

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Bluemont, Virginia – Meeting Notes

Subject: Virtual Meeting with Assistant Bishop of Virginia

Date: Tuesday, 10 May 2022

Attendees: Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey, Rev. Webster Gibson, Lois, Judy, Tim, Josette, Cindy, Kendra

Start time: 6:30 p.m.

1. Rev. Webster Gibson opened with a prayer and then gave a brief summary of the in person meeting he had with the Good Shepherd Vestry on 10 March 2022.
2. Bishop Jennifer commented that she understood we were pursuing a semi-permanent relationship with clergy and were interested in discussing a possible letter of agreement.
3. Tim Hall, Jr. Warden, gave a brief background on our relationship with Revs. Debbie, Melanie, and Martha since the pandemic had closed our doors in March 2020 through our re-opening to current status.
 - a. Debbie was a Godsend in August 2020 and wants to continue with us on a limited basis. She did a wonderful job leading our “Book of Joy” study during Epiphany this year. Great attendance!
 - b. Melanie was great to add to our supply and when we advertised two priests for Advent and Christmas, interest grew. Melanie is now gone to Christchurch, Millwood.
 - c. Martha came because of our ad and we immediately fell in love with each other. She is interested in walking with us, leading services as she’s available, and helping with parish life and mission, but can’t enter into a semi-permanent LOA at this point.
4. Judy talked about how we need advice and help from clergy. We’ve kind of reached our lay limits. But we want to grow!
5. Rev. Canon Abbott asked a couple of good questions for us to reflect on:
 - a. What is our sense of mission?
 - b. Why has God called us together.

6. Several of us answered. Cindy: Creation Care. Josette: Atmosphere. Lois: People not looking for a large church. Judy: Looking for ways to serve. Tim: Seniors, Food outreach, community

Judy's Notes:

Cannon Abbott Bailey on letters of agreement:

These are important if there is a routine agreed schedule for a priest. These are especially important if the priest is not retired. The purpose is to ensure the priests are being adequately compensated.

We need to focus on essentials - what the Bishop suggests. When we get to asking about the funding for "growth guidance " I'll have to look that line item up in the budget. Bishop Brooke-Davidson assigned either Abbott or Webster to contact Cynthia McKend.... to see if she had time to help us. We were to send a letter to Ted Smith about something and copy Webster... Maybe the vicar and wardens call?

These are 2 line items from the Narrative Budget that was passed for 2022. I cannot remember which one I asked about - Probably line item 38... But maybe Chantal McKinney is who they were talking about.

- Line item 37: Root, Thrive, Soar Cohort 33,000
Root Thrive Soar is a coaching consultancy of Chantal McKinney, a successful Latina multicultural church planter well versed in this collaborative missional model. The coaching cohort of 3 church leadership teams will participate for three years in a major commitment to revitalization, evangelism, formation, and service.
- Line item 38: College for Congregational Development Coaching 15,000
We are expanding our team of four diocesan facilitators who have trained at the College for Congregational Development in methods to work within congregations on myriad aspects of church health. Most of the current team already have proven congregational experience with the models. We are beginning in 2021 to offer this support to missions. Funds will cover additional training for trainers and any expenses of coaching and gathering for congregational training.

Tim's Notes:

This is great, Judy. Thank you.

The name I recorded was Cynthia McKenna, with a church in Fredericksburg. And she is definitely associated with the College for Congregational Development, Line item 38. Is it just a coincidence that her name is so similar to Chantal McKinney?

I thought Canon Abbott Bailey asked a couple of good questions... What is our sense of mission? Why has God called us together? Some interesting things to ponder and something Cynthia can hopefully help us with. Both the Bishop and the Canon talked about simplifying what we are trying to accomplish. Abbott said, "Focus energies, focus on essentials". The bishop said, "Focus on things that give us energy. Don't overreach or spread ourselves too thin."

They also mentioned trying to get Small Congregational Workshops, which sounds like a great idea, off the ground. That prompted me to ask about having Mission Church Zooms, similar to what Ted is doing with his Wardens and Treasurers monthly Zoom call. I'm not sure if that was what they were going to reach out to Ted about, but it was definitely something.

My last comment: Abbott talked about a book called "Reclaiming Rural", which, she said among other things, deals with the small church becoming an anchor in a small community. (I found it on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Reclaiming-Rural-Building-Thriving-Congregations/dp/1538135248>) and its full title is "Reclaiming Rural: Building Thriving Rural Congregations".