

January 26, 2010
Meeting of the Vestry of Saint Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church
7:00 in the Chapel
Next meeting: March 23, 2010

Vestry members present:

Susan Abernethy, Jessica Anderson, Elizabeth Boileau, Dan Crisafulli, Paul Fromberg, Cheryl Hendrickson, Brian Protheroe, Rick Storrs, Susan Sutton

Invocation

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The December 12, 2009 Vestry Minutes were approved.

The minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on January 24, 2010 were amended and approved.

II. CONVENOR'S REPORT

Jessica Anderson discussed the parish retreat held on January 23, 2010. Rosa Lee Harden did a very good job of facilitating the retreat. There were a number of breakout groups formed in order to address some of the many interests and facets of life at Saint Gregory's.

The groups and Vestry participants were Spiritual Journeying with Jessica Anderson, Communication with Brian Protheroe, Art and Music, Evangelism with Cheryl Hendrickson, and Space Cadets with Susan Sutton, another group met regarding leadership and forming a book group. Attendance at the retreat was about 45 members. It was agreed at the parish retreat that the Vestry would take the result of the discussions and discuss them at the Vestry retreat planned for February.

Cheryl spoke about the Evangelism group that discussed the possibilities of having events to invite people to at the church other than the liturgy. A 'Parent's Group', a 'Doubting Thomas Group', a 'Talk to a Scientist Night' were suggested as well as liturgy outside the church, such "Blessing the Animals" in a park to attract people to church or to bring Saint Gregory's out to people.

Jessica Anderson raised that the Vestry with its new commissions and level of participation with the membership could meet less often during the year than it has in the past. Our financials are stable, which demands less Vestry time. Then there is a desire from our members that there be more opportunities to gather outside the liturgy and or do more things at church which will need more recruiting of volunteers and creative planning than staff can satisfy at present. Her suggestion was that the Vestry meet nine times a year, omitting a meeting at Easter, March or April and two Summer meetings, either June, July or August. If necessary, the Vestry could convene if a concern arose or a budget issue needed to be addressed. There was general agreement to the idea with the thought of evaluating the practice at the end of the year if the meeting plan was adopted. Jessica will be crafting a motion for the next Vestry meeting and asked Vestry members to reflect if they thought it would be an effective change.

III. FINANCIAL REPORT

Dan Crisafulli reported that our Treasurer, Leesy Taggart has seen a positive response from the first round of stewardship requests that have gone out and initial signs from that response are promising. Dan raised, based on the conversations he heard at the Parish Retreat that we should now start to look at the fundraising for long-term goals, like building. Rick Storrs suggested that discussion at the Fall Parish retreat that might be a good idea coupling the discussion with Estate Planning and Bequests.

IV. CLERGY REPORT

Paul discussed the starting of Stewardship Sundays in order to acknowledge pledges received. A member of the congregation would be saying a prayer over the pledge cards received during the month.

While on vacation Paul spent many hours in reflection about Saint Gregory's church. Sunday mornings at church for children, Sunday School and Chapel for children at the 10:45 service while good ideas need some adjusting. The children at Saint Gregory's require the space to be more in line with their needs. Discussion will start with many folks, parents, staff and consultants about the best way to recalibrate the program for the children, space and time.

The service for George Gibson provided a good example of how we come together as a community to support each other as we mourn. Our community was involved throughout George's illness, with meals, dog walking, sitting with George and immediately after death, organizing with Sanford the wake for George.

The Reverend Canon Doctor Jane Shaw from Oxford will be visiting the Saint Gregory's in March and observing our worship.

V. STRATEGIC PRESENCE

Brian Protheroe reported from the group Communications that met during the Parish Retreat. One subject that was raised in the group was the timing and number of announcements on Sunday. Brian has noted that there is a lot of information about what is happening at Saint Gregory's and it is all over the place. The networking site NING was discussed as being under utilized at present by the membership as well as over subscribed as far as the number of groups on the site. Brian said he also wanted to discuss Nyssen News with Paul Fromberg, the editor. He also will be transcribing the notes from the Parish Retreat in advance of the Vestry retreat.

Brian introduced the Vestry binder, an action item from last month's meeting. He handed out the job descriptions and the list of items to be included in the Vestry binder. There was a discussion of those items which would be updated every year, which items that needed to be printed out month to month or could be found alternatively on the web and the relevance of the Parish Profile. Rick Storrs thought that Vestry binders could be specific to a Vestry position. The position of Rector should be added to the list of job description.

VI. SACRED SPACE

Susan Sutton reported that during the Parish Retreat two items emerged from the Space Cadets group, capturing the history of the building and developing an operating maintenance plan. The church has working groups that are presently intermittently active, Curatorial, Gardening and Fix-It that could meet building requirements of maintenance and new projects. Susan is would like to make sure we have no crises develop because the church has not addressed maintenance. She will be making a list of projects ranked in importance.

Susan would also like to set up an emergency plan for Saint Gregory's, including individual plans and a plan for the building. NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Training) held by the Fire Department would be the source for this emergency training. The church could be a neighborhood shelter in the case of an emergency. She and Paul discussed visiting the SWAT unit that has recently moved to the corner of 17th and DeHaro Streets on Potrero Hill.

VII. MEMBERSHIP

Susan Abernethy reported that the following were received as new members to Saint Gregory's;
Gregory Harvey - introduced by Sara Miles
Amy and Jonah Kai Baker - sponsor Maitreya Badami and Evie

There was a discussion about how members need church and are desirous of groups to be part of, such as a reading group. Dan brought up how the kids need to have an opportunity to connect with each other also within groups. Presently they come to church however their experience here is a very individual one. He pointed out there are numerous parents and children in the neighborhood. The discussion turned to various fellowships that meet around the bay composed of adults and adults and children and younger adults. Brian inquired how we capture information about visitors. Susan explained the process of the guestbook signing, letter writing and phoning with follow-up conversations. Sam Palmer, who coordinates greeting visitors, collects a little information about visitors and makes it known to others so that a relationship between members and visitors can develop.

VIII. LIFELONG LEARNING

Rick Storrs reported that some members had approached him about the Sunday Forums and including biblical studies or series of Sunday lectures about the history of the Episcopal Church.

Closing Prayer

With a recognition of jobs well done the

**** meeting adjourned ***