

St. James' Vestry Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 10, 2007

In attendance: Jim McConnell, Tim Young, Sylvia Ma, Meg Williams, Greg Miller, E.J. Hilliard, Barbara Dabney, Ralph Locher, Janet Fischer, Lynn Locher and Elizabeth Hart.

Barbara Dabney called the meeting to order, and Greg Miller led the opening prayer.

Barbara Dabney and Lynn Locher attended a conference in Sacramento. Lynn attended sessions that focused on stewardship, while Barbara attended sessions that focused on welcoming, growing churches.

Stewardship – handout attached. Additional notes:

- Joyful giver – highest level of giver, receive joy in giving, purpose in life
- % giving/1st fruits – reference is from Bible, the first fruits of the harvest
- GI refers to World War II, parents of the baby boomers
- Need to have a fresh look at stewardship, see in a new light
- What changes someone from being a dues payer to a real connection to stewardship (transformation)
- Two programs for stewardship – Barnabas program and Creating Congregations of Generous People
- Big picture – Prayer for St. James'
 - Intentional that it is not specific to programs; rather use to inspire programs, serve as a launching point
 - May need to move on from that – have a vision that is something people can identify with?
- Analyzing patterns
 - Lynn Locher will be working with treasurer to look for patterns in giving. Have specific guide for things to look for.
 - It was suggested that need to look at level of involvement in church, not just length of time involved.
 - Where was a person's faith community before?
- Facts on growth
 - If there are newcomers to community it is more likely to grow
 - Congregations with fewer older members and more younger members and families with children likely to grow
 - Strongest correlation for growth is the presence or absence of conflict
 - Somber, stilted reverence and strict formality negative effect on growth
 - Worship services changing – more likely to grow
- Congregation spirituality vital and alive
- 67% of new people who come to a church come from information found on website
- Need to follow up with visitors and guests
- Need to meet people where they are in order to give them what they need
- 90 second rule – you have 90 seconds to make an impression
- 6 month rule – if not working in a ministry with 6 months then we have lost them
- Recommend ministry discernment

- Newcomers receive a thank you note from the rector
- Invitation to make a formal commitment rather than “close the sale” (page 6 of handout)
- All budgeting – center around the vision

Cautions offered

- Know target population
- Don't try to do all the things that attract people to mega churches. Some ideas are good but need to know difference between good and bad ideas
- Target toward growth and inclusiveness
- People need to know what is in it for them – if just show them a pledge card it looks like a means to our own end

Suggestion for Pentecost – A presentation of “What does your pledge support?” with pictures and pie chart.

Received brochure “The Path to Shared Ministry” (attached)

Two books were donated to the St. James' Library – Congregational Paths to Holiness and Alternative Worship.

St. James' Brochure

- Communications passed out a prototype of the St. James' brochure, which they would like to have ready to hand out by Pentecost Sunday.
- Items with a question mark need additional information.
- Remove Dental Ministry and Shoes for Homeless Children
- Let Janet Fischer or Meg Williams know via e-mail if you have any info or insight regarding the brochure. Information is needed by next week, May 16th.

Calendar addition – May 13, 2007 is celebration for Sylvia Sweeney's graduation.

Worship and Christian Formation recommend that the decorations ministry write a thank you note to all donors via every avenue of communication (newsletter, bulletin, etc.) so people realize that the money for decorations did not come from operating fund.

Bathrooms in the Parish Hall need to be thoroughly cleaned. This is a sanitation issue. Sexton is responsible for cleaning bathrooms.

Next vestry meeting is Thursday, June 14th, 2007.

Tim Young led the closing worship.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hart
Clerk of the Vestry