

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Topsail Beach
Vestry Retreat and Meeting
March 5, 2022**

Present: The Rev. Caleb Lee (Rector), Bill Anlyan, Chip Carter, Layne Dupree, Ashley Eason, Anne O'Dell, Sally Pope, Tom Sramek, Rhonda Stroud, Meaghan Thomas, Merry Ann Wright, Judy Wilson (Treasurer), and Denise Sheehan (Vestry Clerk).

Absent: Matthew Langley, Steve Martin

Guest: Mona Clites

Vestry Retreat: The vestry held a series of conversations and ice breakers, worship and prayer. They discussed vision, burn-out, passion and service.

Vestry Meeting:

Approval of the February 2022 Minutes

There were corrections made to the February 2022 minutes. Anne O'Dell's name was removed from the Grant Committee and Jan Vicks was added. After a motion by Meaghan Thomas, and a second by Bill Anlyan, the corrected minutes were approved.

Strategic Plans

Facilities – Mona Clites

Mona presented an update on the plans for major improvements to St. Paul's. The conceptual drawings for Phase 1 and Phase 2 are complete. Gray Hudson (architect) is working on the schematic drawings for both phases. Phase 1 is capable of being done right now. Phase 2 schematics can be completed in a couple of months.

These schematics will give a more accurate picture of the cost for each phase, and can be used for fundraising. Each design and development plan will get us closer to the true cost of the project, as they look at engineering, structures and systems.

Once the construction drawings are completed, the projects can be put out for bids.

The congregational comments since the presentation at the Annual Meeting have been mostly positive. There is excitement and eagerness to get started. The negative

comments have centered mostly around cost. But these will be addressed as the cost and timeline become clearer.

Father Lee asked what the timeline would be if St. Paul's committed to all phases and construction was able to proceed at a good pace. Mona answered that the timeline would depend on fundraising.

A question was asked about money for the schematics from the architect. Is there money left over from the conceptual plans? Mona said that Gray would send St. Paul's a 1-2 page proposal that would address this, as well as other questions.

The Facilities Committee anticipates that Phase 1 construction could be completed in nine months. During this time, the church would continue to be fully operational.

Vestry discussion brought up a question. Who else might be involved in this project, other than the Facilities Committee and Vestry? Would there be a separate committee assigned by the vestry or the Facilities Committee only?

The Facilities Committee will report again to the vestry on progress in two or three months.

Bill Anlyan reiterated that we will have to build a strong case to the congregation to raise the funds needed for this project. He urged the vestry to listen closely to all comments – both positive and negative. Chip Carter said the schematics will be key in getting the congregation excited and invested in the project. The more detail provided, the more commitment from the people of St. Paul's.

A FAQ page will be added to the St. Paul's website, answering many of the questions the congregation may have about the building project. Every effort will be made to keep the congregation informed throughout the process.

The vestry thanked Mona and the Facilities Committee for all their hard work.

Human Resources – Meaghan Thomas

Meaghan gave a brief summary of the work the committee did last year. The committee, composed of herself, Sally Pope, Joan Rosko Miller and Matt Langley, accomplished a great deal. The committee completed a labor analysis, staffing and management plan for paid staff and volunteers, job descriptions and spiritual gifts assessments and follow-ups.

This year, the focus will be on membership. The Human Resource Committee will work with the Membership Committee to determine how the vestry can support and grow church membership. This goal is key in going forward – to invite, to welcome and to connect with members of St. Paul's. St. Paul's is already doing much to be inclusive and welcoming.

Human Resources/Membership will establish a regular schedule of new member events- the next will be in late April. There will be a break until the fall; and then these events will be held three times a year. Vestry members will be encouraged to attend these events.

The Committee is also updating informational materials in the welcome bags, pews, and bulletins, with the goal of consistency in all communications.

The Members' Spotlight in the E-News is also a way to encourage and build connections. The Committee would like to create a schedule of old and new members willing to be highlighted. A picture and short biography is all that is required.

This year, Human Resources will focus on Model Policies adherence and implementation. They will update and add to job descriptions. Help and input would be welcome.

Father Lee reminded the vestry that members could change committees if desired – you are not locked into a committee for your entire term. The committee structure is evolving and is in transition.

Bill Anlyan asked if there was a master calendar of regularly scheduled committee meetings.

Stewardship - Bill Anlyan, Anne O'Dell, Judy Wilson

The goal of the committee is to make stewardship a year-round ministry and a way of life. Stewardship is not married to the budget – it is a valuable and faith building ministry, not a once a year transaction.

The Committee will create an intentional, coordinated plan for planned giving and the capital campaign. Communication with the congregation will be key to the success of these campaigns. The committee is already planning for the coming fall. A theme and an appeal to new members should not wait until the traditional stewardship “season” (November). New members must be part of the excitement in the new plans for St. Paul's.

There are plans to enliven and re-invigorate the Endowment Board and planned giving.

Father Lee spoke of the “3 legged stool” of church funding – the annual fund, the Capital Campaign and planned giving (legacies, wills, estates). The focus on each of these “legs” is important.

Rector's Report

Since Epiphany, attendance has grown for both services. The 8:00 am service has doubled in attendance. Membership has increased, in part because of transfers. These transfers encompass all age groups.

On Ash Wednesday, there were 98 attendees at the 12:10 pm service and 92 at the 6:00 pm service.

The upcoming schedule for Holy Week and Easter can be found on St. Paul's Facebook page and the church website.

On March 13, Rev. Michael Singer will begin his position as Pastoral Associate. The church is still in the search for a Sexton and a Children's/Youth and Family Coordinator.

There have been 3 requests already for weddings at St. Paul's, and the church needs to find a Wedding Coordinator. This would be a paid position.

In addition, the church's guidelines and costs need to be reviewed and updated. It costs the church over \$1900 to operate for a day, and this reality needs to be reflected in what is charged for a wedding. Other expenses to be considered are music, wedding coordinator, clergy, and sexton. Optional charges might include bulletins and live-streaming the wedding.

With the decline in cases, COVID and masking policies will be relaxed. As of March 13, St. Paul's will return to "all may, none must, some should" policy. This will apply across the board, including Sunday School and the hospitality ministries. The hospitality ministries will resume regular coffee hour on March 20. There will still be packaged foods and bottled water available for those who choose not to partake in the "self-prepared" offerings.

In mid-March, the House of Bishops will meet and discuss the resumption of the "common cup" for Eucharist.

Ashley Eason asked if these changes would apply to the Taize worship service. The Rector responded yes.

Rector's Warden Report – Bill Anlyan

Bill Anlyan began his report by recommending that the vestry read Lucy Ann Glover's history "Sing Unto the Lord – A History of St. Paul's Episcopal Church 1858-2008". He hoped that this book would be a reminder of the role the vestry plays in the life and history of St. Paul's.

He is in the process of sending out schedules for Vestry Person of the Day and church closings. During Holy Week, more help will be needed.

Vestry members had some questions about duties and procedures for VPOD, opening and locking up the church, codes and keys. Each new vestry member now has a drive with this information. Chip Carter offered a “refresher course” on these responsibilities.

Bill would like to initiate quarterly meetings with former Senior Wardens to share institutional knowledge about St. Paul’s. These former wardens might serve as “ambassadors without portfolios”. Their feedback and positive voices would be beneficial in the parish as St. Paul’s moves into a building and growth phase.

People’s Warden Report – Chip Carter

Chip Carter was unable to attend some of the February GNP gatherings but gained information on Building & Grounds through conversations with the GNP leader, David Tousignant.

- Research for a fire door at the entrance to the downstairs conference area in the Parish House. This is necessitated to bring St. Paul’s back into compliance with local fire codes. The original fire door was cut in half to make a “Dutch door” at the request of the leaders when the children were meeting down there.
- Replacement of the original kitchen “rinse off” faucet with a commercial grade one that is more efficient. This enabled us to move the old kitchen faucet to the serving area as that faucet had broken.
- Bob Belaustegui has completed eight (8) small tables or stands for the children’s area.
- A proper stand for the DOK banner has been completed, and is now in the nave.
- Two (2) circulating fans were installed in the Sanctuary to improve circulation there.
- This past week we dedicated efforts to landscaping projects. These included:
 - Cleaning out dead plants and weeds from the 16th Street gardens.
 - Cleaning out and removing accumulated soil from the bed between the Rectory Garden West fence down to the 16th Street sidewalk. Ten (10) wheelbarrow loads of accumulated dirt were moved from that spot to the south end of the Princess Street parking lot between that lot and Andrews’ parking lot.
 - Severe pruning of the Market Street entrance hedge, necessitated by exterior overgrowth that was stunting interior leafing and would have eventually killed the plants due to a lack of sunlight. The edge was pruned

down to be parallel with the fence. It will take a full year's cycle to achieve the desired full growth pattern.

Planned projects include:

- Robert Dittmer has been contacted and will clean and polish the church floors before the tours of the Azalea Festival April 9th and 10th.
- We need to repaint the Parish Hall walls. However, before that can be accomplished, we need to check the roof and gutters for find a leak(s) that are damaging the plaster walls.
- He will meet with Chad Chandler of the Wilmington Fire Department soon to design an emergency exit plan for the church and Parish Hall. This will include maps showing the exits, training of “fire wardens” (probably need ten (10) volunteers) and a gathering place(s) for evacuees. Parishioners will be advised to **not** move their vehicles unless requested to by the WFD. There should also be fire extinguisher training for staff, ushers and the “fire wardens”. The WFD can set up a fire model in out parking lot for this training.
- The emergency exit plan will need a PA system church wide. This can be done over the Wi-Fi system but will require selection of microphone and speaker locations.
- We want to enable our thermostats in the nave to have internet access.
- The chair lift is in need of a new battery. There is a nationwide search of the correct battery.

During discussion, Anne O’Dell asked that the risk management plan, not completed because of COVID, be revitalized.

Treasurer’s Report – Judy Wilson (see attached reports)

Judy presented a summary of each of the funds (Operating, Capital, Restricted, and Endowment), as well as the fiduciary responsibilities of the vestry and the Finance Committee.

After payments for the architectural study, the Capital Fund has a balance of \$7,812.50. (12/31/2021). These funds will be available to complete Phase 1 and start Phase 2. A Diocesan grant received in February 2022 will be used to pay the Endowment Fund loan.

The Restricted Fund is not used for operational purposes. After expenses for Kauno Lehto Scholarships for 4 students, grants and monies to Nourish NC, there is a balance of \$8,893.08.

The Endowment Fund has a balance of \$1,018,000, of which \$400,000 is earmarked. This leaves \$613,000 of funds not earmarked for specific purposes. Judy Wilson will go over the Endowment Fund in more detail at the April vestry meeting.

The operating fund balance (as of 2/28/22) is \$35,530.56. There is also \$94,132.32 in the Reserve Savings Account.

After a motion by Chip Carter and a second by Ashley Eason, the vestry approved the Treasurer's report.

Old Business

Model Policies

Bill Anlyan will head up a team to explore the best way to implement these new policies at St. Paul's.

There was no New Business presented to the vestry. There was a motion to adjourn presented by Merry Ann Wright and seconded by Sally Pope. The vestry approved and the meeting was adjourned at 3:19pm.

The retreat concluded with Holy Eucharist.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Sheehan
Vestry Clerk