

## **Vestry of St. James-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church**

### Minutes of October 26, 2004

- Present:** Rev. Ron Jaynes, Louis Beacham, Chris Christopher (Senior Warden), Roger Craig, Micki Farrell, Jill Jordon, Frank Gradjian, John Norris, Steve Treadgold, Max Webb, Brian Williams, Susan Rust (Junior Warden).
- Absent:** Keith Kendrick, Gina Woodford
- Appt. Officers:** Ian Williams (Chancellor); Carole Scott (Clerk)
- Staff:** Laura Atwater, Terri Biles, Julie Christian, Karen Fast, Garth Howe, Angela Thompson, Steve Townsend.
- Guests:** Members of the Strategic Planning Task Force: Sarah Davis, Kirk Gardner, Leigh Hartman, Alison Lee, and a number of members of the congregation including: Pat Bischoff, Jim Campbell, Pete Cooper, Ann Dick, David Fast, Alice Fleming, Muggie and Wade Harris, Jill Holmes, Bob and Ethel Jackson, Colleen Jaynes,, LaVon and Tom Skinker, Nan Thomas, Elena and Kip Thompson, Bob and Melesse Traylor, Janet and Peter Waldo, Del and Meryl Weightman, Dorothy Williams, Penny Williams, Joy Winter.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35, Rev. Jaynes presiding.

**Devotion:** John Norris led the Vestry in the Lord's Prayer.

#### **Rector's Remarks**

Rev. Jaynes noted a minor change in the agenda. He acknowledged the work of the Strategic Planning Task Force and the work of Keith Kendrick whose letter of resignation will be read. And he welcomed the members of the congregation who were present at the meeting.

He expressed his belief that the predominant significance of Christian Love is characterized by seeing the face of Christ in one another, and that we must always remember to share the amazing love of Jesus Christ with people hungry for the gift we have to offer. If we do not do that we have failed, and we have sinned.

#### **Report from the Strategic Planning Task Force**

Steve Treadgold described the work the Task Force had undertaken, gathering input from the Cottage Meetings, the surveys, the demographic information, etc. There are a number of issues that need attention, including norms identification.

Alison Lee noted six major events that have been undertaken and explained that the mission is to create an action-oriented proposal from the material gathered. We have some clear strengths: our worship, our music, our sanctuary and our hopes and dreams to build a vibrant intergenerational community. However, issues continue to persist which hamper this development. For example, issues of repair at the Church spiral down into conflict and complaints of lack of communication. Keith Kendrick's resignation appears to many to have been a result of the vituperative norms meeting; but in fact this evening was simply the latest illustration of the long-term inability to engage in a respectful, reasonable, effective debate and move to resolution. The history of dissent, of disaffected splinter groups and the derailing of action reveals an inability to handle conflict and disagreement, to function as a team instead of acting as a dysfunctional family. This is hurting the Church in many ways.

There was much discussion about whether this behavior was or was not characteristic of the Vestry, or was a problem of the congregation at large. It was agreed that the Vestry needs to show leadership in modeling the behavior desired in the congregation at large.

Treadgold moved (S/Craig) that “the Vestry agrees to undertake a family systems analysis for itself, for the congregation, and perhaps for both together, and that a skilled facilitator be retained to guide us through the process. Details will be made by a committee which will be responsible for this action.”

Discussion included consideration of the track record of success with this process, the cost, the need, the amount of time such change will take, and the role of the Vestry in the problem. Several people applauded the Vestry for their commitment and hard work. With the feeling that the Vestry needs to be empowered to address dysfunctional behavior whenever and wherever it occurs, the motion was approved 10-1-0.

### **Resignation of Keith Kendrick**

Keith’s letter of resignation was read aloud to those present. He cited his sense of disappointment at the continued patterns that prevented forward movement, and his belief that someone new was needed in the position of Senior Warden.

The motion that “The Vestry accepts the resignation with the deepest regret and with profound thanks” was unanimously approved (M/Treadgold; S/Williams). It was suggested that a celebration of Keith Kendrick’s great commitment and outstanding work be organized.

### **Resignation of Kip Thompson**

Kip Thompson made an impassioned plea for an end to the lack of civility and Christian respect he has experienced and seen. He stated that he wishes to resign from the Endowment Committee and can no longer continue with the Interfaith Housing project; he is also considering leaving St. James although he holds so many of the congregation in his heart. Many members of the Vestry expressed their strong desire for Kip to remain a member of the congregation. His commitment, his courage, his love and his action were cited as enormous strengths in a Church community that admired and needed him. Louis Beacham stated his belief that progress is being made, that we must keep our hopes up, and not get stuck in a quagmire of fear and depression.

Elena Thompson’s need to discontinue her outstanding work with the Angel Tree program was also raised. Elena gave a heartfelt and emotional description of the need for outreach to the Angel Tree children and her anguish at the lack of support she has experienced.

The response of the Vestry and of others present was that this loving and committed couple deserved to have some rest from these activities, but that they would be sorely missed if they left the congregation. They have worked so long and so hard bearing the burden of these important outreach programs, and it is time for others to take over the responsibilities.

### **Appointment of new Senior Warden.**

Chris Christopher has accepted Rev. Jaynes’ request that he assume the position of Senior Warden for the remainder of the year, leaving a vacancy in the Treasurer position. Max Webb conveyed that his wife, Sheila Ferguson, who is an accomplished CPA with much experience in Canada with companies such as KPMG, has volunteered to take over as Treasurer (and Chair of the Finance Committee). Louis Beacham stated that she is highly qualified.

Her appointment as Treasurer (M/Christopher; S/Beacham) was passed unanimously except for abstention (to avoid conflict of interest) by Max Webb. Max stated his concern that his remaining as Chair of the Audit Committee would also be a conflict of interest, and resigned from that position. Micki Farrell was appointed unanimously to fill the vacancy (M/Webb; S/Williams).

### **Committee Reports**

#### Real Estate Committee (Louis Beacham)

Louis announced that the sale of Rectory I was closed today. A vote of thanks was passed unanimously.

Building Committee (Gene Cook)

The report received from Gene will be postponed until the next meeting.  
Chris Christopher noted that this memo is a model of excellent communication with the Vestry.

Finance Committee (Chris Christopher)

The income and expenditures are pretty much as anticipated, except that the rental from St. James Hall is not up to expectations.

The report was approved unanimously, subject to audit (M/Jordon; S/ Farrell).

Mission Share Pledge.

Although our income for the coming year is uncertain, it was recommended that, as an act of faith, we maintain the pledge of \$127,000 to the Diocese.

The Vestry voted unanimously (M/Christopher; S/Farrell) to make a Mission Share Pledge of \$127,000 as recommended.

**New Business**

Rev. Jaynes asked that the proposed date of the Annual Meeting (1-30-05) be formalized. This was passed unanimously (M/Craig; S/Norton).

Rev. Jaynes commended the Church staff for their very hard work.

**Approval of the minutes** of the last meeting and the Special Meeting (M/Williams; S/Webb) was passed unanimously.

Chris Christopher announced that Carole Scott will serve as Clerk of the Vestry through December of this year, and that we will need a new volunteer to take over in January 2005.

**Open Forum Comments from Guests**

Penny Williams and Janet Waldo both expressed their warm support for the vestry. Janet recommended direct conversation and dealing with conflict openly rather than avoiding it. Joy Winter added that God's presence supports our intent to love one another.

**Executive Session**

The Vestry moved to Executive Session to receive two reports from the Chancellor. No action was taken.

**Adjournment**

The Vestry rose from Executive Session and adjourned a little after 9:00 pm.