

**Vestry Meeting
St. James' Episcopal Church
Minutes for November 7, 2009**

“You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”

The people of St. James are a community of faith rooted in God's unconditional love, seeking to express that love to one another, our neighbors and the world.

Present: John Brewer, Fritz Hughes, Sharon Nitz, Eric Pratt, Margaret Rehberg, Dean Ritchie, Sara Schofield, Stephan Flores, Rev. Mary Beth Rivetti, and Nancy Collins Warner.

Opening Prayer – Fritz Hughes

Approval of Agenda—approved.

Minutes of September 8 and October 13, 2009—approved.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's response to the audit report of 2008:

The gross wages for the Christian Education Director in 2008 were \$5,000 per year, or \$416.66 per month. Social Security and Medicare deductions were computed at \$25.83 and \$6.04, respectively, resulting in a net payroll check of \$384.79 each month, beginning in May, 2008. Then in July, 2008, payroll taxes were paid, which included the withholding from May and June. According to my records, the portion of the payroll tax check charged to the Christian Education Director was 63.75, resulting in a total outlay for that account in July of \$448.54 (384.79 + 63.75). Again in October, the deducted taxes were sent to the IRS, including 95.63 which had been withheld from the July, August and September paychecks. So, the October outlay for the Christian Education Director would be $384.79 + 95.63 = 480.42$. Finally, the \$95.63 discrepancy reported in the audit report was actually paid to the IRS in January of 2009, on behalf of Montine Vona-Pergola. The \$3,333.33 gross income reported on the W-2 form is substantially correct.

In the case of the bookkeeper, my records for 4th quarter, 2007 indicate that \$14.99 of the expense in January 2008 was for payroll tax withheld during the last quarter of 2007. The amount withheld during the 4th quarter of 2008 was 21.69. So, the figures listed in the table include \$14.99 which was actually earned in 2007 and don't include 21.69 that was earned in 2008, but sent to the IRS in January of 2009, for a difference of \$6.70; again, the amount reported on the W-2 form is substantially correct.

The reported discrepancies for the secretary and the sexton do result from errors, which occurred in each of the final three quarters of 2008. The amounts were recomputed in the following way: The actual paychecks for both positions were summed for each quarter, along with the income tax withheld from the secretary's wages. This would be the net pay, after deduction of social security and medicare taxes of .062 and .0145, respectively. To compute the gross pay for the positions in each quarter, the sums were divided by $(1 - .062 - .0145) = .9235$. Discrepancies were found in the second and fourth quarter for the secretary's pay and in the third quarter for the sexton's pay.

Corrected payroll tax filings were made for those three quarters, and corrected W2 and W3 forms have been submitted, including the corrected W2 forms which have been sent to Carol Porter and Daphne Graham. The small checks that were sent with the corrected tax forms were charged to Misc. and Contingencies, instead of payroll taxes, as that money is not payroll tax for this year.

The payroll system included in the Icon system is substantially different, and appears to be less likely to result in errors of this sort. In addition, it appears to be easier to understand, because withheld taxes are taken from the pay budget and moved into "accounts payable" when the paycheck is posted.

Respectfully submitted, Dean Ritchie, treasurer

Dean also described a .04 cent discrepancy and a \$50.00 discrepancy in the budget reports that need further inquiry and reconciling. Discussion of ongoing over expenditures of budget, and effort to identify those areas that are exceeding budgeted amounts (approximately \$21,000).

Appropriate to direct Dean to make necessary transfers to funds and to cover the debt.

Motion: Transfer \$20,000 from the Discretionary Bequest Special Fund along with the other special funds transfers that are scheduled. Approved.

Nancy reported, from cottage meetings, a desire that timely and clear updates on the budget be made available to the congregation.

Jan Brandt—Assistant Treasurer, explained what she does to track pledge/plate giving, directed giving each week; and she expressed interest to learn why the Vestry counts funds each week too, when that creates an apparently redundant effort, especially regarding the fund totals for checks. Discussion followed to review the process, whether checks should be simply counted or the total amount tracked, along with cash, and special memorial funds or directed giving, before Jan receives the weekly report and funds for her to count/track/deposit. Also discussion of process for acknowledging special gifts, such as memorial fund donations. No changes to the process were determined at this time.

Old Business

Update on Stewardship Pledge Campaign; Reports from Cottage Meetings
No information available yet on total amount pledged to date for next year—
Dennis has that information. Nancy observed that there is a very small number of people who do not pledge, and it was a gratifying surprise to discover this. Mary Beth observed that other congregations have ways to provide updates to the parish on a weekly basis regarding number of pledges received and also time/talents pledged. Nancy suggested that perhaps an update be published in the December Tower; also suggestion to encourage everyone to make an effort to increase their pledge from the previous year.

Sabbatical Planning Team—Ted Nitz, Sharon Nitz, Sara Schofield, Dean Ritchie, and perhaps Julie McCoy.

New Business

Plans for Vestry Hosted Brunch for November 15 (service is at 9am; brunch

follows); sign-up sheet sent around. Sharon will research supplies and receive confirmation that some budget is available to offset part of costs.

Renewal of Lease for Community Child Care Center—will expire and subcommittee/team needed to work to determine new lease, including Fritz, Mary Beth, Sharon, and possibly Eric. Sign-off by Dec. 31st or Jan. 1st. Meeting on Wednesday Nov. 18th with CCC folks already scheduled, at noon.

Budgeting Process - vestry liaison contacts with ministry teams. Some teams have responded but await others, and Vestry members need to contact their respective ministry teams/committees to learn their budget requests.

Nominating Committee for 2010 election of new vestry and delegates

Vestry elections: John Brewer, Stephan Flores, Sara Schofield, and Sharon Nitz rotating off; this means that one person needs to be elected for a three-year term and three people to be elected for two-year terms. The Clerk of the Vestry can be determined, however, separate from Vestry members.

Also need delegates for Convention next year, to be held in Spokane.

Reports from Ministry Areas

Executive Committee (Vestry officers: Rector, Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary)

Rector/Calendar—Rector asked for prayers and directions on how to attend to leadership and outreach.

Sr. Warden—discussion of number and price for purchasing used hymnals from the Church of Our Savior in Pasco—perhaps offer \$5.00 a piece, and we would need to pick up the hymnals. Discussion of various people's health and needs, in the congregation. Leila Ludeking is moving to Bishop Place.

Jr. Warden / Building & Grounds—another bid received on lower steps, about half of other bid, and half of the windows went in today, and appreciation to ECW for funding expressed. Awaiting news on whether CCC will receive their grant, expected news by end of year. Attention and discussion still needed to grounds and signs. Discussion of process to convert garden to an organic garden for Backyard Garden organization that gleans and donates food for food banks.

Campus Ministry—plea from Phil for line item in budget for Common Ministry, which lost its \$5,000 funding from the Diocese.

Christian Education—Mary Beth and Julie have been discussing opportunities for reaching out to community and partnering with Susan Berg at the Lutheran church.

ECW—buying windows; team took fruit salad down to lunch at the convention; continue to have lunch on first Wednesdays of each month. Business meeting needs to be scheduled soon.

Hospitality—

Worship—Christmas pageant planning underway.

Outreach / Social Justice—Nancy sent out a report. Baby shower went great, both in gifts and donations. Discussion of how to share the individual experiences of people in the parish who have done work abroad, and also how to keep people informed of what has been accomplished. Nancy reported supportive interest in water issues and local attention to these needs, co-chairing with Sandra Ristow. Also to know more closely who is being helped and how, in outreach efforts.

Pastoral Care—

Communications Team—

Announcements

Follow-up checklist on action items: bring food by 8:30am this Sunday for brunch.

Ministry team focus for next meeting: budget planning

Opening prayer for next meeting: Eric

Next Vestry meeting: Dinner and budget planning - Tuesday, December 8, 6pm

Vestry meeting: Tuesday December 8, 2009 7pm

Compline