

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting
Via Zoom Videoconference
Tuesday, September 21, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Present

Rev. Dr. Bill Doggett, *Interim Rector*
Rev. Canon Allisyn Thomas, *Associate Rector*
Costa Dillon, *Senior Warden*
Susan McCormick-Davis, *Junior Warden*
Polly Getz-Enos, *Chancellor*
J.D. Cowart, *Vice Chancellor*
Amy Adome, *Treasurer*
Akiko Tamano, *Clerk*

Bill Angus
Jerry Blanton
Shinobu Horne
Nancy Peterson
Margie Polishuk
Lauren Sleeper
Will Smith

Demetreus Gregg, *Congregational
Development Director*
Jim Macemon
Mike Fuqua

Excused/Absent

Terry McCune, *Assistant Treasurer*
Larry Burgess
Mark Davis

1. Gather Together

The vestry checked in. Nancy Peterson opened with a prayer.

2. Consent Agenda

Costa Dillon

The consent agenda included the following items:

- (a) Approve the September Treasurer's Report.
- (b) Approve the August financial reports.
- (c) Approve the August 17, 2021, vestry meeting minutes.
- (d) Approve a clergy housing allowance for Bill Doggett of \$13,500 for 2021 and \$36,000 for 2022.
- (e) Approve increasing the amount of the interim rector's salary allocated in the 2021 budget by \$5,000 over the amount previously approved.
- (f) Approve sending \$1,000 in outreach donations to each of the following organizations: North County LGBTQ, Poway Senior Center (now Friends of Poway Seniors), and Rancho Bernardo Senior Center.

- (g) Approve monthly electronic bank payments to the following vendors: Fidelity, HealthEquity, Paychex, SDG&E, Shelby, TSYS, and Union Bank.
- (h) Approve a \$4,000 increase in Minor Repairs and Maintenance in the revised 2021 budget.

A discrepancy was pointed out between the amount of total income for Fund 5 listed on the Treasurer's Report and the total income listed on the August Fund 5 financial report. A motion was made to remove the Treasurer's Report and August Fund 5 financial report from the consent agenda to correct an administrative error (see section 6.1).

A motion was made to approve the remaining items on the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion was made to have the finance committee review the reports and make necessary corrections. Bill Angus clarified that the total income listed on the Fund 5 report (\$4,801,689) is correct, and the wrong number was included in the Treasurer's Report. The motion was then amended as follows: To correct the Treasurer's Report to indicate total income for Fund 5 of \$4,801,689 and to approve the corrected report and Fund 5 report (see section 6.2).

3. Financial Items

3.1 Stewardship Proposal:

Demetreus Gregg

Extension of Building Fund Pledges

In response to questions and concerns raised at the August vestry meeting regarding a proposal to ask a curated list of families to extend their Building Fund pledges for two years and to redirect those funds to the General Fund, Demetreus Gregg clarified the following:

- To stabilize the operating budget, 7–10 families are being asked to consider extending their current Building Fund pledges. Since St. Bart's is at least three years away from any new construction, pledges would be paid in their entirety at a later date. In the interim, payments would be directed toward the General Fund to help with operating expenses. There would be no net loss to the Building Fund, as it will be made whole at the end of the period.
- Regarding the concern about setting a precedent, St. Bart's is currently in a unique position to be able to make this request. The opportunity will not arise again, as any future Building Fund donations will be needed to fund construction of the community center.
- This will give St. Bart's two years to invest in growth and balance/stabilize the operating budget. The church will gain some much-needed breathing room and enable it to concentrate on investing in growth and ministry development.
- The next capital campaign will be a significant challenge. To build donor confidence, St. Bart's will need to be able to demonstrate that it is a good financial steward by ensuring the General Fund is in good order.

The vestry discussed this proposal; the main comments are summarized below.

- Fr. Bill asked whether families have been approached and how they have responded. Demetreus indicated that he has talked to the families, who have been open to and comfortable with the idea; two families have already agreed to it.
- Potential rector candidates will want to know that St. Bart's is on a solid operational footing.
- Getting the church's finances in order will help the parish grow over the next two years, making it easier to raise additional money for the Building Fund. In addition, money for construction cannot be borrowed unless St. Bart's can show the ability to pay the interest.
- In response to a concern about losing momentum and excitement about the new construction, Demetreus indicated that fundraising for the Building Fund is not stopping but is entering a quiet phase before the next campaign. He believes that celebration of phase 2 completion and consistent reinforcement of the goal of building a community center will ensure the excitement persists over the next 1–3 years.
- A parishioner recently provided feedback that St. Bart's appears to be dying. Although this is not the case and the parish continues to move forward, to counter that impression, more people need to be encouraged to get involved.

While vestry approval is not required for this proposal, it was agreed that there should be an official record that the church leadership supports the decision.

A motion was made to authorize the giving-ministry team to grant, over a limited period of time, deferrals of payments on Building Fund pledges by select pledging households so that, during the deferral period, the households can contribute their deferred payments to the General Fund in addition to their usual General Fund pledges (see section 6.3).

The vestry discussed the motion and clarified that Demetreus will be working with Erin Sacco-Pineda to ensure monitoring of a receivable schedule, which will be recorded in the church's database, to ensure moneys are directed to the correct funds at the appropriate times.

3.2 Security Grant Implementation Contracts

Jim Macemon

Jim Macemon updated the vestry on the status of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) grant awarded to St. Bart's (see grant review documents available in Boardable). The main points were as follows:

- St. Bart's applied for a \$100,000 grant in May 2019 and received the award announcement in September 2019.
- There was a delay in obtaining approval from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) due to some government entities recognizing the church by its legal name and others recognizing it by its DBA. The issue was finally resolved in April 2021.

- The final date to request funding reimbursement is May 31, 2022. There are two options for funding the project:
 - Use St. Bart's funds to complete the project, then request reimbursement.
 - Request that funds be advanced so St. Bart's does not have to spend out of pocket. Processing could take two months or longer, running the risk that the money would not be available by Q4 2021.

A combination approach could also be taken (i.e., ask for the advance but move forward in the meantime with St. Bart's funds). The finance committee can recommend the best course of action.

- Vulnerabilities have been identified and prioritized by criticality (bolded items are most critical):
 - **Lack of emergency operations plans with a robust training and exercise program**
 - **Lack of integrated intrusion detection, lighting, security cameras, and mass communications systems**
 - **Lack of adequate access control and key control policies and procedures**
 - **Lack of protection from vehicle ramming events**
 - Lack of adequate standoff distance
 - Large glass windows and doors throughout the facility
 - Lack of a defined perimeter with a buffer zone around the entire facility

- The breakdown of grant funding requested is as follows:

Develop security and emergency action plans	\$20,000
Alarm system and sensors (intercom system)	\$12,000
Lighting (public area lighting)	\$13,000
Video assessment system (cameras)	\$20,000
Physical access control (card key door access)	\$34,000
Barrier (vehicle access)	\$1,000
<i>Total grant request</i>	\$100,000

- A grant execution strategy has been established (see document in Boardable for details and maps showing locations where work is to be performed).
- Quotes were requested from five San Diego vendors, three of which submitted proposals. San Diego Door Control also provided an update to its 2019 quote for door hardware installation.
- The recommendation is for the vestry to approve the following:
 - Gotuwired quote/contract (lowest quote at \$78,344)
 - San Diego Door Control quote/contract
 - Balance of \$80,000 budget as contingency (\$1,656)

Gotuwired has a history of successfully executing similar contracts, and the equipment being recommended is well known and commercial industry standard. Monthly fees would also be minimized (the only operating budget monthly fee is for the door access system at \$160 per month for 8 doors [Kantech Cloud]).

The total due at signing would be \$41,587.66, with \$36,756.12 due upon completion.

The vestry discussed this recommendation and raised the following points:

- This is a time-sensitive decision, as prices will go up as of October 1.
- If St. Bart's pays up front for the project, Building Fund money currently sitting in a low-interest bank account could possibly be borrowed. Another option would be to borrow money from the Endowment Fund. This would need to be discussed with Erin Sacco-Pineda, Amy Adome, and Terry McCune.
- A concern was raised about the possibility of spending the money up front and not having the job completed in time to get reimbursed. Jim stated that he believes the risk of that happening with this particular vendor, with which he has personal experience, is very low. He also indicated that the goal is to have the project completed by the end of 2021 and work out any issues before the end of January 2022. That would allow until April 2022 to ensure all the work meets the government's requirements.

A motion was made to authorize Jim Macemon and Mark Davis to act as agents on behalf of the parish corporation in engaging with governmental entities and outside vendors in execution of the 2019 NSGP-funded grant (see section 6.4).

A motion was made to authorize the officers of the parish to execute necessary contracts and pay vendors with monies borrowed from Vestry reserves in executing the 2019 NSGP-funded grant (see section 6.5).

3.3 **Landscape Cleanup**

Will Smith

Will Smith reported that the church has received feedback from parishioners that the landscaping is looking neglected. Quotes were requested from two vendors for regular routine maintenance and initial maintenance (see LandCare and LandscapesUSA bid documents available in Boardable). It was decided that maintenance is too expensive to consider at the present, but the vestry is being asked to approve \$5,300 for an initial cleanup and mulching. Going forward, the landscaping would be maintained by St. Bart's staff.

The vestry discussed this request; the main points are summarized below.

- The vestry agreed that the campus is in poor condition, but there was some difference of opinion about which was more noticeable to visitors: the condition of the grounds or the condition of the campus's physical infrastructure. (Cosmetic fixes such as repairing chipped plaster and repainting the railings and cross are also needed.)
- There was a concern that only half the grounds are being addressed in the cleanup. Will indicated that the balance of the landscaping will be covered as part of the phase 2 construction.

- Some vestry members expressed concern that this is a lot of money to spend for the amount of work proposed, given that the church's current financial position is not strong. Others felt it would be a good use of funds to do a one-time cleanup. Will noted that \$2,100 of the cost is for mulching, with the remaining \$3,200 for cleanup and hauling away debris.
- The option of having a church cleanup day in October (to replace the canceled gala) was put forward. It was pointed out that a volunteer would need to spearhead the effort, which would involve substantial work (procuring equipment, hauling off debris, etc.).
- Susan reported that she spoke to Mike Jewett; he has asked for a little grace regarding the work normally required to maintain the property, as he needs some time to get things back up and running. He feels this would be a good opportunity for a community project that would encourage parishioners to take pride in the grounds.
- Before the pandemic, St. Bart's had a green thumb ministry. This is an outdoor activity and could be safely resurrected. However, the parishioners who normally help maintain the grounds have not been helping because of the pandemic, so new volunteers would need to be recruited.
- The timing of the cleanup should coincide with the completion of phase 2 construction. Hiring a landscaping company will ensure timely completion of the work.
- Doing a one-time cleanup would allow time to revitalize the green thumb ministry and establish a long-term plan to maintain the campus; parishioners could be invited to engage in environmental stewardship of the campus on a semiannual or quarterly basis.
- Fr. Bill stated that, as a newcomer, he had noticed that the campus needs maintenance. He suggested that starting with a one-time cleanup would be kinder to parishioners and that, since there have been a number of complaints from the congregation about the landscaping, it would be best to address it in one way or another soon.

A motion was made to approve hiring LandCare for a one-time landscaping cleanup of the campus including mulching at a cost of \$5,300 (see section 6.6).

The vestry discussed the motion, with members reiterating varying views regarding whether to allocate funds for landscaping now or to hold off and look into alternatives for cleanup. It was also emphasized that a long-term maintenance plan needs to be developed so professional cleanup services are not needed repeatedly.

3.4 **Participation in State Unemployment and Disability Insurance Programs**

Susan McCormick-Davis

Bill Angus explained that lay employees of St. Bart's are not currently eligible for unemployment or disability benefits (clergy are protected under their own disability program and contracts), since churches are not required to pay into these programs. If St. Bart's decides to offer employees these benefits, the employees must vote on whether to participate, since they will have to contribute a small amount out of their own pay. Opting to participate would put them on an equal footing with other employees in California.

Not many employees will be affected, and the expense will be small for St. Bart's (roughly \$1,000 per year). Employees would pay 1% of their gross income and would need to contribute for an entire quarter before being eligible to make a claim.

It was unclear whether the decision to participate in these programs would require a majority vote or whether each employee could opt in individually.

The vestry determined that more information is needed before a vote can be taken. Susan indicated that she would ask the finance committee for more details for discussion and vote at the next vestry meeting, and Bill suggested having Erin Sacco-Pineda prepare a handout or presentation. J.D. Cowart also recommended that one of the chancellors be consulted ahead of time to craft appropriate language for the motion.

4. Discussion Items

4.1 Staffing Issues

Susan McCormick-Davis

(a) **Preschool Director**

Susan McCormick-Davis announced that a letter of acceptance has been received from a highly regarded preschool director. The new director will start on October 1, 2021.

(b) **Bookkeeper**

Susan reported that St. Bart's has been contracting with Erin Sacco-Pineda's company for bookkeeping services, which has proven to be very efficient. The contractor is on site one day per week.

(c) **Parish Administrator**

Fr. Bill indicated that three volunteers, each of whom is very familiar with certain aspects of the parish administrator's responsibilities, are filling in temporarily. This will allow time to ensure the job description is accurate and to decide whether to hire a permanent parish administrator or hire someone on an interim basis until the new rector arrives. He would like to have discussions right away regarding any proposed changes to the organizational chart, since those decisions will affect how the parish administrator role will be handled in the future.

4.2 Vaccination Policy

Costa Dillon

Costa Dillon announced that the diocese has implemented a new COVID-19 policy that requires all diocesan staff to be vaccinated (see document titled "COVID 19 Vestry Discussion 21Sep v1.pptx.pdf" available in Boardable). Bishop Susan Brown Snook has suggested that parishes consider adopting or adapting similar policies.

The diocesan policy has the following requirements:

- Employees must receive their first shot by September 18, 2021, and their second shot by October 9, 2021.
- No unvaccinated employees can be involved in leading worship, music, or children's ministries or attend in-person diocesan events.

- Employees have the option to seek a medical exemption under the Americans with Disabilities Act. No religious exemption will be offered.

The vestry discussed whether to institute a vaccination policy for the parish. The main points are summarized below.

- If St. Bart's adopts the vaccination policy, appropriate deadlines for first and second shots would be substituted.
- A key component of the policy would be to have a staff member responsible for documenting employees' vaccination status.
- Several concerns regarding the diocesan policy were raised:
 - The policy does not take natural immunity into consideration.
 - The policy does not allow for a weekly COVID test in lieu of vaccination.
 - Requiring proof of vaccination shows a lack of trust and is demeaning.
- Some confusion arose as to whether the diocesan policy applies to parishioners attending in-person diocesan events, as well as employees. It was clarified that the policy applies to employees only.
- Mike Fuqua's recommendation as the COVID-19 coordinator was requested. He stated that he would follow the diocesan standard, but it is ultimately the vestry's decision.

A motion was made to form a subcommittee to consider all the alternatives for a vaccination policy but did not pass (see section 6.7).

It was suggested that St. Bart's adopt the diocesan policies as written, with the exception of the vaccination dates. The policy would not apply to parishioners attending parish events, as administration would be difficult.

A motion was made to adopt the following vaccination policy for St. Bart's (see section 6.8):

- Employees who are members of the staff of St. Bart's will be required to be fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus and to present proof of vaccination to the person responsible for documenting vaccination status.
- If an employee is not able to be vaccinated for medical reasons, they may apply for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities act.
 - If an undue hardship would result from accommodating an unvaccinated employee to protect the safety of others, the terms of employment may be modified, up to and including termination.
 - While the employer works through the accommodation process, employees requesting accommodations will be expected to wear a KN95 or N95 mask at all times in the office or in work-related meetings, and may be asked to work remotely.
- No unvaccinated employee shall lead worship, music, or children's ministries.

In further discussion, the issue of a window of time for new employees to comply with the vaccination policy was raised. It was proposed that this would be an administrative function that the rector could handle.

After some consideration of deadlines for existing employees to comply, it was agreed that employees must be fully vaccinated by December 1; there is no need to stipulate a deadline to receive the first shot.

4.3 **Proposed Gala/Outreach Funding**

Costa Dillon

Costa noted that when the gala was postponed, some vestry members contacted him with the following concerns:

- Hosting an expensive event might exclude some people.
- Rather than hosting a one-time event, St. Bart's should focus on finding a sustainable means of supporting outreach.

He added that some events, like the gala, are planned and operated by the staff. More clarification regarding staff versus vestry responsibilities will be provided at a later date.

Demetreus Gregg also clarified the following:

- The decision to postpone the gala was made in consultation with the gala committee, Mike Fuqua (the COVID-19 coordinator), and Canon Allisyn (the priest-in-charge at the time). The Country Club of Rancho Bernardo is primarily indoors, and St. Bart's could not in good conscience take the risk of possibly exposing congregants to COVID-19 infection.
- The gala is meant to be an annual event to supply consistent revenue to support outreach activities.
- St. Bart's emphasis is on community, and there will never be an event where someone is not welcomed because they cannot afford it. Sponsorships have been structured for the gala partly to underwrite tickets for people experiencing economic hardship.

Shinobu Horne suggested designating October as outreach month. Representatives from outreach partners could be asked to attend St. Bart's services and explain how the funds contributed by St. Bart's will be used. Donations received that week could be earmarked for that organization. Demetreus indicated that he would like to further discuss this idea with Shinobu.

Susan requested that the vestry talk to Demetreus if they have any other ideas for outreach.

4.4 **Vestry Vacancies**

Costa Dillon

Costa announced that Rachel Blankenship and Lauren Sleeper have resigned from the vestry and thanked them for their service. Their terms expire in 2023 and 2024, respectively. With their resignations, the vestry is down to 11 members, which is the minimum number allowable.

The normal method for filling vestry vacancies is for the vestry to vote on replacements recommended by the rector. Canon Allisyn has suggested several people who might be interested in serving on the vestry. However, since Bill Angus was recently appointed to fill a vacant seat, appointing two additional people would result in one-quarter of the vestry being appointed without election.

Costa proposed that the vestry defer filling the vacancies until the annual meeting in January, when the congregation can vote on the vestry slate. The vestry agreed that it would be a good idea to wait to fill the seats. Costa and Fr. Bill will discuss this further, as it is ultimately the interim rector's decision.

Additional discussion took place regarding the difficulty of getting people to serve on the vestry and the need to generate interest from a more diverse group. This will likely require that current vestry members personally invite parishioners to consider being on the vestry.

Demetreus reported that Canon Allisyn will be teaching a fall course about the roles and responsibilities of the vestry, which may help to increase interest.

5. New Business

5.1 Update of Bylaws

Costa Dillon

The St. Bart's bylaws are now five years old and are due for review. Any updates must be approved by the congregation at the annual meeting in January. Costa requested three or four volunteers to serve on a committee to review the bylaws. It was determined that the committee will be made up of the following people:

Bill Angus
J.D. Cowart
Costa Dillon
Polly Getz-Enos
Margie Polishuk

6. Action Items

6.1 **MOTION: To remove the Treasurer's Report and August Fund 5 financial report from the consent agenda to correct an administrative error.**

The motion was made and passed unanimously. (See section 2 for discussion.)

6.2 **MOTION: To correct the Treasurer's Report to indicate total income for Fund 5 of \$4,801,689 and to approve the corrected Treasurer's Report and the August Fund 5 financial report.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. (See section 2 for discussion.)

6.3 **MOTION: To authorize the giving-ministry team to grant, over a limited period of time, deferrals of payments on Building Fund pledges by select pledging households so that, during the deferral period, the households can contribute their deferred payments to the General Fund in addition to their usual General Fund pledges.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. (See section 3.1 for discussion.)

- 6.4 **MOTION: To authorize Jim Macemon and Mark Davis to act as agents on behalf of the parish corporation in engaging with governmental entities and outside vendors in execution of the 2019 NSGP-funded grant.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. (See section 3.2 for discussion.)

- 6.5 **MOTION: To authorize the officers of the parish to execute necessary contracts and pay vendors with monies borrowed from Vestry reserves in executing the 2019 NSGP-funded grant.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. (See section 3.2 for discussion.)

- 6.6 **MOTION: To approve hiring LandCare for a one-time landscaping cleanup of the campus including mulching at a cost of \$5,300.**

The motion passed with 5 votes in favor, 4 votes against, and 1 abstention. (See section 3.3 for discussion.)

- 6.7 **MOTION: To form a subcommittee to investigate all alternatives for a vaccination policy.**

The motion was not seconded; the motion failed. (See section 4.2 for discussion.)

- 6.8 **MOTION: to adopt the following vaccination policy for St. Bart's:**

- **Employees who are members of the staff of St. Bart's will be required to be fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus and to present proof of vaccination to the person responsible for documenting vaccination status.**
- **If an employee is not able to be vaccinated for medical reasons, they may apply for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities act.**
 - **If an undue hardship would result from accommodating an unvaccinated employee to protect the safety of others, the terms of employment may be modified, up to and including termination.**
 - **While the employer works through the accommodation process, employees requesting accommodations will be expected to wear a KN95 or N95 mask at all times in the office or in work-related meetings, and may be asked to work remotely.**
- **No unvaccinated employee shall lead worship, music, or children's ministries.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed with 7 votes in favor, 1 vote against, and 2 abstentions. (See section 4.2 for discussion.)

7. Announcements

7.1 Upcoming Events

Canon Allisyn

- (a) “All You Need Is Love” Gala / Outreach Fundraiser: POSTPONED TO 2022
- (b) Stewardship Season: September
- (d) Be the Change Festival: October 2
- (c) Diocesan Convention (CHANGED TO VIRTUAL): November 12–13
- (d) Bishop Curry Visit: POSTPONED TO 2022
- (e) Bishop Susan Brown Snook Visitation: April 3, 2022

8. Closing Prayer

Nancy Peterson closed with a prayer.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

10. Future Meetings/Events/Key Dates

October 2	Be the Change Festival
October 19	Vestry meeting
November 12–13	Diocesan convention (virtual)
November 16	Vestry meeting
April 3, 2022	Bishop Susan Brown Snook Visitation

Respectfully submitted,

Akiko Tamano
Vestry Clerk