

Calvary Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2013
Crook Auditorium

Vestry Present: Alex Wise, Bob O'Connor, James Dowd, Charles Shipp, Allison Parker, Leslie Smith, Rose Johnston, Alison Boeving, Hall Gardner, John Pruett, Sam Cole, Drew Smith

Others Present: Bishop Don Johnson, Rev. Chris Girata, Rev. Ben Robertson, Rev. Eyleen Farmer, Katie Owen, Terre Sullivant

Call to Order: Rev. Chris Girata called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Bishop Don Johnson opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the October 15 vestry meeting were approved.

Bishop's Remarks: Bishop Johnson explained that he has been attending the vestry meetings of parishes at a time near his visitation to the parish in order to spend time with the vestry. His objective is to listen and observe.

Treasurer's Report: Katie Owen presented the income statement through October. She reported on the HVAC renovation project; heating and air conditioning are working. The work came out on budget. \$154,000 has been paid; \$160,000 is outstanding. The treasurer's report was approved.

Working Group Reports:

Binding Us Together: Team Leader Alex Wise reported that he continues to be impressed with Christian Formation and its offerings. Planning is underway for quality programs through May. He described a forum called "Fifty Years Later: The State of Race in America," sponsored by the national church that he had just attended in Jackson, Miss., and suggested that several topics that were covered in the forum may be interesting for Calvary's Christian formation offerings. Bishop Johnson explained the Diocese's shift to new anti-racism materials that cover more than white/black relations.

Doing and Supporting: Team leader Bob O'Connor reported that three main areas will change in Calvary's ministry: 1) The practice of check-writing to organizations without Calvary parishioner involvement will come to an end. Carissa Hussong will reach out to all outreach organizations to inform them that the process will change. 2) There is movement to identify an over-arching ministry for Calvary to direct its focus. There appears to be a hole in the safety net for women and children and family systems in Memphis. Eyleen Farmer, who is helping to develop this concept, has visited Thistle Farms and Magdalen House, and she briefly discussed them. 3) The committee has identified a need for a bridge program for persons who are not new to Calvary but are also not as deeply involved as those in programs such as EFM. Chris

commented that he is meeting with the membership committee to formulate access points. Bob also reported that the need for a ministry coordinator is being examined.

Using Our Inheritance: Team Leader Hall Gardner reported that expenses have been cut, and he is waiting on a pledge income number to determine income. He is also working on balance sheet accounts.

Clergy Reports:

Eyleen Farmer: Eyleen reported that the Lenten Preaching Series roster is complete and described several of the speakers. Some will speak on Sundays and Wednesday nights to be more engaging for parishioners. There will be online streaming of the speakers.

Ben Robertson: Ben reported that youth Christian formation is going well and there is an 18% increase in attendance from last year. Hilary Chipley communicates well with the teachers. Small groups are also going well. Ben presented the full slate of worship and activities for Advent and Christmas. There will be three services on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day.

Chris Girata: Chris reported that good results are being seen from the stewardship committee's face-to-face meetings with parishioners. The Diocesan Convention is this week, and Calvary will host the 2014 convention. Chris and the membership committee are working on the development of a good system to welcome and form new members. There are new visitors every week at the 10:00 service. The personnel committee is nailing down the roles for Calvary staff and filing in holes. Chris will hold another Rector's Forum this Sunday. Chris and Eyleen led a discussion of better times for Christian education.

Warden's Report:

Alex Wise spoke of his observation of new energy in the church and coherence in ways that things are done. He urged everyone to increase his/her pledge this year.

Old Business: Alex and Chris reported on The Hub. Its financial link to Calvary will end when The Hub goes off Calvary's payroll system January 1. A business plan from The Hub has been presented to Alex and Chris; it raises questions that need to be addressed. The estimates for The Hub's building repairs need further examination. It was agreed that a decision on the future of The Hub will be delayed until more questions are answered and a meeting with them can take place.

New Business: A change in the vestry's by-laws is being proposed, in order to change the date of the parish annual meeting and election of vestry members. The change would allow the annual meeting and vestry election to take place in the 4th quarter of the year. This would enable vestry orientation to take place, as well as the election of new wardens, before January. It would also allow new vestry members to attend one vestry meeting before January. The vestry will vote on this proposal at the December vestry meeting.

Bishop Johnson: The Bishop stated that he is hearing good things about the Episcopal Church in West Tennessee. He commented on his good meeting with Chris and Hall Gardner concerning the finances of Calvary Church. He expressed disappointment about Calvary's reduction in its financial contribution to the Diocese in 2015 and 2016 and asked the vestry to reconsider. He

presented a comparison of parochial report and projected giving to the Diocese for Calvary. Alex asserted that we want to be a good partner and asked whether there aren't other kinds of valuable contributions that Calvary can offer the Diocese. The Bishop said he is eager to work with Calvary to identify additional opportunities for leadership. He is looking forward to Calvary's hosting the Diocesan Convention in 2014. Chris thanked the Bishop for his visit and for his remarks.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terre Sullivant, Clerk