

**Meeting of the Incorporated Vestry of  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
March 12<sup>th</sup> 2024**

Attendees: Rev. Eric Hillegas, Eric Menzer, Anne Strayer, Matt Conant, Pete Partridge, Felicia Marino, Susan Ariail, Megan Dietz, Brian Hershner, Scott Hamilton.

Zoom Attendee: David Kierce

**I. Call to Order 6:30 pm**

Opening Lectio & Prayer

**Reverend Eric Hillegas**

**II. Proclaim by Word and Example the Good News of God in Christ**

a) Parochial Report

**Reverend Eric Hillegas**

The 2023 Parochial Report was presented for Vestry review. This standardized report is submitted to the national Church annually by every Episcopal parish, providing a snapshot of congregational membership, attendance, and finances. In recent years, the report has also expanded to include narrative content about opportunities and challenges facing a parish. For 2023, Felicia Marino suggested that the Pappus House be included as one of our Outreach Ministries. Father Eric noted our average attendance and financial base continue to be well-above above national averages in the Episcopal Church. A motion was made by Pete Partridge and seconded by Felicia Marino to approve the 2023 Parochial Report. The motion was approved unanimously.

b) AV Phase II Improvements

New choir microphones have been installed on the back of the rood screen. We also have twelve (12) new hearing assist devices that have been updated to a digital broadcast technology. Father Eric and Choir Director/Organist Rodney Barnett are also now using digital microphones. With these updates, our transition from an analog to a digital broadcast system is complete. The new components will provide more clarity and stability, both in-house and online. To complete our upgrades, four new speakers will be installed before Easter to replace the single speaker currently mounted in the ceiling. Our new speakers will improve both the clarity

and volume of our in-house broadcast. Tom Warman continues to oversee the project with our AV service provider, Faithful Productions.

### **III. Seek and Serve Christ in All Persons**

#### a) Freezers & Washers

**Felicia Marino**

One freezer remains in the basement for our use. Four have been sold for a total of \$700. Five remain for disposal and Shawn is working to find a vendor who will haul these away at no cost. The \$700 will be used to purchase a dryer. Morgan and Linda Hively have generously donated a washing machine that Shawn will be able to use for cleaning janitorial supplies.

#### b) Safe Church

**Reverend Eric Hillegas**

The Vestry is reminded to continue with online Safe Church training required for parish leadership. Please contact Tory Dunkle, our Safe Church Administrator, with any questions. Thanks to those who have completed their training.

### **IV. Strive for Justice and Peace Among All People**

#### a) New American Welcome Center

**Reverend Eric Hillegas**

Congratulations to Felicia Marino, who will be working part-time at the New American Welcome Center to assist Haitian refugees arriving in York. We look forward to learning about opportunities to continue supporting this important work.

### **V. Rector's Report**

**Reverend Eric Hillegas**

#### a) Staffing Update

Cathy Sowers has announced that she will be stepping down from the Financial Administrator position after more than seven years of faithful service at St. John. Cathy will remain at St. John for several more months, allowing adequate time to hire and train a new candidate for the position. Her tenure will conclude on or before July 31, 2024. Cathy is looking forward to smaller, independent projects that allow more time for travel and being with family. Next month, Father Eric will present an updated job description for input and review. He hopes to post the position in May and hopefully hire someone by June, allowing 4 to 6 weeks of transitional time.

#### b) Host Site for Diocesan Confirmation Service

Beginning in 2023, the Bishop announced that Confirmations would take place either at her regularly scheduled parish visits, or at regional services by Convocation. St. John is part of the Southern Convocation, consisting of seven regional parishes. Since the Bishop's last visit to St. John in September of 2022, Father Eric has been working with a growing number of candidates for Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows at St. John. The number of candidates for one of these forms of Christian commitments has now reached twelve (12). Unfortunately, the Bishop's next visit to St. John is not scheduled until March of 2025, so Father Eric has volunteered St. John to host the Southern Convocation Confirmation Service on Saturday, May 11 at 3pm.

A question was raised by Felicia Marino about appropriate gifts for these candidates. Father Eric reported that a Prayer Book is the traditional gift for Confirmation. He will also plan to include a more recent resource produced by Church Publishing, A Handbook for the Episcopal Church. We look forward to hosting this gathering in May.

A motion was made to approve the Rector's report by Eric Menzer and seconded by Susan Ariail. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **VI. Senior Warden's Report**

**Eric Menzer**

### **a) HU Urban Agriculture Project**

A draft lease has been presented to St. John by Harrisburg University. The draft lease has been reviewed by St. John legal counsel, Chris Vedder, who has provided initial feedback. When both parties have agreed to initial lease terms, Chris will be invited to present the draft lease to the Vestry for review and approval. Diocesan approval will also be necessary. We expect next steps to happen in May or June.

A motion was made to accept the Senior Warden's report by Pete Partridge and seconded by Matt Conant. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **VIII. Junior Warden's Report**

**Brian Hershner**

### **a) Disposition of Unused Pews**

Currently, twelve (12) unused pews are being housed in the Parish Hall. Brian is in the process of clearing off items that have accumulated on the pews so six (6) can be ready for either sale or donation.

## b) Bell Tower Inspection

On April 5, 2024, the bell tower will be inspected, including pictures so we can see the state of the bell and surrounding areas. We expect that the bell support structure will need to be updated. Also, the surrounding flooring will likely need to be repaired. At the March 2024 Vestry meeting, \$1,000 was approved for the inspection, however Brian now thinks it may exceed \$1,000. A motion was made by Eric Menzer and seconded by Scott Hamilton to increase the amount approved for the bell tower inspection to \$1,500. The motion was approved unanimously.

## c) Fire Alarm Report

An estimate for replacing the entire fire alarm system has been received from our long-term service provider, ESI, Electronic Systems Installers. Total cost is \$67,683. A large part of the expense would be the cost of running all-new wiring to replace existing wiring that is several decades old. The current wiring has reportedly made it impossible for ESI to localize electric surges that trip the alarm system and currently prevent us from passing required inspections. As this would be a very large expense, we are seeking input from a second vendor. A meeting is scheduled with Kleppers Security to help us get a better perspective on ESI's proposal, and possibly a second quote.

## d) Additional Property Updates

Bleecker Street has finished repairs to the education hallway and damaged first floor ceiling tiles. In addition, Gohn and Stambaugh is fixing the HVAC units above the Parish Hall. Finally, measurements have been taken for the historic front entrance, and refabricated storm doors in honor of Jody Appell (funded by the Brougner Foundation) should be installed by the end of June.

A motion was made to accept the Junior Warden's report by Felicia Marino and seconded by Pete Partridge. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **VII. Treasurer's Report**

**Matt Conant**

### a) Receipt of S. Boring Estate

A unrestricted bequest in the amount of \$86,000 has been received from Sarann Boring. Matt recommends temporarily keeping this money in the Mission and Ministry Fund until we have a better sense of our financial needs for the alarm

system. The bequest could also be included in recommendations from the Debt Servicing Task Force, which will report back to the Vestry in May.

b) Ken Wallick Estate

Father Eric again spoke with the executor of the Ken Wallick estate. The executor confirmed that St. John is still expected to receive a substantial bequest, and he hopes that estate disbursements will be sent within the next few months.

There were no questions for Matt. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's report by Brian Hershner and seconded by Eric Menzer. The motion was approved unanimously.

**IX. Other Business**

Thanks was extended to Allison Kierce for her work planning the upcoming Palm Cross Palooza. Father Eric reminded the Vestry about upcoming Holy Week services.

The next Vestry meeting will be held at 6:30 pm on April 9th at church.

A motion to adjourn was made by Pete Partridge and seconded by Felicia Marino. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Anne Strayer