

The Vestry was called to order at 7:00 pm, once a quorum (2/3) was present.

Attendance

Nicholas Morris-Kliment (Rector)	X	Dusty Hecker (Warden)	X	Brian Mukherjee (Warden)	X	Vacant (Treasurer)	
Duncan Allen	X (zoom)	Jim Black	X (zoom)	Bob Begin		David Carnahan (Clerk)	X
John Carr	X (zoom)	Bob Keener	X (zoom)	Ingrid Melvin	X	Ginny Yerardi	X (zoom)
Annie Russell	X	Alyssa Kence	X (zoom)	Joe Sweeney	absent	Christina O'Connell	X
Cecile Leroy	X (zoom)						

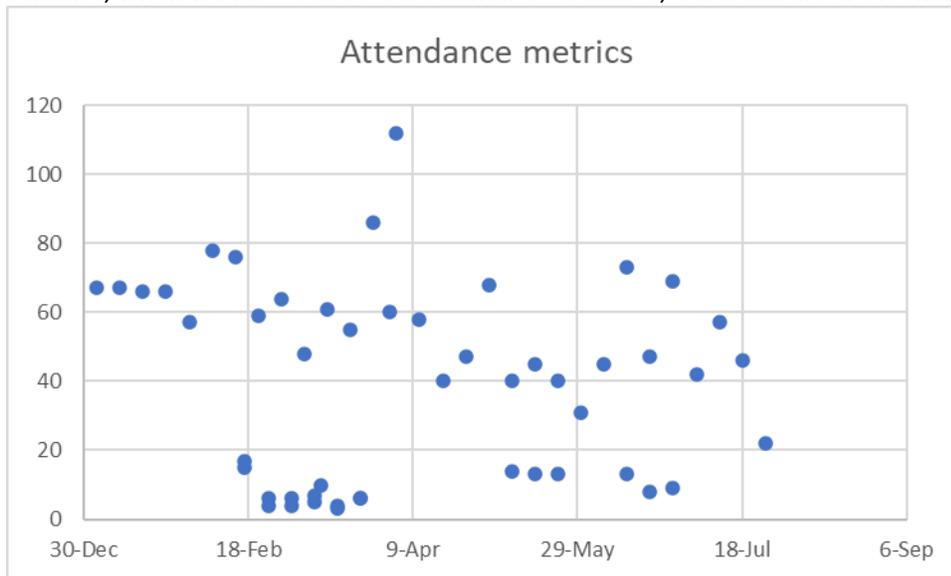
Opening Prayers

David C lead the group in a pottery exercise with readings from Jeremiah 18.

Updates: (7:20-7:45)

Attendance (Nick)

Summer attendance for June and July was fair, but the lack of ushers for the July 25 service means we have no in person count for that service. Nick commented that comparing the attendance to 2019 summer, when we last took actual summer attendance, the numbers are looking very good.



Nick also commented that beginning Aug 25, by new Diocesan mandate, all worshipers will need to be masked for all indoor gatherings. Best judgement is to be used for coffee hour and such. Data shows aerosol, not surface contact is the primary route of transmission. Needham will also issue local guidance shortly. Guidance still dictates distancing.

Ushering and Reading (Nick)

We need new folks for readers, to host coffee hour, and to serve as ushers. Please share these needs with the parish, and consider volunteering as Vestry members. Debby Rempis is in charge of coffee hour.

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry (Nick)

With kids under 12 not yet being vaccinated, we are concerned about church school. At least one teacher is comfortable coming in, but some others are not. We will need to make some decisions about this shortly. We had planned to join the youth group at Carter United Methodist Church. However, David heard that their youth and family minister just resigned. If the situation stabilizes, we will plan to join them for Six Flags, and other outings. We will follow the school system's lead in mandating masks until guidance tells us otherwise.

Finance

Duncan reported that we are slightly behind, which is typical for this time of year. Overall he has no particular concerns. We have not yet taken the second quarter draw for 2021. Facility income is on-forecast. We had assumed a new tenant, and this did materialize (Bilingual Singers), so our projections for revenue are ~ in line with expectations. Brian asked about the Roche Brothers line item income, which is rental for parking spaces for employees. We are getting more per square foot for rental space now than in the past.

Nick also mentioned that there is proposal from Storytime Crafts, which is an appealing offer, with phased in rental. They are very motivated to use this space.

On the expense side, we are under-running on a few items, and over on water/sewer charges. On the personnel side, we are just a bit over our planned expenses, but nothing startling. We may be behind on a couple bills for property maintenance, and will look to catch up on these shortly. Overall totals are in line with expectation, so Property looks ok, budget wise.

So in total, there are no signs of crisis on the horizon. John Carr asked about Community Concerns and its budget. This is a fund that can be spent on any number of worthy organizations around town. That has been stable at 3% of budget for many years. Joanne Neale manages this.

Gathering, Common Life, Outreach (7:45-8:15)

Common Life, Outreach (7:45-8:45)

Haiti Conversation (Nick)

Margaret Pantridge joined the Vestry to discuss our involvement in Haiti. We have all been following the disasters in Haiti. We have heard from Father Milor, and reported that his village was ok after the earthquake, but we have not heard from them since the hurricane. Our program sustained a serious loss when Barbara Murphy moved away. We as a group had concerns about the level of interest and available financial support. Margaret reported that she wanted 6-8 people to join this, and she was able to find 7 folks willing to put effort and energy to this. She thinks that 3-4 people will need to travel to oversee the work there. Duncan addressed the finance question, and he noted that we allocated funds to support our Haiti mission, which is focused on the parish School. Accordingly, that amount, ~\$3500 is available to support the school, in near perpetuity. The school, which has ~80 students, needs that funding, and will expect a wire transfer shortly. Brian asked about the relationship with Father Millor, and his radio-silence for a couple months. Margaret said that he's not in St Luc's all the time, as he oversees five parishes. Margaret says that she will request more information from them on a more routine basis to keep us up to date. Previously there was a request for accounting of the payment to the teachers. For the last 4-5 years, there is no particular paperwork affirming that the teachers have been paid. We will ask them to increase the level of reporting. Heidi Fieldston has suggested that we should get to know the teachers more personally. Annie asked about the effect of the earthquake on churches in Haiti, which was reported upon in the NY times today. She doesn't know if the church is actually still

there, and how would we know? Margaret replied that Milor visits every two weeks, and he's trusted by the villagers, and does respond to direct questions. That said, we need a more clear mechanism for reporting and review. There was a time when we went yearly, but a three year funding cycle that is renewable sounds right. John Carr reflected that it was great to see renewed commitment to Haiti, and discussed that if it is a true partnership, it will be a two-way relationship. She requests that we vote on this in September.

Racial Justice Initiative (Bob)

Bob introduced Sandy Kastantin, who joined the Vestry to be part of this conversation. She, Brian M, and Nick are active members of this committee. After having met for a year, the RJI has drafted a position statement, which is attached as Appendix B. The group discussed the statement, and which would be posted on the website and be a guide for parish action, if it were approved/endorsed by the Vestry. Dusty asked: What is it we found, that evidences our church as complicit in systemic racism? Bob did not have a particular example in mind, but Brian mentioned that Needham didn't become such a white community by accident, then the self segregating system continued without the community recognizing the condition. Sandy suggested that we were more unknowingly participants in this system, and that it is tricky to pinpoint details that place us where we are today. John commented that while the forward looking language is the easiest to get behind, we will have to acknowledge our history and background as part of repentance. Annie and Dusty took issue with the third line to prove the parish's direct involvement, distinct from the town's history. Nick read Joe's position on the statement, who struggles with systemic racism as the explanation for all racial disparity. He raised the idea that even within the black community there is dispute about the narrative of systemic racism leading to disparity. Brian is also interested in what we will do next? We will review it again at the next Vestry meeting.

Parking Lot/Other Business

None

Prayer and Adjourn

Dates

Regathering Sunday: September 12, 2021; return to 8.15 and 10am (Baptism at 10am)

Minutes taken by David L. Carnahan, Clerk of the Vestry



August 17, 2021

Appendix A:

Christ Episcopal Church
Statement of Activities

Date Range: Jan 1st 2021 - Jul 31st 2021 | Includes Open Transactions

Accounts	Actual Jan 01, 2021 - Jul 31, 2021	Budget Jan 01, 2021 - Jul 31, 2021	Budget Remaining Jan 01, 2021 - Jul 31, 2021
Revenues			
Offerings			
40101 Pledge Income	164,617.89	189,321.00	24,703.11
40102 Loose Plate	607.00	490.00	(117.00)
40103 Misc. Income	43.03	0.00	(43.03)
40104 Xmas & Easter Offerings	2,715.00	1,200.00	(1,515.00)
40105 Donations	675.00	2,756.00	2,081.00
40112 Flowers	2,149.22	0.00	(2,149.22)
40113 Music Leader	2,000.00	0.00	(2,000.00)
40114 Regular Operating Support	18,140.09	14,941.00	(3,199.09)
40116 Reimbursed Processing Costs	155.92	0.00	(155.92)
40208 Summer Music	1,050.00	0.00	(1,050.00)
Total Offerings	192,153.15	208,708.00	16,554.85
Investment Income			
40202 Endowment Income	10,602.25	21,204.00	10,601.75
Facility Income			
40201 Facility Income	1,630.00	816.69	(813.31)
40220 Total Eclipse	21,000.00	21,000.00	0.00
40222 Roche Bros	3,850.00	3,850.00	0.00
40224 Town of Needham	5,881.60	5,881.00	(0.60)
40227 Bilingual Singers	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00
Total Facility Income	35,361.60	34,547.69	(813.91)
Total Investment Income	45,963.85	55,751.69	9,787.84
Total Revenues	\$ 238,117.00	\$ 264,459.69	\$ 26,342.69
Expenses			
50555 Property improvement (vestry)	8,445.05	6,041.00	(2,404.05)
Operations			
50101 Education - Clergy	1,200.76	500.00	(700.76)
50103 Music	277.00	550.00	273.00
50104 Office Supplies & Expense	2,720.99	5,938.00	3,217.01
50105 Postage	1,005.97	892.00	(113.97)
50106 Stewardship	32.89	0.00	(32.89)
50107 Sundry - Clergy	72.84	300.00	227.16
50108 Telephone	1,798.70	1,750.00	(48.70)
50109 Travel	1,500.00	700.00	(800.00)
50110 Treasurer/Finance (Audit)	6,366.13	9,258.00	2,891.87
50113 Family Ministries	147.33	498.00	350.67
50114 Adult Education	0.00	70.00	70.00
50118 Technology	2,004.16	1,662.00	(342.16)
50119 Copier	2,711.16	2,597.00	(114.16)
50124 Communications	912.92	820.00	(92.92)
50125 Fellowship	250.00	1,025.00	775.00
50126 Vestry Expenses	100.00	800.00	700.00
50130 Interest Expense - Green Loan	0.00	3,226.00	3,226.00
Total Operations	21,100.85	30,586.00	9,485.15
Worship/Altar Guild/Flowers			

Accounts	Actual	Budget	Budget
	Jan 01, 2021 - Jul 31, 2021	Jan 01, 2021 - Jul 31, 2021	Remaining Jan 01, 2021 - Jul 31, 2021
50111 Worship Expense	1,955.41	1,540.00	(415.41)
50122 Flowers	2,263.95	0.00	(2,263.95)
50552 Music Section Leaders	8,220.00	7,564.00	(656.00)
Total Worship/Altar Guild/Flowers	12,439.36	9,104.00	(3,335.36)
Outreach			
50201 Community Concerns	11,900.00	6,000.00	(5,900.00)
50203 Parish Partnership	1,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00
Total Outreach	12,900.00	8,000.00	(4,900.00)
Personnel			
50301 Payroll Expenses	90,412.63	84,406.00	(6,006.63)
50302 Taxes Payroll	4,283.53	3,729.00	(554.53)
50303 Insurance - Health	8,261.10	8,575.00	313.90
50304 Housing Allowance	18,826.35	20,394.50	1,568.15
50305 Church Pension Premiums	14,619.43	10,243.31	(4,376.12)
50306 Church Clergy Discretionary	100.00	0.00	(100.00)
50307 Bank/Payroll Service charges	1,170.63	0.00	(1,170.63)
Total Personnel	137,673.67	127,347.81	(10,325.86)
Property			
50401 Building Maintenance	4,708.34	14,742.00	10,033.66
50402 Janitorial Services	3,125.14	6,881.00	3,755.86
50403 Building Supplies	512.07	2,408.00	1,895.93
50404 Electricity	4,152.37	2,100.00	(2,052.37)
50405 Heat (Fuel & Gas)	12,718.17	8,510.00	(4,208.17)
50407 Insurance - General	13,389.00	14,876.00	1,487.00
50408 Building Repairs	3,048.74	3,764.00	715.26
50409 Sewer & Water	2,406.23	1,115.00	(1,291.23)
50411 Grounds	13,845.00	9,068.00	(4,777.00)
50413 19 Homestead Park - Reimbursable	3,410.71	0.00	(3,410.71)
Total Property	61,315.77	63,464.00	2,148.23
Diocese			
50501 Diocesan Assessment	10,602.25	33,559.00	22,956.75
Total Diocese	10,602.25	33,559.00	22,956.75
Total Expenses	\$ 264,476.95	\$ 278,101.81	\$ 13,624.86
Net Total	(\$ 26,359.95)	(\$ 13,642.12)	\$ 12,717.83

Appendix B: RJI Proposed Statement

Our Position on Racial Justice

In August of 2020, the Vestry of Christ Church Needham approved a resolution acknowledging the inequity of racism and charging our parish to respond, “beyond our convenience to love our neighbors as ourselves.” The resolution included commitments to learn about racism and engage in anti-racist actions and practices. (See the full text of the resolution below.)

The Racial Justice Initiative (RJI) was subsequently formed to consider the resolution and identify ways that members of the parish might deal with issues of racial justice as Christians and as concerned members of Christ Church. The RJI has worked to craft a message that reflects our church’s commitment to matters of racial justice. With approval by the Vestry, this statement is an important starting point for our church and is intended to help us develop strategies that

provide direction and accountability for who we are, what we believe and what we do as followers of Jesus to combat racism in our community.

As Christians and members of the parish of Christ Church:

- We acknowledge that even after the abolition of slavery, racial minorities have suffered patterns of intentional and systemic racism throughout the history of our country. These patterns of racism are self-perpetuating, leading to inequities in opportunities, wealth and power, generation after generation.
- We acknowledge that systemic racism continues in many aspects of our society including policing, housing, education, employment and the environment.
- We acknowledge that many in our community have benefitted from systemic racism that fosters white privilege, which keeps white people in power and able to access opportunity easier than people of color. Since our founding in the late 19th century, our parish has been knowingly and unknowingly complicit with these systems and institutions. We collectively acknowledge that such complicity is wrong.
- We strive to be anti-racist in our collective, personal and spiritual lives. This includes identifying and working to change implicit and unconscious biases within ourselves and others. We will also work with others in our community to encourage action toward racial justice.
- We believe that truly loving our neighbor requires fully recognizing the humanity in all people. We believe this involves the recognition and redress of past harms, the steady effort to make change, and the commitment to ongoing, respectful, honest dialogue to confront unpleasant truths and help promote racial equity.

RJI acknowledges this statement is long overdue and will be most impactful and meaningful when we are able to integrate it into our life as a Church community. We acknowledge that there may be differences of opinion regarding the content and necessity of such a statement. Nonetheless, we invite every member of the parish to reflect on its message and begin a dialogue in our shared spaces on how we can ethically reckon with racism, both individual and systemic, within in our church, our town and beyond.

About the RJI: In the spring of 2020, a series of brutal and senseless deaths involving people of color led many individuals in our country to recognize the ongoing and systemic crisis of racial injustice in America. In response, after candid conversations in its July, August, and September meetings, the Vestry charged a group of parishioners to help Christ Church Needham explore how we are called – individually and together – to challenge racism and, in doing so, to truly love our neighbor as Jesus calls us to do. The RJI was formed in October 2020 as a result of this charge. The RJI is co-chaired by Bob Keener and Cynthia Anderson and also includes John Carr, Lila Carr, Heidi Fieldston, Janet Haines, Stan Hitron, Sandy Kastantin, Brian Mukherjee and Donna Vello.

The RJI also curates a list of opportunities and resources for the parish and the Needham community concerning racial justice issues.

The resolution approved in August 2020 by the Vestry regarding racial justice issues in the Christ Church parish and our nation is as follows:

Whereas, it is the call of Episcopal Christians by our Baptismal Covenant (BCP, p. 305) to seek and serve Christ in all persons loving our neighbor as ourselves; and to strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being; and Whereas, we believe that all humans are created in the Divine Image (Genesis 1.27-28); and

Whereas, it is the call of all Christians to be “ministers of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5.18);

Therefore, the Vestry of Christ Church, Needham, Massachusetts, as leaders of this Christian community, acknowledges the inequity of racism.

In response, we will exert ourselves beyond our convenience to love our neighbors as ourselves by prayerfully:

~committing to exploration, listening, and reflection to understand the nature and sources of these sins.

~committing to engage in just actions and practices which promote the equality and dignity of all people.