

VESTRY BUSINESS MEETING
Minutes for Feb. 15, 2022

Present

Rector: Chad McCabe
Sr. Warden: Deb Hesek
Jr. Warden: Howie Gelles
Treasurer: Mary Brown
Clerk: Cathy Terwedow (via Zoom)
At-Large: Debbie Burke, Jeannie Hebert, Tom McDonald, Henry Terwedow (via Zoom), Jeff Turgeon

Absent

At-Large: Janet Wilcox
At-Large: Ted Flanagan

Welcome! Deb welcomed the 2022 vestry, explained the vestry covenant, and gave Breeze logins and a copy of the Vestry Guide to new members. She also handed out copies of the new church directory that Cathy created and recommended that vestry members attend the bishop's online "Vestry 101" overview, to become acquainted with some of the folks at the diocese. We'll sign the vestry covenant, and Chad will commission us, during a single church service on March 6, the first Sunday of Lent.

Consent Agenda: The January minutes were approved as written, as were the January financials, pending confirmation that the "Common Ministry Assessment" is the diocesan tax. (CLERK'S NOTE: Confirmed; the diocesan tax is line 4006, "Diocesan-Fair Share," in the 2022 budget. Unfortunately, the diocesan tax is higher than anticipated. We budgeted \$2917/mo but our January charge was \$3002/mo, meaning that we will be \$1020 over budget for the year.)

We also discussed the need to post signups for altar flowers as we did not budget any funds for them in 2022. The actual cost of fresh flowers from the florist is ~\$35/week. Last year, a parishioner kept expenses down by purchasing flowers directly from the grocery store. She was reimbursed by Nativity, but she chose and arranged the flowers herself, as a gift to the church.

Rector. Lenten preparation. The first opportunity to serve will be a Mardi Gras celebration from 5:30-7:00 on Tuesday, March 1, with setup at 4:00. It was suggested that it would be a great men's ministry opportunity (cook, set up, clean up). Deb will organize stuff for kids to do and Chad will talk to the Scouts. We'll invite the preschool and post info on social media.

Chad is discerning a Lenten sermon series and a six-week small-group series. Ideally, he would like to have three leaders. One group would meet via Zoom; meetings for the other two groups would be up to the groups to decide. Chad is also selecting a book for the vestry to study.

Family Ministry. Blair Moran accepted the position! She'll do some social promotions, but her primary goal will be to gather young families.

2022 Annual Meeting. We spent a lot of time talking about the timing of Nativity's annual meeting. Holding it in late January is difficult. The timeline is too tight, particularly given the very busy period leading up to it (stewardship campaign, budget, Christmas, etc.), not to mention that there is insufficient time to close and properly report on the prior year's books.

Since Nativity operates on a school schedule, Chad suggested that we move the annual meeting accordingly. We could plan in September and hold the meeting in October, presenting the parish with a "goal budget" that reflects what we *want* to do (rather than the other way around, where the budget is built around the money that has been pledged). Thus, the annual meeting would serve as the kickoff of the stewardship program. The actual budget would be prepared once the stewardship program has concluded.

To install the new vestry and present the 2023 approved budget, we'd hold a Community Gathering in February 2023. Annual reports would be partial for this year (Jan-Sept 2022); next year would be a full 12-month Oct-Oct report.

Although the Rector has discretion on this topic, we all agreed with his suggestion to move the 2023 meeting (and all subsequent years) to the fall. The date of the annual meeting does not require a vestry vote.

Intentional discipleship. We discussed how everything should lead to something. For example, we baptize people but we don't have a defined discipleship program, such as CCD. How do we lead people to further develop their faith? Can we encourage parishioners with certain professional skills to use them for the church (eg, could Brad teach a confirmation course)? Programs need to be fun for kids, but will parents who work a lot of hours bring them? Many parents want the weekends to themselves, although they do make time for things they think are important, such as kids' sports activities. How can we insert church into that thought process?

Website updates. Chad put Cherie on a schedule to learn Wix and Breeze. Deb filled out the prayer-chain/info link three weeks in a row but hasn't gotten a response back. Cathy used to get email from the 'request info' link but hasn't seen anything in quite a while. She will check her spam. It was suggested that a button for prayer and information requests be added to the first page. The button should point to Worship > Visit.

Miscellaneous: Chad is still working on the 2022 church calendar. His staff meetings are typically on Tuesdays.

General. *Employment Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) program.* On January 24, Cathy spoke to Susan Olbon at the diocese to find out whether they would be applying for ERTC funds on behalf of all the Western Mass churches. She said they were not, but she assured Cathy that the diocese would support us in our effort to apply for the funds.

Jeannie said only a fraction of the people who the government thought would apply for the ERTC have applied, so they have lots of money and are anxious to give it away. We can hire a 3rd-party company such as Cunningham to do the paperwork for us. They only get paid if we are successful in getting a reimbursement. Jeannie will start the process with a virtual introduction between Ryan (at Cunningham) and Linda Knopp. (CLERK'S NOTE: A day later, after the introductions were made, Linda Knopp found out that the diocese had decided to apply for ERTC after all. I will follow up later.)

Parochial Report. Nativity's report is due March 1, so vestry approval needs to be completed this month. We're waiting for Cherie to fill out the basic church information and add Chad's information. Deb worked on the stewardship portion during the meeting. Chad will provide the church growth information.

Parish Register. The register hasn't been maintained so Chad asked Cindy Loverin to train Cherie. What is the difference between members and active communicants? We'll ask Cindy to train others later.

Finances. Everything is set with Avidia now in regard to the change in treasurer. Henry wrote to Avidia to ensure that Mary would be a signee on all Nativity's accounts. The letters also clarified the appropriate signers and director for the preschool account. Mary will update Chad's Avidia credit card which lists the wrong point of contact.

Senior Warden. As discussed last month, we're creating three reusable bulletins, one for each season, to minimize paper & ink waste and cost. A one-page insert will be included for the week's psalm, announcements, etc.

Summer preschool program. To raise money for the preschool, Stacey proposed running a four-week, half-day summer program. Her proposal was approved at the February executive committee meeting. We will help promote it.

Junior Warden: Howie spoke briefly about several topics:

- Finishing Living Nativity cleanup once the weather warms up.
- Eradicating the raccoons in the meeting hall which are damaging the ceiling tiles (among other things).

Junior Warden, cont:

- Repairing gutters on the back of the church, especially where the snow "avalanched" off the roof onto the handicap ramp.
- The fact that there might be a service charge for replacing the circulating pump. We need to see what our contract covers.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Terwedow, Clerk

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Feb. 20: Family Sunday, 10AM
- Mar. 1: Executive meeting, 7PM
- Mar. 1: Parochial report due to diocese; form & instructions [here](#)
- Mar. 2: Lent begins
- Mar. 22: Business meeting & social, 7PM, at Deb Heseck's house

RECURRING EVENTS:

- On Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/pg/NativityNorthboro/videos/>. Facebook account not required.
 - Every Sunday: 10:00AM
 - Every Wednesday: noonday prayer
- In-person worship: indoors, every Sunday at 8:30 & 10:00AM
- Every Wednesday: Rachel Manley's bible study, 10:00AM
- Family Sunday: the third Sunday of every month

ON HOLD / UPCOMING TOPICS

- Preschool integration
- Treasurer / Finance Committee priorities
 - Process for assigning budget line items, and attaching receipts, to check-request forms (for signature)
 - Evaluating credit card situation (needs & recommendations for church and Home Depot cards)
 - Paperwork for Amazon Smile and tax-exempt status
 - Update & finalize financial SOP document
 - Start program for planned giving
- Men's ministry (hikes, bible studies; multiple leaders needed)
- Small-church grants