

St. Stephens Vestry Meeting
3-13-07

1. The meeting opened with a prayer. Prayer volunteers were organized for the rest of the year:

May – Joan June – John July - Diane	August – Steve September – Rich October - Cheryl	November Ann December Penny
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2. The Special Parish Meeting was voted upon and moved to April 29th.
3. The new organ has been ordered and will be delivered on April 23rd. A dedication recital is tentatively scheduled for June 3rd.
4. The Rector's Report was presented (attached).
5. The Associate Rector's Report was presented (attached).
6. Financial Report.
 - a. The Vestry reviewed Kevin Collins' February Flash Report (attached). Our deficit after three months is \$10,696. Expenses are \$6853 below budget.
 - b. The point was made that January 2006 had 5 Sunday's to this year's 4. We don't catch up until March.
 - c. The first two weeks of March were very strong.
 - d. The Dump the Deficit Letter was presented and briefly discussed. The Vestry indicated they would read it at home and comment by e-mail.
 - e. We are past due for an audit. Kevin will arrange.
 - f. Online payments being investigated. Manual or automatic deductions are possible. Kevin is trying it out and will report to the vestry.
 - g. A SWAT team was formed to educate the congregation on what is required to meet financial obligations. Emphasis on creative ways to view our relationship to our budget. Members?
7. New Business:
 - a. An acknowledgement of departing Vestry Members should be planned. Assignment?
 - b. The Endowment Committee has an open position. Steve has volunteered.
8. Harassment Training took place this past week. Approximately 15 members of St. Stephens attended. 90 total participants. Marylou Kleitch can help with the other dates.

9. The diocese requested \$3000 for a CESA donation. The Vestry feels that our outreach efforts are currently vigorous. Given our financial situation, the Vestry denied this request.
10. Next month's Vestry meeting may be moved up a week to provide extra time to plan for the special Parish meeting. Moving the meeting will depend upon the first quarter financials being ready.
11. The meeting closed with a prayer.

John Morley
St. Stephen's Clerk

RECTOR'S REPORT TO THE VESTRY

March 13, 2007

1. Thank you for your flexibility in rescheduling the April Special Parish meeting. It indicates strong support for youth ministry.
2. The Organ Replacement project has been strongly supported and the new instrument is slated for installation the week of April 23.
3. The slow pace of our contributions in January and February is very frustrating. However, the SWAT team has developed a comprehensive strategy for addressing issues of stewardship and I look forward to hearing more about it in this meeting. I have made a suggestion to them regarding the short-term revenue shortage and look forward to hearing their response at this meeting also. The ease with which the new organ was funded suggests to me that our fiscal issues are not primarily due to a lack of funds on the part of our parishioners.
4. I believe we should go into the April 29 Special Meeting with a common mind and strategy regarding stewardship, the budget, and actual expenses. Even if the general situation improves, we can count on there being some criticism and anxiety. My goal is to keep the focus on
 - A. Increasing awareness re personal stewardship and the spirituality of giving.
 - B. Reducing dependence upon our most generous givers.
 - C. Keeping the focus upon mission and ministry and avoiding preoccupation with money.
5. All that said, I think we should be prepared to demonstrate our commitment to fiscal restraint and responsibility. By the April Vestry meeting we should be prepared to adopt a "Provisional Budget Reduction Formula" that is consistent with our mission priorities and does not unduly burden any of our ministries. In the meantime, we should be exercising all reasonable economies in reducing expenditures as much as possible until the funding situation improves.
6. The Episcopal Church has gotten a lot of press lately. I refer anyone who is interested to the Presiding Bishop's statement posted across from the water fountain. You can also subscribe to the new "Record Weekly" that provides up-to-the-minutes news and commentary at _____. Very briefly, the 37 Anglican "Primates" have issued a request that the House of Bishops of the American Episcopal Church commit itself to not approving the consecration of any more gay or lesbian bishops, nor the authorization of Rites for the blessing of same-sex unions. The House of Bishops does not meet until September, and even then it does not have the authority to commit the Episcopal Church in an official way, because our church includes lay representatives in decision-making (through the House of Deputies at General Convention) to a degree not always practiced in other Anglican jurisdictions. General Convention does not meet again until 2009. It is unclear what steps might be taken to punish or exclude the Episcopal Church if action before then is required, or if the Episcopal Church does not agree to the restrictions.

7. Due to the generosity of people at St. Stephen's and a freak low-fare offer from Orbitz, Nancy and I will be able to attend Caitlin's Scottish wedding celebration in July of this year. Zachary and Katie will accompany us, and David and James will go with their maternal grandparents, so the whole group will be there! I am very excited and thankful.
8. You will hear more about plans for my sabbatical in April & May, but before it begins I plan to empty my file drawers, take the pictures off the wall, remove most of the books, and clean off my desk! When I return in September it will be as if I were starting a brand new ministry at a new church... except I won't have to learn everybody's names and you will probably remember mine also.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan+

Associate Rector's Report for Jan 9 to Mar 12, 2007
By Pastor Manisha

- **March 25 Open House:** The YACYM Committee is sponsoring the first Sunday School Open House (that we know about) during Fellowship Hour on Sunday, Mar 25. We hope all of you will come. Its purpose is to educate all the members of the congregation of the good things that are going on in the education wing every Sunday AND encourage parents to bring their children regularly to this program vital to their Christian faith.
- **College care packages:** The Sr. High youth have made 20 college care packages for 19 college student and 1 service person who is stationed in Baghdad. They included handwritten letters to each one of the students. I plan on mailing them out in the next 2 weeks.
- **Youth that are not participating in the youth program:** We are beginning to encounter some families who do not want to participate in the youth programs being offered by St. Stephen's because of the time commitment. I will have to talk to YACYM about this. After having a very productive conversation with Father Jonathan yesterday, I am hoping we can develop an understanding that youth who do not want to participate are invited to go to Sunday School and are welcomed and encouraged to be confirmed and participate in Youth Sunday.
- **Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals:** Bob Novak was buried on Monday, Feb 19. It was a powerful worship service, and Father Jonathan gave a very stirring sermon.
- **Canon to Youth and Young Adults:** Canon Lisa Gray, the Canon to YAYA in the Diocese of Michigan, will be the Canon to the Ordinary as of April 1. We will eagerly look forward to seeing who the new Canon to YAYA is and working closely with that person.
- **SWAT:** The SWAT Team is meeting and is underway! We are beginning to implement our strategies to incite God's people to give cheerfully and sacrificially since this is the way God gives to us.
- **Mychurchevents.com:** I would like to request that the Info/Communications Committee begin an earnest search into a church calendar system that allows for multiple users to input church events, but that also allows for administrators to control the calendar (mychurchevents.com is an option). Because we now have 3 youth groups, and youth group activities change all the time, keeping the calendar current has been quite a challenge. This search must be conducted with the

church office staff, since they have to be completely comfortable using the church calendar.

- **Sabbatical Planning:** The team has met and discussed our many options and is beginning to put into place a clergy/lay person schedule for the sabbatical. During the summer, all services will have children's sermons and there will be no Sunday School.
- **Mutual Ministry:** This group is in full swing and all 3 clergy members are meeting and being encouraged and sustained by this group. I am so glad it is in place!
- **A Call from my Bishop's Office:** I got a call from the Bishop's Office last week asking me to consider a call at a Lutheran church. It is a solo pastorate position and I am not ready to be a solo pastor. They graciously agreed with me!
- **Dilemmas in Discipleship:** The topics feel harder this year than last. But we are called to discuss the hard things! I have had the privilege to take the extreme views on the topics, but unlike Father Jonathan, I have actually been arguing for my convictions, so sometimes it is hard to be so vulnerable and get struck down by God's people. Ah, the joy of being the extreme disciple!
- **The Art of Listening:** I am so excited about this! We have a robust class that is learning the gift and the power of active listening. It is a ministry and I believe all Christians would benefit from this training—I certainly did. I plan on offering this again. Please consider taking it!
- **Youth Fundraisers:** Cheryl Davenport will inform you about the plans of the J2A youth group to conduct some fundraisers for their trips. Sometime in the near future, the Sr. High YAC group will also solicit funds in order to go on their annual mission trip which will be to Detroit.
- **Families in distress:** There are currently 2 families who are having financial difficulties in the church. The good news is that these are the same families we have been helping, and so there are no new families that I know of who are struggling. The sad news is that their situation keeps getting more bleak, mostly because of health issues.
- **Personal: Sickesses:** I feel the need to ask forgiveness from the congregation, and a public thank you to Father Jonathan. Since Jan 28, I have had the stomach flu, the regular flu and 3 major colds. I do not know what is wrong with me! I am trying to make it through this without letting too much of my work suffer, but I admit this is no fun!

2006 St. Stephen's Flash Report									
	MTD Actual (This Year)	MTD Actual (Last Year)	MTD Actual Variance		YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Actual (Last Year)	YTD Actual Variance	YTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Act/Bud Variance
Revenue	\$28,329	\$32,538	(\$4,209)		\$61,016	\$73,877	(\$12,861)	\$75,456	(\$14,440)
Expenses	35,540	42,829	7,289		71,712	74,671	2,959	78,011	6,299
Variance	(\$7,211)	(\$10,291)	\$3,080		(\$10,696)	(\$794)	(\$9,902)	(\$2,555)	(\$8,141)
Forecasted Giving									
					Variance to	Variance to	2007 YTD		2007
	Min	Max	Average	2006	Avg Rate	2006 Rate	Parish Giving		Forecast
Jan	6%	10%	8%	10%	(\$59,088)	(\$148,773)	\$30,632		\$390,479
Feb	12%	18%	16%	18%	(\$93,023)	(\$132,491)	\$57,398		\$356,544
Mar	22%	27%	24%	24%					
Apr	30%	34%	32%	32%					
May	38%	40%	39%	39%					
Jun	47%	50%	48%	47%					
Jul	53%	58%	55%	54%					
Aug	59%	66%	62%	59%					
Sep	68%	72%	70%	68%					
Oct	75%	81%	78%	77%					
Nov	82%	89%	86%	85%					
Dec	100%	100%	100%	100%					
					YTD Budget:	\$449,567			
					2006 Actual:	\$394,906			

DUMP THE DEFICIT !

Dear St. Stephen's Friends:

Lent, 2007

Your Vestry is happy to let you know that sufficient funds are in hand to authorize the installation of our NEW ROGERS ORGAN! God willing, it will be installed during the week of April 23-28, thus fulfilling our hope for it to be in place for the Fiftieth Anniversary Festivities. No operating funds have been used for the new organ. Thanks to all who participated in this effort, and especially to Bill Dunn for coordinating everything.

Now we are turning our attention to sustaining our other programs of ministry and outreach. As of March 1st, EXPENSES for 2007 HAVE EXCEEDED INCOME by \$10,696. This deficit is not due to excessive spending... expenses are \$6,853 UNDER BUDGET.

As a Vestry we are committed to DUMP THE DEFICIT. In addition to our regular giving, we have committed ourselves to GIVE AN ADDITIONAL DUMP THE DEFICIT AMOUNT in accordance with the blessings God has bestowed upon us. Please join us in our effort to DUMP THE DEFICIT as effectively as we enabled the purchase of a new organ. If you wish, you may use the enclosed DUMP THE DEFICIT envelope. A chart will be posted in the Gathering Area to track progress.

A SPECIAL PARISH MEETING is scheduled for SUNDAY, APRIL 29, at 11:30 am. This meeting has been changed from its original date to avoid interfering with the RITE 13 CELEBRATION set for April 22. The agenda for the Special Parish Meeting will include:

1. A review of parish finances and efforts (long term and short term) to address any problems.
2. Presentation of "Future Vision 3", a plan for the development of St. Stephen's over the next four years.
3. Unveiling of the "Master Landscaping Plan" for future improvements.

Please plan to attend this meeting, where your Vestry hopes to announce that we have DUMPED THE DEFICIT!

Sincerely yours in faith,