**St. Brendan the Navigator**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Vestry and Search Committee**

**December 12, 2019**

Present: Lis Ingoldsby, Josephine Jacob, Barbara Kourajian, Tom van Buren, Martha Dane, Judy Miller, Luke Williams, and Fr. Edward Dufresne.

Present by video conferencing: Mirian Antich, Meg Graham, Curtis Flowers and Bill Scaife.

Senior Warden Lis Ingoldsby called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Fr. Dufresne read our Discernment Prayer as the opening prayer.

Fr. Dufresne stated he had consulted Michael Ambler to make sure his presence at this meeting in the role of consulting priest was not a problem. Fr. Dufresne felt his presence could be helpful in terms of process and that his background might be helpful in elucidating anything about the candidate. He suggested that when we got close to the vote, he would absent himself – he cannot and would not be engaged on the substance of the issue. Fr. Dufresne asked if this was OK with everyone. Lis said given his close involvement and work with us on the Renewal Plan, his presence at this meeting was appreciated and welcomed.

Judy Miller reviewed the Search Committee Process Report (included here on pages 3-5) with the Vestry. Judy said the Vestry has two responsibilities:

1) To make sure we did the process correctly and thoroughly

2) To vote to accept this person or not

Vestry members raised a question about the scope of the search – how many candidates applied for the job? The Committee said they closed the search after Candidate 4, as they felt they had found an exceptional candidate. It was unanimous this was their candidate of choice.

Barbara thanked the Search Committee for their diligence, thoughtfulness, and good humor through this process and then announced: “Without qualification, the Search Committee wholeheartedly recommends to the Vestry as our next Priest in Charge – Elaine Hewes.”

Miriam moved to approve the recommendation of the Search Committee. Meg seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Lis phoned Bishop Thomas Brown to request his consent.  Bishop Thomas stated: “I am so glad to hear this. Not only do I give my consent, but I give it with great excitement and a great amount of joy.”

There was some discussion on whether this position should be called a Rector or a Priest in Charge. The authority is the same, but one title might indicate more permanence. Lis will clarify with Michael Ambler when the Letter of Agreement is drawn up. For now we will call Pastor Hewes, our Priest in Charge Elect. (Elaine prefers to be called Pastor.)

Fr. Dufresne clarified the title/role of Pastor. He said “Pastor” is a magical, golden, highly spiritual term. It is a title of love, affection, and respect. It denotes an intimate pastoral-parishioner relationship; one that says we have bonds of affection between us.

Lis phoned Pastor Hewes to ask if she would accept the call. She replied: “It is a lovely offer and I gladly accept.” Her official start date will be June. Until then, she will be preaching two Sundays a month and will be continuing as the consulting priest for the Worship & Music Ministry. She mentioned there may be other opportunities to live into the relationship before June. After Pastor Hewes notifies her church in January, we can announce this call to our congregation. We were reminded of the high degree of confidentiality we need to maintain until the announcement is made.

  Miriam moved to accept Lis’s resolution of great gratitude and thanks to the Search Committee for their work, diligence, and the thoughtful process and ultimate result in presenting a candidate that will take us forward to grow and thrive. Bill seconded the motion. The motion passed. Bill noted that the Spirit has been with us. We agreed we needed to thank the Spirit as well as the Committee. We also expressed our deep gratitude to Fr. Dufresne, who put us on this path with the Renewal Plan.

We closed the meeting by reading the Prayer of St. Brendan together. The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Barbara Kourajian,

Clerk

**St. Brendan’s Search Committee Process Report**

**December 12, 2019**

*Almighty God, giver of every good gift, look graciously on the people of St. Brendan’s and guide our hearts and minds as we seek to discern your will for our future and seek to be drawn closer to you. Amen.*

Phase 1: Organizing the committee - Preliminaries

* January 31, 2019 Committee appointed: Martha Dane, Curtis Flowers, Barbara Kourajian, Judy Miller, Bill Scaife, and Luke Williams. Barbara agreed to chair the committee with help from others.
* Committee began meeting in February including a Zoom meeting with Michael Ambler to discuss the *Guide to Clergy Transitions* (2017) and the search process. Initial discussions:
  + Prayerfulness at every step of the process
  + Decided how to make decisions – consensus
  + Use of Zoom conferencing for meetings with the committee, Michael Ambler, and the candidates
* March 31, 2019 Michael Ambler visited St. Brendan’s and commissioned our Search Committee

Phase 2: Extending the Invitation to Potential Candidates

* The Office of Transition Ministries (OTM) Portfolio
  + Discussion of OTM questions and process for completion
  + A mailing to parishioners and an online form enabled everyone to respond to the questions.
  + A parish meeting on April 14th gave members an opportunity to share their responses
  + Input from nearly 30 parishioners helped the committee develop answers to the OTM Portfolio
  + May 21, 2019 Vestry approved the OTM Portfolio
  + Mid-June The position was posted on the Diocesan website and as a free listing on the *Episcopal News Service* (ENS) website.
  + Mid-August We opted for a featured listing on the ENS site for two months to reach a wider audience. This paid listing ($349) was our only search expense.
* Getting the word out
  + The congregation’s website became part of the church’s profile. The Ministry chairs updated their pages and a new link dedicated to the Search was created. A “Dear Candidate” letter, our OTM Portfolio, and information about Deer Isle were available to a potential candidate or anyone wanting to find out more about St. Brendan’s.
  + Encouraged our parishioners to contact clergy they know who might be a good fit and to encourage them to apply for the position
  + Frequent updates to Vestry and entire congregation via meetings and newsletters

Phase 3: Receiving Applications

* What an application includes
  + Candidate’s own OTM Portfolio which is a mirror copy of St. Brendan’s OTM
  + Resume
  + Cover letter
* How we received and handled applications
  + Michael Ambler received the application materials from the candidate
  + He checked with their Diocese to identify any issues that might prevent the candidate from going forward
  + He then forwarded the materials to the committee chair who forwarded them to the committee. For confidentiality, we decided to call the candidates by number, i.e., first applicant was candidate 1, then 2, etc.
  + We kept in contact with the applicant via email as to the status of their application

Phase 4: From Application to Decision

* Reviewing the application
  + Each member of the committee reviewed the application material.
  + We then met to discuss the material including any additional information we had from Michael Ambler.
  + At that meeting, a decision was made to move forward with the process or notify the candidate that their skills and talents were not what our church needed at this time. If we were moving forward with a candidate, a Zoom Conference or an in-person interview was set up.
* Prior to reviewing the applications, we developed a set of interview questions for the candidates. We used these questions with all the candidates we interviewed in order to maintain consistency. Each committee member asked the same questions with each interviewee and took notes on questions asked by other committee members for the interview summary.
* The summary of the interview was circulated to the committee members for their review.
* A second decision was made to determine if we wanted to move to the next step in the process. If the candidate was strong, we waited until other candidates were interviewed before we determined the next step which included the candidate’s visit to Deer Isle and the committee’s visit to the candidate’s church.
* Because of our decision to go forward with our candidate of choice, we did not find it necessary to have the candidate make a visit to Deer Isle or for the committee to visit the candidate’s church.

Phase 5: Making the Call - ***The Veil of Confidentiality***is critical during this process

* When a decision is reached by the Search Committee, the Senior Warden is notified and a special meeting is called.
* At that meeting, the Vestry reviews the process of the Search Committee, satisfies itself that the Committee did its work thoroughly and prayerfully and that the Vestry understands the reasoning behind the recommendation.
* Then the Vestry passes a motion to call the candidate as Priest in Charge
* The following steps happen in quick succession, starting with this evening
  + The Senior Warden telephones the Bishop (or Canon) to notify him of the selection and to ask consent
  + The Bishop consents to the call
  + The Senior Warden telephones the candidate to extend the call, and follows up with a hard-copy letter
  + The priest accepts the call. This is a continuum that begins when the priest says “yes!” and concludes when the Letter of Agreement (LOA) is signed by the priest, the Warden on behalf of the Congregation, and the Bishop and Canon.
* Once the LOA is signed, the new PIC and the Senior Warden will decide when and how to make the announcement. ***The Veil of Confidentiality***is also critical during this process since the newly elected PIC will have people/churches/congregations to notify.
* The Senior Warden will determine when the veil of confidentiality can be lifted, and the St. Brendan’s congregation notified.