

St. James' Vestry Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 10, 2011

In attendance: Lori Walton+, Mary Casas, Janet Fischer, Valle Brokes, Marlene Benedict, Gary Gearheart, Brad Hoffman, Donald Razzolini, Andy MacRae, Jan Brandt, Stephen Ferro, Laura Winter, and Elizabeth Hart.  
Guests: Jan Scrutton and Dave Nelsen  
Absent: Dean Valentine and Greg Scheuffele

Lori Walton+ called the meeting to order, and Janet Fischer led the opening prayer.

Motion was made to approve the October 13, 2011 vestry meeting minutes as presented. Moved by Valle Brokes, seconded by Janet Fischer. Motion approved.

There is a new computer in the AV Room. The computer from the AV Room is now in EB1.

CONFIRMATION CLASS UPDATE – presented by Jan Scrutton

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St James' Youth Group

For the next 18 months the youth group curriculum will be a course of preparation for confirmation. This will be taught once a month on Sunday nights and through some additional sessions on Sundays and an overnight Easter retreat. The leaders will be Jan & Mike. Lori will teach some of the sessions (chosen to be the ones best covered by her)

We chose to use a curriculum that was originally written by a church in Oakland but is now used nationwide. **Confirm not Conform** encourages young people to claim their faith as their own and to decide if their beliefs lead them to want to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church.

We will be supported by a team of mentors who have been asked by Jan, Mike and Lori to be involved in this course. Their role is to join with the kids in the learning on a few sessions, to be a link to the church and to share their own faith with the group. We are not pairing the kids one to one with a mentor but will have small groups working together.

Those young people in 8<sup>th</sup> grade or above who decide to be confirmed will have the opportunity in November 2012 . After this we will celebrate at St James with an iConfirm service lead by the students and their mentors.

Part of the course involves a service component that we hope the group will bring to the Vestry next year.

At our parent/student lunch we had 10 students and their families and our first meeting saw a (slightly different) group of 10 gathering together.

The youth blog is a good way to stay in touch with what we are doing.

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- Jan thanked the vestry for their support for the youth group.
- The members of the youth team are Jan and Mike Scrutton, and Lori, with help from others like Laura Winter and Jill Buono.
- There is a service component that is based around the millennium goals.
- This is still a group of youth, not a “youth group” – the young people are spread out in age, attend different schools, and have different experiences. They are different from a youth group that has grown up together. These young people do not have the same kind of connections.
- Lori thanked Jan and Mike for their commitment, intentionality, and integrity for doing this project.

ENDOWMENT UPDATE – presented by Dave Nelsen

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Endowment Address to Vestry, Nov 10, 2011

I wanted to speak with you personally about a decision the endowment board made during our last meeting on Oct 18. We unanimously approved a motion to move the endowment funds to different investments under the management of the Episcopal Church Foundation (also referred to as ECF).

We have done a lot of research this year to better understand how we have managed, invested and tracked the endowment funds. We have looked at different ways to invest the funds which might offer greater security and improved performance.

Over the years the “Boards” have invested in a growing number of funds as the value of the endowment has grown. We are currently invested in two mutual funds with T.RowePrice, one mutual fund with Charles Schwab and

two bond funds with Charles Schwab. The Sept 30th value of the endowment fund was nearly \$90 k.

Although the interest of the members of the board is in the right place, none of us has the experience, expertise or time which we feel is needed to manage the funds effectively.

We have talked with Richard Schaper, who heads the office of planned giving at our diocese. His team manages \$17 M of endowment funds. Although we could bundle our endowment funds with theirs, we would be subject to the rules and conditions which exist with their current system. We have not received an adequate response to our queries and are generally not comfortable dealing with this team.

When we approached the ECF (at the suggestion of Richard Schaper) for information regarding their organization, they were very responsive with a high degree of professionalism. The ECF is a non-profit org, lay-lead and lay-staffed. Its mission is to help Episcopal Churches and organizations with their financial goals and development needs. They are the official resource for all Episcopal dioceses in the U.S. for planned giving and endowment development.

The ECF manages funds for 145 churches with over \$100 M currently under management. Their investment partner is State Street Global Advisors which has \$2.8 T under management.

All the funds we are currently invested with have fees - many are hidden. Although I cannot state all of them accurately, some are 1.5%. Fees for working with ECF / St. Street will range between .95 and 1.21%. (\$855 and \$1089 based on a balance of \$90,000).

Some of the significant differences we will see when using ECF and St. Street Global are:

1. Lower fees paid.
2. Well diversified portfolio (1 of 3 investment groups or combination to meet our desired investment ratio).
3. Re-balancing of our funds on a regular basis to match our investment ratio.
4. Timely reporting on condition of our investments.
5. Expert advice from ECF and St. Street Global Advisors.
6. Socially responsible investment practices with no-buy and do-buy policies.

Personally, I am very excited about this change. I feel it's a growth step for our endowment fund which will benefit from a team of professional advisors. I believe the growth potential of our investments will be greater by partnering with ECF than partnering with our diocese or continuing to manage the funds ourselves.

I ask for your blessing and approval for this motion which the endowment board has approved.

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- The endowment funds (general, Little Church, and Memorial Garden) are currently pooled but could be split into 3 endowment accounts, ratio to be determined.
- The distribution policy needs to be redone. Dave Nelsen will come back at a later date with clarification.
- The endowment board has the vestry's blessing to go forward with this change.
- We will finish this year with the current account structure. The funds will be moved to the new account in January. The other 2 accounts will be closed entirely.

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#### Financial Reports

- The financial reports presented tonight are preliminary
- Operating cash is up – pledges are only 4.5% behind
- The housing fund and Schader fund are earning a small amount of interest on CDs
- Expenses are 9.8% behind what was budgeted
- Building donations are 12% behind, but are starting to catch up
- Our new music director is being paid less than our previous director. The music at Christmas will be more expensive – 2 musicians and 2 alto singers, for a cost of \$450 vs. \$150 last year – but this will be balanced out by the director's lower salary.
- The special interest funds have been corrected - \$3000 in Memorial Donations that should have been in the Memorial Garden have been moved to the correct fund.

#### Calendar Updates

- November 19<sup>th</sup> – work party; private event in parish hall and kitchen
- December 4<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 pm – Las Posadas
- December 10<sup>th</sup> – George Vlastelica's reception

#### Cluster Budget Updates

- Jan Brandt will need to start working with each cluster for the budget process.
- Need to get budget numbers to Jan before the next vestry meeting, no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Jan will send out what has been spent under your cluster. The 2011 budget is available on the website

#### “Thank You” Reception for George Vlastelica

- Invitations have been mailed out
- George listed eight people he would like invited
- The mayors of the tri-city area, and Bishop Marc and his wife have been invited.

#### Matson Container Update

- Gregg Feeney has gotten approval on the container, but we do not have a firm date yet
- He has worked with others to prepare the site. The ground has been leveled and gravel will be brought in this weekend.
- Once the container is placed it is set and cannot be moved.
- Planning to build a wood frame after the container is set to contain the gravel
- The cost to move the container is \$250. Gregg made a request to a transportation company, and that company is making a donation of \$250 cash to cover the cost
- At some point the container will be painted the same color as the other buildings

## CLUSTER REPORTS

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### Congregational Care and Social Ministries Cluster Report for November 2011

Gary is still in process of working with Abode Services to get us included in the tri-city resource pamphlet as a source for food.

As part of the Congregational Care cluster we are reworking the recyclable program at St. James' to include recycling of Batteries, Fluorescent bulbs (including CFL's) and Printer cartridges. We have recently found a new company that will pay us for sending in inkjet (and some laser) cartridges with Printer heads and they will accept and recycle the printer cartridges that do not have printer heads. The batteries and Fluorescent bulbs are taken to our local waste company, Allied Waste and disposed of properly. This is helping us to be good stewards of our environment.

As the facility report noted we will be seeing the container for our HW program in the next couple of weeks.

Respectively

Gary Gearheart & Brad Hoffman

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- Have made contact with Abode, who promised to put the word out that St. James' is a resource for emergency food bags
- How do we store light bulbs in a safe manner before recycling? We already have secure containers for batteries and cartridges
- November 30<sup>th</sup> – meeting with Eucharistic visitors. Will look at members who are home-bound who might benefit from regular visits

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### Facilities – November 2011

The Memorial Garden tree trimming was completed on October 11. The trees overhanging the Little Church were cut back enough that the branches no longer touch the roof.

The electric work in the Little Church was begun, with a new circuit breaker installed to replace the faulty one. We still have some work to do, but the power has not shut off unexpectedly since then.

The October work party was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> and there were approximately fifteen hard workers – thank you to all! We did some of the always needed trimming and mowing, plus the unused sprinkler controllers in the courtyard lawn were removed to eliminate a possible tripping hazard. The pianos in the two churches were swapped over as requested by our music director, making them more usable on Sunday mornings.

Gregg Feeney and assistants leveled the ground behind the dumpster in preparation for the delivery of the Matson container. A gravel bed will be placed before the container arrives.

I adjusted the thermostats to reflect standard time. Since the weather has turned much colder recently, if you notice a space is too hot or cold for a regularly scheduled service or meeting please let me know. Many clocks were changed on Sunday, and Art corrected any that were missed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura

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Christian Formation Cluster Report

November, 2011

## Nursery

The "leftovers" from the nursery renovation have been removed and discarded:

- An old changing table mattress
- old toys
- other toys not appropriate for nursery – taken to Social Services

There is an unused baby changing table that we're trying to find a good home for.

## Youth Group

No updates.

## Adult Faith Formation

Upcoming Faith Formation classes/events:

- Nov. 13: Endowment Board event on Hospice care
- Nov 20: Advent Wreaths with Linda Nelsen
- Nov 27, Dec 4 & Dec 11: The Greatest Prayer, with Janet Fischer
- Dec 4: Las Posadas
- Dec. 18, Dec. 25, Jan. 1: no class

Faith Formation is working on new classes for the spring.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marlene Benedict, Stephen Ferro, Janet Fischer

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- Lori and Janet Fischer have been working on life even brochures – baptisms, weddings and unions, funerals and memorial services

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**Cluster Report**  
**Parish Life – Nov. 2011**  
Submitted by Donald Razzolini, Dean Valentine

### Goals for future events

#### A. On-going

##### a. Continue support in the following areas...

- Kitchen
- Congregational Outreach

- Congregational Activities...
  1. Receptions & Memorials
  2. Special Events – lead by outside sources
- B. Game Night Social
- C. Casino Night - Possible community outreach event
- D. Mardi Gras Party
- E. Halloween Costume Party (Family Fun Event) – Possible local community outreach event
- F. Treasures from the Attic Sale & Art Show

### Current Projects – Update

- Since there have been no large community events scheduled other than the normal venues...The PL cluster has been on a brief Hiatus since the St. James' Feast Day event in July to regroup for the Thanksgiving/Christmas season
  - a. By request...An old fashion Christmas Caroling event is in the works for possibly the week of or before the Christmas holiday
  - b. Date(s) and time TBA
  - c. Cluster are in process of recruiting to see if anyone is interested in co-chairing this event
- Welcome Committee
  - a. As a member of the committee Donald attended the most recent Newcomer Lunch
  - b. Newcomer Welcome Lunch – Nov. 6, 2011 @ 12:30pm
    - a. Very successful combination of mingling and socialization – Thank you to all
      - 2-tables for eating (8 settings each) - Guests were instructed to sit in groups of 4newcomers vs 4old-timers per table in order to enhance the “getting to know you” process
      - In addition – Old-timers switched tables for dessert to offer another “getting to know you” opportunity
      - Good time had by all
    - b. Hosted by the Pearson's with help from Jan's daughter – A very special Thank you for opening your home
    - c. Breakfast Quiche, Sausage breakfast style Croissant Sandwiches, assorted Fruit & Veggie platters, Hot Apple cider, decaf/regular coffee, and Mixed Berry Trifle were contributed by the hosts and congregation “old-timers” and served

- d. Newcomer packets and Plants were given as guests left

### Upcoming Events

- Stewardship Dinner – Nov. 6, 2011
- Thanksgiving
- Budget Planning 2012
- New Career Opportunity for D. Razzolini – Nov. 28, 2011

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### Communications and Evangelism Monthly Vestry Report November 2011

1. We asked the Sign Shop to update our two Christmas services Banners to reflect the order of worship for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We are using the same banners but are using vinyl letter overlays to show the updated service times. The Banners were completed Nov. 7th and will be hung up in the Sign Frame in very late November or early December.

2. Met with Ella Felix, Advertising Sales Associate for East Bay Region of Patch.com to learn about advertising in hyperlocal internet news sources.

A bit of background: Patch sources are aimed at towns between 10,000-81,000 population. They are owned across the country by AOL-Huffington Post. In our immediate neighborhood there are Newark.patch.com and Union City, San Leandro and San Lorenzo Patches.

As an example, this is what Ella recommended for us:

Paid Listing for Newark and Union City Patch = \$33/mo for 12 months  
Cost: \$396 each

Home Page Slot 2 for each = \$115/mo (use in the months to promote events such as Christmas and Easter) (Slot 2 BTF means (in old "journalism speak") ¼ of an ad "below the fold" – you can guess: that means it's not at the top.

Cost \$230

If this were a Fremont Patch, the paid listing might be a good bargain as it allows us to edit, add pictures, videos, change events, and do some self promotion, etc.

We have demographic figures for Patch.com.

*The Bay Area News Group* owns the local Fremont Internet sites *InsideBayArea.com* and *MercuryNews.com* – "Inside" covers the *Daily Review* and *Argus* readers; "Mercury News" entire East/South Bay. *The Bay Area News Group* has just reorganized itself and so far phone calls have gone unanswered. Connie Rux has helped us with a name and telephone number which we will pursue. Connie says Calendar listings will be self-

entered. We do not know if they are free. In the past, the daily print-based *Argus* has given us a small free listing on their weekly religion page. According to their website, the daily advertising rate for a one-time ad in the *Argus* is \$39 per column inch; Sunday is \$46. We have demographic figures for BANG.

There are two free print-based weekly newspapers in the area which are widely read: Fremont *Bulletin* (published by *Bay Area News Group*) and *Tri-City Voice* (published Tuesday and Friday by Sharon and William Marshak). Fremont *Bulletin* ads are listed at \$9 per column inch – when I asked, a 2x2 one-time ad would cost \$46.80. *Tri-City Voice* ads are \$10.50 per column inch (that includes a discount for religious institution.) Both have free Calendar Events available for listing. The Fremont *Bulletin* claims 7,000 readers weekly.

All of these institutions say they welcome “news” articles. However, publication in all of them is at the discretion of their editors.

Faithfully Submitted,  
Greg Scheuffele  
Valle Brokes  
November 8, 2011

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- Looking at advertising for Christmas

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Lead Team Report  
November 10, 2011

The Wardens have formed a Clergy Housing Committee. This committee will look at possible ways of securing a residence for the Rector of St. James’.

There are two possible new facility users. Agreements have been sent, awaiting the return of documents.

- Youth Champion – Art Class, Tuesday afternoon, PH
- Learning Spanish – youth and adults, Saturday morning, EB1

We have begun to alleviate some of the burden on our treasurer. Mary is being trained to do the payables. Being aware of a good practice regarding the printing and signing of checks, the Sr. Warden will become the second signature to any check over \$500.00 and the Rector will be the primary signature.

The Reception to honor the good work George Vlastelica has done in our community for the past 47+ years is scheduled on Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup> 2-4pm. It would be nice to have the entire Vestry present to show our appreciation to George.

Submitted by,  
Mary and Andy

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- Did receive the facilities agreement from Youth Champion. First meeting is January 17<sup>th</sup> from 5-8 pm in Parish Hall.
- Signed green sheets should go in the treasurer's box

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Rector's Report  
Vestry Meeting, November 10, 2011

### Worship

Completed planning Advent and Christmas and have begun working on all of the bulletins for Lessons & Carols, Advent Season, and the Christmas Eve Services.

Working out the details of this year's Christmas Pageant for Children, which will still be low-key without having line memorization, but will incorporate the building of the crèche using our crèche figures.

Planning on the Greening of the Church for Sunday, December 18 following the 10:30 service.

Crafted and mailed Advent/Christmas letter to the congregation.

Worked with Bill Mosier to plan for the Thanksgiving Morning Prayer Service.

Working with a group of four parishioners to preach a sermon on November 13 that will focus on gratitude and St. James'.

Celebrated at one funeral in the Little Church for Kevin Valente, Sylvia Wessel's son.

Prepared and baptized Olivia Nabukeera and Isaac Kazibwe.

### Pastoral Care

Visited Jim McConnell before and after his surgery in Oakland; made a pastoral visit to his home as well. Met with two parishioners regarding spiritual issues.

### **Children & Youth**

Moving along in the planning of the Advent Wreath making, thanks to Linda Nelsen.

Looking for options for Kathryn Ruth, our nursery care provider. It seems that 75% or more of the time, there are no children, and she's feeling a little bored. I've suggested to the Sunday School teachers that we have Kathryn help out in the classroom when there are no children in the nursery. If children show up for the nursery, Kathryn could be retrieved by the ushers to care for the child/ren. Still exploring this option.

The Sunday School continues to run well, with an average of 5 kids or so each week. However, it's important to recognize that if every child showed up to church on the same day, we'd have almost twenty kids.

### **Diocese/Deanery**

Attended the Diocesan Convention on 10/22.

Asked Andy MacRae to coordinate/recruit for the Congregational Vitality Team. The first webinar is on 12/8.

### **Welcoming Committee**

Had lunch, hosted by the Pearsons, for the new members of our community (arrived between May and now). Entertained 8 new people. 5 others were invited but unavailable. Next lunch is planned for the beginning of May.

### **Stewardship**

Continued to work with Gail Blalock on the stewardship program for this year. Composed a letter to go out with the pledge cards, and attended/spoke at the stewardship dinner on November 3, with another one planned for 11/17. Planning for a "stewardship sermon" on 11/13, and the ingathering of pledges on 11/20.

### **Administration**

The new copier/printer was installed, and after some trial and error, all machines can print to it, and we can scan from it. Our pricing structure has changed, so everyone should be frugal about making copies on the machine – only make what you really need, and only use it for church business.

Met with Dave Nelsen a couple of times to talk about the endowment structure and management of our endowment funds.

## Facilities

Learned from Gregg Feeney that the cost for the delivery of the container (\$250) will be donated to St. James' from Sonoma Valley Transport (they are not delivering it, but have offered to donate a check for \$250 to cover the cost of the delivery). I will write a letter of appreciation to the contact there.

## Other

Attended the Western Christian Educators Conference on October 10-13 at Zephyr Point. Co-presented with Sue Thompson on Small Groups as a means of soul Sabbath. Learned a lot from Marcus Borg who spoke about "Speaking Christian" and the reclaiming of Christian language/words.

Composed a short letter to go with the invitations for George Vlastalica's reception.

Participated in the Mutual Ministry Review on 10/27.

Will be on vacation (my last week of the year) from Monday, November 21 through Monday, November 28 (minus a Southern Alameda Rector's Meeting on 11/28). Back in the office on November 29. Jim McLeod is supplying and leading Lessons and Carols for 1<sup>st</sup> Advent.

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- We will have substitute organists, two sisters, on Sunday
- Congratulations to Donald on his new job!

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Motion was made to accept the cluster reports, the lead team report, and the rector's report as submitted/amended. Moved by Janet Fischer, seconded by Stephen Ferro. Motion approved.

Janet Fischer led Compline.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hart  
Clerk of the Vestry