

DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Meeting of St. Mary's Episcopal Church
January 20, 2019

Following a potluck lunch, Rev. Bill Fowler opened the meeting at 11:55 with a prayer.

Outgoing Senior Warden Paul Wilborn thanked Judy Lansford, Linda Joseph and everyone who contributed to a wonderful potluck lunch. Paul thanked outgoing vestry members Robert Oliver, Linda Joseph and Sue Faulkner for their service over the last 3 years and welcomed incoming members Mary Casbeer, Mary Raring-Hart and Betty Lindsey-Maxey. At its meeting today at 9:00, the vestry appointed the following officers:

Senior Warden	Bill Adams
Junior Warden	Paul Wilborn
Treasurer	Bunny Gunn-Johnson
Clerk	Mike Watson
Stewardship Volunteer	Bill Adams (acting)

Parishioners interested in service as Stewardship Volunteer or Columbarium Volunteer please contact Bill Adams. These ministries are described in our Operating Policies available in the parish office. Paul asked all the vestry members to stand so people know their representatives, then gave the following update on our 2018 activities.

Paul reported that our parish began and ended the year in good condition. We are able to support paid part-time staff for parish clerk, bookkeeper and organist. Our outreach contributions of time, talent and treasure supported His Kids, AA, Girl Scouts and Highway 190 trash pickup. Cindy Harris added that our Episcopal Church Women (ECW) fundraising supported Highland Lakes Casa and the Lampasas Mission, and that the annual Christmas Bazaar was a success.

The vestry created a Finance Committee that reviewed our parish's facilities and expected expenses for the next 5 years and published recommendations for repair of the remaining (NE) corner of the sanctuary, revision to the Parish Operating Policies, and our 2019 budget that the vestry considered and approved. Mimi and John Cole have graciously funded the sanctuary foundation work, which we expect to begin shortly as soon as the specialty foundation contractor from Dallas can be scheduled. We expect to hold services in the parish hall during some of this construction, as we have done for prior sanctuary work.

We discovered a leak in the water line supplying the parish hall. It was re-routed and repairs to the wall and ceiling are completed and paid.

Rev. Susie Comer announced on August 19 that she accepted a call from Saint Mark's parish in Ft. Bend, near Houston, and her last Sunday with us was September 23. Canon Kai Ryan met with the vestry and our consensus was to secure an interim priest, review our parish and needs in depth, and call a full-time priest within a year. The diocese suggested candidates for interim rector, including Rev. Fowler, and when the Vestry met with him Bill offered his interest to be St. Mary's part-time priest-in-charge. Our projected revenue does not support a full-time priest, and with approval of the diocese and vestry, Rev Fowler joined us on December 16, 2018.

Paul closed with "Thanks to each and every one of you for all you do for our church and community."

Rev. Fowler said he has been fortunate to have a unique ministry in the Diocese of Texas. Ten years ago he asked Bishop Doyle to send him to serve “wherever needed”. He spent 3 years at Galveston after the hurricane and led a large parish and school in Houston. The loss of a close relative last spring caused Bill to think further about the direction of his ministry and recall his experiences growing up in the Episcopal church in Llano. Bill learned of our need, and in October Bishop Doyle suggested he consider leading St. Mary’s, saying “Those people are your people”.

Bill sees his mission is to preach the gospel, and “love you – my ministry is my people.” His first focus will be to elevate our worship experience and pull the congregation together in fellowship. He emphasized that he wants to be “very accessible and available to you all” and will be with us as and when needed. He plans to experiment with different days and times in office to best serve our needs.

Bill Adams directed attention to the printed draft minutes of our 2018 annual meeting on the tables and asked for a motion to approve. Paul Wilborn moved to approve the minutes as written, Tom Hart seconded and the parish voted to approve.

Looking ahead to 2019, Bill thanked everyone for their pledges and thanked Rev. Fowler for accepting our budgeted total compensation at the same level as Rev. Comer.

Bill reported that the vestry had created the Operating Reserve per our Operating Policy revisions last fall. This reserve serves as a cash buffer for operating the parish during the year, and avoids temporary use of designated funds to cover monthly variations in income and expense. Bill thanked the parishioners whose donations helped create this reserve, and also thanked Treasurer Bunny Gunn-Johnson for all her work on our finances and particularly for streamlining our bank accounts. Our 2019 operating budget is “essentially zero-based” in that forecast expenses exceed revenue by around \$1300, well below our forecast accuracy. Donations of supplies listed on the parish hall whiteboard have been very helpful and our budget depends on your donations again this year.

We will conduct a sample audit again this year as required annually by our Operating Policies. Libby Bluntzer participated in the 2018 audit and found it very interesting and helpful to understand our parish finances. Last year’s team created forms and guidelines to help simplify the task. It’s best that parishioners who are not vestry members perform this audit – please contact Bill Adams if you would consider helping this spring.

Rev. Fowler asked that we not keep a Rectors’ Discretionary Fund and instead include those needs in our overall Outreach budget. The new vestry will decide how to use the remaining 2018 outreach funds and suggestions from parishioners are most welcome. We discussed briefly whether the vestry could charter an Outreach Committee to recommend how best to apply these funds. Parishioners with any suggestions for use of 2018 funds, or interest in serving in this ministry should please contact Bill Adams or Rev. Fowler.

Diocesan Council, held this year on Thu-Sat Feb 21-23 at The Woodlands near Houston, will elect a new Bishop Suffragen and decide other policies and business of the diocese. Rev. Bill helps organize the council and will be seated on the dais. We normally send three or four delegates. Janie Watson, Tom Hart and Mary Raring-Hart volunteered, Libby Bluntzer moved to accept them, Bill Adams seconded and the parish approved by acclamation.

Rev. Fowler closed the meeting at 12:30 by leading us in the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Mike Watson, Clerk of the vestry.

Comments and corrections to this draft are welcome. These minutes will be offered for approval at the January 2020 annual meeting of the parish.

DRAFT approved at the March 17, 2019 Vestry meeting.

Parish approved at the ????, 2020 Annual Meeting.

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