

ST. MARTIN'S-IN-THE-FIELDS
VESTRY MINUTES
12-18-2007

Present: Bob Askins, Joe Broussard, Fr. Michael Bullock, Gwen Geidel, Ed Kellett, Jim Maass, Jack Myers, Esther Richey, Robin Smith, Gus Strasburger, El Thompson, Andrew Todd. **Absent:** Chad Poteat.

Also attending: Michael Conner

Opening Reflection:

Father Michael shared the collect for "Stir-up Sunday" (Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us;) and reflected on what it means to be stirred. He stirred us a little more with the reminder that this would be his last vestry meeting at St. Martin's.

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 P.M. and a welcome issued to all. Michael commented on the practice of note writing as a way of staying in touch with the congregation pastorally. He shared the names of parishioners who may be in special need of our prayers and concern and received volunteers to write notes to each of them.

Rectors Remark's/Report

Michael reminded the vestry that the Internal Revenue Service requires that a statement of the housing allowance for clergy be recorded in the minutes each year. It is our custom to do this at our December meeting. The vestry resolved that the clergy housing allowances for him and Furman were \$30,000 each for 2008.

Michael appointed Gwen Geidel to a second term as senior warden and asked that the vestry approve that appointment. Ed Kellett made a motion to approve, Jack Myers seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously by affirmation.

Gwen proposed a slate of Vestry officers for 2008: Jack Myers for Junior Warden; Ed Kellett, Treasurer; Bob Askins, Secretary. Her motion was seconded by Robin Smith and the slate of officers voted in by affirmation.

Gwen also noted that the By-Laws do not require the office of Treasurer to be a vestry member and that while Ed Kellet is a vestry member this year, he could be nominated and elected after completion of this vestry term, if it were the desire of the Vestry to do so.

Michael reminded everyone that the officers and rector comprise the executive committee of the church and that it is their responsibility to plan vestry meetings so that the vestry's time is well-spent and the vestry remains on track with the goals outlined in the Parish Principles.

Michael reviewed the agenda from the December 2006 meeting:

- Clergy housing statement;
- Vestry endorsement for ordination (Furman);
- Vestry Strategic Planning Day (“Don’t let that slide. Be sure you have your map and that the compass is pointed north”);
- Foundation Task Force established (By-Laws need to be revised – foundation and vestry are cooperative organizations at arm’s length);
- Kevin Martin’s book, *The Myth of the 200 Barrier*.

He reflected on all the change that had occurred and the progress made since last December and admonished us to stay on track, to remember the purpose statement and use it as a map and compass as well as a yardstick for measuring how our actions fit that purpose. He recommended that we follow Mark Clevenger’s advice and use the expedited approach to searching for a rector, that we find a supply priest, take advantage of the knowledge, honesty and judgment that our associate and assisting priests and deacon can provide and that we keep the focus where it needs to be. “I want you to experience in your fingernails what it is to be the church and what the role of the priest should be.” That is the great gift of this stirring up. Michael reminded us that he will still be rector until the end of January and that the search process could not begin in earnest until that time. He concluded with a thank you, saying “I will never be the same because of you guys.”

Worship Committee

Michael reminded us of the Christmas schedule, and that the Worship staff meets every Wednesday. He also reminded us of what a dedicated and talented a worship staff we enjoy and how fortunate St Martin’s is to have the full, rich, and varied liturgy that it does.

Christian Formation

Michael informed us of a crisis in the nursery. Doris Johnson has quit. Courtney Jowers is providing coverage for two weeks, but we have an immediate need to find a solution. He pointed out the vital need of a nursery program as foundation element of Christian formation, providing parents respite and an opportunity to worship, and supporting the growth of the parish. A three-person task force will be formed to determine whether to hire a director/coordinator or outsource the nursery.

Additional Items:

Stewardship letters.

Gwen reported the good news that there are many groups concerned with our finances. On the other side, there are **many** groups concerned with our finances. Both the stewardship committee and the finance committee had proposed letters to the congregation asking for increases to pledges for next year. Additionally, several groups, including stewardship, finance, parishioners and vestry are concerned with this year’s deficit. Joey Broussard has written a letter asking parishioners to join his family and others who have stepped forward with additional gifts for 2007 to help retire the deficit in the budget. Gwen welcomed the interest and expressed a need to capitalize on the energy while presenting a unified message.

Ed Kellett reported that statements were being mailed along with letters to those who were not current with their pledges. The vestry resolved to reconvene in two weeks to call those who had not responded by that time. The vestry also agreed that it would be appropriate for the letter written by the family of Joey Broussard to go out.

The stewardship brochure and a letter drafted by Judy Tighe will be packaged together and sent out after the first of the year to address 2008 stewardship goals.

Finance

Ed Kellett reported that the finance committee was unhappy with the service provided (or not provided) by Wachovia Bank and has approached First Community Bank to inquire about a line of credit.

Michael interjected that the Standing Committee of the Diocese must approve any encumbrance on the property.

Ed reported that the finance committee was requesting an unsecured loan in the amount of \$100,000 to repay funds borrowed from designated and special funds and added that approximately \$90K has been borrowed from those funds to date. Ed reported that the bank will not charge any loan origination fees and that this loan will be “rolled-up” into a larger, partially-secured, line-of-credit at a later date. Gus Strausburger motioned that we accept the Finance Committee’s recommendation. Jack Myers seconded. The Vestry approved Ed Kellett to sign as Treasurer any and all documents related to the aforementioned loans with First Community Bank. The motion passed by acclamation.

Administration

Michael Conner distributed the Vestry-In-Charge schedule for the year and requested that each of us communicate with him about needs related to the service (bulletins) and facilities (unlocked doors)

Adjournment – 7:40 P.M.