

The Episcopal Church of St. Andrew – New London, NH

Vestry Meeting Minutes

19 December 2023

Present: Jay MacLeod, Morris Edwards, Billy Kelly, Fifi Mitchell, Claire Pace, Lin Potter, Russ Potter, Mike Quinn, Russ Register, Nonie Reynders, Nancy Rollins, Alice Perry.

Absent: Karen Zurheide.

Guest: Liz Niehaus.

Jay opened the meeting on Zoom with a prayer.

**November minutes** were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**Montessori Preschool:** Nancy introduced Liz Niehaus, noting she had brought her proposal to open a pre-school/child-care in partnership with St. Andrew's to Jay in the summer. Liz described herself as a career educator who found her way to Montessori, a practice for 3- to 6-year-olds she has been engaged in for the last decade. Her plan is to pair high-quality education with financial accessibility under the auspices of a national network of more than 60 schools called Wildflower. There will be a tiered tuition model based on income level to create an inclusive and economically diverse group of children, toddlers and 3- to 6-year-olds. Plans call for six teachers and up to 36 children.

In response to questions, Liz noted the curriculum is to be secular, with a community (not religious) partnership. Parishioners might be invited to have lunch with the children as a connection for us to young members of the wider community. The program will accommodate the schedule of families with two working parents, expecting that most will attend full-day but with a half-day option. Special-needs children will be held in common space all the time, she said.

Jay noted how our missions overlap and noted some urgency if the program is to be up and running by September. Some renovation will be required to downstairs spaces and also provisions for outdoor space are needed. Nancy will chair a task group to include Harvey Best (Buildings and Grounds) plus vestry members Billy and Fifi. A meeting will be called early in January to continue the planning process. Nancy has been in touch with Bengi Ambrogi and he reports Diocesan experience with such partnerships and with insurance and contract arrangements.

**Stewardship:** Russ Register reported 144 pledges totaling \$430,811, 99% of our \$435,000 goal.

**Finance:** With some loose ends to tie up in the monthly report, Mike will send spreadsheets and a written summary soon. He noted that revenue from January through November is doing well. He invites questions by email once the November report has been sent.

Mike walked us through the proposed 2024 budget that we received in advance of the meeting. Total expenses shown are \$736,129 with total income at \$736,438. It was **moved, seconded and unanimously voted to adopt the 2024 budget as presented.**

**Core Outreach:** Jay reported that the Last Sunday offering for KREM was well in excess of what we would have given from Core Outreach so our plans to provide Arava Institute for Environmental Studies with \$2034 from Core Outreach, enhanced by a \$1000 anonymous gift, were accomplished.

**Annual Meeting:** Alice said that Annual Meeting has been set for 21 January at 9 AM, between services, with budget preview and questions on 14 January, also at 9 AM. Nominations to be voted on at the meeting are as follows:

Nancy Rollins as Junior Warden

Jennifer Giles to complete Nancy's remaining two years on the vestry

Kathy Mathias as clerk for three years

Jerry Coogan and Susan Feyrer also for three-year vestry terms

JoAnn Hicks will serve a second term as Delegate

Bill Morgan will serve a first two-year term as Delegate

Mandy Johnson will serve a two-year term as Alternate to Convention/Convocation.

Alice also provided an explanation for each of the proposed by-law changes that had been sent to vestry with this meeting's agenda. Jay noted that information about annual meeting will be sent to parishioners in advance via regular parish emails.

**Worship:** Jay reported that a few people feel quite strongly against his suggestion to halt the Thursday Healing Eucharist for a period, confirming Jay's reservation that some will miss the midweek Eucharist. In part because of his knee, Jay will continue with the plan to incorporate healing into the Sunday morning services three or four times a year.

Jay announced Bishop Rob's visit next year on 8 December at both 8 and 10 AM services. Jay will probably offer "God 101" in the fall in anticipation of Bishop Rob's visit.

Jay asked that we make an effort to engage new people at coffee hours and noted that our music during worship, a combination of traditional, world church and contemporary music, is doing a great job.

**Talents/Gifts survey:** Claire noted that with Nonie, Gardner Yenawine and Elizabeth Lowell it has been decided to move forward and launch the survey in January. Data will be gathered in Excel to include information about work and life experiences that parishioners are willing to make known and share with the rest of the congregation. Announcements both written and spoken will alert parishioners to participate. Jay thanked the team putting the survey together, noting it is helpful to our mission and ministry.

**Plans for 2024:** Jay said 24 youngsters have signed up for St. Andrew's Youth Choir to begin in January, on Mondays after school. Children are expected to sing at an all-age Eucharist on the

first Sunday of the month; those weeks, singers will also meet after school on the Friday preceding the Sunday service. A Diocesan grant provides partial funding for the program.

We plan to proceed again with Voorhees internships, anticipating mid-January recruitment when students return to school. Jay is hopeful that a partnership with the Outing Club summer camp program, that will provide something concrete for interns to be involved in each week – story-telling, racial understanding, perhaps singing --, will come to fruition this year. The intern program, dependent on suitable applicants, will be funded via another Last Sunday offering as well as a budgeted line item.

The pilgrimage along St. Cuthbert's Way will take place over two weeks, one group each week of those weeks. "Through walkers" will complete the trek in five days, gathering on 9 September to begin the walk on 10 September, with Jay accompanying them. The second group, any through walkers plus those walking shorter segments each of six days, will join the first group at Durham Cathedral on 15 September to begin their walk on 16 September. This group will be co-led by vicar Leah Philbrick and a colleague (Jules) of hers. Some pilgrimage expenses for the leaders each week are in the budget; participants will pay their own way. Jeff Cleveland coordinates the first week and Nola Jordan the second.

Fifi asked about the B & G Capital Needs Assessment Group that had outlined numerous suggestions to be implemented in 2024. It was decided to revisit that list at a future vestry meeting to schedule those out, understanding that several items can be deferred to later years. Jay also noted that while Old St. Andrew's had not been a part of that study, a legacy gift has been earmarked to address issues identified in an earlier OSA building-needs study.

**Lay License Renewals:** It was **moved, seconded and unanimously voted to approve lay license renewals for Marni Eaton, Anne Hall, JoAnn Hicks, Nola Jordan, Alice Perry, Emelia Potter and Theresa Quinn.**

Jay closed the meeting with a moment of silence, giving thanks for church leadership and all God's blessings, and together we offered a mutual blessing in the words of the grace.

Respectfully submitted,  
Alice Perry, Clerk

**Note: The next vestry meeting will be 18 January 2024.**