

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting
Via Zoom Videoconference
Tuesday, July 20, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Present

Rev. Canon Allisyn Thomas, *Associate Rector*
Costa Dillon, *Senior Warden*
Polly Getz-Enos, *Chancellor*
Amy Adome, *Treasurer* (left 6:22 p.m.)
Akiko Tamano, *Clerk*
Jerry Blanton
Larry Burgess
Mark Davis
Shinobu Horne
Nancy Peterson
Margie Polishuk
Lauren Sleeper (joined 7 p.m.)
Will Smith
Demetreus Gregg (joined 6:30 p.m., left
7:15 p.m.)

Excused/Absent

Susan McCormick-Davis, *Junior Warden*
J.D. Cowart, *Vice Chancellor*
Bill Angus, *Assistant Treasurer*
Terry McCune, *Assistant Treasurer*
Rachel Blankenship
Jim Oakes

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 July Treasurer's Report.
- (b) Approve the June financial reports.
- (c) Approve the June 15, 2021, vestry meeting minutes.
- (d) Approve the June 10, 2021, special vestry meeting minutes.
- (e) Approve the finance committee recommendation to get additional bids for the removal of the dead eucalyptus tree and have the tree removed at a cost not to exceed \$2,900.
- (f) Approve the finance committee recommendation that the vestry authorize using funds from phase 3 of the Building Fund to pay for the cost of removing the dead eucalyptus tree.
- (g) Affirm the hiring of and funding for the Rev. Cathey Dowdle.

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

3. Finance Update

Amy Adome

Amy Adome provided the following finance updates:

- As pledges were a little lower than forecast for June and are anticipated to be lower for the rest of the year, and expenses are running higher than income, a revised budget will need to be created for the remainder of 2021 and early 2022. Amy is working with Terry McCune and the finance committee to provide a revised budget to the vestry at next month's meeting.
- Funds for Haiti were disbursed in the last week of July. Although funds are usually sent in the first week of July and December, the finance committee and clergy have advised that it is not safe to send the money right now due to political instability in the country. They have recommended holding off until the situation is more stable.
- Funds approved by the vestry for scholarships have been disbursed.
- Approximately \$83,000 is available to support minor outreach partners through the end of the year. Larry Burgess will work with Demetreus Gregg to identify more partners; recommendations will be presented at the next vestry meeting.
- Canon Allisyn will transfer money from the rector's funds to shore up the theological school reserve.
- Vestry approval is needed for funds to remove a tree that has died. (This was approved as part of the consent agenda.) St. Bart's is currently seeking a less costly bid. Jerry Blanton and Polly Getz-Enos indicated that they have used tree removal services in the past and will forward contact information to Mark Davis.

In response to a question from the vestry regarding why pledges are down, Amy indicated that historically pledging has tended to decrease during summer months, and this is no cause for concern. However, some families' pledge amounts are not as high as in the past, so Demetreus has opted to be conservative in his forecast for the rest of the year. It is anticipated that St. Bart's may be approximately \$100,000 short compared to last year.

4. Group Discussion

4.1 Interim Rector Search

Costa Dillon

Costa updated the vestry on the interim rector search, as follows:

- An "Interim Rector Criteria" document has been posted on Boardable.
- Interviews have been scheduled this month with the three candidates recommended by Bishop Susan Brown Snook: the Rev. Bill Doggett, Pastor Mark Galbraith, and the Rev. Canon Andrea McMillin.
- Once a selection has been made, a special vestry meeting will be scheduled to discuss and vote on the selection. The vestry's decision to hire an interim rector does not require the bishop's approval.
- The background check will take up to six weeks.

In response to vestry questions, Costa and Canon Allisyn clarified the following:

- All candidates are from out of town, so per diem will be required. Costa indicated that he still needs to obtain the pay scale from the bishop, but the pay for an interim rector is equivalent to that of a rector.

- The Rev. Cathey Dowdle has recently moved to Scripps Ranch. After the interim rector arrives, she will probably stay on at St. Bart's as a parishioner but will not be paid.
- The interim rector's job is to intentionally help the congregation prepare for the next rector.
- There are rules that prohibit the interim rector from becoming the permanent rector, or the rehiring of a previous rector.

Costa also advised that, as part of the discernment process, the congregation will be surveyed and a profile developed in 2022. The expected time frame for hiring a permanent rector is early 2023.

4.2 Congregational Development Director Update Demetreus Gregg

(a) Service Times Survey

Demetreus Gregg reported on the results of the worship times survey (results are available in Boardable). There were 145 respondents, and responses were as follows:

- **Which service do you regularly attend?**

Choral Eucharist	48%
ReGeneration	35%
Celtic Evening Prayer	17%

- **Primary reason for attending**

The service time was the primary reason for attending the Celtic and ReGeneration services. For the Choral Eucharist, the type of worship/music was the primary reason.

	<i>Time</i>	<i>Worship/music</i>
Celtic Evening Prayer	67%	33%
ReGeneration	73%	27%
Choral Eucharist	19%	81%

- **Preferred service**

Choral Eucharist	61%
ReGeneration	26%
Celtic Evening Prayer	13%

- **Worship time preference**

Celtic Evening Prayer:

Happy with current times	58%
Earlier start time	21%
No opinion	21%
Later start time	0%

ReGeneration:

Happy with current times	50%
Earlier start time	29%
Later start time	13%
No opinion	8%

Choral Eucharist:

Earlier start time	66%
Happy with current times	21%
No opinion	7%
Later start time	6%

Also included in the survey results report are additional comments with a number of good suggestions for implementing different service times.

Demetreus advised that the staff is considering various changes to worship times that will best serve the community. This will affect a substantial amount of parish programming (forums, lectors, altar guild, Sunday school, etc.).

There has been discussion regarding switching the ReGeneration and Choral Eucharist service times (i.e., ReGeneration at 11 a.m. and Choral Eucharist at 9 a.m.). The ReGeneration service was envisioned as attracting families but thus far has not been successful in fulfilling that vision. The 11 a.m. time slot might fit better for families who have trouble getting children out of the house early in the morning. However, no definitive decision has been made yet.

The new worship service times will be finalized by August 1 and communicated to the parish. New times will go into effect on September 5.

Costa reminded the vestry that service times are decided exclusively by the priest.

The vestry discussed the survey results and offered the following feedback:

- Some parishioners who currently attend the Saturday Celtic service used to go to the 8 a.m. Sunday service before the pandemic. If the Celtic service is moved back to the 8 a.m. Sunday slot, there was concern that attendance at the Saturday evening service might drop. Canon Allisyn responded that the Saturday service was well-attended long before the pandemic, averaging about 40 people.
- Changing worship times always causes a lot of controversy. The staff should be guided by the data in making any changes.
- An 11 a.m. start time is a little late. There seems to be a lot of support for 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. start times.
- A concern was expressed that not that many people responded to the survey relative to the total number of parishioners.
 - Demetreus indicated that there was a statistically significant response rate considering the number of people currently attending in-person services.
 - Those who did not respond to the survey probably do not care that much about the service times.
 - Some individuals responded for their entire household.
 - Compared to past surveys, this one had a lot of responses and is likely representative.

In response to a question about length of services, Canon Allisyn advised that the ReGeneration services will be kept under 1 hour in order to be mindful of today's shorter attention spans and all the other things people do on Sundays. Since the music for the Choral Eucharist takes longer and attendance is higher, the target

length is 1 hour, 15 minutes; the goal is to keep it under 1 hour, 30 minutes (it may run long when there are baptisms, a guest preacher, etc.).

(b) Gala

Demetreus announced that St. Bart's will be hosting its first gala in recent memory. With the closure of the thrift shop, alternative means are needed to continue to raise funds to support outreach, as well as college and preschool scholarships. It is hoped that the gala is one avenue that will become a consistent funding source to financially support work in the diocese.

The gala will be held on October 23 at the Country Club of Rancho Bernardo. The event will include a plated dinner and a live and silent auction. St. Bart's has established a positive relationship with the Country Club, which is working with the church to ensure good prices. Due to the pandemic, there is an option to cancel the event 30 days out if there is a rise in COVID-19 cases, and the only money forfeited would be the deposit.

Electronic save-the-dates will be sent out, and printed save-the-dates will be available at worship services. A few save-the-dates will also be mailed to those who are not comfortable attending worship at this time.

Sponsorships are currently being sought for overhead costs, which will enable all proceeds from tickets and the auction to go directly to outreach. A group of parishioners is also working on securing donations for the auction. Auction items received to date include a music lesson from John-Luke Addison, a weeklong stay in Santa Fe, New Mexico, a weeklong stay in Nicaragua, and various dinners and experiences.

The vestry discussed logistics for the gala. Key points are summarized below.

- Since the event is open to the entire community, this might be a good opportunity to invite past parishioners to get reinvolved with St. Bart's.
- Advertising for the gala will stipulate that the proceeds will go strictly to outreach and educational support, not to operating support for St. Bart's. Demetreus indicated that before the official invitations are mailed, he would like to have the sponsorships closed so it can be unequivocally stated that 100% of the ticket costs will go directly to outreach.
- Sponsorships are being requested from businesses with whom St. Bart's has had relationships in the past (e.g., those that advertised in the "News from the Hill" newsletter, vendors), as well as parishioners for whom outreach is a priority.
- Nearby Rancho Bernardo Inn has also been contacted regarding offering a special rate for people who would like to stay overnight after the gala. The Hilton Garden Inn is also in the neighborhood and could be approached.
- Polly Getz-Enos suggested that the Poway Rotary Parade scheduled for September 11 might be a good opportunity to get the word out about the gala. Demetreus asked that Polly forward information about the parade to him.
- St. Bart's should be sure to invite its congressperson, city council members, state senator, and state assemblyperson.

The vestry also brainstormed the following ideas for auction items:

- Community leaders might be willing to contribute their time and talents (e.g., “rent a [favorite key figure in community]”). Steve Vaus and his daughter, Anna Vaus, are well-known performers, and many other community leaders may have interests they would like to share.
- Ken Holcomb might be willing to donate a ride in his plane.
- Margie Polishuk mentioned that one of the live auction items at the California Wolf Center’s gala is a speed painting by an artist who paints upside down at the event; bids for this item are generally very high. She volunteered to locate his contact information.

Demetreus stated that the vestry should feel free to email or text him with any input regarding the gala. He also has a donation request letter that he can email to anyone who would like a copy.

(c) **St. Bart’s Weekend: August 28–29**

Demetreus reported that planning is underway for St. Bart’s Weekend on August 28–29. A family barbecue is planned for Saturday afternoon. On Sunday after the 9 a.m. service, a festive coffee hour with fruit, pastries, and cheese will be held, and an ice cream social will take place after the 11 a.m. service.

5. Regular Discussion Items

5.1 Reinvigoration of Ministries

Costa Dillon

Costa noted that he has distributed the list of ministry liaison assignments. The goal of the liaisons is not to lead the ministries but to serve as a central connection point regarding how well they are working, any problems that arise, and whether help/leadership is needed.

Significant work will be required to get the ministries up and running again. The vestry discussed how best to accomplish this; a summary of the main points follows.

- Volunteers are especially needed for outreach and the children’s and youth ministries.
- Staff have been asking for volunteers; the request might be more effective coming from a fellow parishioner. The liaisons could take on this role.
- Email, texts, and announcements are not working; people need to be asked personally.
- Every church is having serious problems recruiting volunteers.
- At St. Bart’s Weekend, clipboards for signups could be placed along the outskirts. Although it would not be a regular ministry fair, people could be directed to sign up through informal conversations. The vestry would then need to help with systematic follow-up, as the staff is at capacity.
- There were people running booths at the ministry fair; some of those people have reached out to parishioners who signed up to volunteer, but others have not. Liaisons should contact those who have not to see if they need help.
- People who volunteered with various ministries in the last decade might be helpful sources of background information and advice. Demetreus Gregg, Beth Dean, and the Shelby database could help identify those people.

- Previously, many teams were self-directed and had no official leaders. It would be helpful to have some leadership; possibly ministries could have two or three leaders so no one person feels they have to take complete responsibility. If the vestry can connect two or three people per ministry who previously volunteered or recently signed up, that might be enough to get some ministries off the ground.
- Greeters are a key ministry. A welcoming presence up front is needed to greet returning parishioners as well as visitors, help them find name tags, etc. This will put a face to the church again.
- Hospitality is not a ministry per se but is mobilized when there is an event (e.g., Veteran's Day barbecue). Currently, many of the people who normally lead such events do not want to volunteer. The vestry needs to look for new volunteers.
- People might be more interested in volunteering if they understand that most ministries do not require a big commitment. Ministries such as ushers, lay readers, and Bartmobile drivers need only a one Sunday per month commitment.
- Attendance has been low, partly because it is summer and partly because some people do not feel comfortable returning to in-person services yet. Publicizing the gala and a few other events (e.g., Christmas) is important as it might be an entry point for more people to start coming regularly to the church.
- Canon Allisyn is working with Christine Sleeper to resume in-person Sunday school in the fall. Since children are not able to get vaccinated yet, parents are concerned.
- The church exists for the people who have not yet found St. Bart's. Once they do, they need to participate; however, many people who come in initially want to be fed and not serve right away. It is a delicate balance.
- Canon Allisyn mentioned that the Rev. Cathey Dowdle has been at the Saturday 5 p.m. service for the past three weeks, and no one has approached her to talk to her. She encouraged the vestry to get over any sense of shyness.
- Vestry members should make it a goal to say hello to one person they haven't met yet at church every Sunday.

5.2 Staff Appreciation Proposal

Costa Dillon

Costa reminded the vestry that a staff appreciation proposal was raised last fall but was deferred due to other more pressing concerns. The issue has come up again now.

Canon Allisyn expressed that the staff has worked extremely hard under phenomenally difficult situations over the last couple of years, regardless of performance issues. As some semblance of normality returns, she has not heard from staff that they feel they deserve anything special. Given the current financial circumstances, she does not think St. Bart's can afford to provide a monetary bonus. However, other ways to reward employees could be considered.

The vestry discussed ways to show appreciation to the staff. The following summarizes the main points:

- While this is not the time to spend money, it is a good time to appreciate the staff and express gratitude. There are many creative and relatively inexpensive ideas for rewarding employees.
- A staff lunch or dinner could be hosted by the vestry.
- Staff could be recognized at worship services. However, some staff are not members of the church and do not attend services.
- It was suggested that staff could be given small gifts such as Visa gift cards. There is the risk, though, that a gesture might be perceived as too minuscule and taken as an insult.
- Staff could be given paid time off.
- A suggestion was made to celebrate staff at birthday parties; however, this was a pre-pandemic custom and would be reinstated in any case.
- Polly indicated that giving an award to someone who has filed a legal claim might work to the church's benefit, as long as the award is given to all staff, as it could demonstrate that St. Bart's does not have a problem with the claimant.

The vestry decided on two rewards:

- **Staff Lunch:** Canon Allisyn recommended that lunch be served in the multi-purpose room so the preschool teachers can participate. The best date would be sometime in August or the beginning of September, after the new preschool year has started. The vestry will serve the meal, and Will Smith volunteered to barbecue. Nancy Peterson will take the lead in organizing the event.
- **Paid Time Off:** The vestry agreed on 16 hours of paid time off for all paid employees of St. Bart's, excluding clergy. Canon Allisyn will provide a list of staff. Costa will draft a staff communication for vestry review. Once approved, Canon Allisyn will distribute it.

6. Action Items

- 6.1 **MOTION: To approve 16 hours of paid time off for all paid employees of St. Bart's, including preschool staff and musicians (excluding clergy), to be used by December 31, 2021.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Approved via email vote:

- 6.2 **MOTION: Resolved that the following officers are hereby designated as signers for a Union Bank Certificate of Deposit in the amount of \$294,900 for Phase 2 construction costs:**

Constantine Dillon, Senior Warden
Amy Adome, Treasurer
Teresa McCune, Assistant Treasurer

The motion was unanimously approved via email/Boardable vote on June 22, 2021.

7. Announcements

7.1 Upcoming Events

Canon Allisyn

- (a) St. Bart's Weekend: August 28–29
- (b) "All You Need Is Love" Gala / Outreach Fundraiser: October 23
- (c) Stewardship Season: September
- (d) Diocesan Convention (St. Bart's Host): November 12–13
- (e) Bishop Curry: December 2–4
- (f) Bishop Susan Brown Snook Visitation: April 3, 2022

8. Closing Prayer

Nancy Peterson closed the meeting with a prayer.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

10. Future Meetings/Events/Key Dates

August 17	Vestry meeting
August 28–29	St. Bart's Weekend (pending construction completion)
September 21	Vestry meeting
October 19	Vestry meeting
October (date TBA)	"All You Need Is Love" gala (Outreach fundraiser)
November 12–13	Diocesan convention (St. Bart's hosting)
November 16	Vestry meeting
December 2–4	Bishop Curry revival visit
April 3, 2022	Bishop Susan Brown Snook Visitation

Respectfully submitted,

Akiko Tamano
Vestry Clerk