

**St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting
Via Zoom Videoconference
Tuesday, October 19, 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
Larry Burgess
Mark Davis
Shinobu Horne
Nancy Peterson
Margie Polishuk
Will Smith

Excused/Absent

Terry McCune, *Assistant Treasurer*

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 October Treasurer's Report.
- (b) Approve the September financial reports.
- (c) Approve the September 21, 2021, vestry meeting minutes.

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

3. Financial Items

3.1 2022 Health Care Policy

Amy Adome

Amy Adome explained that every year before open enrollment, the St. Bart's health plan policy is reviewed and compared with what the diocese is either doing or suggests. (The health plan policy is available in Boardable; text in black indicates the current plan, while text in red indicates suggested changes.)

The diocese has suggested two optional amendments to the plan:

- For employees who are eligible for medical coverage but opt out, to enroll those employees in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at the employer's expense (the cost is approximately \$4 per month per employee). **The finance committee recommends that this amendment be adopted.**
- For employees who are eligible for medical coverage but opt out, to contribute the value of this benefit to the employee's employer-sponsored retirement plan. **The finance committee recommends that this amendment NOT be adopted at this time.**

A motion was made to approve the proposed St. Bartholomew's Health Care Policy, with the exception of the amendment to contribute the value of the health care benefit to the St. Bartholomew's-sponsored retirement plan for employees eligible for medical coverage who opt out (see section 7.1).

3.2 Mike Jewett Promotion from Sexton to Facility Manager

Fr. Bill Doggett

Mike Jewett's promotion to Facility Manager has been approved. Fr. Bill explained that while the ideal scenario would be to have Mike be an exempt employee, the church cannot currently afford the additional \$12,000 this would require; this may be a goal for the future. For the time being, it has been decided instead to raise his hourly wage immediately to \$25 per hour, and to increase it to \$27 per hour at the new year.

3.3 Participation in State Unemployment and Disability Insurance Programs

Bill Angus

St. Bart's lay employees are currently not eligible for the State of California's Unemployment Insurance (UI) or State Disability Insurance (SDI) benefits. To answer questions raised by the vestry last month regarding the possibility of St. Bart's enrolling in these programs, the controller, Erin Sacco Pineda, has provided a memo (available in Boardable) outlining the terms and costs. The main points are as follows:

- Because SDI is paid via a deduction from employee earnings, employees must vote to opt in before St. Bart's can offer these benefits.
- The church has the option to separate employees into different classes (e.g., church clergy, church lay employees, preschool employees) and allow for different outcomes for each class of employee.
- If a simple majority of a class of employees votes to opt in, all employees in that class must participate in both the UI and SDI programs for at least two years; enrolling in only one or the other is not an option.
- Benefits are not available to employees until contributions have been paid into the system for at least two quarters.

The vestry discussed allowing employees to vote on whether to participate in these programs. It was agreed that it would be advisable to hold separate votes by employee class, since interest in these benefits may vary between church employees, the majority of whom work full-time, and preschool employees, who work part-time.

A motion was made to (a) advise the parish staff on the benefits and expenses associated with participation in the State of California's Unemployment Insurance (UI) and State Disability Insurance (SDI) programs; (b) invite the staff to vote by employee group (clergy, lay, preschool) on whether to participate as a group in both programs (as required by state law); and (c) in the event of a majority-yes vote of voting members in any group, authorize the necessary expenditures in the parish budget to fund the employer's UI contribution required by state law for that group (see section 7.2).

4. Rector Items

4.1 Transition Concerns and Processes

Fr. Bill Doggett

(a) Information-Sharing Session and Listening Sessions

Fr. Bill announced that an information-sharing session with the bishop in attendance is being planned for November 3 at 6 p.m. The meeting will be in a hybrid format (in-person/remote), and a recording will be available for those who cannot attend. The panel participants are still being worked out but will include Fr. Bill, Bishop Susan Brown Snook, and probably Canon Allisyn and the wardens. Questions will be submitted in writing only, either online or in person, with Fr. Bill serving as the moderator.

After the information-sharing session, listening sessions will be set up, probably with just the clergy and wardens. Parishioners may schedule sessions in their preferred format and will have the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns, express feelings and what they are worried/hopeful about, etc. Notes from these conversations will be compiled anonymously as part of the data for the search.

(b) Parish Administrator Search

A draft of the parish administrator job description has been completed. It should be finalized in the next day or two and will be submitted to the same agency used for the preschool director search.

(c) Organist Resignation

The organist, Jenny Yun, will be leaving at the end of the year. John-Luke Addison has already lined up an interim replacement for a substantial part of the new year. An announcement to the parish will be made soon, in conjunction with news of the parish administrator search.

(d) TryTank Experimental Laboratory

Demetreus Gregg has asked that St. Bart's participate in an experimental program called TryTank, a joint venture between Virginia Theological Seminary and General Theological Seminary, which offers innovative approaches to evangelism challenges facing the Episcopal Church. The Rev. Lorenzo Lebrija is the coordinator. St. Bart's will take part in a new program coming up for Christmas that will involve changing how St. Bart's invites people to services and responds to newcomers at services and afterwards, and reporting back on lessons learned. There is no cost to participate.

(e) Rector Search

Fr. Bill explained that action on the rector search is being deferred until anxiety about staff changes has settled. After the information-sharing session with the bishop and the listening sessions, St. Bart's should be ready to begin the search process. General steps are as follows:

- A transition committee will be formed to ensure all steps of the process are adequately staffed and to offer any support needed.
- A profile committee will be formed to gather information about the parish in various ways and to write a profile for vestry and diocesan approval.
- A search committee will be formed to handle the sorting and interviewing process and make a recommendation to the vestry.
- The vestry will conduct further interviews and make a final decision.

Fr. Bill also emphasized the following points:

- This is a vestry process; every decision throughout the search is the vestry's, not his. His role is to serve as chaplain, advisor, and cheerleader.
- A search process never works well unless the parish is perfectly honest about what it has been, what it is now, and what it hopes to be. If the parish avoids talking about difficult topics, that will corrupt the process.
- A successful search needs the highest possible level of participation, which will require constant invitation from the vestry.

The vestry discussed current anxieties among parishioners. The main comments are summarized below.

- The majority of parishioners are anxious not about what happened in the past but about what will happen in the future and the call process specifically. Fr. Bill responded that he will address this in a letter to the congregation to be sent in the next couple of days, in which he will explain why the search process has not started yet and announce the information-sharing session and listening sessions.
- Fr. Bill noted that the diocese is relaxing mask requirements, and St. Bart's will have to consider adjusting its mask policy accordingly.
 - Many parishioners are worried about the forthcoming masking rules, as they do not feel comfortable without masks. To accommodate these parishioners, an option could be discussed to set up outdoor seating and broadcast the service.

- COVID anxiety is a general concern among health and mental health professionals (i.e., what can be done to help people get back to normal?).
- It is important to state that those who feel the need to wear a mask are more than welcome to do so.
- This is a complicated issue, as wearing masks may do more to protect others than the people wearing the masks.
- If St. Bart's changes its policy to no longer require masks, the rationale for making this decision should be included in the announcement of the new policy.

Canon Allisyn recommended that a button be added to the St. Bart's website to allow immediate access to the latest information on the transition process. Costa also indicated that he will be issuing another news update on October 27, to cover the search procedure, construction, the staff organizational chart, current employees, and the parish administrator search. He asked that vestry members let him know of any other items that should be included.

5. Discussion Items

5.1 New Staff Organizational Chart

Fr. Bill Doggett

The new staff organizational chart has been posted in Boardable. Fr. Bill noted that, as St. Bart's is a church and a small organization, the organizational chart does not establish a hierarchical structure such as a larger business would have. Rather, it reflects a pattern of communication (e.g., who gets instructions from whom, whom staff can go to when they have questions).

5.2 Phase 2 Construction Update

Mark Davis

Mark Davis provided a status update on phase 2 construction. The original target completion date of mid-October has been pushed back to early December. The good news is that the project remains within the authorized budget, and there will be some money left over that can be applied to the next phase of construction.

Although the contractor has been doing everything possible to keep the schedule on track, the following factors have contributed to the delay:

- Underground rock impacts have forced changes to previously approved and permitted plans. This has necessitated additional City of Poway review and inspections.
- The City of Poway plan review engineer left in early September, in the middle of the review process. However, the replacement engineer, who is the immediate supervisor of the engineer who left, is familiar with the project, which has facilitated the process somewhat.
- AT&T fell behind schedule on conduit rerouting.

The projected construction schedule for the remaining work is as follows:

- The AT&T rerouting work is now back on track and scheduled to be completed in mid-October.
- The preschool playground should be ready for state inspection and open house tours in mid-November.
- Columbarium access will be limited from early November to early December due to removal of a temporary wood ramp, which is necessary to complete work on the remaining existing ramp and steps, including repainting the columbarium. During this time, the columbarium will be accessible from the cross area only.
- The new columbarium walkway, including handrails, lighting, and landscaping, is scheduled to be completed in early December.
- Work on the upper parking area will be starting in the next few weeks and will be ready for use in late November (after Thanksgiving).
- The upper parking circle will be closed starting in mid- to late November for resurfacing, addition of new lights, and restriping. It should be ready for use in late November (after Thanksgiving).

Mark indicated that every effort will be made to stay on schedule; however, if any additional issues crop up, the schedule could be impacted. He requested vestry feedback regarding whether to give specific completion dates or a range of completion dates when notifying the congregation about the revised construction schedule.

The vestry discussed how parishioners with mobility issues will access the church when the upper parking circle is closed. It was agreed that they will need to use the ramp from the lower parking area, and volunteers with wheelchairs should be posted there to assist on the two or three Sundays when the upper parking circle is inaccessible. Canon Allisyn stated that she thinks St. Bart's has wheelchairs and Mike Jewett will know where they are located. It was also noted that more Bartmobile volunteers are needed for the Sunday 9 a.m. service.

Amy Adome noted that the Union Bank CD that is holding the security funds required by the City will be maturing tomorrow. St. Bart's has 10 days to decide whether to renew the CD; by default, it will roll over for another 120 days. As Mark indicated that 60 days would be more than sufficient, Amy stated that she would call Union Bank tomorrow and request that the CD be renewed for 60 days.

Will Smith also reported that a contractor came out a final time to fix some lighting issues, and Mike Jewett confirmed they have been resolved. The landscaping cleanup was completed last week, as well.

5.3 Ministry Liaison Updates

Fr. Bill Doggett

Fr. Bill indicated that he would like to receive regular updates from ministry liaisons. While it is okay that some ministries are not very active right now, liaisons should still report on plans, hopes, time frames, and any help needed to reactivate ministries. Ministry liaisons are not necessarily responsible for chairing their assigned ministries but should advise the vestry if help is needed to find a chair.

(a) Children's Ministry

Will Smith

Will Smith stated that he checked with Christine Sleeper, who reported that the Sunday school reopening is going well. However, she indicated that it is sometimes taking as long as a month to get reimbursed for items purchased for Sunday school.

The vestry discussed how to facilitate the reimbursement process, as follows:

- Amy Adome asked whether Christine could order items through Canon Allisyn, who could use her church credit card. This would make it easier to track expenses than if Christine uses her personal credit card. Canon Allisyn agreed that this is a possibility, and she will discuss it with Christine tomorrow.
- Canon Allisyn brought up the possibility of Christine having a church credit card; however, Bill Angus indicated this could be problematic as there would be no control over approval of expenditures.
- Ordering through Canon Allisyn would not be practical for situations like picking up pizzas for Trunk or Treat. Amy noted that in those instances, if Christine emails her, she will work with the bookkeeper to reimburse Christine within a week or so.
- Reviewing the reimbursement process with staff may solve the problem. Otherwise, a reimbursement protocol needs to be established with input from the finance team.
- In the past, a reimbursement form had to be obtained from the office and filled out. It would be helpful to have the option to file for reimbursement electronically. In general, finance has a number of procedures that need to be adapted to an electronic environment.

(b) Peace and Social Justice Ministry

Susan McCormick-Davis

Susan McCormick-Davis reported that the Peace and Social Justice Ministry, which is fairly new, has been very active throughout the pandemic. A climate education event, the Be the Change Festival, was recently held in the parking lot, with more than 12 electric vehicles and other resources for the community to explore. The social justice arm of the ministry has hosted films and book discussions, which have expanded tremendously with the use of Zoom. The ministry has always worked in conjunction with already established community groups and is starting to work with other houses of worship.

(c) **Invite Welcome Connect (IWC)**

Shinobu Horne

Shinobu Horne reported that she had talked to Demetreus Gregg a couple of years ago about launching the IWC ministry, but the pandemic stalled those efforts. There are plans to regroup and invite interested people to a meeting in November. Participation in TryTank over Christmas will provide some direction and be a good foundation for restarting the ministry in January.

Fr. Bill advised that he senses in the congregation a desire to be more involved and active, and St. Bart's needs to find ways to engage them right now, while the window of opportunity is still open.

(d) **Outreach**

Larry Burgess

Larry Burgess reported that outreach was able to maintain support for the following throughout the pandemic:

- Partners including Interfaith Community Services in Escondido, St. Luke's, the Vida Joven de Mexico orphanage, RefugeeNet, North County LGBTQ, and senior centers in Rancho Bernardo and Poway
- Haiti school (through a separate dedicated fund)
- Scholarships

The vestry discussed finding ways to engage former thrift shop volunteers in the outreach ministry, since the thrift shop was once a major source of funding for outreach. Potential contacts mentioned were Cheryl Roop, Carla Morrissey, and Sumner Rollings.

Costa also asked who is responsible for contacting people who are signing up after services to volunteer with various ministries. It was suggested that this should fall under the IWC umbrella.

(e) **Feeding San Diego**

Marjorie Polishuk

Marjorie reported that Feeding San Diego has terminated its relationship with St. Bart's, as the church does not have the necessary space or infrastructure to be a distribution site at present. The ministry may need to be re-visioned at a later date.

The vestry discussed whether, in the meantime, St. Bart's might collaborate with other organizations to help with food distribution. Organizations mentioned were Interfaith, the Community Food Connection in Poway, Trinity Church, and Incarnation Lutheran Church.

Marjorie stated that she would look into working with the Community Food Connection, and Canon Allisyn also suggested that she speak to Jill Henderson, who is the primary liaison with Incarnation Lutheran Church.

(a) Vestry Vacancies

Three vestry vacancies will need to be filled in 2022. Costa indicated that he has approached a couple of people about running for vestry seats. He requested that vestry members speak to others who may be good candidates. Fr. Bill added that this vestry will be involved in choosing the next rector, and it would be a good idea to mention that to potential candidates. For people who show an interest, next steps would be to show them the vestry position description and refer them to Fr. Bill and/or Costa for further discussion.

Canon Allisyn suggested that she and Fr. Bill do a “Vestry 101” session on Zoom for those who might be interested. Polly Getz-Enos, Nancy Peterson, and Jill Henderson volunteered to assist.

(b) Officer Vacancies

Amy Adome indicated that she could continue as Treasurer into early 2022 (possibly March), but after that, a new Treasurer will need to be installed.

Akiko Tamano will be termed out as Clerk at the end of the year, so a new Clerk will also need to be identified.

(c) Rector Transitions Book

Costa announced that the office has six copies of *Rector Transitions: A Handbook for Episcopal Lay Leaders* available for checkout. This book was recommended by Canon Gwynn Lynch.

6. New Business**6.1 Upcoming Vestry Meetings****Costa Dillon****(a) December Meeting**

Costa requested feedback on whether the vestry should meet as scheduled on December 21, since this is Christmas week. Bill Angus indicated that if the meeting is moved up a week, a preliminary budget for 2022 can be ready by then.

It was agreed to reschedule the December vestry meeting to December 14.

(b) February Meeting

Costa also requested input on whether the vestry should meet in person in February. The possibility of meeting in person sooner was raised; however, Fr. Bill works from home on Tuesdays. He suggested that the January meeting, when the new vestry is installed, would be a good time to discuss the best day and time to meet in person. A hybrid meeting format is also an option.

7. Action Items

- 7.1 **MOTION: To approve the proposed St. Bartholomew’s Health Care Policy, EXCEPT for paragraph 7 (i.e., for employees who have alternate health care coverage, St. Bartholomew’s will NOT contribute the value of the health care benefit to the St. Bartholomew’s–sponsored retirement plan).**

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

- 7.2 **MOTION: To (a) advise the parish staff on the benefits and expenses associated with participation in the State of California’s Unemployment Insurance (UI) and State Disability Insurance (SDI) programs; (b) invite the staff to vote by employee group (clergy, lay, preschool) on whether to participate as a group in both programs (as required by state law); and (c) in the event of a majority-yes vote of voting members in any group, authorize the necessary expenditures in the parish budget to fund the employer’s UI contribution required by state law for that group.**

The motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. (See section 3.3 for discussion.)

8. Announcements

8.1 Upcoming Events

Canon Allisyn

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

9. Closing Prayer

Nancy Peterson closed with a prayer.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

11. Future Meetings/Events/Key Dates

November 12–13	Diocesan convention (virtual)
November 16	Vestry meeting
December 14	Vestry meeting
April 3, 2022	Bishop Susan Brown Snook Visitation

Respectfully submitted,

Akiko Tamano
Vestry Clerk

DRAFT