Minutes - Annual Parish Meeting - Sunday, January 27, 2019

Call to Order and Opening Prayer - Fr. Joe Gibbes

Welcome – Wayne Plummer, Sr. Warden

Review of Vestry Candidates – Wayne Plummer, Sr. Warden

Four vestry members were selected via random draw by children in the parish. New vestry members are:

Lexy Fields – 3 year term

Richard Phillips – 3 year term

Bill Scaggs – 3 year term

Caroline Ritchie – 3 year term

An additional vestry member was selected via random draw for a one year term due to the resignation of Phyllis Hendry. The one year member is:

Chick Chance – 1 year term

Diocesan delegates were also chosen:

Ellen McClure

Mike Geiger

Melissa Gostage, Michele Elisano, Wayne Plummer and Marc Gentry, the “retiring” vestry members were thanked for their service to the church and presented a bible as a remembrance of that service.

The appointment of a new leader for the Foundation was delayed until further notice.

Junior Warden’s Report was presented by Joe Neutzi. Highlights for the year included new air conditioning units in the choir room and the church; establishment of the Children’s Chapel; new PA system for the church; new faucets and door handles throughout the buildings due to parts availability becoming an issue. One item remaining to be accomplished is the fencing at the Family Life Center.

Treasurer’s Report was presented by Bob White. Church of Our Saviour always wants to be transparent in the budgets and expenses in all the areas of the church. 2018 was a good year in that we fell short 3.4% of our income goal and 1.7% below our pledge goal. Total expenses came in at a favorable variance of 4.5%. The resulting “bottom line” was deficit of $5,425 vs. a budgeted deficit of $17,170. The liquidity (cash) at the end of 2018 was $439,607. One of the “unwritten” goals is to maintain at least three months of reserves for expenses (net of restricted and designated funds) and at the end of 2018 we had 3.45 months of reserves using this methodology. The pie chart in the Annual Report Booklet was reviewed as to the areas where funds were expensed.

Fr. Joe requested that all present stand and sing the hymn on the back of the Annual Report Booklet – *Oh God, Our Help in Ages Past.*

Fr. Joe continued with the Rector’s Address. He began by saying the hymn reminded him that for nearly 140 years, generations have worshipped on this hallowed ground. The parish was born out of a group studying the Bible and who found in God’s word a mandate to reach out and care for those around them. Harriet Beecher Stowe and her friends were instrumental in the care and education of freed former slaves, the economic survival of the area during Reconstruction and in the preservation and care of Florida’s environment. And they did so because “their noses were regularly in God’s word.” This is Church of Our Saviour’s heritage – study and service.

He continued on by thanking the “retiring” vestry members and announcing the Senior Warden for 2019 is Theresa Meyers. A lot of internal transition occurred this past year…Bill Mecabe was hired as the Facilities Manager; consultants from Ministry Architects helped in reconstructing our youth group and reinvigorating the children’s ministry which resulted in the hiring of Bethany Dixon as our Youth Minister; and Elaine Allen was brought on as the Executive Administrative Assistant to the Rector. During this transition phase, each of other staff members pitched in and took on jobs there weren’t hired to do and did so with energy, willingness and excellence. Plus there were many, many other successes: annual attendance increased by approximately 10%; there were great Lenten and Easter seasons of worship (including the premier performance of Bob Moore’s cantata, *(O For a Thousand Tongues);* the summer programs were phenomenal; at least five new Bible studies and small groups were started; and we figured out a compelling way to offer invitations to our neighbors: the Food Truck events and the Live Nativity were are incredible successes. Fr. Joe thanked the congregation for the time, talent and finances to make all of these things happen. “This is your church. You are the empowered people of God. Wherever you are, you are the church, you are the face of the church, and the church’s mission is your mission.”

He continued with the exciting things being planned: Beginning February 10th, we’ll be adding a few instruments to the 5:30 worship service; alongside Created for a Purpose, a program for boys called Built for a Purpose will be added; we’ll be evaluating internal and external communication processes and for the time being Bethany Dixon will be serving as our Communications Coordinator until we hire someone into that position later in the year; we are continuing to encourage Small Group participation; and we’re planning another 4 or 5 Food Truck events and aiming for another Live Nativity!

Fr. Joe then talked about those being the things we do; but what kind of church are we going to be? A Strategic Planning Commission has been formed to find out from you what sorts of ministries are on your hearts? who do we need to reach? how will we be known in the community? what is the heart of the parish?

Rick Daber (currently the head of this group but Lenora Gregory will be taking the leadership role from here) further explained how the commission plans to engage the congregation in determining these things…surveys; discussion groups; will have numerous opportunities to contribute your thoughts and ideas.

Fr. Joe finished by saying Church of Our Saviour will continue to be vibrant and spirit filled; will continue to nourish those here; will be a lighthouse of the Gospel to Mandarin and beyond. There are 10,000 new homes being built in St. Johns County with hardly any churches! We need to pray that we become the church God dreams us to be; pray how we can each give to that dream; pray who to invite into our church’s story; pray for people in our neighborhoods and in our lives to come to know Jesus.

Fr. Joe ended with: “We were founded through Bible Study that led to Outreach that lead to transformed vibrant Christian lives. May it ever be so for Church of Our Saviour. *O God our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come.”*

Senior Warden’s Report was presented by Wayne Plummer. He reviewed the 2018 budget: $970,400 budget expenses vs. $926,450 actual budget expenses. 2019 budget has been approved at $1,016,400. He presented a bar chart with a breakdown of budget items and reviewed each expense area: buildings and grounds, clergy, program staff, support staff, music and worship programs and outreach to the community. He also had available a line item 2018 / 2019 budget document. (Both documents are available on the website.) There is a projected shortfall of $31,360 for the approved 2019 budget. Fr. Joe does not want to cut the budget and go backwards…we want to continue to grow the church. The vestry concurred with his position. Wayne concluded with the idea that if everyone could give just a little more…$5/week, $10/week, etc., we would be able to cover the projected shortfall. Pledge cards for an “additional amount” were on each table and all were encouraged to think and pray about what they could contribute.

Fr. Joe returned to the floor with the comments that the rise in the budget is due to “fixed” costs (such as insurance) and the rise is program costs. He stated that the budget is all up for discussion and encouraged each person to join in and invest in these programs.

The meeting was concluded with a closing prayer by Fr. Joe.

Respectfully submitted:

Elaine Allen, Executive Administrative

Assistant to the Rector

January 27, 2019