

TRURO ANGLICAN CHURCH VESTRY

-Regular Meeting-

July 20, 2021

MINUTES

Call to Order: The regular meeting of the Truro Anglican Church Vestry came to order at 7:35 pm on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 in the Truro Undercroft. Lincoln Mullen, Senior Warden, presided over the meeting.

Present: Holly Desmarais, Mark Epley, Don Foy, Tom Gangemi, Nancy Gordon, Lincoln Mullen, Clare O'Leary, Jim Osterhaus, Teresa Rowe, Chris Tiller.

The Vestry received an emailed resignation notification from Kim Bean, Dave Huggins and Moses Perrone shortly before the meeting.

Others Present: Randy Bowen, Liz Brewster, Rev Jamie Brown

Absent:

I. OPENING ITEMS

a) Prayer: by Rev Jamie Brown

b) Meditation/Vestry Prayer: Chris Tiller offered a meditation based on Ephesians 6.10-13

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.”

Our enemy is not Tim, or the two women. It is not the ‘3’ or the ‘10’ of the vestry. Our enemy is God’s enemy. He is demonic, divisive, cruel, and destructive – he is a hater of God, of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul cautions us to recognize the real enemy, “that we would not be outwitted by Satan” because “we are not ignorant of his [Satan’s] designs” (2 Corinthians 2:11).

Recently Tom challenged us to ask, “what is God trying to teach us?” I think our Lord wants us to learn discernment of the rulers, authorities, cosmic powers and spiritual forces of evil. The author of our current circumstances is not Tim, or the two women. The author is the evil one.

If we could see the spirit world with our physical eyes, it would be so much easier to recognize the ones we are battling. I think we have been deceived to believe the enemy is each other as we have disagreed. No one here is my enemy. We can have opposing opinions, but you are my brothers and sisters.

Why does God allow such things? Don't know. Philip Yancey suggests that "not all suffering comes as a punishment, it could be that some trials may be used to win a great spiritual victory." What I know is God is sovereign over Satan. The devil does not have a free hand in this world. He is on a leash, so that he can do no more than God permits. He is required to ask permission of Father God to attack us. Remember Peter when Jesus told him that Satan had asked permission to have Peter and to sift him like wheat (Luke 22.21); Remember Job was described as the best man of his day, yet he suffered terribly and unjustly for nothing he'd done except that he was righteous. After the 35 chapters filled with Job's laments, his complaining, and why questions, God said, "Brace yourself like a man...I will question you and you shall answer me." Basically, the summary of what God spoke in the following chapters is 'if you can't comprehend the world you can see, how dare you expect to comprehend the world you cannot see.' There is a dark spiritual world that hates Truro – I think afraid of Truro because of what we can do that defeats evil.

I don't understand why all this has happened, but I believe God is just, is faithful, is loving and he loves all who are hurt in this, and he knows more than I do.

The end? Recall that in the end Job's health is restored, his fortunes are restored to twice what they were, he had more children. I believe God will do this for Truro and for Tim. I believe for all of us Jeremiah 29.11 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Let's pray now keeping in mind the following things:

Let's recognize the true enemy and it's no person at Truro.

Let's ask Tom's question of God, "Lord what are you trying to teach us?"

Ask for God's help to forgive.

Let's hope for and trust God for something wonderful beyond this for Truro.

Let's trust God for his love of Tim and his family and that there is a new a wonderful end for them too.

Liz Brewster led the vestry in a worship song.

- c) Consideration of the Agenda: Lincoln Mullen propped changes to the agenda.

II. VESTRY PACKET: MINUTES, VESTRY BRIEFS AND SUBMITTED WRITTEN REPORTS

- a) Meeting Minutes – June 15, 2021 Regular Vestry Meeting
- b) Minutes and Financial Status Report – June 2021 Finance Committee Minutes and Financial Reports and 2021 budget overview
- c) Brief: Approval of non-vestry member Gideon Steinberg
- d) Brief: Approval of Property Task Force

- e) Brief: Approval of Summer Anderson's discernment committee

III. INITIAL MATTERS The Vestry moved, seconded, and unanimously approved acceptance of each of the following matters with the described corrections:

- Vestry Meeting Minutes – Chris Tiller, Registrar, presented the June 15, 2021 Vestry Meeting minutes with correction of the job description for Angela Velez.
- Financial Reports – Don Foy, Treasurer, presented the June 2021 Finance Committee Minutes and Financial Reports

IV. BUSINESS

- a) Jamie Brown provided a clergy report. He began by focusing on three encouraging signs in our life together.

First, the ministry of this church is active, vibrant, and growing in exciting ways, even in the middle of the summer. Sundays have been marked by heartfelt worship, prayer ministry, fellowship, donuts, good weather, and visitors. Over the last two weeks, two large families with young children have communicated to us that they're eager to make Truro their home. Our youth ministry is preparing to take a group of volunteers and teens to inner-city Philadelphia. Our senior's ministry is regathering twice a month for fellowship. Our prayer ministry team is not only supporting Sunday ministry, but appointments all throughout the week. TIPs continues to reach people all around the world. And our commitment to local missions continues. This Sunday we'll aim to have 75 backpacks collected for local students. We handed out over 600 bottles of water for the Independence Day parade. We were able to extend the use of our Sanctuary, undercroft, and courtyard to our sister congregation, Christ Church Vienna (Anglican) for a funeral for one of their founding members. Men's bible studies are meeting. These are just a few encouraging signs of God's blessing on this congregation, even during a difficult season.

Second, our staff is united and strong. Each Tuesday we gather for worship and fellowship, praying through the service of midday prayer from the Book of Common Prayer. These are wonderful times, and it's been great to have many of you join us for those. You're always welcome. Yes, we continue to experience staff transitions, but we're encouraged that our staff culture remains strong, loving, and joy-filled even in the midst of trials.

Third, God continues to expand our ministry behind the scenes, even in small ways. Last month I was contacted by a woman whose husband had unexpectedly died just days earlier. In the 70's and 80's, they were committed members of Truro, but then their lives got busy and their faith grew cold. When we began livestreaming our services in March 2020, they began tuning in. They ended up never missing a Sunday. Their faith was rekindled. They couldn't leave their homes due to their health, and so their weeks revolved around Sunday mornings with Truro. Her husband would sit with his bible open, taking notes. He would stand and lift his hands in worship during the songs. She asked me I would officiate his funeral, three weeks ago now, at Fairfax Memorial Gardens. Her only request was that I would simply, clearly, and unapologetically preach the gospel. So I did, to 200 mostly unchurched people. It was a Truro service, using our

Anglican liturgy, and Truro's worship guides, for this Truro family. God used this church to bring this dear couple back to himself.

So our ministries are active, our staff is strong, and every week we hear more behind-the-scenes stories like the one I just shared.

These are challenging days for sure, and the clergy continue to pursue our commitment to preaching the gospel, caring for the flock, and doing all we can, in every way we can, to promote unity during this time.

Each week we meet and talk about the different needs and concerns in the congregation, to discuss where the current pressures are showing up the most, and simply to pray and seek God's face for this church.

Over the last few weeks, we've talked with a handful of people in the congregation whose marriages are failing, or who are struggling with wayward children. We receive emails from folks who are discouraged and confused by this current situation, from multiple perspectives. Recently, we have heard how painful it was for many in this congregation when the American Flag wasn't processed on Sunday, July 4, and when we decided not to display them in our worship spaces. Over the course of two weeks we listened and talked with many who approached us. We're grieved by how painful this was for many folks in our congregation, and we have asked them for their forgiveness. The flags are once again displayed at the front of the Sanctuary and the Chapel. We will always make the unity of this congregation, especially during fragile times, our number one priority. To you, our brothers and sisters on Vestry, having so much before you during these days, we ask your forgiveness for creating a painful situation.

But having addressed some of the pain in our congregation, let me say on behalf of my colleagues in the clergy, (Mike, Coleman, and José) that we love this church and we're not just encouraged (generally) about the long-term future of Truro, but even specifically the short-term of this coming Fall.

- After our Ephesians series finishes this Sunday, we'll return to the lectionary during the month of August, before beginning a series through every verse of 1, 2, and 3 John this September.
- On a personal note, I'm truly honored and humbled to be ordained to the priesthood, Lord willing, on Sunday, August 1.
- We're eager to see what God does through new Alpha courses in the coming ministry year, drawing the lost to Christ.
- Our new website is ready to be launched. We will likely launch it closer to September, when our new sermon series and new ministry year begins.
- We're looking forward to baptisms on Sunday, August 29.
- As we shared with you last month, we're excited to welcome Martyn, Angela, and Rachel Minns back to Truro on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29. Martyn will preach and celebrate at both services.

There's more I could share, but I'll close with these words from Jesus, in Matthew 16:18. Jesus said that "...On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

- b) Director of Operations, Liz Brewster, reported the following
- IT – moving to Office 365. We are in continual reconstruction and stabilization of our IT system.
- HR – Maggie Marcum is moving from 12 hrs in parish life and 5 hrs in Mission and 5 hrs in admin to help with funerals and weddings into a temporary special service role of 12 hrs for Jamie and continuing in parish life with her normal early childhood responsibilities. Liliana will split her time to help with admin in systems and worship and arts.
- We are working on a backend system that will incorporate the vestry policies.
- Facilities – The Orangeburg Pipe is done but there was additional cost bringing it from 36K to 50K.
- Finance – Audit underway.
- Attendance – at the 7:45 a consistent trend of between 40-45
- 9:00 has an upward trend ranging between 120-140. New people have come because it is outdoors, some like it because it's been pleasant outside, others like the sense of safety from COVID outside.
- 11:15 is up and down with holidays and vacations at this time of year. Have received a phone call from Australia from some who are watching the live stream and want to join an online community group.
- Fun Life update – in the last month both Pilar Fandino and Summer Anderson have gotten married.
- c) Personnel report, Jim Osterhaus reported. They will be meeting next Tuesday. Currently the employee handbook re-write completion is the most demanding issue currently.
- d) Buildings and Grounds, Nancy Gordon reported. The committee hasn't met yet. Nancy has asked one non-vestry member to join the committee, hasn't yet received a response.
- e) Mission Committee, Clare O'Leary reported. The committee hasn't met yet. Clare has met with José and Lincoln to get a handle on the new policy driven committee. José's part on the committee is of vital importance and since he is on leave, she feels it is important to wait until he returns to gather. One of the first items of business is to rename the committee as the role and responsibilities of the committee have been expanded and broadened the name is misleading and confusing. There is much congregational interest in serving and supporting this committee.
- There was discussion about the possibility of setting up a designated fund for Cuba. Liz and Clare will work out the details and inform vestry and congregation.

V. OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Senior Warden's Report –

Executive session declared 9:26 pm

Executive session closed 11:00

VI. ADJOURNMENT by Lincoln Mullen at **11:01 pm**.

*The next regular Vestry meeting will be on **Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 7:00pm** in the Truro Undercroft. Meditation provided by Jim Osterhaus and refreshments will be provided by Chris Tiller.*

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Tiller

Christina Tiller, Registrar, Truro Anglican Church