

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation
June 25, 2024 – Regular Vestry Meeting
Location: Short Hall
Minutes

Attendees: Robert Aguero, Karin Dutra, Joseph Ferrucci, Inese Heinzl, Rebecca Kendall, Linelle Lane, Laura McLellan, Mark Neumann, John Torres; Stephen Shaver, Rector; David Jasper, Treasurer; Kathleen Kane, Clerk.

Absent: Matt Bonacorso, Bill Glenn.

Visiting parishioners: None.

Call to Order: Stephen called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Opening Prayers: Chaplain Laura offered an opening reflection.

Check-in: Inese, Rebecca, John, Mark, and Stephen gave brief personal check-ins.

Consent agenda:

- Approval of May 28, 2024 vestry meeting minutes.
- Corporate Resolution designating fictitious business names for Open Table and Heavenly Treasures to be added to the General Fund bank account.

With no objections, the consent calendar was approved.

Learning / reflection time: Looking Back...Looking Forward – Accomplishments and Initiatives

The vestry reviewed a list of events, initiatives, and accomplishments from January 2023 to June 2024 and celebrated these achievements. Stephen reviewed additional events dating back to 2018-19. There have been many special projects each year. This year the vestry needs to work on financial sustainability. Other focus areas include an improved newcomer pathway and intergenerational liturgies.

Stephen reviewed a timeline chart to help frame the work in five finance areas that are in some ways inter-related and that may compete with each other. The vestry is beginning to talk about a potential capital campaign, while the Development Committee is actively planning the upcoming Pledge Campaign and also talking about developing a legacy giving program, the Financial Sustainability Task Force is working on recommendations to the vestry for ongoing stabilization of the church finances, and in the Fall the vestry will be adopting the annual budget for 2025. Stephen noted that hard decisions will have to be made by vestry when developing that budget, as there is currently an effective annual deficit of \$125,000.

The public-facing phase of the capital campaign will not begin this year, but a quiet preparatory phase can happen. The vestry will need to flesh out the vision for the project for which funds will be raised. Rebecca noted that the first step in a capital campaign will be crystallizing the vision, which may take 3-6 months. The second step is a feasibility assessment, which could take up to 6 months. The public phase inviting donations from the congregation or public at large will not happen until rather late in the process after the initial, significant donors are already on board. The vestry also needs to complete next year's budget showing financial stability before asking for capital donations.

Mark noted that creating the framework for the Legacy Giving program is a useful step in attaining some of the larger goals. It can be ramped up when appropriate as long as that framework is in place, so it need not compete with a capital campaign. Staggering these projects is good so that congregants are not asked to increase their annual pledge, donate to a capital campaign, and consider legacy giving all at once. Stephen suggested that we let the Generational Plan adoption sit and be celebrated for a few months so that we can take a breath for a bit before moving forward on a first project. Robert suggested that we build prayer and discernment for the vestry into all steps of the process and timeline.

Development Committee report: Joe reviewed the pledge campaign schedule. Paper packets will be available first at the kickoff event, then will be available for pickup before or after services. Packets will also be sent out by email because some people prefer to respond electronically.

Joe reviewed the proposed campaign theme: *Come and See*. This theme is rooted in scripture, both in Psalm 66:5 and John 1:35-39 and 1:45-47. The Committee is planning to have both dollar-figure and number-of-pledges goals.

The Committee has done more thinking about the potential Legacy Giving plan, and will report out in a future meeting.

Generational Plan: Discussion of revised plan and adoption

Stephen asked for comments on the revised Generational Plan, which now includes changes made pursuant to vestry and Task Force comments at the May meeting. The vestry voted to adopt the Plan with two additional changes: update the cover photo and mention on page 9 the desire to reunify Jerusalem Court with the south lawn. (*Moved: Inese. Seconded: Karin. Vote: unanimous.*)

The adopted Plan will be made available for congregation members with both a PDF version for electronic dissemination and some hard copies in the library. Research will be done regarding whether the Plan can be made disabled-accessible.

The vestry also discussed the idea of drafting intention statements about implementation of the Plan. Future vestries may want to draft additional intention

statements as time passes. Intention statements may help to inform or launch one or more capital campaigns. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

Treasurer's Report

- **Monthly financials:** David presented the May Summary Financial Report as an information item and responded to questions from vestry members.

Invite-Welcome-Connect: Considerations for the Welcome Center and Bookstore: Inese gave an update on the Welcome Center. Since May last year, we welcomed over 50 newcomers through the welcome process. Tracking is not yet in place to determine how many of them are still attending services here. She noted that there are gaps in the welcome process that are now being addressed for the future. This will involve a stronger relationship between I-W-C team and the ushers, the new guild being formed, and the library.

There will be a Ministry Fair on Pentecost Sunday (June 8, 2025). A gathering of all ministry leads to share ideas, goals, needs, etc. is planned to take place in August 2024, so that they are ready to recruit congregants to join the different ministries at the Fair.

Inese also noted that the I-W-C team plans to revive gatherings for newcomers, and to restart the four-week Inquirers and Seekers course which was once offered twice a year. Stephen also plans to offer the short Episcopal 101 sessions monthly after services this year, as well as some form of bible study.

The retail outlet component of the bookstore will be allowed to slowly, gently, and organically phase out. Existing inventory will be sold, but no new inventory will be purchased. The primary focus in Welcome Center is discipleship to the congregation. It will provide companionship, service, and information. It will have materials that are exclusive to us, and perhaps curated books and books recommended by Stephen and other clergy. The Welcome Center will have a tighter relationship with the library so that people can borrow, rather than buy, many books. The Welcome Center will continue to provide religious / spiritual artifacts to help people take their worship home. There will also be some space for Incarnation authors, artists, historians, and scientists to be highlighted. It will still be a cozy nook for newcomers and others. The coffee cart (Mission Brew) will be coming back with vouchers for free coffees given as a gift to newcomers. Finally, the I-W-C team will be refreshing the used puzzle and books nook.

Summer vestry work:

- Ongoing work by Development Committee (pledge campaign, etc.), and the Financial Sustainability Task Force.
- Stephen would like to have lunches with vestry members.
- The vestry decided not to meet in July. (*Moved: Mark. Seconded: Rebecca. Vote unanimous.*)

- August retreat preview: Saturday, August 24, 8:45 am – 3 pm, at Bill's home

Summing up tonight's meeting for parish announcements

- Adopted Generational Plan.
- I-W-C plans and how tying into other ministries.
- Looked back at prior years' accomplishments, taking July off, mid-year retreat in August.

Closing Prayer: Chaplain Laura offered a closing meditation and prayer. Music chaplain Rebecca offered a closing song.

Meeting adjourned: 8:48 pm

The vestry will meet for a summer retreat on August 24, 2024 at 8:45 am.

The next monthly regular monthly meeting of the vestry to be held on September 24, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Kane, Clerk