



Minutes of the 26th Annual Congregational Meeting, Oct. 28, 2007

The mission of this parish is to bear witness, through word and deed, to the ways the Holy Spirit/Comforter makes visible the sacred within the secular of our daily lives.

The annual meeting of the Church of the Holy Comforter was opened at 9:16 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 28, 2007, with a prayer by the Rev. Allen Spicer, associate rector. Senior Warden Denise Noll called the meeting to order.

Denise recognized those members who are continuing on the Vestry: Bob Ash, Charles Franz, Ann Gearhart, Al Johnson, Shirley Lindsey and Robin Vahle.

Janice Gordon-Barnes, the rector, recognized the officers, all of whom will serve again in 2008: Senior Warden Denise Noll; Junior Warden Susan Escobedo; co-junior warden Tom Simpson; and Registrar Edward Hewitt. They were affirmed by the parish.

Braxton Mitchell offered a resolution in honor of four members who are leaving the Vestry: Suzy Beck, Chelsea Manning, Nor Rysticken and Louis Yachimowicz. (Resolution below.) The resolution was approved by a voice vote.

Denise said the minutes of the 2006 annual meeting were approved by the Vestry at its November 2006 meeting.

Suzy Beck, representing the nominating committee, reported the names of three candidates for the three positions open. They are Sam Davis, Fran Kephart and Bill Pheil. Mac Manning, representing the youth of the parish, nominated Sarah Craig to be the youth member of the Vestry.

Denise recommended that all four candidates be accepted by acclamation. That was approved by voice vote.

Sarah Craig thanked the parish for its support of the Journey to Adulthood pilgrimages, those of the past and one planned for summer 2008. She reflected on her pilgrimage two years ago when the group bonded, their faith grew, they prayed and wrote journals.

Ed Hewitt, webmaster of the church website (holy-comforter.ang-md.org), reported on the changes since the website was revamped 14 months ago. A page dedicated to the Christian Responsibility Committee, highlighted by the mission we do and the opportunities to serve, was added this year. The Sunday sermons are also available. The number of "hits" (or individual visits) has grown from an average of almost 600 over the last six months to more than 1,300 in October.

Bob Ash, chair of the Long-Range Planning Committee and the Finance Committee, reported on the budget. He said the 2007 operating budget was \$342,000 and the capital budget was \$30,000, which will be slightly under.

For 2008, our operating budget is expected to be about \$359,000, a 5 percent increase, and the target capital budget is \$30,000.

The biggest capital project for next year will be replacing the roof, which is about 20 years old. The cost will be about \$80,000.

Bob said that 92 pledges have been received for next year for a total of \$220,000. There are 38 pledging units from this year that have not responded for 2008. Bob said that all Vestry members have made their pledges for next year.

In response to questions, Bob said that income from the collection plates is about \$5,500 each year, about \$20,000 from non-pledged sources, \$20,000 from the endowment fund and \$7,000 interest from bank accounts.

In recognizing all those who participate in activities in the parish, the rector asked all those to stand who volunteer their time to sing in the choir, to be chalcists, acolytes, lectors, ushers, to be on the flower or altar guilds, to work with the youth, and many other activities. Well more than half of those attending stood.

In the rector's report, Janice Gordon-Barnes thanked her staff – "the best ever" – Dean Kreiger, Allen Spicer, Herb Lodder, Kathleen Capcara, Harold Thompson (applause broke out at the mention of his name) and Jill Roach.

Janice recognized Martha Robinson, who has headed committees since 1989, when Janice arrived at Holy Comforter.

Janice asked everyone to bring someone to church over the next year.

This year, there were 13 weddings, 21 funerals and four baptisms.

The rector noted that we celebrate as a warm, loving parish, pointing out the surprise 70th birthday party for Allen Spicer. She recognized Howard Chaney, who is 90, and who made possible the purchase of two octaves of hand bells for our new choir. She thanked Kathy Shannahan, the director of the hand bell choir, which was making its debut this day.

The new sanctuary lighting will be completed in the next couple of weeks. These were a result of a bequest from Margo VerKruzen . . . The book and yard sales were a financial success, but the fellowship was the best part . . . New kneelers were placed in the church . . . Celebrating Holy Eucharist during Lent with services from throughout the Anglican Communion was very special for many people . . . There were Picnic & Prayer services on Wednesday evenings in the summer on the lawn . . . The Youth Services meant much to many . . . And the pictorial directory will be out soon . . . We have given out thousands of crosses ("Discovering Christ in Our Daily Lives").

But what about our spiritual needs, the rector asked. She asked us to think about L O V E.

Learn – grow spiritually and you are alive. Attend Bible Studies or the Inquirers' Class.

Outreach – what should we be doing. We are good at one-shot efforts, but what else?

Vestry – get to know them, support them and work together in Christ

Eyes and ears – See God revealed in your life.

Janice closed by reminding us that our parish is only as alive and vital as we are willing to make it.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15.

Respectfully submitted,
Edward Hewitt
Registrar

RESOLUTIONS

Whereas, Suzy Beck has made enormous contributions to the welfare of this Parish by providing wise counsel to the Vestry during its deliberations as well as serving as acolyte, chaliceist and 8:00 opener, being a wise mentor to our youth, all in addition to being on the altar and flower guilds and a member of several sub-committees, . . . and

Whereas, Chelsea Manning, the eldest of five children, a member of this Church since her early years, and as the “youth member” of this Vestry has set an example by progressing through the entire Rite 13 program and has otherwise been a staunch advocate for the young people of the Holy Comforter family by her dedication to strengthen our youth programs, . . . and

Whereas, language teacher and Bible student Nor Rysticken, has served on several Vestry sub-committees in addition to supporting Holy Comforter’s Wednesday evening programs, being Queen of the local branch of the Red Hatters, and teaching one of our youth classes, . . . and

Whereas, faithful blood donor Louis Yachimowicz, married at Holy Comforter and now father of two, frequently serves as acolyte and chaliceist at our 8:00 services in addition to teaching in the Sunday School as well providing sound advice to the Vestry during its deliberations, . . . and

Whereas, William Boden a long time member of this Parish who has, over the years, faithfully served variously as a member of the Vestry and Senior Warden among other offices including, but not limited to, Chairman of the 1986 Commitment to Renewal campaign and head of the steering committee of the Toward the Year 2000 initiative and has most recently served us as

Treasurer of this Parish and as such has competently managed the budget, crunched numbers, and otherwise made things come out even, . . .

Be it now therefore RESOLVED ;

that, as Suzy Beck, Chelsea Manning, Nor Rysticken and Louis Yachimowicz end their service on our Vestry and as Bill Boden concludes his service as Treasurer, the members of this Congregation express to them our profound gratitude for their effective, selfless, and distinguished contributions to this Parish; . . . and

Be it further RESOLVED

that this Resolution be spread upon the records of the Church of the Holy Comforter and that a copy be given to each of them.

For the Congregation:

Janice E. Gordon-Barnes+

Rector

Braxton D. Mitchell.

Scribe