

September 30, 2021

Priest-in-Charge Report
Submitted September 30, 2021

*“Morale was deteriorating, and it was all Yossarian’s fault.
The country was in peril; he was jeopardizing his traditional rights of
freedom and independence by daring to exercise them.”*

Joseph Heller, Catch 22.

1. Thank you! Although I am not quite there yet, I am getting to know St. Paul’s and every day brings new learning. Thank you all for your warm welcome. I am excited about what we can get done in this transition period and how we can prepare for the arrival of your new Rector. You have truly made Marcie and I feel right at home.

2. Nominations In consultation with the Wardens, I propose that the Vestry present a motion to the Annual meeting that would waive the by-laws and allow the current Senior and Junior Warden to stay as members of the Vestry for 2022. TaMara would step down in regular fashion and three new vestry members would be elected. For 2022 we would have 11 vestry members keeping the odd number; we would also be able to keep the current leadership during this transition period without upsetting our normal three-year-cycle. Barbara and Becky’s service would end with the Annual Meeting in January 2023.

3. Technology I have written-up a separate technology report which is posted elsewhere. I do wish the permission of the Vestry to appoint a technology committee which would assist me in making decisions relative to the technological needs of the parish and then presenting proposals to the vestry.

4. Proposals Proposals from the University of Michigan Flint and from Partners for Sacred Places have been received after months of development. I propose that tonight, the Vestry authorize the Wardens working with Walt and I, to go forward in approving both proposals. The archival of historic material is extremely important allowing the parish both access and ownership, and the proposal from Partners is work that will need to take place as part of the search process anyway. Granted, the work of Partners will be superb because they not only help but teach. I commend you all in working toward this laudable undertaking and I support both proposals.

5. Administrative Assistant There is a great need to hire a new Administrative Assistant as soon as a suitable person can be found. You are welcome to tell people that the part-time position is available. I have received permission to move forward from the Wardens and Treasurer. I believe that it is in the best interests of the parish to hire someone who is not affiliated with the parish. At first, I will embark on a low-key search.

6. Ministry Groups and Reports, Short Meetings and Committee Work

Ministry groups need to keep the Vestry fully informed by submitting monthly reports. These reports should come from the lead (Elder) of that group. The lead person need not be a member of the Vestry. The Finance and Building/Grounds reports will be

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part of the reports of the Treasurer and Junior Warden respectively. If the group did not do anything since the last vestry meeting, then no report is warranted. The reports should be submitted to me via attachment to an email (or in the email message itself) on the Monday prior to the Thursday Vestry meeting. The Minutes of the meeting should be out within a week or so after the vestry meeting. All reports will be posted on the vestryinfo website as they are submitted.

Unless there is a decision to be made, these reports are submitted for the information of the vestry. They can be read prior to each meeting, but they need not be discussed. I think it is a good thing if someone moves that the reports be received.

The Vestry is a policy-setting and decision-making body. The Vestry is not a committee. Committee work is best done during committee meetings and then reported to the Vestry with a proposal (suggestion/recommendation) to be decided upon by the Vestry. A proposal submitted by a committee is automatically on the table it need not be moved or seconded.

I really like short meetings and most of the time, I think the Vestry should be able to meet efficiently. If we are all prepared (that, is we read reports prior to the meeting) there is no reason that a meeting must last more than an hour or so. I need your help to make that happen.

7. Diocesan Convention At the Diocesan Convention in Lansing, the Standing Committee (the ecclesiastical authority when there is no Diocesan or Provisional Bishop) will present a Bishop to serve as the Provisional Bishop for both Eastern and Western Michigan for the next 3-4 years. A provisional bishop is an ordained bishop who may have served as a Suffragan or Diocesan Bishop but has not yet accepted full retirement. This individual will most likely begin their tenure with us after the first of the year. Only one candidate will be presented by the Standing Committee. In a sense, this is a vote of affirmation of the decision by the Standing Committee (operating jointly with Western Michigan). A "no" vote is highly unlikely.

I will conclude my three-year (albeit interrupted by my service in New York) term as a member of the Diocesan Council. Although eligible for re-election, I chose to seek a three-year term as a member of the Standing Committee. I am also a member of the Building Bridges Steering Committee which is working on ways in which the two dioceses can work more closely together.

Will Eastern and Western Michigan become a new Diocese? Hard to tell, there are some loud negative voices mostly from the northern portion of the lower mitten. We now share three staff members and there is a great richness in learning from each other. The process will need General Convention approval which puts this under a time constraint. Stay tuned.

8. Phone Thanks to you all, I have a new dedicated rectorbatphone. The number is 810-836-8727. You are welcome to use my personal cell as well. The phone has unlimited voice and text. I am having a minimum number of business cards printed with the new phone number. The phone and new email address will be transferred to your next Rector down the road.

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9. Out

I will be out of town on November 7 attending the Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame Induction ceremony in Topeka. The Reverend Heather Barta will be the guest celebrant that morning as the parish celebrates All Saints Day.

Blessings everyone,

Don+