

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
January 28, 2018

Following a potluck lunch, Rev. Susie Comer opened the meeting at 12:00 p.m. with a prayer. Milly Williams moved that we approve the minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting. Janna Hammett seconded the motion and all said 'aye'.

Rev. Susie thanked outgoing Vestry members Carol Brown, Wade Wooten and Janna Hammett. She thanked Robert Oliver and Paul Wilborn for their service as Senior and Junior Wardens. Susie welcomed incoming Vestry members: Bill Adams, Jan Sewall and Mike Watson and announced that Paul Wilborn will serve as Senior Warden and Mary Black Davis as Junior Warden.

Diocesan Council will meet in Waco this year. Proposed delegates are Libby Bluntzer and Tom and Mary Hart. Maureen Adams moved that we accept these three delegates. Mary Black Davis seconded the motion and all said 'aye'.

Bill Adams presented the 2018 parish budget approved by the Vestry on January 21. Thanks to the generosity of our members and careful management of expenses, St. Mary's ended 2017 with a \$4300 surplus, including prepaying the 2018 Diocesan Council fee of \$1000. The Vestry decided to retain the surplus in the parish Operating Fund. Treasurer Bunny Johnson added that all repairs were paid from operating funds in 2017, and she is exploring how to add online payment to St. Mary's website.

The 2018 budget projects an income of \$150,902 and expenses of \$149,209 for a \$1,700 surplus. Bill explained that past budgets forecast pledge income as 100% of pledge amounts, while pledge fulfillment averaged 90% over the last 4 years. 2018 pledge income is 90% of forecast pledges, and Plate & Contributions is increased to reflect recent history. The 11% overall revenue increase over 2017 allows three new initiatives included in the 2018 expenses: part-time service of an organist, a bookkeeper, and an office clerk. Pledge fulfillment is vital to realizing our 2018 plans. Bill thanked all the office volunteers that have supported parish operations and asked that they keep going! He thanked Bunny Johnson for her service as parish Treasurer and especially for her skill keeping our accounts with QuickBooks. Richard Hammett moved to accept the budget, Milly Williams seconded and all said 'aye'.

Sue Faulkner reported that ECW held two fundraisers and made 4 donations of \$500 each to: Lampasas Senior Center, Lampasas Mission, Highland Lakes Casa and the Family Crisis Center. ECW also donated \$1700 of equipment to update the sanctuary sound system and wireless microphones, provide a large screen TV and DVD player in Hirst House, and provide a portable projector for computer presentations or video. She thanked Mary Raring Hart for her "smart shopping" of these improvements. ECW also honored Rev. Milly Williams at the St. Mary's Day celebration on October 8, 2017. Rev. Milly shared that she was ordained 32 years ago in Albany, NY.

Robert Oliver was absent and Paul Wilborn gave the Wardens' report. Paul thanked Susie and the Budget Committee for their work to plan 2018. He thanked all the office volunteers, including Jane Westerfield, Linda Joseph, Bunny Johnson and Molly Johnson. In 2017 we repaired plumbing leaks in the sanctuary, well house and lawn sprinkler system. The sanctuary roof was repaired and the front doors refinished. We completed the playground fence and trimmed the trees in back of the lot.

Rev. Susie Comer opened the Priest's report by noting that St. Mary's has grown and flourished in Worship, formation, outreach, fellowship.

At our pet blessing, we had mostly Dachshunds this year, and it was the event most closely followed and appreciated on Facebook.

In worship, we have become used to having children's voices, and had new folks coming to worship with us throughout the whole year. Please welcome them, befriend them and invite them over to coffee. We now have children's bulletins related to our readings available every Sunday for kids to read and color. Susie thanked Mimi Cole and Rev. Milly Williams for leading morning prayer when she was away.

Our average 2017 Sunday attendance was about the same as 2016. A number of older members are homebound. Others are busy with ongoing commitments in other cities, with business and football, and family. Still, our membership grew by 8. Susie encouraged everyone to come and worship, even if you think you might be late, even wearing sweats or work clothes. Jesus had no problem with late arrivals. We welcome you and love to see you regardless, and of course it is so very good for your soul!

We have contracted a wonderful organist, Paula Blaha, who began playing for us on January 14th and will continue for 2 Sundays a month at the 10 o'clock service through the end of May, and hopefully beyond. Paula is a skilled musician who grew up in the

Episcopal Church and is familiar with our liturgy. Please welcome her, and consider singing with the informal choir that she will organize two Sundays a month. Parishioners Tish Casbeer, and J.R. McBryde have newly volunteered to serve as acolytes. Susie thanked them and expressed deep gratitude to Richard Hammett who selflessly and sacrificially programs and operates the digital organ.

Formation for Adults and children thrived this year. In adult formation, we studied the book of Revelation and the first 11 chapters of Genesis. Last Spring Mary Raring Hart continued to skillfully teach Godly Play, with the assistance of parents and Janna Hammett and Robert Oliver. In the Fall, Judith Ann McGhee and Georgia Hay led Godly Play monthly on Shepherd Sunday.

Last summer we began having Kid's oriented Wednesday night meal and activities. For three Wednesday nights we had a vacation Bible school format, provided food for busy families, and Rev. Susie told a story and led the children with games and singing with help from Janna Hammett and Catie Johnson. It was so well received that at the parents' request we continued once each month in the Fall.

We again held Wednesday night Soup Suppers during Lent, followed by a meditative Eucharist in house. Wednesday night speakers in the summer Jane McMillin and Warren Bluntzer and their talks about Lampasas from two different perspectives were very well attended. In the fall we began having Compline services after our Wednesday night potluck dinners.

In addition to our Lenten and Advent bags that we put together for clients of Central Coastal Services, our congregation responded quickly to the crisis after the flooding of Harvey. We sent 150 care bags for adults and children to the emergency shelter in Killeen, then gathered 12 sets of shovels, brooms and cleaning supplies for the Sugarland area of Houston. Susie continues to be grateful for St. Mary's outreach: feeding the kids of His Kids, supporting our local charities financially in our budget, and supporting Coastal Services clients through our hygiene, food and stress relief bags. Trash pick up on our mile on Highway 195 continues monthly through our trusty St. Mary's "Chain Gang", and many of you volunteer individually in so many other ways here in Central Texas.

Following the shootings which distressed so many last fall we sought the advice of our Lampasas Police chief and we will continue to balance our security needs with our primary call to be a welcoming body of Christ.

Last December our members Dewey Dobbs, and Bobbie Behlau entered the fuller presence of God. We celebrated their lives in worship and welcomed their friends and loved ones with wonderful and generous receptions. Our receptions following funerals are one of our important ministries that are always deeply appreciated by friends and family.

Parishioners' committee work is vital to St. Mary's. Our thoughtful budget is the work of members who worked together and enjoyed the process. This year Susie plans functional committees to work together for finances, outreach, communication, and formation.

Susie announced that, with the active support of Senior Warden Paul Wilborn, contracts have been signed with Bunny Johnson for bookkeeping services and with Molly Johnson for office support in 2018. This is our first year in a number of years to have the financial wherewithal for these services and we hope to sustain them in future. This support frees Susie to be more consistently available for pastoral visits on weekdays, and our goal is to have someone in the office 4 or 5 mornings a week.

Susie thanked our wonderful office volunteers - Jane Westerfield and Linda Joseph in particular - for the most generous gift of their time and talents. And Bunny Johnson for her skilled handling of our finances and budget, with recalcitrant software and often under deadlines. Truly the church would not be running without them.

St. Mary's is vital. We are stewards of the miraculous. God is at work through us as we worship God together, study and serve together, and of course enjoy our many and wonderful potlucks throughout the year. We remain St. Marys: Family sized, reverent, and neighborly. Loved by God.

Susie gives thanks to God for her calling as priest, and to St. Mary's for the past 51/2 years. She closed the meeting at 12:45 with a prayer that God continue to bless us, challenge us, and encourage us as we serve God together.

Comments and corrections to this draft are welcome. These minutes will be offered for approval at the January 2019 annual meeting of the parish.

Respectfully submitted, Mike Watson for Bill Adams, Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry approved at the March 15, 2018 Vestry meeting.  
Parish approved at the January 20, 2019 Annual Meeting.