

2021 Annual Parish Meeting

Here are the approved minutes of the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting held on January 31st, 2021.
Minutes of the 2022 meeting will be available soon.

Annual Parish Meeting Sunday, January 31st, 2021

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Opening Remarks
4. 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes
5. Nominations of Candidates
6. Candidate Remarks
7. Casting of Ballots
8. Reports from Committees and Organizations
9. Treasurer's Report
10. Junior Warden Report
11. Senior Warden Report
12. Other Business
13. Election Results
14. Adjournment
15. Closing Prayer and Blessing
16. Dismissal

Item # 1: Call to Order

- There were 41 members in attendance as of 12:00pm.
- The meeting started at 11:30am.
- The senior Warden (David Creese) asked Deanie Anderson to serve as the facilitator for the meeting.

Item # 2: Opening Prayer

- The opening prayer was offered by the Junior Warden -Mr. Egerton Forster-Jones.
- The meeting was called to order at: 11:33 am.

Item # 3: Opening Remarks

- Deanie shared that some reports were shared with the congregation via WhatsApp and email.

Item # 4: 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

- No corrections from last year's minutes were made.
- Carol Hazlewood moved for the minutes from last year to be accepted. The motion for acceptance was seconded by Brian Roman.

Item # 5: Nominations of Candidates

- Deanie Anderson asked for the nomination of candidates from the floor.
- Leslie Rogers-Wright suggested that since Deanie Anderson was running for the Senior Warden vacancy, her position on the vestry would be open.
- A parishioner raised a question as to why the clerk was not facilitating the meeting. No clarification was provided as to what clerk position was being referenced (vestry clerk or meeting parliamentarian). Brian Roman (previous parliamentarian) clarified that when there was a priest-in-charge, that priest almost always asked Brian Roman to chair the annual meeting. In the absence of a priest-in-charge or a rector, the current senior warden can identify anyone to step-in to facilitate the meeting. The senior warden confirmed that he had appointed Deanie Anderson to serve as the meeting facilitator.
- Brian Roman raised a procedural request and asked that the candidates be voted by acclamation before accepting nominations for the new vacant position.

Item # 6: Casting of Ballots

- A Zoom poll was sent and members had to select a yes or no.
- Poll question: “Do you approve the motion to declare the unopposed candidates for senior warden, vestry member, youth representative, convention delegate and convention alternate to all be declared elected by acclamation?”
- 100% of those who voted, opined with a yes.
- At 11:49, the floor was opened for nominations for an additional vestry member.
- Daverly Cole was nominated by Carol Hazlewood and seconded by Brian Roman.
- A parishioner nominated Ephraim Johnson, but he declined.
- Daverly Cole was voted as the new member of the vestry with 97% of the vote.

Item # 7: Candidate Remarks

- Deanie Anderson- gave a brief statement and stated that “her goal is to have the doors of St. John’s open and not as a mission church. She personally plans to reach out to every talent to make sure that they provide their support. She plans to meet everyone in the middle. She wants to make St. John’s grow and be better.”
- Valarie McCree -introduced herself as a new member of the St. John’s vestry. She moved from New Jersey to Mt. Rainier and is looking forward to serving on the vestry. She wants to do the best so that “we can get more people back into the church and have the church remain open.” She wants to make a difference in our community.
- Patrick Kaloko said he was honored to serve as the voice of the youth on the vestry.
- Daverly Cole said though it was unexpected, her goal is to “uplift St. John’s again and bring the young adults. With God’s help, things will get back to how it was.”
- Carol Hazelwood asked that the names of the new vestry members be reviewed:
- Senior Warden-Deanie Anderson
- Vestry Members-Sonia Anderson, Valarie McCree, Daverly Cole and Jestina Heroe.
- Patrick Kaloko III will serve as the youth representative.
- The other newly elected vestry members declined to provide a statement.
- The members voted to the Diocesan Convention were: Carol Hazlewood and Brian Roman. June Dove is the alternate.
- New soon-to-be treasurer will be Layard Pabs-Garnon who will be confirmed by the vestry at its first meeting.

Item # 8: Reports from Committees and Organizations

- Deanie Anderson asked members to review the packets sent with the reports from the other church organizations. (*See addendum*)

Item # 9: Treasurer's Report

- At 12:20, the treasurer's report was shared. Last year's expenses were shared on the Zoom screen. (*See addendum*)
- The Treasurer's Report was presented by Joan Stuart. She began by thanking the various church organizations (Mother's Union, Choir, Social and Cultural Committee and others...)
- In total, last year we spent \$127,422.19 in expenses.
- Clarification provided that utilities encompasses everything including Comcast.
- Question about the diocesan fund for members of the congregation? - Joan Stuart shared that those were small checks to certain members of the congregation.
- We still owe the diocese for the church insurance as well as money to the county for three quarters of property taxes.
- Request to compile a list of all outstanding debts.
- Joan Stuart shared that MD state taxes had not been paid for years. Also, Social Security taxes were not paid.
- Joan Stuart and Fredericka Hamilton-Ortiz still need documents from Kojo Dixon (former treasurer).
- Carol Hazelwood shared that an audit had not been undertaken in 3 years. Joan Stuart stated that an audit had not been done for more than three years.
- Joan stated that Canon Dr. Philips had shared with the vestry that the diocese would send in staff to review the finances of the church. As of now, no staff from the diocese has been sent in to undertake a financial review.

Next Steps:

- Joan Stuart and Fredericka Hamilton-Ortiz still need documents from Kojo Dixon (former treasurer).

Item # 10: Junior Warden Report

- The Junior Warden provided his report. Mr. Egerton Forster-Jones shared his thanks and appreciation to the following: Mr. David Creese, Father Daniel Darko, Deacon Sandra Bramble, and others. (*See addendum*)

Item # 11: Senior Warden Report

- David Creese shared his sentiments as the outgoing Senior Warden. He encouraged church members to continue to support the church. He reiterated that the current supply priest is willing to stay in place "for a while" to continue to serve the church as a supply priest.
- A reopening plan has been submitted to the diocese.
- Bishop Mariann will visit St. John's on June 20th, 2021.

Item # 12: Proposed Budget

- The proposed budget was shared with the congregation. The total proposed budget is \$107,734.00.
- Our incoming treasurer suggested that questions about payroll taxes and the audit should be deferred until he meets with the finance team, so that informed decisions can be made.
- \$590 x12 monthly payment will be made for the copier for the next three years. We used to pay \$1045 a month for the copier.
- Simeon Asaboro asked that the budget should be reviewed within the finance team. He expressed his sentiments that the salaries are too high when we can't afford to pay other commitments.
- Incoming treasurer noted his observation that the expenses are too high. The finance team needs to work a bit more on the proposed budget so as to reflect the current fiscal state of the church.

Item # 13: Other Business

- Pledge form-Leslie Rogers-Wright briefly shared about the new revised pledge form. The new pledge form can be found via email, the church website as well as the WhatsApp group. The form captures all necessary information to monitor pledges. Members have the option to pay through PayPal or with a credit card.
- Members can still send their paper form to the church.
- Church printer-Alfred During and Sonia Anderson provided an update about the printer/copier transaction from last October's town hall meeting.
- The church was able to settle for \$16,000. The company negotiated with the church and the church received a \$22,000 check. \$16,000 was used to payoff the old printer and the remaining balance of \$6000 was used to pay the three-church staff (\$2000 each).
- Code used for everyone who uses the copier so as to track and monitor its use.
- \$1200 raised to buy an additional functionality for the printer/copier's use.
- We no longer owe Wells Fargo.
- We only now owe Nautica for the printer/copier.
- Heating-Heat at the church needs to be replaced.
- The Junior Warden clarified that we have different heating systems at the church. The heating system for the church works well. The one that supplies heating and cooling to some of the offices and the Father Brown Room do not work.
- The previous heating system installed in the Father Brown room has never worked.
- Goal is to get conventional heating in the offices.
- Church sanitization for reopening: WOSJ and MOSJ will pay for the sanitization of the church prior to the start of in-person services.

Next Steps:

- Submit your pledge forms.
- Members can still mail in their paper pledge forms into the church.
- Eventually, the vestry will vote on whether to abolish the use of the paper forms.
- We only now owe Nautica for the printer/copier.
- More members with technical skills needed to help with capital improvements projects (Remie Sesay, Richard Gabidon, Desmond Slowe) etc.

- Capital improvement projects need to be undertaken before the church reopens.
- A parishioner suggested a quarterly town hall meeting.
- Donations-members can donate things to the church. This includes communion wine and wafer-which are sold at a store next to the La Fontaine Bleue hall in Lanham, MD.
- Virtual Plate offering link-will be unveiled next week.
- Several members commented that the meeting was well-run, the tone was respectful and cheered all of the participants.
- The incoming Senior Warden thanked the outgoing vestry members: Dr. Julius Morrison, Naomi Scott, Leslie Wilson and the outgoing Senior Warden David Creese.
- Flyer for Abigail Taiwo Wilson's funeral will be posted on the parish WhatsApp group.

Item # 14: Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 1:56pm The motion was made by Jestina Heroe and seconded by Juno Thomas.
- A moment of silence was observed for those who transitioned to our Lord in the past year.

Item # 15: Closing Prayer and Blessing

- Closing prayer offered by Junior Warden Egerton-Forster Jones.

Item # 16: Dismissal

- The meeting was dismissed at 2:00pm.

In His Service,

Dr. Theodosia M. Edwards
Clerk of the Vestry