

Trinity Parish Vestry Meeting

Tuesday, October 24, 2006 – 7:00 pm



Present from the Vestry: David Arscott, Peter Bostock, John Crevelt, Jay Dean, Carl Ditmore, Nancy Grove, Harry Hagey, Howard Smith, Jeannie Thomas

Vestry absent: Jeff Cunningham, Frances Nuelle

2007 Vestry present: Lisa Deal

Clergy: The Rev. Anne Jensen

Guests: The Rev. Michael Hansen, Janet Littlefield

Officers: Jennifer Fitzmorris, Treasurer; Margie Stehle, Clerk

Prayers: Jeannie Thomas

Jeannie led the vestry in a portion of Evening Prayer

Approval of September 2006 Minutes

It was moved that minutes from the September 26, 2006, meeting be approved as emailed.
Motion was seconded and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Jennifer Fitzmorris

Overall, we are ahead of budget on income because of the one-time gift noted last month. Jennifer is still hoping that pledging will come in at budget.

YTD expenses are slightly below budget. Utilities were a little high, but other expenses are offsetting that overrun.

YTD we have a deficit of \$8000 – entirely due to the one-time gift.

Total assets decreased in September by \$30K.

We should end the year at 3.7 months of operating reserve, lower than we would like.

NRSC Update and Presentation by Michael Hansen

Howard introduced Michael Hansen, Diocesan Deployment Officer, who attended the meeting to update Vestry on what happens next in the search process. He talked about Vestry's role in the search. *(all items from here until the paragraph headed "Questions" are part of the Rev. Hansen's talk to Vestry)*

The search committee is in the process of visiting 6 semi-finalists, and will soon turn over the names of up to three final candidates to the Vestry. Vestry will elect a new Rector by two-thirds

vote, so 8 votes are needed to elect. The finalists will all be people that the NRSC members would happily accept as Rector. The NRSC may rank the candidates, or they may not.

Once the top three are chosen, the search committee's task is finished. They will turn over all the information (all paperwork) about the finalists to the Vestry. They will tell the Vestry who these people are, and why they have been chosen, the equivalent of an executive summary. Vestry then reads through all the paper files.

Keep in mind that the Vestry will elect the next Rector. Vestry members must decide what they need to know, and how much time they need to spend with the candidates, in order to make the best decision.

The Search Committee does not elect. The responsibility of electing is the Vestry's. We need to be sure all Vestry members have all the information they need in order to make an informed decision. Vestry has indicated that they would like to keep the NRSC more involved in this last phase. There can be as much interaction and passing of information between NRSC and vestry as is wanted or needed.

The Rector candidates will each come for a weekend. Standard visit outline: candidate and spouse arrive on a Friday. They are met at the airport by a vestry member, and taken to a hotel. Saturday: tour of local area, tour of campus, meet with bishop or executive officer, meet with treasurer and wardens to discuss salary, housing, expenses, etc. Dinner with search committee and vestry.

Each candidate will have about an hour meeting at the Bishop's office, to talk about the diocese, clergy, etc. They might have this meeting on Friday. Most candidates want to meet with the team (treasurer and wardens) that will decide their salary. It's very important that we have a real salary number to give them. Trinity's housing situation is not a question: with the present economic conditions, they will live in the rectory.

After tours and meetings, the candidate and spouse will have dinner with the vestry at someone's home. They need significant time (2-3 hours) with the Vestry.

Typically, there will be a social time, dinner, then a formal interview process. Aside from the interview, it is important to have some one-on-one time (during tours, airport trips, etc.). Everything you're doing with a candidate is an opportunity to get a feeling, an impression. Build in some time for this.

Should the spouse be present for the interview? They are coming as a couple. Talk with candidate about what they would prefer. If Vestry has definite opinion, let the candidate know.

Interaction is extremely important. You want some magic to happen ("It's happening, I like talking to this person!") Is this person in synch with us, or are we missing each other somehow? This is not some kind of court process. If magic is not happening, something is wrong. The Rev. Hansen says he interviews candidates constantly, and can tell within the first 10 minutes whether he wants that person in the diocese. If the search committee has done their job, these feelings will be the most important part of the vestry process.

Vestry is also selling Trinity to the candidates. We need to be thinking about this. The candidates have no history with us, and we need to tell them who we are. They need as much opportunity to discern a call as we do. They're doing research on us, too. The person we choose might say no. Some of them are in multiple searches.

On Sunday, they will go to services, incognito. They will observe quietly, and not go to coffee hour. So much is learned about a parish by participating in the liturgy.

A priest interviewing for a job is a public person, like a politician. Questions can be asked that might not be asked in a corporation, such as questions regarding health issues, age, how the spouse might be involved in parish, etc. The Rev. Hansen's opinion: Don't ask something that you wouldn't want to be asked yourself. The most important questions might be: what would be your plan for this congregation? How would you approach this parish? What does the Parish Profile tell you about this parish? What have you learned about us from this profile? What's your vision for this congregation? Where could you take us? How do you take care of yourself? What do you and your family do to stay healthy? What's the last book you read? How do you stay current? Many of these questions are already being asked by the NRSC, and this info will be presented to vestry.

The Rev. Hansen recommended a booklet published by the Church Deployment Office – "Interviewing in the Calling Process." This booklet lists nine areas in interviewing that Vestry members should be concerned about: leadership style, liturgy and worship, interpersonal relations, preaching, Christian education, etc. Decide who asks which question. Everyone should share. Ask questions that need to be asked in order to be able to make a decision.

The Rev. Hansen is in the process of checking with the candidates' bishops. Background checks will be done on the final three.

What if our chosen candidate declines? Would vestry call candidate #2? If not, we would need to start over.

If Vestry's vote can't be completed before the annual meeting, The Rev. Hansen says the annual meeting can be postponed for up to 90 days. This should be plenty of time. The Rector should be elected by this Vestry, not the incoming class..

We should not tell the candidates when we will make the final decision. It's not possible to know. Vestry might not be able to make the decision on a specific night. Also, the Bishop of California must approve our choice (he will approve, because The Rev. Hansen will present him with the three names in advance, so that he can express reservations if any). Actually, Vestry can overturn the veto of the Bishop. When election is made, the Vestry should call The Rev. Hansen and tell him who is elected.

The voting process: Vestry should give some thought to the process, and make plans in advance. It is strongly recommend that deliberations start with prayer (Anne would be happy to celebrate the Eucharist), reflection. Then come into the meeting room, take a straw vote (nonbinding). This gives an indication of direction. Then begin the discussion, with each person expressing an opinion. From time to time, take a break, and take a straw vote. If the meeting lasts 2 to 2-1/2 hours, stop. Often vestries can't decide the first night. Take 24 hours, pray, think, and talk to one

another. Come back and do it again. Don't force selves to make a decision according to some timeline. Forcing a decision is a recipe for disaster.

Eight are required to elect. After the election, ask for unanimity. If some people can't do this, the candidate is going to want to know. Usually people can live with the majority decision.

Questions: What if vestry members are not available on specific dates? All vestry need to be there, if possible. If someone is missing, ask the candidate if a phone call would be possible. Candidates will be here in December, some might be pushed to January. All Vestry members are eligible to vote, whether or not they have met the candidate. Need to trust the group.

Spouse profession: what will they find to do? How to interview? It's OK to ask questions. The candidates will be worried about what the spouse will do in case of a move. Suggestions could be made for networking with people in parish, etc.

When the candidate is on campus, do they meet other people? Should they meet staff? If they did meet with staff, they could have orientation, information about how everything works in the parish. Should they visit the school, meet with Head of School Mary Menacho? Do they have children with special needs? Be very sensitive to family, spouse, children, ages, etc. Want to know about the whole family. All are involved. Everything needs to be transparent, open.

Trinity Vestry's plans for the visit weekends: arrive Friday, go to see the Bishop or The Rev. Hansen; dinner with vestry and some search committee members on Friday night. On Saturday, see facilities, go to the school, tour area, with different groups taking them around; another dinner on Saturday night. Sunday they go to church. An interview meeting would take place on Sunday afternoon, not after dinner. Candidates will be asked to do a homily, and there will be time for questions. Let them go to dinner by themselves on Sunday night, and then someone will take them to the airport on Monday morning. This gives enough time for everyone to have a chance to meet them. More time than what the Rev. Hansen suggested.

Anne has been a candidate in this process. She suggests that we make sure the tour isn't boring. Ask the candidate if they have been in this area before. Don't assume that they have never been here. Ask them what they would like to see. Binders have been sent to them with local information, info about the school, etc., so that they should have some idea of what might interest them. One church took Doug hiking while Anne was interviewed.

Endowment Discussion: Janet Littlefield

The Finance Commission recommends that the Vestry adopt the Endowment Fund Resolution documents presented by the Endowment Fund Trustees. These documents are based on the template provided by the Episcopal Church Foundation for endowment fund "best practices." This would help Trinity to put finances in order, and to follow guidelines of the national church for use of the endowment draw.

The complete resolution was given to the Vestry. This is a total redo of the existing trust document from 1993. (Janet will send the 1993 wording to Vestry members for comparison.) Major changes are that endowment draw would be limited to use for capital needs, outreach, seed money for new ministries and one-time projects, and other charitable or religious purposes

specified by Endowment Fund donors. Distribution of endowment draw would not be made to the operating budget of the parish, except in case of an emergency.

No decision will be made tonight: Vestry will take this under advisement and a decision will be made at the November meeting. The restrictions must be phased in over time. The Trustees request 15% in 2007, increasing to 100% by 2010.

Jennifer will present information about the endowment draw and what it funds. It is expected to be \$86.5K for 2007.

Interim Rector's Report: Anne Jensen

Beth Foote seems to be working out very well. She is learning to lead the 9:10 service.

There have been 7-8 people regularly attending the 10 o'clock Adult Education class. It's a good beginning.

Town Hall meetings – Anne was so proud of Vestry. She appreciated comments from vestry members who spoke up: we have different perspectives but one voice. This really conveys to the congregation that we are working together for the good of the church. The response of the congregation is one of greater understanding. People felt heard. There is anxiety about change. People felt better to know the process. Jennifer Fitzmorris and Lynn Pieron put together explanatory material; Jeannie led the meeting after the 10 o'clock: thanks to all! A Town Hall Meeting Report from Lynn Pieron will appear in the newsletter.

We would like to include financial information regularly in the Sunday bulletin and newsletter: the goal is to get this published by December.

Process for Monetary Approvals: David Arscott

The process for Buildings and Grounds requests is to take the request to the Finance Commission. From Finance it comes to Executive Committee and then to Vestry. Finance and B&G make the recommendations.

Buildings and Grounds Future Projects: David Arscott and John Crevelt

The Montgomery House porch: Vestry approved \$10K, but workers found dry rot that will add \$2400. This will exceed the amount approved. We authorized the project, and need to complete it. Money will come from capital budget. ***It was moved that we approve an additional \$2000 for the project, seconded, approved.***

Angus Hall floor – buckling of floor keeps one door from opening. A sprinkler sprayed water in, which warped the floor. The sprinkler has been fixed. We are looking into insurance to see if any repairs will be covered. Total repair will be around \$2500, and our deductible is \$500. We have not heard back from the insurance company.

Stewardship Update: Anne Jensen

Stewardship Sundays will be this coming Sunday through Nov. 12th. The ingathering will be on Nov. 19th. Each Sunday, we will have a stewardship prayer during the services, a stewardship

table at coffee hours, and “witnesses of Joy” speakers during the services. A guest preacher is a possibility on the 19th.

There will be a wonderful letter from Lynn Pieron in the upcoming newsletter.

The pledge mail packet goes out on Nov. 7th. It will include a letter from the interim rector, and a pledge card. Parishioners will receive an e-mail reminder on Nov. 16th.

On Monday, Dec. 4th the Vestry will have a “callathon.” All who have pledged will get a thank-you call; others will get a reminder to pledge. An office facility with 10-12 outside lines is being sought. Vestry participation is required.

Calendar discussion for 2007: David Arscott

We have had a request from Social ministries to do an outreach benefit on February 10th, and another big financial benefit is being planned for next year, for the music program. This possible conflict highlights our need to program 2007. Vestry should think about any other financially-oriented items for next year.

Discussion: Music budget has been cut to the bone, needs the money to continue. Every musician is taking a pay cut, hours cut, every service is affected. Worship is at the heart of what we do. If worship is diminished, by lack of music, we are cutting off our own hands. We have talked about needing an increase in numbers, bringing more people in. Can we remove music from one service, which would probably mean the end of that service? Can we wait for the ingathering to see what we can do? Ramifications of the budget cuts for music (and probably childcare) weren’t known by Vestry last month when the decision was made.

We want the parish to be aware that there will be various fundraisers, but we need to have a conversation about how we finance everything. We don’t want people to reduce the amount of their pledges, considering that fundraisers will be coming. Fundraising in this way will spread out to every item that has been cut. There are people who would give money now to save Salvador’s job. It’s a way to raise money bit by bit, but not solving our pledge problem. Somehow we need to find a way to bring everyone together, to get the pledges that are needed to have a healthy church.

People have a tendency to give to specific needs, to give where they can see their money at work. With greater transparency, we have to try to get people to see how money is needed for basic operations. People say they didn’t know that pledging was a problem. Fundraisers need to be planned, programmed, with people knowing what’s coming.

It was moved to approve the Social Ministries fundraiser on Feb. 10th. Seconded, approved.

We have to give Michael Taylor direction on what we want in worship. He is doing what he can, as interim, but he has to assume that basic things are scheduled and need to continue. He can hold together the core of the program with \$8000, and Anne is committed to finding another \$8K from someplace else – in economies as we run this place, conserve energy, etc. When the new rector arrives, there will be one apartment available in Montgomery House. Can we rent it to generate revenue? We don’t know yet how much money we’re going to save on custodial services. Who is tasked with finding out, getting bids? David, Frances, John, and Carl will do

this. Our plan has to be in place on January 1st. If we begin to pursue this, we might begin to get a handle on the situation – do we have a bigger or smaller than \$8000 problem?

Anne would be willing to leave the apartment in January if needed. If the new rector is coming, Anne would plan to be gone 30 days earlier. We need to see if outsourcing custodial work will work, and what it will look like.

Preparations for Bill's retirement party: Anne Jensen

Deacon Bill Schooler's retirement party will be on November 12. A volunteer is needed to coordinate the reception, which will be cake and refreshments after the 10 o'clock service. John Crevelt will check with Jeff Cunningham and JB Brahy about planning the party. Perhaps a parish e-mail could be sent, asking people to bring potluck. Nancy Grove will talk to Bill, and write an article for the bulletin. The parish will give Bill a purse.

Purse for Salvador – Anne Jensen

A purse will be given to Salvador by the parish in December.

Vestry retreat planning – David Arscott

Traditional time for the Vestry retreat has been the first weekend in January. The new vestry should have some kind of organizational meeting, and will need to pick new wardens. Vestry might not have a real retreat until the new rector comes. There is no money for a retreat, so it may need to be held at a neighboring church. A retreat committee of Carl, Jeannie, and Peter will meet to make plans.

Nominating Committee (continued) – David Arscott

The Nominating Committee did not seek candidates for Deanery Delegates. David would like to work with Lucy and John Strandberg, to get a slate to be elected at the annual meeting.

Closing Prayers: Jeannie Thomas

Jeannie led the vestry in reading a portion of Compline.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 pm.

Next meeting is Tuesday, Nov 28th (the week *after* Thanksgiving).

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Stehle, Clerk