

Meeting of the Vestry of St. Philip's Church in the Highlands
April 24, 2021
9:00 AM
Via Zoom

Agenda

Opening Prayer - Joe Plummer

Spiritual Exercise

Minutes for Approval - March 27, 2021 Vestry Meeting

Treasurer's Report

Rector's Report

Letter and reconciliation, worship, guest preachers, Sunday School, VBS, choir planning, May 15 event, June 20th event

Warden's Report

Mission statement conversation

Ministry Reports/Questions

Partner Relationship with St. James, Kitale, Kenya

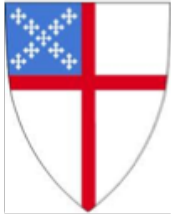
Other Business

Adjourn

Next Meeting:

Saturday, May 22, 2021 9:00 AM via Zoom

I move that St. Philip's Church enter into a partnership with St. James Church and School, Leland, Kenya. The purpose of this partnership is to facilitate St. Philip's application, on behalf of St. James, to the Episcopal Diocese of New York 's 2021 Sustainable Development Goals Fund. This grant application for \$15,000 supports construction of 2 girls' dormitories for grades 5-8, with capacity to board 100-200 girls. The Diocese of New York has strongly encouraged St. Philip's to apply for this grant. This new partnership creates the platform for these 2 Episcopal Churches, thousands of miles apart, to join in prayer and fellowship, to further learning about each other, and to share in God's love and grace in the world.



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Youth Ministry Liaison Report to Vestry

Date: 4/20/2021

Author: Jennifer Sandlund

Ministry/Action Items Completed this Month:

Cross Trainers:

The Cross Trainers helped to hide the eggs in the churchyard on Easter morning.

On our April 18th meeting we met up at the Parish Hall and walked over to the Garrison Cafe for dinner. After we returned to the parish hall we had a discussion about volunteerism and possible opportunities at the church and in the community!

Plans are being made for the Cross Trainers to help with upcoming Sunday school activities.

Sunday School:

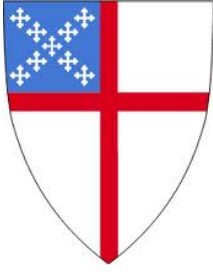
We had many young families in attendance on Easter Sunday and our more than 300 eggs were quickly gathered up. It was wonderful to see.

Starting on April 25, we will offer in-person Sunday School for K-5th grade children outdoors during part of the in-person services through Sunday, June 20th!

Ministry/Action Items in Progress/Pending:

If other committees can think of ways the Cross Trainers can help you, please contact Jennifer Sandlund.

Items Requiring Vestry Vote:



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History/Archives Liaison Report to Vestry

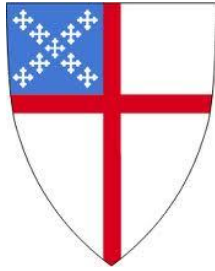
Date: April 20, 2021

Author: Margaret Leahey Gerber

Ministry/Action Items Completed this Month: Correspondence with David Gordon re current projects, the most important of which is bringing churchyard records up to date; History & Archives now has a room in the Sloan Rectory dedicated to parish lore/history; the church has a Welcome sign.

Ministry/Action Items in Progress/Pending: Possible project to digitize records (now done by hand); recruit help in bringing records up to date/digitizing

Items Requiring Vestry Vote:



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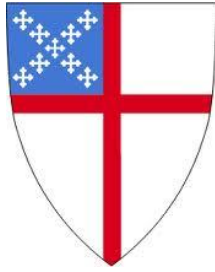
St. Philip's Nursery School liaison report to the Vestry April 2021

The vestry met new SPNS Director Betsy Alberty at its March meeting, and last Tuesday Betsy spent the day at the school, meeting parents, children, the NS Committee, (members include: Sarah as chair, Alli Pataki, Phoebe Geer, Fred Osborn, Kathy Plummer, Kate Calligaro, Erika Cooper (as parent reps), Anita, and Amanda and will include Betsy) and having a long lunch and meeting with the teachers and Anita. According to Amanda and Anita, productive and candid conversation about the state of the school, areas of strength and areas for improvement occurred which was positive. Betsy and Anita continue to meet frequently to discuss the transition; I am also meeting with her, though less regularly. There is a plan for her to join Anita in several Open Houses throughout the spring for present and prospective parents to meet her and hear her plans about the future. Anita reports steady interest in new enrollments and enrollments in the summer; she is active on FB and Instagram as well as placing ads in the papers. With the lifting of COVID restrictions in the fall, our hope is to have more students and for there to be more mixing of groups.

Parent members of the NS Committee: (Erika Cooper, Phoebe Geer, Kate Calligaro and others) are working on a plan for fundraising for the spring, with a specific focus, and a 60th NS Anniversary cocktail party, to be held at St. Philip's on the early evening of May 22. Past parents, past grandparents, and present parents are planned to be invited, as well as vestry. Though the limit on attendees for outdoor events is higher, the plan is for an event which is inclusive, but not too large.

The B&G Committee and Chris Nowak are working on a plan to provide Betsy with private office space in the PH to meet with parents and have private conversations.

Sarah Bayne



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Community Conversation Report to Vestry

Date: 17 April 2021

Author: Gabriel Salas

Ministry/Action Items Completed this Month:

We held a zoom conversation with members of the congregation and the general community of St Philips.

The conversation was long – 1h45m – but the attendance was stable with between 40 and 43 connections for the entire conversation. Some of the connections included 2 participants.

The tone was cathartic, but to some degree constructive. The agenda covered different topics from the very specific – the partnership with the Diocese of Kitane, the new Mission Statement – to the more generic. The main issue was, as expected, the events of the past 6 months as the choir and other participants in the music program have left the congregation.

This was the first, wide-forum conversation involving St Philip's leadership – rector, wardens, and vestry – and an open invitation to the community.

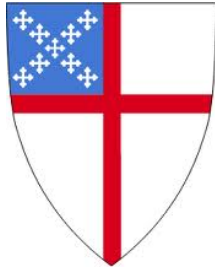
The process to mend relationships within the community is likely to be long and challenging. Nevertheless, the level of affective connections and fraternal

engagement between all involved remains very high and provides some hope for recover.

(Suggested) Ministry/Action Items in Progress/Pending:

- A second “town hall” type conversation with the community. This forum should focus on the future, as means to engage those that have left or are on the fence and bring them back with the Church, if possible.
- (Possibly) some form of offering or gesture to the people that have left the congregation, particularly the Choir, as means to begin mending the broken bridges

Items Requiring Vestry Vote:



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Buildings and Grounds Committee Liaison Report to Vestry

Date: April 24, 2021

Author: Paul Kantor

Action Items Completed:

Refocused existing lights in church to increase lighting for recording and broadcasting purposes completed.

Clemmens repair of slate on PH and rectory completed.

Action Items In-Progress/Pending:

Weekly church heat start responsibilities during winter months among B and G members were continued in April, along with monitoring of humidity.

Estimates are being obtained for water/septic piping to church, as per project approval in principle by vestry on March 27.

Plan to repair the partial collapse of the wall south of the parking lot entrance by John Benjamin was approved by vestry via email after Paul K reported settlement of claim with church insurance company to cover 90% of the cost. Work is to begin at end of April.

Annual campus tour/inspection by B and G committee is scheduled for May 8.

A plan to prepare and install an existing generator for emergency power at rectory is under way. Chris N attempting to make the generator operational and look into installing a crossover switch and perhaps place the generator in a nearby shed for weather protection. The cost is expected to be minimal.

Chris N's preliminary plan and estimates for handicapped access to PH and bathroom in Parish House is under evaluation. Further examination of appropriate walkway improvements would complete the proposal, but the committee agreed that the project should be deferred for now and brought forward to the vestry for their consideration later during 2021.

Fire department advice for installing signage remains under evaluation, seeking more advice from the fire department about specific alternatives, and the value of installing a recommended Knox box to enable fire department emergency access.

Use of the north loop roadway/pathway through the churchyard was evaluated by the B and G committee, but it was decided to defer planning any changes with respect to upgrading or winter use at this time.

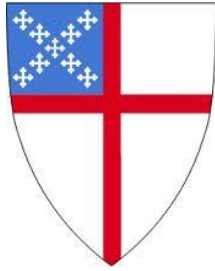
The need for additional office space adjacent to the secretary's partition office in the PH was discussed. Since the cost for constructing this is minimal and will be needed by the NS director soon, the committee agreed that it should be undertaken as soon as possible under supervision of Chris N.

Proposal to install AC split units in entire Parish House was discussed along with possibility of providing AC to only the office areas. The committee agreed to defer planning the larger project, and investigate alternative partial solutions. Chris N and Jim B are examining possibilities.

Proposal for additional AC unit (s) in rectory was discussed. The cost of adding a split unit was very considerable, so it was agreed to look at other solutions, including portable units.

Items Requiring Vestry Vote:

NA



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WORSHIP Liaison Report to Vestry

Date: 16th April 2021

Author: Fred Osborn

Ministry/Action Items Completed this Month: March and April have been exciting: the state government and the diocese of NY have both lifted COVID-19 restrictions to allow in-person gatherings up to 50% of a building's capacity. That means that St Philip's can allow 50 people to attend, in-person, inside, using social-distancing with every-other-pew and opposite-end seating. We are still restricted to a single singer (parishioners may hum behind their masks) and we have the organ and piano playing of our interim music director, Owen Borda. On Easter Day, Owen engaged a string quartet who added great zest to the service. We also brought back the 8am Eucharist service for Easter Day and for the foreseeable future. This has enabled additional participation in worship.

A worrisome development, of which the Vestry is well aware, is the creation of an alternative worship experience in the for-ten-years-unused Methodist Church at the corner of Snake Hill Road and Route 9 in Garrison. St Philip's choir members and their supporters are upset about the resignation in November 2020 of Music Director Dr. Durward Entrekin. They apparently perceive that St Philip's leadership was unable to manage the situation or enable reconciliation. This group has formed the "Highlands Choral Society," and rented the Methodist Church (calling it "The Highlands Chapel") for services and performances at 10:30am on Sunday Mornings, in direct competition with St Philip's main Sunday service.

Easter Day found 60+ attending, many of them long-time St Philip's parishioners. At the following "Low Sunday" on 11th April, over 50 people came.

The Highlands Choral Society has become its own pending 501©3 not-for-profit corporation, managed by a board of directors, governed by a scripted committee structure, and welcoming financial support. Members of the Society have expressed their intention to create a community with the nurturing atmosphere that they had once enjoyed at St Philip's, but feel is no longer possible for them with the current leadership.

Ministry/Action Items in Progress/Pending: This is a disturbing threat to the viability of our parish, and should be addressed with the utmost attention of the Vestry.