

**St. James Cathedral – Chapter Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2009**

Attending: Very Rev. Joy E. Rogers, Rev. Kevin M. Goodman, Senior warden T.J. Ferrantella, Junior warden Ann Meuse, Treasurer Elsa Vaintzettel, John McNeill Anderson, Mary Jo Barton, Bill Cosper, George Culver, Phil Debush, Mary Downie, Cathe McEnerney, Duncan Moore, Rev. David Stanford, Amy Young

Staff: Bruce Barber

Guests: Deb Heau

The business meeting begins at 7:05 after a theological reflection on Matthew 25:34-40.

Consent agenda is modified by removing the attendance figures, at Mary Jo Barton's request. Passes.

175th Anniversary Celebration: Mary Jo Barton reports that we had \$7,000 in donations, plus \$4,000 appropriated by Chapter. Expenses were \$11,715.88. We might need to appropriate another \$1,000. Dean Rogers says we can find funds from other accounts to cover the difference.

Tithing policy: We discuss implementation of the tithing policy drafted by Bill Cosper. Dean Rogers asks Chapter's preference on selecting members of this tithing committee. She presents a proposed list of members. She will inform Chapter of those who agree to serve. T.J. Ferrantella moves to allow the dean to appoint the initial tithing committee as shown. She will have the option of substituting new candidates for those who cannot serve. Passes.

Chicago Consultation: A motion is made to accept a two-month extension to the fiduciary agreement. Passes.

Stewardship: A discussion is led by Dean Rogers. Stewardship is not the same as pledging; pledging is only one aspect of the stewardship God has given us of this place. We have so much work to do, not on our numbers but on our hearts and souls.

Whenever this community has taken responsibility for its life and mission, St. James Cathedral has had something to say to our city. When the people of this place have been diligent about our own soul work, then we have been a prominent voice in the city.

We need to work harder on pledging. We need passionate leadership, committed to being generous in our giving and our investing in this place. We have to care and want to make a difference. We spoke recently about givers who are not pledgers. She is much more concerned about pledgers who are not givers. Clergy can't make this happen. We can give theology, but we can't lead the way. Lay people have to lead it.

Endowment has been an easy out. Many people think, "My gift won't matter, because we have the investments." Stewardship at St. Luke's, Evanston, is shocking. They have no endowment. Their leadership has been able to call them to something

extraordinary. That congregation has been through a near-death experience and they know what they have and what they value. St. James has been bumbling along for its 175 years. This is the leadership that can set something loose. We have it all here.

Dean Rogers will lead a session on stewardship education next Sunday at 10 am. She invites members of Chapter to attend. That would lend credence to the importance of this effort. Stewardship events are being scheduled. Chapter people need to be at every one of these events and make the ask. Lay leadership need to show passion for St. James. We need to start working on stewardship education in the Chapter. We should talk about what people do want to say at these stewardship events. Why would someone want to send part of what they have to our congregation?

Mary Jo Barton reports on her stewardship event. It was a delightful function, she says. However, if we depend on these parties to do this, we're just preaching to the choir. Out of 21 people she invited, only nine came. They were all active and engaged and credible members of the community. Nothing came up. Nobody volunteered to reach out and talk to others. She thinks the event was a failure, because the ones who were there were already active.

Dean Rogers would not call it a failure. We're building relationships here. We don't do that well. We're not set up for that. The cafe in the lobby is starting to produce relationship possibilities. This isn't something we do for two months in the fall; it's something we do year round.

Cathe McEnerney says that anything that feeds us a people of God is positive, not a failure. One of the things that's missing here is spiritual growth and connection. Whether it takes place at a party, on the street, at events, it is feeding us. George Culver says the party was a lovely time, a very spiritual time. The fact that it was small meant that we could talk to everybody. He feels stronger bonds as a result.

Mary Jo says she tried to recruit a variety of types of people: young and old, single and married. It's no surprise that the 20- and 30-somethings have other things to do on Friday night. Many people just do church on Sunday morning, and there is no connection beyond that. It's very hard to break down that barrier and find people who have active lives socially, at work, and culturally. To get church or St. James itself into that mix will be tough; the barriers are very high right now.

Dean Rogers says this brings us back to relationships: if people want to be with people they enjoy, this will be able to compete with the symphony. If we build relationship in this community, we'll build our giving. These parties are useful for deepening these relationships, even if people already know each other.

T.J. says our behavior as leaders make a difference. He thinks we're jerks to each other too often. There is a nastiness to the tone of discourse in the congregation.

Mary Downie says that it is hard to build community in a big urban church. It's much easier in a suburban church. We have to work on this. Amy Young says she does not hear discouragement from the congregation; to the contrary, at the recent social justice meeting, we realized we did a lot in 2009. It's very exciting. We want to do even more in 2010.

John Anderson says we need to level with people what it costs to run our church. We ought to say, this is our high pledge, this is our low pledge, this is our median. Where are you in relation to others? At John's church, Annunciation in Gurnee, the average

pledge is almost twice as high as at the Cathedral. It took him years before he could be a sacrificial giver and be happy about it.

Duncan Moore suggests we introduce this relationship work into the Sunday services, by inviting parishioners to greet each other during the service and after. Dean Rogers opposes any such activity in the liturgy. She says it is easier to introduce such measures in a suburban church because they are more a monoculture.

Amy Young thinks the pledge numbers are embarrassing. We have the resources.

T.J. says he sees a lot of jerky behavior. People are being splintered and pulled apart. Pettiness is getting in the way. He has never been so confused in his life. He expects a much higher standard of people in church. Dean Rogers comments on the degree of backbiting in the congregation. T.J. thinks the standard of behavior in our congregation is not what it should be. He is not a participant in any other organization that behaves this way.

Duncan Moore says the church is not that different from any other human institution. Some people are satisfied, some aren't. Some engage in productive endeavor, some don't. You take what you find and make the most of it to build a Body of Christ. It's unrealistic to expect people to behave differently than they naturally do.

Mary Downie says a lot of people coming from a position of brokenness just need to talk about their issues and be heard. David Stanford suggests one-on-one relational meetings for the congregation. Kevin Goodman says he comes to church because he is broken.

Dean Rogers says some people want to complain without being held accountable. Nobody ever comes to the dean, the warden, treasurer to say directly what they think. There is a sort of round-robin of dissatisfaction but people don't own it. It's up to leadership to call for healthy accountability. T.J. says it is hard to foster a more positive sense of engagement in our community. He will not engage with people who are attacking the staff or the leadership.

Duncan points out that St. James people are more generous than it appears from the pledging data. Many St. James people gave generously to the Rent Party for CCHV, and they give to diocesan causes, Episcopal Charities, and a variety of other ministries.

Dean Rogers says that if congregants are not willing to give to this faith community, then we should close the doors. If giving to St. James is not a priority in your life, and we don't have enough people for whom it is, then we don't have a reason to exist. She believes that some people are reluctant to make a pledge to the general fund because they feel they have lost control of where the money goes.

Bill Cosper says that people give to the Summer in the City program because they see immediately what their dollars do.

Dean Rogers is experiencing some tension from old-time members of the congregation. New members seem happier. For example, some people from the 11 o'clock service are complaining about the new 9 o'clock service, and they don't even attend it. We need to grow in our capacity to be Christ-like. We need to understand where our neighbors are on the journey.

Common Mission Share: Motion is made to commit to pay a Common Mission Share of the diocesan budget, for \$131,116. Passes.

Nominating Committee for elections to new Chapter in January: Departing members of this Chapter, namely T. J. Ferrantella, Mary Jo Barton, Phil Debush, and Cathe McEnerney, are members of the nominating committee. They will recruit for three lay leader spots from the congregation and two clergy spots from the diocese. Dean Rogers has already recruited Rev. Stacy Alan from Brent House and Rev. Sara Ottersall, of St. Mary's, Park Ridge, plus Ruth Frey, a parishioner at All Saints, Chicago, to stand for election at Diocesan Convention.

George Culver would favor non-competitive Chapter elections, in which a slate is presented for vote by acclamation. Cathe McEnerney suggests that we be intentional about recruiting for Chapter, and try to find the skills we want on this body. Dean Rogers says we do not want people on Chapter who would be happier running a program, such as adult faith formation. John Anderson says he would never have run for Chapter at the Diocesan Convention if somebody hadn't put his name in. Cathe asks that an invitation be issued to the congregation from the pulpit. Bill Cospers says we should do some work on leadership development at the Cathedral.

Dean Rogers asks that we discern as a group who would make good leaders of this congregation. We need to have the strength to say, "This might not be your call." She doesn't want a "cattle call" for Chapter nominations.

Commission reports:

Social Justice: Amy Young reports that the group has met and is working on a list of priorities for 2010. A survey was taken of the congregation, yielding more than 40 replies. The group is sifting through these and seeing what the congregation is excited about.

Finance: George Culver presents some policy proposals from the Finance committee, including a policy that budget overages be approved by Chapter when they exceed a specific threshold.

Dean Rogers says this would be a nightmare. It is not workable for budget overruns to come before Chapter. She cannot work this way. A budget is merely a guideline. We are over budget on guest preachers. She never heard of a parish that works this way.

George presents policy changes on investment guidelines for the endowment. T.J. would like us to have a more comprehensive investment policy. He will put this on the consent agenda for the next meeting. Mary Jo Barton asks that it be a regular agenda item and not a consent agenda item.

Motion is made to send our commitment letter to the diocese for the Common Mission Share. Passes, with one abstention.

Real Assets: Ann Meuse reports that a new ADA-compatible door for the sacristy entrance to the plaza is on order from the manufacturer and should be installed in December. The roofing company has fixed leaks in the sacristy and organ chamber area. We will talk about costs and payments with our insurance company.

Meeting adjourns at 8:06 p.m.