

# CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

Vestry Minutes

August 8, 2024

7:00 PM

**Present:** Chuck Arensberg, Ran Barton, Ruth Beresford, Audrey Bruce, Cindi Cozza, Barb King, Ted Ledden, Alexander Maynard, Thorpe Moeckel, Eliza Phillips, Jamie Poston, Jaq Whalen, Alexia Wolf

**Also Present:** Mark Parsells, Joe Zakielarz

**Absent:** Scott Nickle, Bart Reese

The meeting was called to order by the rector at 7:04 PM, and she offered the opening prayer.

## Leadership and Governance

**Personnel and Staff Transitions:** Ruth explained that a few months ago, Stacey Carpenter informed her that she would be seeking a new position in Pennsylvania, and in late July, Stacey notified Ruth that she was accepting a call to be the Senior Associate Rector for St. James Episcopal Church in Lancaster. Her last day with CCCH will be August 29. Obviously, this is a challenging time to lose a clergyperson with Michael Kurth on parental leave; he will return to work September 9. The celebration of Stacey's ministry will take place on August 25, when the 10:30 AM service will be held in the Parish Halls due to lighting system repairs in the Church.

Ruth raised the question of what our path forward should be: to seek a full-time curate or an associate with experience or to bring on someone part-time. Ran affirmed that having three full-time clergy is one of our budgetary priorities that we believe is key to achieving our strategic goals for growth. Thorpe noted that in Ministry Architects' original assessment, they considered us over-staffed compared to our average worship attendance; Ruth replied that she objected to that assertion because their methodology did not account either for the preschool or the size of our campus. There was consensus among the Vestry that we should maintain three full-time clergy at this juncture in the parish's life. Some expressed the benefits of seeking someone who is more seasoned and whose tenure would be longer than that of a curate, while others acknowledged that our parish has a tradition and responsibility of raising up curates for the wider church. Mark noted that notwithstanding Stacey's imminent departure, we are staffed effectively for the parish we are aiming to become, our financials are healthy, and if difficulties arose, he would look for other items to cut than clergy salaries. Ruth mentioned that the Personnel Committee reminds her regularly that she is overdue for a sabbatical, and while she knows this is not the year for that and she is not currently feeling the need for it, she does look forward to taking that opportunity in the future. Ruth expressed a desire to bring in someone with skills or experience in pastoral care and ministries of healing and recovery, while she continues to lean in on ministry to children and youth. She has already spoken to Brad Hinton, Canon to the Ordinary, about potential supply clergy in the diocese and beginning a broader search. She will form a small search committee to work with her and the Personnel Committee on the selection, which will likely take several months. Vestry members

spoke of their readiness to step up to assist Ruth, and she addressed the reality of needing to prioritize carefully and postpone certain plans until we are fully staffed again.

Ruth reported that we have a signed letter of agreement with Cameron Kuzepski for the position of Organ Scholar, to fill the headcount vacated by David Hearn last year. He is an accomplished organist and a graduate student at the Peabody Conservatory, who attended an Evensong here as a teen in 2015 and felt a call to Anglican choral music. He will act as an assistant to Bruce Barber, and Bruce will contribute to his formation as a parish musician. We anticipate that he will be with us for a couple of years, similar to a curate priest. Mason Cruz's wedding will take place later this month, and Sheila Abio has settled into her role heading the preschool.

Joe reported that our contract with Ministry Architects is set to end this fall, but the option exists to extend that. He asked if it is worth inquiring how our relationship might evolve and what value they might bring as we go forward with the plan that they helped us develop and implement. Mark commented that we should look at the cost as an investment in maintaining our momentum. Ruth and the wardens will explore the idea further.

**Election of Diocesan Convention Delegates, Alternates, and Youth Representative:** The Diocesan Convention will take place November 22-23 in Rehoboth. Alexander is willing to serve again as Youth Representative, and Cindi and Mark can serve again as Delegates. Jaq volunteered to be an Alternate. Barb moved to nominate these individuals to the stated roles, Eliza seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Ruth noted that we will need to secure a second Alternate.

**Addition of Senior Warden as Authorized Signatory on M&T Bank Accounts:** Currently, Mark as Treasurer and Bob Reardon as Assistant Treasurer have authority to sign checks from the parish's accounts for more than \$2,500. Historically the Senior Warden has been added as a signatory and Mark stated that this is a strongly recommended practice, but the signatories have not been updated since Steve Boyden was the Senior Warden. Ted Ledden moved to renew Mark and Bob and add Ran as the authorized signers, Jamie seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Monthly Management Tasks**

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the Annual Meeting in May and the July Vestry meeting were approved as presented.

**Other Concerns and For the Record:** Ran distributed a list of contact information for Vestry members and asked everyone to check that their details are correct and complete, and he will set up a new group chat.

The closing prayer was offered by Ruth. The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer O'Connor, Clerke