



St. Timothy's Vestry Minutes

July 13, 2021

Vestry Minutes taken by Katharine Wells, Clerk of the Vestry

Present: Pastor Stephanie Kopsch (Interim Rector), Mother Lauren Grubaugh (Associate Rector), John Putnam (Children & Youth Minister), Shawn Murphy (Senior Warden), Bob Fullerton (Junior Warden), Dennis Haugh (Treasurer), Dominic Dezzutti, Tim Mills, Victoria Parker, Ann Pontius, Jessica Ross, Jennifer Saldanha, Neil Scarlett, Marie Schriefer, Katharine Wells

Absent: none

Called to Order

6:30 p.m. – Shawn called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

Shawn explained the COVID-19 protocols for this in-person meeting. This small group meeting can be held without masks if all are vaccinated and all in the group agree. Ann moved to hold the meeting without masks required, and Dennis seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Shawn welcomed John Putnam. John is attending tonight to discuss the Believe Out Loud letter submitted by the staff.

Spiritual Reflection

6:40 p.m. – Mother Lauren led a spiritual reflection. The reflection was a Dwelling in the Word activity, with a reading from Luke chapter 19. The group discussed Zaccheus and the connection to hospitality. She asked the group to reflect and share, "Where is Jesus inviting us to go as people of hospitality?"

Agenda Review

7:06 p.m. – Shawn reviewed the agenda. There were no adjustments made.

Approval of Minutes

7:06 p.m. – For the minutes from the June meeting, Victoria moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Dominic seconded. Approval was unanimous.

Treasurer's Report

7:07 p.m. – In advance of the meeting, Dennis shared a memo along with the monthly financial statement documents. Dennis noted that in the absence of having a Financial Administrator on staff, he is spending 15 to 20 hours per week to keep our accounting systems running. He shared that we do have a new good candidate for the position.

Dennis noted that US Bank opened their online portal to apply for forgiveness of the second PPP loan, and he will start to work on that application soon.

Clergy and Warden Reports

7:11 p.m. – Shawn noted that we will begin with the letter from the staff about Believe Out Loud. John shared that the recent loss of his friend from his former church has fueled his passion and urgency for the Believe Out Loud work.

Mother Lauren shared that she and the staff do not believe the process would conclude before the new rector would begin. It is important to ensure that all voices are heard. We should probably wait until the new rector is in place before having congregation-wide conversations. Mother Lauren noted that three parishes in our diocese recently went through the Believe Out Loud process.

John explained that the number one term people across the country associate with Christians is “anti-gay.” Many people do not know what the Episcopal Church is, so it is valuable and important that we say we welcome the LGBTQ community. He believes this could also be powerful for the broader South Suburban community.

Mother Lauren explained that the Believe Out Loud process is intended to honor every voice and to welcome questions. It is a dialogue-based model, based on storytelling and asking questions.

Victoria noted that this is not a part of the Parish Profile for our new rector search. Pastor Stephanie added that she has never done this process as an interim, and she is not sure that now is the time to bring this to the congregation after 15 months of the pandemic. While Pastor Stephanie agrees it is a fabulous process, she is unsure this is the discussion to which we re-gather as a congregation.

John shared that he feels we should ensure we are finding a candidate for the new rector that matches our values as a church, and that it would help the new rector by beginning these conversations before a new rector joins us.

The group discussed the desire for these conversations to be truly enlightening, not divisive, and done in a way that all voices are truly heard. The group shared that this was not raised as a concern in the recent Cottage Meetings, but that there is already an assumption of welcoming among the congregation.

Mother Lauren explained that the Bishop of Colorado has not mandated that same-sex marriages be performed, but that each Parish needs to make that decision for themselves. The Believe Out Loud process is the Parish discernment process for that decision on allowing same-sex marriages. The process could take anywhere from three months to two years.

Dominic moved to initiate the Believe Out Loud process, as a result of this meeting. Ann seconded. Additional discussion continued.

The group questioned if the process presumes a fixed outcome. The group discussed that we are interested in a process of discernment, but that we should not presume the outcome of the process.

Victoria moved to amend the motion to say: We are agreeing to start a process of discernment about what it means for St. Tim’s to be a welcoming Parish, by following the Believe Out Loud process as outlined by the Diocese. Dominic seconded, and approval was unanimous to accept the amended motion.

The group then voted on approval of the amended motion. Approval was unanimous.

8:03 p.m. – Pastor Stephanie emailed a written report in advance of the meeting. She asked for feedback on what, if anything, the Vestry believe is missing from her report about our most imminent ministry goals.

A question was raised about re-opening all the pews for seating. Pastor Stephanie shared that they had already planned for all pews to be open for seating starting this Sunday. Pastor Stephanie shared that while she understands the struggles of continuing to wear masks in worship, the Diocese does not provide guidance that would allow for no masks. The Diocese’s guidance says that if anyone is unvaccinated, including children, masks must be worn. Because St. Tim’s welcomes children in our worship service and children are not eligible to be vaccinated, masks must continue to be worn.

8:10 p.m. – Shawn emailed his Sr. Warden’s report in advance of the meeting. Shawn thanked Tim Mills for agreeing to lead the Search Committee for the new rector.

8:11 p.m. – Bob emailed his Jr. Warden’s report in advance of the meeting. Bob explained that the parking lot needs repair. The Property Committee would like to repair it, instead of replacing the whole thing this year. He is not yet asking for approval; however, they would like to fix the potholes and replace the poor lighting soon. Bob thanked Jana Loyd for becoming the Chair of the Property Committee and for the energy and care she has brought to the position.

Rector Search Report

8:13 p.m. – Bob emailed a Profile Committee Report in advance of the meeting. He shared that Vanessa, our contact at the Diocese, is pleased with our progress and had positive feedback on the Parish Profile report. Bob noted that the Parish Profile will be ready for review and a vote at the August Vestry Meeting.

Additional Business

8:15 p.m. – The staff noted that they are planning for a homecoming event, such as a rally like we’ve had in the past. The group agreed with hosting the event on the Sunday after Labor Day, instead of in August. Marie volunteered to organize a Ministry Fair to be part of the homecoming event.

8:17 p.m. – Given the vote earlier in the meeting, Shawn asked for volunteers to be Vestry representatives in the Believe Out Loud process. Dominic and Ann volunteered.

Calendar Review

8:18 p.m. – Shawn reviewed the upcoming calendar item.

- Vestry Meeting on August 3

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Vestry will be Tuesday, August 3, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Adjourn

Pastor Stephanie offered a closing prayer.

There not being any additional business, Dominic moved, and Marie seconded the motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Approval was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katharine Wells

Katharine Wells
Clerk of the Vestry