

**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**  
**Vestry Meeting – April 18, 2007**

**Present:** Senior Warden Tim Croasdaile, Junior Warden Greg Geissler, Roger Kilgore, Maryann O'Brien, Mike Kornelsen, Kevin Fletcher, Ann Luke, Deb McVicker, Diana Solomon, and Susan Backus

**Absent:** Rector Constance Delzell, Deacon Sally Brown, Assistant Priest Curtis Wait, Treasurer Kathy Fleming, and Mary Buck

**Attending:** Bishop Robert O'Neill, Clerk Cheak Yee, and Sue Kilgore.

The meeting convened at 6:35 p.m. with opening prayer.

*Conversation with the Bishop.* Bishop O'Neill began by inquiring what concerns members of the Vestry had about the upcoming transition. These topics/queries were mentioned:

- 1) The process and selection of an Interim Rector;
- 2) The coordination of clergy transition with a capital campaign and construction disruptions;
- 3) When the search portion of the clergy transition should commence; and,
- 4) How long a timeframe to expect for obtaining an Interim Rector and for the search process itself.

The Bishop commenced by noting the very special and quite unparalleled role which a priest plays in any parish for impact at the happiest heights and deepest sorrows of the lives of its members. He cautioned that our community will need indeed not only to celebrate the ministry of Mother Connie before she departs, but we need to bear in mind having the time and space for the grief of her departure to heal at its natural staging and pacing.

The Bishop indicated that he will select the Interim Rector, and noted that the Parish and Vestry would not desire to be involved in two successive search processes. He noted that the canonically mandated roles for the Rector, besides responsibility for worship and liturgy, focus on the management of the staff and the proper usage of building/facilities. During a transition, these roles will devolve primarily or ultimately upon the Wardens and Vestry.

An Interim Rector can assist with the customary duties of a Rector in a relationship defined with input from the Vestry; the Interim Rector primarily facilitates the transition in such a manner that the Vestry can focus on leading the Parish forward to renewed stability with healthy strength. (The Bishop indicated that he did not prefer to see a "stirring up" for its own sake as that is sometimes seen as a natural concomitant of an interim ministry assignment by some clergy.) An Interim Rector has a role which has particular requirements and skills, but these by definition are not for a long-term and would not necessitate a formal search by and a "call" from a Parish. Indeed, an Interim Rector is generally not to be a candidate for a call to permanent Rectorship.

The Bishop described in general the four basic options available to any Parish for a clergy transition under the basic rubric that it is the Vestry which calls a candidate to Rectorship –

- a) A full search. This typically involves a significant self-study, the formation of a search committee, the conduct of interviews, and a formal Vestry decision to call a new Rector.
- b) An abbreviated search. This requires a greater effort by the Bishop's office for more of the search functions, and is requested when a Parish is constrained by finances or other

personnel limitations. A self-study is still required, and at least one candidate will be made available for the Vestry to consider calling.

- c) An appointment by the Bishop of a Rector. This is never entirely unilateral but a consultative process appropriate to a Parish which is unable or unwilling to undertake a formal search.
- d) An appointment by the Bishop of a Priest-in-charge. This is appropriate when a Parish has endured significant conflict or severe financial crisis. It would not be in a position to undertake a search even if desiring to do so. This appointment is typically for about 3 years, with the hope that by then the Vestry and Parish may be able to consider a search. A Priest-in-charge can be a candidate for a call for permanent Rectorship.

The Bishop expressed his confidence that St. Andrew's, as a vibrant Parish, would be fully capable of undertaking and would desire a full search. The Bishop advised that the resources of his office be used as fully as possible; this is a key focus of Diocesan life and priority and transitions will progress most positively when they are collaboratively undertaken. The consensus of the Vestry agreed that the Parish should undertake a full search.

In terms of the search process, the Bishop advised against a complicated over-engineering (which had been all too common) but believed a timeline needs to be established with clear steps and an associated budget; a "typical" search can take about a year, but even if the process is basically concluded, a new Rector may need to relocate, wrapping up other engagements, so it may be more than a year before a new Rector is present on site.

Similarly, in terms of appointing an Interim Rector, the Bishop did not believe that this decision would necessarily occur by the first Sunday after Mother Connie departs. Answering a query, he indicated that availability is the key to the timing for an Interim Rector to take up duties with us, and he indicated he would need to consult with his Canon Bill Martin on the current actual roster of clergy on hand. It was noted that St. Andrew's has a particular character and diversity and queried whether compatible clergy could be readily obtained; on this the Bishop expressed his confidence that there will prove to be suitable candidates. In answer to another query, he believed that the Interim Rector would likely be someone "relatively local" given the expense and constraints for someone to move any great distance for a temporary posting.

Given therefore that a period of supply priests may be utilized before an Interim Rector arrives, the Bishop was queried whether a rotation among the several retired clergy already within the Parish should be established. He indicated that he would like to check with the Canon first. In a period when supply priests are used, there may need to be appropriate (and possibly different) arrangements both for the Sunday liturgies and for appropriate pastoral ministry to parishioners.

The Bishop counseled that the Vestry advise the Parish about the search process with due confidentiality and simplicities, but frequently. Indeed, too much communication is better than too little; the key is to be effective for both reassurance and for inspiration.

He observed that the self-study period of discernment about the Parish and about the new ministry of an arriving Rector can be energizing in a positive way; he urged the Vestry to look for creative and flexible approaches: home meetings, neighborhood gatherings, forums, meals, etc., with appropriate written communications from Vestry, search committee, or task forces, are possible vehicles.

The Bishop noted that a Parish Profile is really "just a snapshot" and should not be treated as an "idol" in a dynamic and changing underlying situation. It needs, nonetheless, to be clearest probably in what the Parish hopes to find in its next Rector. Part of the self-study involved will be to ask and to listen attentively to the stories our parishioners will tell about themselves, the past

Rector and the current concerns, and of course their hopes and visions for Parish and the next Rector. These stories, more than statistics, will reveal important truths about who we are and who we hope to become.

There ought to be linkage or overlap between the Vestry and a search committee; the Wardens should serve on the search committee; and there ought to be regular consultations between the Vestry and the search committee.

The Bishop was briefed about the Sacred Vision, Sacred Space process and the imminent capital campaign it will likely entail. It was noted that significant self-study and discernment had already been undertaken precisely for this major undertaking. A further comment elucidated that Mother Connie had observed how the Parish, especially with its recent growth, was moving from being “priest-centered” to “program-centered” based on vital and dedicated lay leadership; it was this trajectory which persuaded her, the Vestry, and other lay leadership that this is the proper timing to consider such a capital campaign. It was understood that if, instead, the option would be to await until after a clergy transition to consider such an endeavor, the delay could readily require multiple years, and could seriously stunt the growth already achieved and hopefully attainable. The Bishop reflected that if the capital campaign effort is not protracted, a clergy transition can still occur positively, and even synergistically. Candidates often will find a growing and positive Parish attractive.

The Bishop noted that various consultancies and advisory services exist to expedite the search process in addition to what is regularly provided from the Diocesan Center. He observed that the interview process, usually away rather than having candidates come visiting, will be much determined by the practicalities of budget and schedule. Typically, a search process should result in recommendations to the Vestry and then a decision by the Vestry to call. During this process, the Bishop observed that he does reserve the right to remove names from candidacy for reasons he deems appropriate. The call of the Vestry after a due process of search will usually be acceptable to a Bishop.

Bishop O’Neill concluded by observing that in the various occasions in life for loss and pain, the Kingdom of God is always also opening new possibilities, and that change can be one of these positive opportunities.

The Vestry expressed its deep appreciation for the Bishop’s visit and counsels.

*Minutes.* The draft minutes of the March 21, 2007 meeting of the Vestry included a reference to accounting details of the Keeping Faith Initiative which proved on further investigation to be overstated. Accordingly, it was moved and seconded to adopt the draft minutes with the correction of deleting related sentences; the motion passed.

*Special Request.* Sue Kilgore noted that on May 22<sup>nd</sup> she will be hosting an Advance Commitment Gathering for the Capital Campaign, and requested Vestry members volunteer to help with finger foods for this event, at which about 40 attendees may be expected in the early evening (7 p.m. or earlier).

*Report of Sacred Vision/Sacred Space Task Force.* Chairman Roger reported that the Endowment Committee met on April 12, 2007 and unanimously approved on a contingent basis the usage of \$300,000 of the anticipated bequest from the Titus estate for the Capital Campaign, on the condition that the funds are actually received. In the event that circumstances do not warrant proceeding with the planned expansion, these funds would be set aside for future similar usages. A

copy of the Endowment Committee minutes was provided to be attached to the minutes of this Vestry meeting.

Before this action can be further considered at the Special Parish Meeting to be convened on April 29, 2007, the Vestry would need itself to ratify the decision of the Endowment Committee by not less than a two-thirds majority. A motion was made to this effect and was seconded. To a query, Chairman Roger noted that the Titus estate, which is apparently larger than first reported at the January 2007 All-Parish Meeting, should be received by the end of this year. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Chairman Roger noted that the schedule of activities for the Capital Campaign is taking shape as home meetings for updating parishioners are now set.

*Report of Senior Warden.* Senior Warden Tim distributed information on “Standards for the Practice of Interim Ministry” and unaudited financial data from absent Treasurer Kathy Fleming. He noted that he had only had time himself for a cursory review so that the usual more careful checking of its contents had not yet occurred. He announced that a follow-up mini-retreat for the Vestry is to occur on Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, on site from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. This would focus on the options, directions, and processes of the clergy transition; George Magnuson will also lead on this occasion as he had in February, 2007.

*Report of the Junior Warden.* Junior Warden Greg reminded that a grounds clean-up has been scheduled for May 5; he will also develop a maintenance schedule for the summer tasks hopefully to be addressed adequately by voluntary sign-ups. He also noticed that seams in the undercroft flooring are coming up and how this will be addressed will be investigated.

*Retirement Party.* Mike Kornelsen reported that the Scottish Rite Masonic Temple site has been secured in a turn-key style activity with a catered dinner and beverages included. Appropriate entertainment is being arranged. Ideas for an appropriate gift or purpose for a purse are needed.

After a closing prayer, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheak Yee  
Clerk