

Church of the Nativity
Minutes of the Vestry
October 20, 2020

Attending: Stephanie Allen, Carrie Mash, Rene Garces, Cheryl Waechter, Robert Joines, Stephanie Sumner, Josh Booth, Kim Stoke, Lori Special, John Oldham, Phillip Bass, and Gail Christensen.

The meeting convened at 7:04 pm via Zoom video-conferencing due to all meetings being suspended because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Stewardship Annual Campaign 2021:

This year's campaign will begin on November 1, and will mostly be done through email, Glad Tidings, Facebook, etc. Carrie will ask people to give testimonials during the online services on Sundays about why they pledge and why it is important. They can record 60-second videos on their cell phones for uploading to the Google drive. Stephanie will send out a mailing thanking people for their generosity, flexibility, and creativity that has been required during this pandemic, and hope they will keep doing what they've been doing through 2021. People have been very consistent this year about meeting their pledges, and we are optimistic that we will be OK.

The Youth and children will also have pledge cards and will be asked to make a commitment, not necessarily for money but for a commitment to praying and standing up for their friends.

Advent and Christmas Ideas:

Stephanie asked the Vestry members to brainstorm ideas for how we can celebrate Advent and Christmas under these very trying circumstances. Among the suggestions:

- Mail Advent devotion pamphlets
- Take photos of your Advent wreaths to share online
- An outdoor gathering on Advent 4 with candles/luminaries listening to carols (not allowed to sing them) or handbell concert
- Online Christmas pageant via Zoom, or recycle Jeremy Clos' video from several years ago
- Christmas carol sing-along via Zoom
- Living Nativity outdoors
- Decorate oak tree in Christmas lights

Bishop Ann will be with us (online) on St. Nicholas Day, December 6. The Day of Giving this year will also be online.

The Youth's annual fundraiser this year will be a bit different. They will not take pre-orders but will have Christmas greens and trees for sale over the weekend after Thanksgiving (November 27-29).

Annual Meeting and Vestry Elections:

The Diocesan canons do not allow virtual annual meetings or elections to the Vestry, and we cannot all meet in person now. Updating the congregation, as is done at annual meetings, can be done via videos from the committee chairs, but we cannot have a Vestry election. Four members (Betty Sammitt, Lori Special, Kat Belk, and Michael Warrillow) will rotate off in January, and it is not allowed by the canons for them to continue afterwards. The members were given a choice of not filling those four seats and sticking through 2021 with eight members,

or appointing up to four new members. They chose the latter. Josh and Kim volunteered to search for parishioners who would serve on the Vestry, and all members were asked to reach out to potential members. We will aim for a Vestry of 12, but when Stephanie came to Nativity there were only 9 members, so a specific number is not required.

Junior Warden's Report: Rene Garces

Rene reported:

- 1) Pest control came 9/16/2020 morning to perform their quarterly spray around outside of each building except along the southern wall of Curry Hall where the garden is located.
- 2) Newcomb & Company visited the Nativity campus 4 times and fixed the Daikin HVAC issues in the worship building; the total bill paid was \$1287, which is above and beyond the yearly \$2604 yearly cost of them doing preventative maintenance.
- 3) B&G team solicited a bid from ServPro to clean animal (squirrels) debris above the dropped ceilings in Estill House, and the ServPro proposal estimated to cost \$4K. B&G will seek more bids.
- 4) Fall Workday is scheduled for Saturday October 31 from 9 am to 3 pm with an inclement weather make-up day scheduled for November 7. Workday tasks will be conducted outdoors in groupings by household, with social distancing to be encouraged between households, and masks required if social distancing is not possible between households.
- 5) Flood lamps to light up the sidewalk north of the worship building should get installed this month.
- 6) Neighbor's vinyl fence was damaged in a storm in mid-July when a large branch from a tree in COTN's memorial garden fell. A replacement panel has been ordered and should arrive soon.

Carrie thanked Rene for making all the dollies used to bring chairs to/from the outdoor services.

Rector's Report: Stephanie Allen

Outdoor services will continue until Advent 1. The Diocese is now in Stage 2. Outdoor services can have up to 40 participants, and indoor services are limited to 25. The Bishops will allow in-person services if the county's "rolling average" of positive cases is less than 7.5% of all cases; over that, and we must revert to online only.

When outdoor services were rained out on October 11, the first service was cancelled but the 9:30 and 4:30 services were moved indoors. The people who normally attend these services were uncomfortable indoors, and Stephanie has decided that the congregation is not ready for indoor, in-person services, so she will cancel services from now on, rather than move indoors.

A funeral and a memorial service will be held indoors in the next weeks, but within the limits established by the Diocese.

Stephanie is not confident that we will be back to "normal" services until 2022, so we need to find a way to have services and activities that are easiest on the staff and volunteers. She is considering live-streaming services again, and will start with the Wednesday evening services, seeing them as a "laboratory" for Sunday services.

The 205th Diocesan Annual Convention has been postponed until March 2021; it will be a hybrid of online and limited in-person. The Diocese will stream a "celebration all that has happened in our churches and ministries throughout a very challenging year" on November 21. Part of the day will be testing tools and approaches for any online component needed in March 2021 at the Annual Convention.

The next phase of the Memorial Garden renovation will be extensive grading to address some drainage issues. The Memorial Garden committee wants to ask for donations from individuals, sort of like the Organ committee raised funds for the completion of the organ pipes. The Vestry members agreed with this approach. No motion is needed, since a fund has already been established for the Memorial Garden.

Financial Report: John Oldham

The Finance Team met on Monday, October 19 and are comfortable with where we are now. Regular giving is above expectations, although pledges are a bit below budget. Overall revenue is greater than expected, even though September income was below budget. They will keep an eye on October numbers before they recommend we do something.

We continue to be in a good financial position, but the Team expects that the 2021 budget will be flat, with no increases in salary, until we know how the Stewardship campaign goes.

The money Nativity received from the Payroll Protection Program is on the balance sheet as a liability. We will hold it in reserve to see how pledges come in during the Stewardship campaign. The Finance Team, working with our bank, will apply for forgiveness of the loan because we have met all the requirements - we did not fire nor furlough any staff members.

Approval of the September 2020 minutes:

The minutes of the September Vestry meeting were submitted for approval. Lori moved to accept the minutes as corrected; Cheryl seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Christensen
Clerk of the Vestry

The Next Scheduled Vestry Meeting is Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7 pm