
September Vestry Minutes

Present: Paul Fromberg, Mark Pritchard, Francie Kendall, Amy Baker, Jen Blecha, and Susan Sutton, reporting

Absent: Greg Cleaver and Bridget McShea

1. **Minutes:** We could not approve minutes for July or August. Greg will furnish them for the October meeting and Susan will provide minutes for September.
2. **Finance:** Amy will present her regular report next month. We discussed the fundraising challenges of approaching people to talk about pledges/money, working around the question of “What gives you energy/makes you happy here at SGN right now?” Not everyone responds to the same entry questions, obviously, and Amy asks that we let her know how our conversations go even if we can’t bring ourselves to get to the financial part. Clearly the skills to talk to people about giving will be even more critical as we head into a capital campaign.
3. **Capital Campaign:** The committee overseeing this is already meeting each Sunday and is planning a kickoff event for Oct. 30 with a combined liturgy and speakers. At that time they are hoping to be able to announce substantial pledges already made. As part of that weekend, Frances Caldwell will come on Saturday to train “campaign visitors” on the vestry and in the parish to conduct personal conversations with members of the community.
4. **Rector’s Report:** Paul has now officially announced that he is in the running for bishop coadjutor for the Diocese of Los Angeles. He will be on a Q&A “walkabout” tour there the weekend of Oct 7,8,9 with the other candidates. Closer to home, we have a new intern, Joey Courtney, who has a lot of energy *and* extensive experience in creative direct service in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, Kerri Meyer has accepted the position of Youth and Family Minister, no longer interim, and we will support her in her journey to ordination.

We have heard nothing recently from the developer of 540 DeHaro. Mark will ask Alfred Bey and/or Burton Edwards to check on the permit progress of the project. We are mainly concerned that the developer could get a building permit that was substantially noncompliant with their Planning approval conditions. Susan suggested that one priority be to identify by name the plan checker at the Building Department assigned to that project once it is submitted for permit. A secondary concern is that they are not required to act immediately just because they have Planning approval, and we may want to think about a contingency plan for dealing with our water damage along that lot line if they do not begin construction in 2017.

5. **Vestry Members:** Mark and Bridget will end their terms this winter, and so we need to identify candidates for Inward-Looking Co-Convener, Membership Commissioner, and Youth and Family Commissioner (replacing Megan Yip, who resigned early this year). We have identified several people to approach about their availability and interest in serving.
6. **Disaster Preparedness:** Susan reported attending a meeting of representatives from 5 parishes (including us) to begin discussing issues around churches and widespread emergency situations of the sort we would expect from a major earthquake. The vestry agreed to include the topic when possible in its conversations with members to identify who might be interested in working on it. Susan noted that this is a topic which typically has cycles of action and coasting,

so one challenge is to form our response more systematically. Mark suggested the vestry take an annual safety tour of the grounds, and Susan suggested we widen that to the liturgical leaders, who will be important leadership resources for many of the time the building is in intensive use.

7. **Vestry Roles:** Jen (Sacred Space) and Francie (Strategic Presence) have both previously asked to have a wider vestry discussion about their roles. We considered that one way of looking at Strategic Presence, which used to be Communications, would be to ask how we can leverage our resources and what we do to produce change, both internal to the parish and out in the world. Francie has suggested that one activity might be a collective discussion on James Cone's book *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*.

Likewise, Sacred Space involves how we use and care for our building and grounds to support our mission(s). The absence of any kind of accountable system to handle basic maintenance and repair tasks (or stocking toilet paper or being at church when a contractor arrives) has made Jen's job frustrating, as has the lack of funds to pursue larger projects. Amy will investigate the possible cost savings of contracting with a handyperson on some kind of weekly/retainer basis, and we will return to this conversation soon.

After this discussion we officially adjourned. For the sake of convenience and planning, October's meeting should include approval of the July/Aug/Sept minutes, a vote on Kerri's N-4 form, the finance report, and further discussion about announcing staffing changes. It may also include fundraising conversation results and additional suggestions for new vestry members. We expect to return to disaster preparedness at some point as well as conversations about the possibility of hiring a handyperson and how that could function with Sacred Space. As usual, please contact both Mark and Susan with additional agenda items as soon as you become aware of them.