



ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

Vestry Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2020

4-6 PM Held via ZOOM Conference Call

Attendees: Jennifer Allen, Thomas Barbour, Audrey Chapman, Elizabeth Drummond, Leigh Grinstead, Michael Koechner, Richard Lawson, Toya Nelson, Meg Parish, Robin Paulson, Ilana Poley, Helen Richards, Shirley Traettino, David Rote, Angie Thomson, Michael Vente, Mark Wherry, Bryant Harris

Absent: Broderick Greer, Katie Pearson, Kathleen De Mars

Summary of actions taken:

- **Consent Agenda** – Approved Minutes of the August 2020 Vestry Meeting
1. **Call to Order/Opening Prayer** – Leigh Grinstead/Richard Lawson – Richard opened the meeting with the reading of the Collect for Saint John's Day.
 2. **Check-In: Zoom Small Group Discussion** – Vestry members broke into small group discussions to review the experience of St. John's Day, held on September 13day. Richard asked that the small groups discuss the experience and any feed-back from the day, including the five outdoor groups held on the Cathedral grounds and the "Community without the Commute" gatherings held across the metro area. These are learning experiences which will help inform decisions taken as the Cathedral plans to open for services. About 160 people participated, and Michael Vente thanked the Clergy, Vestry and staff for a successful team effort in organizing the St. John's Day activities. Richard noted that this experience will help guide decisions about what's on the horizon for future services.
 3. **Continuing Conversation, Latinx Ministry** - Richard Lawson – Richard opened the discussion by asking members two questions concerning St Alban's Latinx Ministry experience: 1) what most surprised you about the St. Alban's model, and their experiences? 2) what parts of the model might we learn from; what parts of their model might take shape here at St John's? The discussion revolved around several notable issues:
 - No one seems to like the bi-lingual service model.
 - The "little things" (flowers) matter a great deal.
 - Money issues are important. The traditional "pledging model" doesn't work for all communities and cultures. How to manage a meaningful financial offering experience is an important consideration, and budgeting/allocation of financial resource considerations are important.



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- The St. Alban's experience has taken several years to get started, including the need to assess, re-assess and re-design the model in response to "lessons learned." This is a long-term commitment.
- How is the St John's "Wilderness" community integrated? Is our "Wilderness" model an example that can be drawn upon for the Latinx discussion? Should the "Wilderness" community be better integrated into the greater St John's Cathedral community? If so, how?
- Communities coming from different faith traditions bring faith-based cultural norms that are important considerations. For example, those from the Catholic Church tradition bring different expectations about church hierarchy and lay leadership expectations. What elements of past faith and cultural traditions are we asking people to embrace or abandon?
- People are not just individuals, but come to Church with their "community culture", including family, household, neighborhood, workplace, racial, cultural, language and (in some cases) homeland customs and norms.
- Is the traditional "Cathedral" experience, (i.e. large congregation, "grand" building, formal liturgy and hymn traditions) actually desirable?

Richard noted that a very thoughtful, deliberate process is needed if we are to move forward. Broderick will be leading our efforts to come back to Vestry with a proposal. This process must be done in partnership with the Office of the Bishop, with collaboration with other Central Denver/Denver Metro communities and, perhaps, other congregations. It is important to remember, and to accept, that whatever we do will change us.

4. Senior Warden's Report - MMR (Mutual Ministry Review) Discussion - Leigh Grinstead – Leigh opened the MMR discussion as feed-back/follow-up to the analysis report and discussion concerning next steps. The goal is to develop action steps to strengthen the Cathedral Vestry and lay-led ministries, create support and visibility, and establish social connections to engage members in sharing information about activities and "good things" beyond the Voice and e-newsletters." Regarding social connections, Leigh discussed thoughts about "match-ups": random "one on one" connections between vestry members, vestry and congregation members, on-line coffee hours and other creative means to provide on-going support, visibility, social connections, continued "community without the commute" activities, and information –sharing. Leigh, Michael and Richard will continue to discuss next steps.

5. Junior Warden's Report - Michael Vente - Michael reported that the annual Blessing of the Animals will occur on Oct 4th. Also, in conjunction with the "big picture" capital needs discussion the Vestry members are invited participate in a Cathedral walk-through on September 27th at 2:30 PM.

6. Nominating Committee Report – Helen Richards – Helen reported that both Mark Wherry and Robin Paulson have each agreed to seek another Vestry term, and three additional candidates have been identified. The committee is also in conversation two additional parishioners. A total of five potential candidates have received instructions for submitting candidate profiles. Based on this year's



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experience, the Nominating Committee will recommend that timing/scheduling an in-person information session will be built into the committee work plan and timeline for next year.

7. Clergy Report – Canon Pastor – Katie Pearson – Richard gave Katie's report in her absence. Katie will oversee the next Pastoral phone calling campaign, modeled after our first phone tree. The calls will be held to coincide with the holiday season, and will be unrelated to the stewardship campaign. Volunteers are invited to join in this pastoral outreach, an important program during a time when social distancing and remote services continue.

8. Clergy Report – Canon Precentor – Richard Lawson on behalf of Broderick Greer – Richard reported that Broderick is continuing the Young Adults 20s-30s outreach programming, and his Mile High Theology Program is back in full swing. Broderick completed a Podcast on September 14th, reaching over 500 listeners accessing the podcast. Broderick is also working on Cathedral re-opening plans, with the first opening scheduled to coincide with the Bishop's approvals to authorize virtual/private (from home) Holy Eucharist service. The first stage of Cathedral re-opening will occur on Sunday, September 27, with live-stream broadcast of the Dean's Forum at 9:00 AM, followed by the virtual Holy Eucharist service at 10:00 AM. From 12 to 2:00PM, the Cathedral will open for in-person, properly-distanced Cathedral visits for music, private prayer and in-person Holy Communion. This is our very important first step in the Cathedral's re-opening launch, representing a huge step in the right direction.

Regarding recent outdoor services: four Baptisms have been held, three more Baptisms are scheduled, and 30 confirmations and re-affirmations have been held.

9. Treasurer/D.O. Report – Tom Barbour and Audrey Chapman – (See Vestry Packet Financial Update, Page 13). Current year revenues remain steady: operating revenues are up by about 1%, and operating expenses are down by almost 7%. However, a budget deficit of \$240,000 to \$245,000 is forecast for 2021 (see page 59 for information about the projected deficit). Richard again noted that the budget situation is stable but not sustainable. More immediate concerns are how to handle the projected deficit, which will depend on certain outcomes: Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan forgiveness, Kimberly revenues/expenses, Mineral leases revenues, and other long-term projections of revenues and expenses relating to additional issues. These additional factors include the stewardship campaign, critical capital needs (see pages 14 & 22, page 53), major gifts, and the 5-Year Budget Plan, (pages 59 & 60).

Audrey noted that the PPP loan is eligible for loan forgiveness, to be approved as a grant; time to pursue the grant option has been extended and the Cathedral is expected to qualify for the grant approval of \$374,000. Budget year 2021 expense plan is projected to include a planned 20% budget decrease in all departments.

Tom noted that a long term solvency strategic plan is needed. The 2021 Budget Development process will take time, and is expected to be presented for approval in February or March, 2021.



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Property Appraisals: A DRAFT Property Appraisals report has been completed and submitted to the Finance Committee. The appraisal report is an aggregate report of all property values, including the Cathedral, Kimberly Apts., Dominic Park and the Argonaut Parking Lot. Although finances are stabilized, the Five Year Plan shows that there is no long term stability. The Finance Committee and Vestry will need to look at all options, and options concerning property usage will be one of the most critical issues under consideration.

10. Director of Operations Report – DRAFT 2021 Vestry meeting schedule is included in the Vestry Packet (page 12).

11. Dean's Report – Richard Lawson - see detailed Vestry Packet Information, as noted below.

1) Big Picture Report – Richard began the discussion by noting that the Vestry board has total authority on all budget and property-related decisions. Recent critical capital investments have been undertaken, including roof repair, major cleaning, sidewalk, pavement, and handicapped ramps, etc. Critical capital needs now include two major urgent projects: HVAC and Stained Glass Window Project.

HVAC – The Vestry Packet (pages 14 and 22) includes a project proposal (submitted for information only) concerning the range, scope, HVAC needs and possible cost projections for a comprehensive project, which may cost about \$2.5 million. The information is provided at this time as a place-holder for thinking about the assessment of HVAC needs, energy efficiencies, air circulation needs (especially in the nursery) and the long-term project benefits.

Stained Glass Window Project – A comprehensive project description for preservation, restoration, replacement, cleaning, stabilization and exterior protections is included in the Vestry Packet (Page53). This project is estimated to cost about \$6 million. As with the HVAC project, this project is not optional, and is designed to meet immediate, critical needs to preserve and protect the Cathedral's Stained Glass assets.

Richard noted that new income streams are needed to support these critically needed projects. Pledges are not sufficient, and strategic cuts, while necessary to stabilize on-going operations, are not a funding source for major projects of this size and scope. Richard requested spending authority to continue to work to solicit another bid on the HVAC project.

Richard noted that it is important that the design, scope, development and implementation of these two projects need to be undertaken simultaneously because of the relationship between the HVAC system improvements and stained glass preservation and stabilization efforts.

Next Steps:

Next year, the Vestry will be asked to make major decisions about these projects and additional funding streams needed to support these efforts and eliminate projected budget deficits. Vestry members are invited to participate in a comprehensive education process, beginning with a Cathedral walk through on



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September 27th, to learn more about these complex projects, their costs, and funding streams needed to support on-going operations and these critical projects. In addition, major gifts contributions are in the development stage for HVAC and the Stained Glass projects.

2) Five Year Plan – see Pages 59 and 60 in Vestry Packet

Budget deficits are projected for the next five years. Revenue increases, new funding streams and expense cuts will be needed to manage these projected deficits. Richard noted that next year is an important year for long-term strategic planning, annual administrative and budget management and decisions concerning major gifts, stewardship and major capital campaign needs.

3) Stewardship Campaign Update – Richard reported that the annual Stewardship Campaign will launch on October 4, with published pledge requests Oct 11, 18, and 25.

- Letters to top 30 pledgers will be sent initially
- Letters to this year's 520 pledgers will be sent Oct 5th
- Letters will be sent to all persons on the Cathedral mailing list
- November activities will include email follow ups
- Some phone call follow ups will occur in November as well
- Additional follow up contacts will be made in January, February and March

12. Information

- a. Minutes of the August 2020 Finance Committee meeting (page 61)

13. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes of the August 2020 Vestry Meeting (page 67-72)

14. Other Business

- a. Audrey noted that plans are being made to prepare for the annual meeting, to be held on January 31, 2021, with new protocols for voting and new Vestry Member Installation to be conducted virtually.
- b. Leigh suggested that more in-depth Vestry planning meetings may be needed to conduct sessions are needed concerning strategic visioning for the 5 Year Plan, sustainability, and decision-making surrounding large capital projects. Vestry members will be asked to respond to a survey to schedule time, apart from the monthly Vestry Business meetings, to conduct these in-depth conversations.

15. Prayers – Leigh offered the final prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.



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