

All Saints Episcopal Church – Hilton Head, S.C.

Vestry Meeting Minutes

April 29, 2025

Present: Rev. Denise Trogdon, Rev. Katie Presley, Charlie Forbes, John Gilbert, Anita Hill, Becky Forbes, Howard Coonley, Dana Duncan, Judy Cote, Nancy Tillinghast, Bryce Edwards, Cristina Giroux, Ron Niclas, Irene Pedersen, Joyce Emmett, Bobbie Helbig

1. Senior Warden Charlie Forbes called the meeting to order at 7:01pm via ZOOM.
2. The Rev. Denise Trogdon then lead the group with a reflective opening prayer.
3. The Vestry Retreat Minutes from March 25 ***were moved approved by Nancy Tillinghast, seconded by Irene Pedersen, and unanimously passed by the Vestry members.***
4. Rev. Katie Presley then lead a book discussion on Chapter 3 of “**The Book of Forgiving.**” Various, reflective responses commenting on restorative rather than retributive justice were shared by individual Vestry members.

5. Several Discussion Topics Followed:

A. Review of Progress Addressing Three 2025 Goals (*established at February Retreat*)

I. Develop an Infrastructure Strategy upon which to base a Capital Campaign

- Charlie indicated that Dana Duncan is working on a second draft of an inventory that lists the church property’s equipment needs. After gathering more information on individual areas, it will likely be ready next month.

II. New Family Engagement Strategies

- Denise shared that Organist Molly Nichols has had conversations with parents about potential future All Saints music programs that could involve their children. This could include a children’s choir & practice sessions.
- Katie said, “We are also thinking about possibly having something offered for parents simultaneously (a program? socializing?); this could occur when the children are occupied with their music.”
- Denise suggested that perhaps the launch needed to occur in late Aug/early September so parents could get the events locked into their calendars on time.
- Bobbie Helbig then inquired whether the children could also be involved in the Sunday service, not only by singing, but also by helping to greet, usher, &/or pull the wagon. In terms of older children, Denise suggested that they could be encouraged to serve as acolytes during the service after some training or even assist Jessie.
- When Charlie suggested the importance of a committee implementing these ideas, Bobbie Helbig agreed to help out; last month, Irene Pedersen also volunteered to assist with a Family Engagement committee.

III. Expanding Volunteerism and Participation in Church Ministries

- Charlie thought it would be good to follow through with a Ministry Fair and possible BBQ or Potluck supper for the Fall. Last month Judy Cote and John said they would help on a committee to organize this.
- Nancy noted that there were sometimes leadership voids in key ministries and the church needed a mechanism or model to encourage people to step up.
- Dana suggested the possibility of term limits to help prevent burn-out.
- Denise then offered a three year commitment model which was used in her previous church. Using this framework, a committee member would be an intern the first year, a chair or leader in the second year, and then an emeritus consultant in the third year.
- If this mechanism is to be tried, Denise said we need to determine the ministry with which to start so that it could serve as an example.
- Dana suggested that the Stewardship Ministry might be a good place to begin.
- Ron Niclas noted that Finance now works loosely using this same structure.

B. Sandalwood Community Food Pantry

Charlie then reviewed key points of a letter addressed to all Vestry members from the Sandalwood Food Pantry's founder, the Rev. Nannette Pierson. It described their likely eviction from Queen Chapel AME church unless they can produce a monthly rent of \$2500, instead of \$750. Though the town of Hilton Head has stepped up to provide Sandalwood with a 50 year lease to erect a Resilient Pantry that would provide not only food, but clothing, basic needs, and hurricane shelter, it will take 12-18 months for permit approvals and construction.

- Charlie and John indicated that All Saints just does not have the space needed to meet all their requirements, some of which include electric plugs and space for commercial grade appliances. However, we might be able to help out with temporary storage of some non-perishables.
- Several offered on campus location suggestions, including the outdoor shed for cleaning supplies and paper products. Also, there is some space in a 2nd floor room or even the second conference room.
- Perhaps using this offer and another from the Presbyterian Church might help Nannette to better negotiate with the new pastor if they need some of the space.
- Bryce said he would be glad to discuss her situation privately with a government representative (Tom Boxley) whom he knows well, but not as an ASEC representative. Perhaps, the town could persuade the Chapel's board or pastor to give Sandalwood more time while the facility is being built. John suggested that Nannette needed to come to view our spaces being offered.

- Others discussed how secure (or not) the shed was for storage.
- Charlie then moved that:
“The Rev. Nannette Pierson should be offered an invitation to visit All Saints and tour our facility in terms of Sandalwood using some area(s) available for temporary storage for 12-18 months. Nancy and John affirmed this motion, and it was unanimously passed by Vestry members.”

C. Summer Services

Because of our limited personnel resources and reduced overall summer attendance, it was suggested last month that All Saints might consider combining Sunday’s 8:30 and 10:15 am services between Memorial and Labor Day at 9:30 am. Vestry members were to poll the congregation for feedback about this idea.

- Denise said she very much appreciated the intent of making things easier for the clergy with this suggestion for change. However, she has received a lot of negative feedback from the 8:30am attendees about it. They cited a wide variety of reasons to leave things as they are. Since this service’s attendance has slowly increased over time, the risk of losing attendance by combining services is very real, and she hates to risk this.
- A lengthy discussion then ensued, with several Vestry members reporting the feedback they received from parishioners when they inquired about combining services. Overall, parishioner input was very negative about any temporary summer change. With such a clear preference to leave services as they stand, Vestry members and Charlie generally concurred that we should respect the wishes of the congregation, neither changing nor combining Sunday Services.

D. Personnel Matters

Katie then addressed Vestry members to inform them of a major career change that she has been discerning over these last 6 months. After much prayerful consideration, she feels she has been called to full time army chaplaincy: “It has become more and more clear to me that this is an area where God wants me to be; it is a world where I thrive as a person.” She said that her application will be reviewed, and a determination likely will be made by the end of June, with orders to follow if there is approval. It will be some time in August when she “will say goodbye to All Saints.”

- Several members then praised Katie and expressed appreciation for all the work she has done for the parish, saying they will miss her presence.
- Noting the expressions of concern on some members faces, Denise said that she has talked to the Bishop about a possible plan for her replacement. The

Bishop offered a candidate of about the same age who is now in a Charleston church. He will be travelling to All Saints tomorrow to talk to the personnel committee. Then, on May 1 at 11 am he is offering a morning prayer service and sermon followed by a question and answer period within All Saints church. Denise urged vestry members who are free of other commitments to please attend that morning.

- She also noted that the Bishop is willing to have the diocese pay for any salary overlap with Katie if he is hired to begin in the month of June.

6. Reports:

There were no additional comments made on any of the submitted liaison reports, having been distributed and read by Vestry members before the meeting.

7. The next meeting will be held on May 27. Charlie noted that Bryce Edwards and his wife Mary Helen have graciously offered to host the next Vestry meeting at their home in Sea Pines, with dinner and fellowship to precede the business portion of the meeting. Details will follow.
8. Katie reminded everyone that Chapter 4 of the Tutus' **"Book Of Forgiving"** is to be read for next month's discussion. She then offered a prayer to close the meeting.
9. Charlie adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita L. Hill

All Saints Vestry Chief Clerk

