines itself to be.

- Candie and others wondered about children's Christian Education. Would hiring an Education Director or Teachers be a good use of priority and funds? Perhaps a Children's Choir as formation?
 - Fr. Patrick supported the brainstorm of Christian Education as appropriate to the "Other" category. He also reminded the vestry that he and Michael Funston are working on a plan/proposal for a Children's Chapel-type approach to formation to experiment with in the Fall and the current budget supports that potential. Fr. Patrick gave further details on that: having preschoolers leave the second service for a period of formation between the Sermon and Eucharist. Fr. Patrick is generally frustrated with the visuals of children leaving worship, but understands the reality of modern parents being less-than-willing to bring children to church an hour early for Sunday School. As such, Fr. Patrick would also like to see Children's Chapel incorporated into the main service on a regular basis, probably replacing the regular sermon; at least on fifth Sundays (in 2019/20: Sept 29, Dec 29, March 29, May 31), but maybe as often as monthly.
- Fr. Patrick reminded the vestry that another learning from the Survey was the curious combination of a lower satisfaction with worship and music combined with a desire to not change anything. Fr. Patrick suggested an "Other" priority of enhancing the choir through a Choral Scholar Program similar to St. Peter's in Pittsburgh or the Cathedral. This would be paying for student section leaders. Fr. Patrick also remarked that the Diocese has matching grants for campus ministries of which this could qualify.

[\(https://edokcampusministry.wordpress.com/parish-partner-grants/\)](https://edokcampusministry.wordpress.com/parish-partner-grants/) These grant applications

are due on August 31 of each year. The vestry was broadly supportive of this idea and excited about the possibility of enhancing the choir's support and ministry.

Fr. Patrick wrapped up the discussion with a promise to have June minutes out soon so that the vestry can pray and reflect on the discussion and continue individual discernment ahead of priority-narrowing decisions at the July 16th meeting.

Fr. Patrick led closing prayer.

Meeting ended at 8:59 pm.