

PARISH OF ST. PAUL - VESTRY MEETING

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

at the home of Tim Dunn and John McDargh

Present: Joan Brandmahl, Richard Pearce, Margaret Hummel, Lee Hatfield, David Montgomery, Tim Dunn, Ellie Pandorf, Betty Murray and Betsy Blagdon. Absent: Bernice Cramer. Phil Whitbeck joined the first part of the meeting as a guest. The meeting began with an opening prayer at 7:35 p.m.

Priest Search Process. Phil Whitbeck gave Vestry an overview explanation of the role of a *Priest in Charge* versus that of an *Interim*. Calling an Interim includes the formal establishment of a search committee and engaging in a formal discernment process of the parish following guidelines promulgated by the diocese. The Interim then serves to guide the parish through that process. A parish profile was generated in recent years by a search committee during Carol Flett's time with us. Phil believed that that profile would still be largely relevant to an Interim/rector search process now if we take that route but even so we would be looking in all likelihood at no less than a year before a rector could be called by the parish.

A Priest in Charge helps a parish discern what its best path is in light of its current big issues (e.g. a dire financial burden or other issue requiring guidance). PICs have all canonic and administrative authority held by Rectors. Most PIC agreements are for a period of three years. Generally the first two years are applied to addressing the identified problem(s) and then the final year is a period of mutual discernment by the parish and the PIC as to whether the PIC will stay on after the PIC period as the parish Rector or whether new leadership will be sought. The appointment of a PIC can in theory be for anywhere between one and three years but virtually all such agreements are for three years.

Search consultants can be assigned by the office of the Bishop, subject to the agreement of a parish's Vestry. Typically they come in at the beginning of the search process and work with the search committee as frequently as the committee sees fit. The cost of each such meeting is currently \$50 plus mileage. Suggestion is that if a parish seeks to work with a consultant that they set aside \$1,000 in reserve for that purpose.

A search consultant is not the same thing as a "congregational coach." The latter is typically engaged for multiple sessions to help a Vestry in creating a process to discern the parish's needs. Fees are typically \$150 per session.

Discussion on Current Strategy. At its September 19 meeting, Vestry had concluded that it would likely recommend to the parish that we re-embrace St. Paul's Plan for the future of the Parish as first adopted in October 2006 and as further articulated in our "Focus of St. Paul's Ministry for 2007 - 2008" but for extending the end date for holding a formal vote of the Parish as to its future leadership out by the same amount of time we ultimately will have been without a PIC (that is, from the time that Carol Flett announced her departure up to the time a new PIC has been officially appointed).

At this meeting (October 17), Vestry reflected on the informal discussion held with the Parish September 23 at which numerous parishioners urged the parish to continue as a stand-alone parish while still encouraging collaborative efforts going forward with our friends at St. John's. Concerns have been expressed recently by several parishioners about the lack of pastoral continuity over the last several months. Some have signaled that their willingness to wait much longer for things to settle down at St. Paul's is reaching its limit and that action is needed. Vestry considered a spectrum of possibilities for the parish going forward (with the intention that no matter what our internal consensus was as to the best course of action it would be appropriate for us ultimately to go back to the parish for a formal meeting of the membership with our recommendation for a ye or nay vote).

Following much discussion, on motion duly seconded, Vestry agreed to give our current plan of hoping to line up a Priest in Charge until October 30 but that if by that point we have not had any encouraging developments from the Diocese then we would in all likelihood (i) formally recommend to the parish for a vote of the membership that we transition to a formal rector search process and (ii) notify St. John's of this new development in our Plan. This would mean posting a warrant concerning same on November 4 for a meeting to occur on November 18.

Make-up Meeting. In light of the amount of time devoted to the rector search process and the corresponding need to address routine matters, a follow-up Vestry meeting was scheduled for Tuesday evening, October 30, at the home of Lee and Keith Hatfield.

The Meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David P. Montgomery, Clerk