

## Church of the Epiphany Vestry Meeting Minutes – February 16, 2010

The Vestry Meeting began with Fr Robin leading the group in prayer at 7PM.

Fr. Robin was present at this meeting.

Vestry Members Attendance: Present (P), Excused (E)

Bassert, David	P	Hamlin, George	P
Conlon, Tom	P	Kodat, Roger	P
Cummings, Ross	P	Mentzer, Steve	P
Edmunds, Gin	E	McNeely, Dennis	P
Ellis, Lisa	P	Reed, David	P
Fetzer, Bill	P	Stoddard, Sandra	P

Paul Petersen attended as an observer.

### **Treasurer and Finance Committee Report – Scott Reiter**

- Income for January was \$115,704 and expenses were \$116,224. However, giving is above budget and our cash position has significantly improved over the last 6 months. The goal is to maintain \$600,000 in reserves. We are currently at over \$400,000.
- Dave Bassert motioned for the financial report to be accepted and Lisa Ellis second the motion. Vestry approval was unanimous.

### **Approval of Minutes for November 10, 2009 Meeting**

- George Hamlin made the motion to accept the; Dave Bassert seconded the motion. The Vestry voted unanimously to do so.

### **Reports**

#### **Rector's Report – Fr. Robin**

- Discussed attendance at Epiphany. From 2006 through 2009 there has been a decline of approximately 75 attendees each Sunday. Finances are based on attendance and attendance has been an issue since the building campaign was launched.

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- Bottom line is that we need to grow. This was supported by the survey conducted by Father Julian Dobbs.
- We should make it a priority and develop specific action plans and follow up responsibilities.
- It was discussed that the theme for the Vestry retreat was “Vision and Action”, but so far we seem to have much more Vision than Action. We need both and need to make sure we are advancing the process rather than simply discussing it.
- We will coordinate more full with the prayer ministries on the growth issues.
- Our Vestry meeting needs to be more about strategic decisions and discussion than about general tasks.
- Father Robin thanked Paul Petersen and his crew for all their efforts on the Lenten series stage construction. Paul thanked his team for their efforts.
- Luke is currently in upstate New York for a week of Spiritual healing with Bishop Bena. Please continue to keep Luke, Pat and their entire family in your prayers

### **Chancellor Report – Dave Reed**

- The appeal briefs have all been filed and we expect the Virginia Supreme Court to hear oral arguments in April and render a decision in late summer or early fall. Further appeals are possible.
- Dennis discussed his father’s church in Montana that negotiated a settlement in order to separate from their hierarchy.

### **Senior Warden Report – Dennis McNeely**

- Discussed the book *The Simple Church* and the need for new Vestry members to get a copy and read it.

### **Junior Warden Report – Lisa Ellis**

- SCRIP income is already at \$2500 since the beginning of the program and the process is becoming smoother each month.
- The program was used to buy gift cards for the Hypothermia Relief guests and that was very effective.
- We are ordering 2 times per month on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays and delivering the cards on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays.
- Special thanks to Annette and Janice for all their efforts on the SCRIP program.

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## New Business

### New Member Discussion – Dave Bassert

- Ambassadors greeting newcomers is very important
  - There is a need for additional ambassadors
  - Having the small/home groups supplement ambassadors would be a consideration
  - Ambassadors need to have limited functions, covered by a one-page instruction sheet
  - Fr. Robin indicated that there may be a need to replace the question marked-vests, due to feedback from the church survey
- George Hamlin noted that the church WEB site does not handle an introduction to the church well
  - 60% of the visitors leave after viewing just the home page
  - Alvin Moore is revamping the church WEB site and his work may be able to impact the newcomers issue
- Follow-up visitation is not apparent but would be useful
- Fr. Robin explained the current follow-up process: newcomer information goes to the church secretary and she creates a letter for Fr. Robin to sign
- There is a big need to close the backdoor, or getting people integrated into the church; the need for an effective process
  - First step could be to meet with the rector during a session held quarterly
  - Epiphany 101 class for newcomers is another possibility
    - Session held semi-annually
    - Leads to a formal commissioning of newcomers in church
  - Overall, the process needs to convey expectations and be formal - becoming a member through a commissioning ritual
- Fr. Robins noted that the early Church had a sense of belonging, love and acceptance of outsiders
  - People wanted to belong and to pay
  - Payment occurred through education
  - Relationships are a key aspect of the Epiphany experience; Roger Kodat reiterated this point
  - (Vestry challenge) is getting people to want to become church members and examining ways to achieve this goal
  - Accountability will be key to achieving these goals
- The following suggestions were offered for this new member issue:
  - Steve Mentzer recommended placing pictures of new church members in the *Candle*
  - Fr. Robin and Paul Petersen mentioned the possibility of using a sign or big screen to highlight newcomer names
  - George Hamlin offered the idea of a Nametag Sunday
  - Dave Bassert recommended moving the nametag board to the great hall

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- From a newcomers perspective, the entry to the building for most activities, except the Sunday service, is not the main entrance
- Fr. Robin commented that the WEB site needs to be a focus item recommended to the newcomers

### **Simple Church Discussion – Steve Mentzer**

- A handout was provided that highlighting the Simple Church concepts
- Fr. Robin stated that there is a need to look at the innate strengths and pray to realized these strengths and for the use of them
- Roger Kodat noted that the visitors should know what makes Epiphany relevant
  - 2-3 key aspects
  - Church survey indicates that most of the congregation is not familiar with 2-3 key aspects
- George Hamlin stated that the WEB site should clearly reflect the church vision, if not a detailed roadmap
- Fr. Robin indicated that the next church retreat may focus more on strategic discussions
  - Ray Blount, a church consultant, or Rev Julian Dobbs may help
  - Steve Mentzer noted that a facilitator could be useful for this discussion
- Fr. Robin encouraged the vestry to get together and to focus on a strategy that results in actionable outcomes

Meeting adjourned with a motion from Tom Conlon and seconded by Bill Fetzer. The Vestry unanimously concurred.