

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2022

Vestry present:

The Rev. Neil Willard
David Robinson, Senior Warden
Danna Kurtin, Junior Warden
David Candler
Margie Dieter
Melanie Fahey
Abigail Follmar
Pam Harvey
Bet Hunter
Rand Key
Jim Rosenbach
Posey Saenz
Libby Spoede
Marie Wehrung
Andy Williams
Lam Yu

Vestry absent:

Clergy present:

The Rev. Ryan Hawthorne
The Rev. Jack Karn

Clergy absent:

The hybrid in person and virtual meeting started at 5:36 pm and ended at 7:12 pm.

- 1) **Opening Prayer.** Jack opened the meeting in prayer.
- 2) **Community Sharing.** Neil encouraged community sharing.
- 3) **Dwelling in the Word.** The verses from Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 was used for the exercise.
- 4) **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes from March 29, 2022 were approved with no corrections. Motion by David R, second by Rand, and the vestry voted to approve the minutes.
- 5) **Strategic Planning Proposals.**
 - a) **Funding Sources Update.**
 - i) \$10,000 matching fund from two anonymous Palmers if the entire congregation was involved in the process.
 - ii) David Fisher's response about Bishop Quin Foundation. Neil shared an email from David Fisher providing a general overview of the funding.
 - b) **Reference Check Overview.** David C, Rand, Ryan and Libby used the questions developed by Danna and Rand and each person called one reference from each consulting group and presented a summary of the discussion from the references that were able to be reached.
 - i) Tucker Branham of Change Develop Move (CDM)
 - (1) Lauren Herterich of Kids on Point. Worked with them for 8 months to develop a 5-year strategic plan. They considered other consultants but felt the "blueprint" was a selling point. Tucker was able to unify the board and staff which Lauren felt was difficult to do, given the varied experience levels of the group. The process was above and beyond their expectations. Plan contained tangible action items and milestones by year and time period. They are using the information during their staff and board meetings. They

would use Tucker again for a future project and noted that Tucker had intentional DEI incorporated in the plan.

- (2) Larry Frye of Harley School. As a part of the strategic plan, looked outward to the community in addition to collecting information from within the school during their evaluation. Every piece of information they have received, Tucker has helped them to move forward to make progress while also listening. She has been able to get them to level earlier than anticipated and are 1 year into an anticipated 3 year process for a 15-year strategic plan. They feel comfortable with her and she is a good listener and would use her again. He noted she had good discernment and listening.
 - (3) Anthony Sgro of The Ashville School. They are finishing up the mission/visioning portion and have not yet come to the strategic planning process. With fractured faculty and some disenchantment, Tucker was able to navigate and work with the groups and felt that she was genuinely listening to them. They would use her for a future project.
- ii) Nathan Kirkpatrick of Saison Consulting
- (1) Joe Swimmer of the Episcopal Parish Network. Looked at 3 groups and selected Nathan because of his background, approach (listening), and helping the organization form ideas and set a direction. Was the best facilitator he's ever seen and wanted someone who understood the church. Sessions were set up, executed and documented well. He felt that Nathan helped to accomplish objectives, put a plan together and have had ongoing workshops and helped with accountability and staying focused on goals. Felt that Nathan help to shift their focus and pivot during the pandemic. Overall, gave glowing review of Nathan.
 - (2) The Rev'd Justin Coleman of University United Methodist Church. Nathan was helping with the merging of 2 churches and he did a great job with a highly emotionally charged situation. Nathan did a good job of keeping both congregations focused on the process and that both groups had to give and get something and feel comfortable. Once the merger is complete and there is time to heal, they would look to Nathan to help with more strategic planning.
 - (3) The Rev'd Greg McIntyre of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church. Nathan has been great and was selected from seven consulting groups. They are still in the consulting process, but noted that Nathan has been doing a great job with focus groups and interviews and is a good communicator with the parish. He noted that Nathan has been able to help identify their strengths and problem areas, working on low hanging fruit even before the strategic plan is in place. One of Nathan's strengths is in congregational development which he felt was important for the parish and felt supported as clergy. They would use Nathan again for a future project.
- c) **Discussion on selecting consulting group.** There was discussion that both consulting groups seemed to be able to meet the needs of Palmer, competent, and would be able to engage the parish well. The discussion turned to the financial considerations and pros/cons in engaging a consulting group for visioning. There was a majority (11) that voted to proceed with making a decision and one that voted to not proceed with engaging a consultant. The vestry voted 8 for Tucker at CDM and 7 for Nathan at Saison.
- 6) **Vestry Councils.** Deferred.
 - 7) **Warden Reports.** Deferred.
 - 8) **Clergy Reports**
 - a) The Rector. The bishop will be here on Sunday, May 15th and will meet with the vestry that morning as well.
 - b) Assisting Clergy

- i) Associate Rector Search. The first candidate selected the other church. There is a second candidate that is being interviewed.
 - ii) Curate Covenant Agreement has been signed and will be turned in.
 - iii) Safeguarding Policy Review needs to be signed by all vestry members.
 - iv) Sabbatical. Neil will take off the summer from the day after the next vestry (May 18th) meeting through Labor Day (September 6th).
- 9) **Closing Prayer.** Neil closed the meeting in prayer.