

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Of Trinity Church, October 18, 2009

Senior Warden Linda Lloyd called the meeting to order. Present were Jane Canfield, Bob Reid, Janet Walker, Linda Lloyd, Roy Bickley, Martha Baer, the Rev. Heidi Truax, John Lloyd, Al Dorf, and Geoff Brown. Absent was Pat Barton.

Martha moved, and Bob seconded a motion that the minutes of the previous Vestry meeting be accepted as circulated. The motion passed by voice vote.

The next matter of business was discussion and execution of a Letter of Agreement with Heidi Truax to become the next Priest-in-Charge of Trinity Church. In a wide-ranging discussion, the subjects of compensation, Mutual Ministry Reviews, and the decision to begin payment at the 2010 rate instead of the 2009 rate since only two months remain in 2009 were agreed upon by the Vestry and Pastor Heidi. In response to a request, she provided a personal history. Linda provided additional information about items relating to Pastor Heidi's relationship with Trinity, including spousal roles, and Pastor Heidi, in response to a question, spoke of her own visitation practices. Janet noted that our parish is geographically dispersed, making visitation more important than it might be in a parish centered in a village from which most parishioners were drawn. John moved that Trinity sign the agreement with the Rev. Truax, and Al seconded the motion. The vestry unanimously passed the motion by voice vote. Following the vote, the Wardens and Pastor Heidi signed the agreement, which will now be sent to the Bishop for his final signature.

John presented the Treasurer's report. Following clarification of the bad check fee question from the last meeting, Roy moved and Martha seconded the motion that the Treasurer's Report be approved. The report was approved by voice vote.

Wardens' report:

Linda noted that we are just over two months away from our next annual meeting, as which we will need to elect a new Junior Warden and two new vestry members to fill vacancies. All were asked to consider potential candidates for these positions.

Linda reported that she had received an inquiry from the Episcopal chapel in Cornwall regarding any interest on our part in providing them with a priest for their 8 AM Holy Eucharist each Sunday. She did not perceive that this group was flexible with regard to service times or other arrangements, and noted that they were adamant about maintaining their own status as a separate congregation and not becoming affiliating with Trinity. It was noted that this would eliminate our own 8 AM service, also noted that Trinity Torrington would be able to provide them with the services of their second priest. Heidi noted that the financial resources of this group would represent an excellent opportunity for us to undertake outreach as they have no church building nor seated clergy and hence very limited expenses. There was also some discussion regarding whether they are still looking for a priest.

Linda noted that she had increased the hours of the custodial firm that provides Junior as our Sexton to 10 per week, with the vendor selecting the hours that we receive service as long as the building is clean when we need it clean. She noted that Junior has been working on some deferred cleaning tasks, including removing squirrel-damaged materials from the undercroft. The sense of the vestry was that the increase in hours is reasonable, particularly until Junior is able to catch up on the deferred maintenance. She also noted that Junior is looking for additional work.

Linda reported that the discernment committee that has been working with Danielle Gaherty concluded their final meeting today, and will be filing their report with the Diocese. She noted that Fr. Clements retains clergy responsibility for her candidacy, even though he has moved along to a new parish. She noted that it appears that the vestry will not need to be involved in this discernment process further unless it is to fill out a form later on.

Roy noted that some of the prayer books and hymnals are beginning to show their age, and that some of the hymnal racks in the pews are in need of repair. The possibility of raising funds to replace hymnals and prayer books via a campaign like the one we recently had to purchase the new Bibles was discussed and generally perceived as a good idea. Jane Canfield volunteered to assess the condition of the hymnals and prayer books, identifying any hymnal racks that needed repair, and report back to the Vestry with the results of her survey.

Committee reports:

Geoff provided the buildings and grounds report. He noted that the septic tanks for the church and for the rectory had now been pumped. The vendor for the slate roof repair has not yet been identified, and we continue to await Fr. Clements' advice on how to contact them. Responding to a question, he also noted that Hull Oil had been over on Saturday to repair a malfunctioning furnace.

With regard to the Sunday School, it was noted that it continues to grow, with the addition of one new child (Diane Walters' niece, who has recently moved with her family from Torrington to Lime Rock) just today. It was noted that two of our IMS students have been added to the Trinity contingent participating in the Confirmation classes, and that a phone inquiry has been received from another one. Favorable comments were received about the effectiveness and good organization of the Sunday School at present, and several positive comments passed regarding the children's chapel service.

In this connection, Heidi indicated an interest in reconstituting a Worship Committee and asked for volunteers. Geoff, Linda, and Jane offered to serve on it. It was also suggested that Ginny, Alexis and Christine be asked to serve on it. Some discussion ensued regarding scheduling at Christmas, including when to hold the Christmas Pageant (seemed to be consensus that 4 Advent was preferred), whether to eliminate the late service Christmas eve (seemed to be general agreement that this was a good idea due to sharply diminished attendance at it in recent years), and whether to have a Christmas Day service (consensus seemed to be that this was an important service to hold despite limited attendance at it).

Old business:

Under old business, Linda noted that she had communicated with the local AA chapter regarding the housekeeping issues noted at an earlier meeting, and that there seemed to be an improvement in them. John noted that there had been no payment forthcoming from them for around a month. Heidi indicated that she planned to visit this group shortly.

With regard to parish computers, Linda noted that Crescendo has given the black Dell with the bad hard drive to Trinity. Al will undertake to refurbish the machine. With regard to internet access in the clergy office, Al and John noted that since there is a telephone connection in that location there should also be DSL service available. Heidi believes she has a DSL modem she can bring in, which should solve the problem. Geoff noted that if it does not, a repeater in the general area of the kitchen should suffice to extend wireless coverage to the office.

With regard to Crescendo matters, Linda announced that this organization now pays Trinity \$155/month in rent, and pays for copies at a per copy rate. The question of providing a thermostat in the volunteers room or re-zoning the heat in the addition for Crescendo's use was suggested but expected to be too expensive to undertake at this time. The desired approach is for an informal agreement to be reached so that the heat can be turned up when Crescendo needs to use the office. It was noted that Crescendo plans to have an open rehearsal of its forthcoming Telemann program on the weekend before the concerts, with local EMTs, fire fighters, and other volunteers especially invited since one of the Telemann works being performed was an oratorio written in honor of people in Telemann's time who performed similar functions. The vestry was very supportive of this as our change in clergy had obviated our holding our annual volunteer recognition Sunday this year.

New business:

Under new business, Jane recommended that we switch our annual volunteer recognition Sunday to May, beginning next May, as this will also correspond with EMS week nationally, and will also be an easier time to schedule the various EMS squads and fire companies. This suggestion was well-received by the vestry.

With regard to Stewardship, Heidi noted that we need to get underway with this. She will incorporate stewardship in her visiting program, and will take a look at the "Grow One Step" program we found effective last year. In that connection, Heidi noted that we will need an updated parish list to undertake the process. Linda and Lisa will undertake the project using Servant Keeper.

The vestry will have a special meeting on November 1 to start off the Stewardship process for this year, and will have its next regular meeting on November 22 (as November 15 conflicts with the Crescendo concerts). There will also be an adult baptism on November 22.

Pastor Heidi concluded the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoffrey Brown, Clerk