

Priest-in-Charge Report Submitted September 20, 2022

1. Acknowledgement: As priest-in-charge, I hereby acknowledge the resignation of Ferrell as an elected member of the Vestry of St. Paul's Church.

2. Appointment: In accordance with the by-laws of St. Paul's Episcopal Church I hereby appoint the following current members of the Vestry as the Nominating Committee

Vestry 2019-2025			2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
TaMara Oertel										
Barbara Mannor										
Rebecca Bennett										
Bommarite		Maggie Hart								
Jan Bugbee										
Ed Henneke	D	vacant								
Walter Peake										
Elizabeth Jordan										
Ferrell Katzenberger	R	vacant								
Joel Arnold										
Tina Morrison										
Celeste Lord										

Barbara Mannor
Becky Bennett
Maggie Hart
Jan Bugbee

They will meet soon and elect a chairperson. They may also invite others to join them in their process of selecting two candidates for a two-year term. Jan Bugbee is eligible to run for a second term. The nominating committee, may select a candidate for the one-year remaining on Ferrell Katzenberger's term which ends in 2024 as Ferrell was elected under the by-laws at that time.

The nominating committee will also select four delegates and at least 2 alternates to attend the General Convention in 2023. Although unknown at this time, it is possible that the vote to allow the juncture of the Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan creating a new Diocese within the Episcopal Church.

3. Current Problem The Barth Hall door can be unlocked from the outside and remain under a magnetic lock on the inside doors of the air-lock. There is an intercom system from the Administration office to the air-lock that (at the moment) only allows the office to hear but not speak to people in the air-lock. There is a "garage-door opener" and a switch that allows the inside doors to be opened remotely. The doorbell from the air-lock rings in the Administrator's office. It also rings (loud buzz) in the Rector's office where no intercom or opener is available.

With the elimination of the administrative position, the only way to answer the door is to walk either to the Administration office or to manually open the door, which when alone may not always be a safe practice.

The new security system would solve this issue, allowing the door to be opened in more than the one location.

The phone system is old and antiquated. In comparison to new systems, it is difficult to program and does not allow integration with the web or a security system. It does work and with the new modem provided by Comcast, it may continue working for a long time. I understand it is about 15 years old.

The solution is to purchase a new security and phone system which is expensive and may be beyond our means at this time. We believe it could be done for 10-12,000.00. I would ask the Vestry to request the Treasurer and Director of Finance to report back to the vestry on if funds are available for this capital purchase beyond budgeted operational funds.

4. Not now, but when the Next Rector...I believe it would be best if the discretionary fund could be a little easier to use, have a clearly defined confidentiality so that pastoral sensitivity is not betrayed, and have some regular stream of funding. As it stands, the fund is part of our operational funds thus a second signature (in addition to the Rector) is required which defeats the confidentiality. By Canon, the fund can be supported through the budget or by the loose offering of one Sunday per month.

My suggestion is that the discretionary fund be allowed its own checking account that resides with the Rector but is reconciled by the Director of Finance. That the Discretionary Fund Policy that I have proposed be adopted. Finally, that the account receives the loose offering from the first Sunday of each month, and that the purpose of the fund and its collection be regularly announced. At this time, the fund has about \$90.00 for the rest of the year.

5. In the area of technology, I wish to commend and thank Edythe for her good work with our website and our FB page. I hope that you notice all the new things on the website including posting of Vestry Minutes, Epistles, the Master Calendar and all things going on at St. Paul's. If we were to hire a web-manager who would do all the work that Edythe is doing, it would cost between 10-20,000.00 a year. No kidding!

I restored an older computer for Ed Arter and am in the process of rebuilding two others. However (ug) for some reason our Internet interconnectivity is down between

our main juncture and Ed's office. I am working on it.

We have an amazing back-up system. Our server backups numerous files from most of our computers in the building within seconds of when the files are created. It even backs-up iterations of those files while they are being made, thus if a file is corrupted or (oh that cannot happen to me) a person slips a finger and erases a file, an older copy is still available. Amazing huh?

The monitor speakers in the chancel have been installed and are working. We now have the ability to use a small hand-held camera that ties into our other cameras for live streaming. We have had a problem with low audio for people watching. Mostly, the solution is on the receiving end by turning-up the volume, but now the technician can check through a pair of earphones to make sure that the audio we are streaming is up to par.

6. Passion can be a problem

I am extremely pleased with the work done by our Finance Committee and my appreciation is extended to Maggie, George, TaMara, and Becky. They truly care about our current predicament and the work and study they have done is first rate. I hereby extend this public apology for my own passion concerning transparency and budget writing in a style and format that is quite a bit different than what St. Paul's has used for many years. I am neither always right nor always polite. I sometimes get forceful or passionate more than is needed. I hope it shows just how much I have to grown to love this place, and my own (be it good or not) hope for its future. My apology as I never meant to offend anyone.

7. Tonight

I am "over the top" delighted in our gathering in August and totally delighted in the responses of our people. From my first day I have been praying that I might see a subtle turn from the Vestry being individuals that supervised to a group or entity that found ways to love and show compassion. Through that love and compassion, the vestry becomes servant leaders instead of board members or trustees or something else sterile. I heard love, I heard vestry caring and kindness for one another in ways I had never heard before. I heard the vestry speak of itself as a community. WOW! This is how a system of 2 or 150 years can be defeated. These moments of real community cannot be programmed, legislated or demanded. They happen when our spirit is aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit and we look to each other for answers. This happens when we care more about the feelings of others than we do our own comfort. This happens when we are more committed to doing the right thing than we are concerned about the economical or worried about what someone might say. I will look back on that gathering as a real breakthrough. I pray this is a new beginning.

8. Easter 2023

Easter Sunday will be my last day as your Priest-in-charge. We can talk more about my leave taking in February and March. I had a long and productive chat with our Canon to the Ordinary and as I stated to you all at our gathering, I am aware that I am not doing as well as I would like. I was contracted to be here for 12-18 months with the hope that a new Rector could be found in that time. With a number of things, I would still like to finish, we have accomplished most of the items that were on my list one year ago. Some things are going to wait for a new vestry and a new priest. Other things, like the trust cake will take more time. Intervening or mitigating an ongoing system (ref Heather) is hard work, and yet you have been working on it and I am proud.

I am growing in my belief that a new Rector can find StP as a home. I love the steps taken to find a new and unique mission for St. Paul's and the recognition that what has been done is not always we should be done.

I am worried about the hard choices ahead – considering a part-time-rector (try not to say part-time-priest as priests are priests 100% of their lives after the ontological change of ordination). I wonder if we have reached a place where the people of St. Paul's may consider taking out a community mortgage – that its borrowing our savings from ourselves to keep the parish alive. When those funds are gone, the parish will then have a “come to Jesus” meeting about its next steps. If at that time our attendance is in the 40s, we have a nearly empty building, our membership is below 100 people and we are unable to sustain our operational expenses a new decision will need to be made. This idea would make such a decision corporate..i.e. one that we all make. In a way, an annual major deficit is doing much the same thing without making sure it belongs to everyone. Survival is not a mission, and this kind of structured decision-making could allow the parish a reasonable amount of time to talk about strategic future, legacy and planned departure. Can we chat about this?

Gossip is terrible, so allow me to answer questions that have not been asked... officially (honestly!):

- a) Neither Marcie or I have any major diseases that we did not have before we took the position.
- b) I have **not** been offered another big job. No! In fact, I have committed to a three-month sabbatical for the rest of April through July to figure out what I want to do now. After 38 years of ordained ministry, I need a break. I have never taken a sabbatical before and while this one will not include pay, I plan on enjoying it and enjoying being with Marcie. Although a diocesan policy to provide the rector with a sabbatical every 5-6 years, my parish at the time said no.
- c) We plan on living where we live.
- d) Any typical discussion of any future relationship with St.P. will be held with the 2023 Senior Warden and Canon Little at some future date. I will let Canon Little know, and your SW that if StP does not have a Rector (or Priest-in-Charge) I will be willing to serve in case of a funeral or if permitted schedule a wedding. I would also be happy to continue pro-bono IT work. All of that is up to Canon Little, your SW and then re-discussed when your new Rector arrives. S/he would have total authority in that area.
- e) We are not taking a trip anywhere beyond 1000 miles.
- f) We are not buying a farm for our animals.
- g) I do plan on having more to do with Amateur Radio and model railroads.
- h) Marcie and I love each other deeply and plan on living together the rest of our lives, but thanks for asking.

i) I am tired, and I do feel more burn-out. I have no loss of faith, but I am worried about the future of the church and the lack of any movement toward merging not just with another diocese but maybe with another denomination. I think the pandemic has caused more harm to the parish than anything I have ever seen.

k) I do plan to do some kind of "paid" work No clue what. I do not think there is a major market for old geeks, but I am working on a certification or two if my brain works. I will not be welcoming you to Walmart nor asking if you want "fries with your meal."

l) I plan on continuing with my diocesan assignments as a member (VP) of the Standing Committee, Building Bridges task force and the Budget Committee. I also have enjoyed being a search consultant for St. Jude's and would love to do that again. I have volunteered 12 times to serve as an instructor for the Coppage-Gordon and the Academy but have been turned down. I might try teaching as that is my first love. I will also supply.

Blessings,