

St. John's Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting
May 15, 2013

Members Present: Larry Bennett, Betty Culley, Randy Pickering, Meegan Reidy, Jim Suren, Debbie Swanson, Kim Roberts, Cindy Turner and the Rev. Jan Oller.

Members Absent: Ed Fain

Others Present: John Culley, Canon Bruce Gray

The Rev. Jan opened the meeting with prayer at 6:58 pm.

Minutes

The minutes of the April 17 meeting were adopted. Kim Roberts, second by Meegan Reidy.

Financials

Facilities rental income is 115% of budget, which is great. \$325 received from Energizing Indiana (energy audit) to date. The financial report was accepted upon a motion by Larry Bennett, second by Randy Pickering.

Upcoming Events

Strawberry Festival at Christ Church Indy is June 13. Monies received will be donated to the MC Free Clinic.

Weds & Thurs next week the 3rd graders are coming through to see the organ.

Jan is preaching on Sunday, June 15 at the Crawfordsville Strawberry Festival.

Mutual Ministry Review

Discussed questionnaire that was given to the vestry.

Bruce part:

How is St. John's doing at welcoming newcomers?

We think we make every effort to welcome them. We have a few people in the parish who definitely make it a point to welcome new people. Should we ask if someone is new or "call them out" during the service? Jan will send a note when people sign the guest register. The register does not have space for an email, but we could get a new book.

Suggestion: have a choir member greeting people at the end of the service and recruiting for choir.

How are worship services going?

Sermons are good. It is nice to have sermons online. Sermons tie in things that are going on in the parish. Jan is not afraid to address issues. People enjoyed the Mother's Day prayer. The music ministry is going well. Discussion on the postlude. Love it? Dislike not leaving during it? Issues surrounding it are confusion with newcomers. The healing service drew 10 participants, which is good attendance for a mid-week service. Other places have weekly healing services. We can have one quarterly. Wednesday services are running 4-7 people. We are using

authorized resources for that service.

Lay Leadership

Lay leadership is still strong. It got us through the difficult times. Many have taken on responsibilities and done very well. This is consistent with our history. We need to make sure that our lay leaders understand that accepting a role does not mean a life-long commitment.

Suggestion: Publicly thanking people when they leave a role is a way to show that people do leave committees or chairmanships. Have a committee dedicated to leadership development.

Adult Formation

A sense that people are hungry for new things, but we don't necessarily know what they are. We have been using answers from the questionnaire that we had. We have plans through February 2014 from those ideas. Sessions on the Prayer Book were well attended. The choir feels valued that we try to wait for them to start. We have had much variety. 10am Tuesday morning bible study. The study focuses on Sunday's readings.

Suggestion: Elder hostel approach for the community. We can present something on a weekday morning that would be attended by retirees. This approach facilitates some intellectual and spiritual insights into life as well as provides a social outlet.

Children's Formation

Children sang a butterfly song in April. The idea of a children's choir has been raised. The Christmas pageant went well. The curriculum is from the Episcopal church and based on the readings. We have had intergenerational events for formation time. Our children have been invited to join the Presbyterian church for Vacation Bible School.

Suggestion: Events are a good strategy for formation. Focusing on an event monthly or every 6 weeks is easier than planning one curriculum for 9 months.

Social Life

Starting dinner groups for 8 members. Each group will meet four times over 6 months. Several events scheduled: Breakfast at the Shore in August. Barbeque in late June. Blessing of the animals at the shelter. Indianapolis Indians baseball game in August. Stroll for Strays. We are a sponsor for Dancing with the Stars. Family camp with St. Matthew's.

Facility

Aside from the elevator people, the building is fantastic. Vestry members adopt entrances. People are conscious of litter. Jim Suren has an agreement with a friend to exchange services for churches. An energy savings is having midweek Eucharist in Whitlock, not the sanctuary. Another is changing the lights in the choir loft. Parish hall is newly painted, as are two of the restrooms. We had a fire inspection and found that our extinguishers had not been upgraded. There were a few other minor issues that we have 6-9 months to fix. We save on office supplies by recycling donated ink cartridges.

Communications

We have a new Facebook page. We have a Google group for email. The newsletter is consistently good. 10 households receive hard copies, otherwise it is sent electronically. Communications community-wide are a growth area. The newspapers are willing to publish

things if they are print-ready. Jan recently preached at Wabash and is currently on the rotation to preside at their chapel. There were 27 students in attendance. We have had a presence at Wabash Community Day. We may be able to get an advertisement in the Wabash paper, or through a website. Also look at options at Ivy Tech.

Suggestion: Collect email addresses at Community Day?

Stewardship/Finance

Finances are doing fairly well. We have a deficit budget, but have been able to hold our expenses down. We do not have a planned giving program. This fall there may be a seminar on aging, including an attorney and discussing a will. In the past having discussions about tithing was considered, perhaps, distasteful. Transparency in finances is key for parishoners to know that their donations are going to a good place. The hope was to be further along in year-round giving. A narrative on where the money is going is planned for the fall. Showing what we save from the free work that people do. Emphasize the importance of attendance. It is important to make sure visitors know which cups to use. We should put out visitor mugs and invite people to bring their own the following week.

Other Comments

Questions: Fresh perspective on how committees should work. A full and better understanding of what an “ideal” outreach should be. Also, an understanding of a healthy faith community. We hope and believe that Jan will let us know if she needs more or less of something in the future.

Jan’s Responses: She would like to move away from thinking of “committees” and more toward “ministries”. We should only meet when we have something to do, not meet because we feel like we’re obligated to do so. We don’t identify projects as “St. John’s” projects, but our members are very involved in the community. We need a list of people involved in various ministries within the community. Canon Gray’s response: a healthy faith community can vary and there’s no single snapshot. Jan’s response – healthy community is based on strong relationships.

Meeting ended at 8:44pm with a prayer from Canon Bruce Gray.