



Discernment Process Meeting June 13, 2009

Facilitator: Rev. Canon Torri Duncan, Moderator: Rev. James Massie
Sponsors: The Warden's & Vestry

Attendance: 24

Meeting Recorder: Gregory Lodinsky

Rev. Jim Massie began the meeting @ 9:30 am, with an invitation to prayer:

...“we gather to listen to the Holy Spirit and ask that it assist us in discerning God’s will for this congregation and its future”...

Rev. Massie continued with comment:

“This process is not to find a new minister for this church, we have ministers in place, the ministers of the church are those that are baptized, the people do the ministry of the congregation, they must be full time, we are here to discuss ‘*ordained clerical leadership*’....

“ The decision about full time or part time ordained leadership will be decided by the Vestry, not the committees or congregation, the committees may recommend, the Vestry will decide.”

Canon Duncan then asked the congregation to present questions regarding issues connected to full time or part time (FT/PT) clerical leadership.

Canon Duncan listed the following framework and prompts for the meeting:

Name concerns of congregation that Vestry will consider.
Input needed by Vestry
Define FT vs. PT
Interim (PT) contact hours with congregation per week
Position descrip. Of PT
Decision timeframe

The following are questions, comments, statements that were generated and recorded:

Effect of Café on Good Shepherd Finances
P/T or P/T or other?
P/T
Other: Covenant Congregation- both F/T
Yoked
Yoked – time certain
F/T – time certain
(% of time toward Good Shepherd growth and development
Position Description – F/T vs. P/T

Relationship of Good Shepherd to Diocese of WNY in F/T vs. P/T?
Canon Departing
Finances of G.S. including Endowment Fund history
Repercussions of P/T vs. benefits of F/T
History of other P/T churches – ever return to F/T?
Demographics of neighborhood
\$ saved in PT vs. FT
Rectory

Warden Joe Spina presented an overview of the compensation package associated with FT clergy.

The following were listed on poster paper:

Compensation (Minimum set by diocese = \$59, 896) Salary and housing and ½ FICA
Benefits Pension and healthcare and continuing education and housing equity (Minimum= \$18, 964)
Expenses (reimbursable) Travel, professional and cell phone (Minimum = \$3,400)
\$64, 660, including Rectory

Presentation by Joe Spina ‘Cost of calling new clergy’

Cost of Position

Compensation	{	Housing Value/Utilities (Rectory) Housing Allowance (If living away from Rectory) FICA (½ to be paid by GS)
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Diocese governs what the minimum compensation the church can offer, GS is in the ‘third tier’ of churches; Minimum compensation we can offer is \$59, 869

Benefits	{	Pension – 18 % of compensation Health Insurance – single overage (not family) Workers Compensation Days off sick Continuing Education
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Expenses: Travel, Business

Other Expenses

To determine housing allowance: if Rectory were to be rented,
Expected income: \$1,200 /month x 12 = \$18,600 (this amount would be deducted from compensation)

Utilities = \$350.00

½ FICA= \$4,256

Salary = \$37, 039

Pension (set by National Church): 18% of compensation = \$10, 781

Health (Single) = \$5, 435 (Family) = \$16,129

Total Benefits = \$18,964

Expenses

Expense Reimbursement = \$3,400

Salary = \$ 37, 039

FICA = \$ 4,256

Benefits = \$18, 964

\$63,660 (If living at the Rectory)

Compensation for previous Rector: \$92,464

Expected compensation for new Rector: - 63,660

Difference \$28,804

Expenses for travel/lodging for interviewed candidates =?

Refurbishing of Rectory= est. \$20,000

Moving Expenses =?

Endowment Fund

Treasurer Greg Lodinsky presented an overview

Inception (8/31/84) Value: \$149,891.00

Total Contributions: \$649,877.18

Total Withdrawals: \$ 1,176,392.36

Current (6/11/09) Value: \$503,392.28

Rate of Return since Inception: 10.19 %

Standard & Poor's 500 Index Rate of Return: 9.82%

The fund appears to be well balance between stocks, bonds, cash and Treasury Bills, the emphasis is on long term growth and preservation of capital.

The Endowment Fund is used as a budget line for regular income for the church (\$15,000), and is used to pay for unbudgeted items or to fund church deficits (annual deficits are in the \$15,000 – 25,000 range), unbudgeted items include repairs to the church property, etc.

Other comments for those in attendance:

“What level of community participation are we asking the next pastor to do?
“Our ministry should be a function of what we have and what we can afford”
“Will a part time rector give the impression we’re on the ‘way out’”

Elam Jewett Café – Jennifer Coleman

- Café is considered ‘outreach’
- A collaboration between St. Mary’s School for the deaf and Good Shepherd
- Will serve to raise the profile of GS
- Hall improvement has been a great benefit
- Takes a lot of energy and focus to move project forward
- Not an income producing instrument – “we’re getting the faces that may lead to ministry opportunities”

A review of FT/PT implications followed:

Multi-governing laws are imposed on the church, each working with the other:

- Laws of New York State
- Canon – Church law
- Local – our own bylaws

In the Diocese of Western New York:

Part time priest is termed a ‘Vicar’, ‘time certain’ contractual length of tenure is determined

Full time priest is termed a ‘Rector’, has life time tenure, not contractual term, must retire at 72 years of age.

‘Defined term Priest’ – two to three year part time term followed by an increase to full time status.

Shared Minister: considered part time, church under the authority of the Bishop

A church with a Rector is considered independent and self governing; one staffed with a Vicar is under the authority of the Bishop. In the future, after Canon Duncan leaves her position, a consultant, appointed by the Bishop, will fill her role and duties.

Rector and Vestry must sign a Letter of Agreement/Letter of Mutual Understanding, detailing the number of ‘blocks’ of time that must be served, usually 10 blocks, with morning, afternoon, evening blocks detailed.

Vicar and Vestry may decide on any percent of ten blocks the congregations wants (Jim Massie agreed to serve 6 blocks).

Shared Parish Priest – considered PT

(Example: St. John's, Wilson; St. Andrew's Burt)

- “covenant congregation”
- Maintain individuality
- Share priest expenses
- Share activities
- Pool youth activities
- Share in outreach endeavors
- Key: covenant committee composed of both congregations
- Separate Vestry and treasurer
- Annual, renewable relationship

Canon Duncan: “There is no diocesan plan to combine Good Shepherd and St. John's – Grace churches”

Sale of Rectory

- Canon Duncan: “One of the greatest financial assets (besides the Endowment Fund) that GS has”
- Diocesan standing committees will no longer approve the sale of rectory's
- Negates FT clergy
- Moot point for GS – rectory is attached to the church

Another Option: **Covenant Relationship**

- Two parishes
- Two full time rectors
- All other activities shared
- Parishioners can attend either congregation , envelopes are directed to home church

Local Aspects

- Part – time congregations in WNY are having trouble maintaining financial base, the congregation appears to ‘relax’ with PT clergy
- Donations are reduced
- Less participation
- Significant numbers of people leave the congregation
- More part time than full time Episcopal Churches in the area
- Two have assistant clergy
- Ascension Buffalo (North & Linwood Ave.) has grown
- Part time (Vicar) will be a local person, ‘there are no candidates in the area at this point’
- Canon Duncan will continue to represent GS at regional meeting in September to present GS on a regional level (for FT clergy)

Decision Time Frame:

- Monday Vestry meeting, Saturday's meeting will be discussed; pending review of Parish Survey, special July Vestry Meeting will be scheduled to make decision.

Meeting Concluded at 12:00 noon