

Minutes of the 2011 Annual Meeting
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
December 4, 2011 – 10:00 a.m.

Father Robert Salamone called the meeting to order. He indicated that the minutes from the 2010 annual meeting have been posted at the website all year so they will not be read. Bill Connerat moved that they be approved. Robin Johnson seconded and they were approved as posted.

Fr. Robert nominated Sue Boatright to serve as secretary for this meeting and nominated the following tellers: Hank Seward, Julie Miller, Mark Dodson, Vince Howard, David Gossett, and Terrie Seward. Mark Dodson moved that the election of these officers be approved. Jane Payne seconded and the motion passed.

Introduction of Nominees and Election of Vestry:

Dee Forester, chair of the nominating committee, thanked other members: Curt Collier, Marty Kemp, Joe Clements, Steve Hall, Gillian Ball, and Jason Miller. The slate of nominees approved by the vestry included Emily Kleiber, Sondra Lange, Jeff Stephens, Allen Stovall, Carol Bowles, Jeanette Rowe, and Kim Ripps.

Ballots were distributed with instructions to vote for four candidates in order for the ballot to be counted. Other requirements for voting include being at least 16 year of age, being part of the parish for the past three months, being a faithful communicant in good standing, receiving the Eucharist, being faithful in working and praying for the mission of the church, and being a financial contributor of record.

Faithful Servant Award:

Fr. Robert indicated that about three years ago we began to gather and reflect upon those in our parish family whose lives have touched Emmanuel. There is never a shortage of nominees for our Faithful Servant award.

This year the committee bestowed special recognition upon Balfour Hunnicutt. Dev and Jean Weeks shared comments from many individuals highlighting his fine qualities, humorous incidents, and many years of service to Emmanuel. Balfour thanked all who have been so wonderful to him and his family over the years.

Rector's Report:

Fr. Robert began his comments with a prayer. He noted that this was our sixth annual meeting together. As Emmanuel's twenty-first rector he has now served longer than 13 of his predecessors. During the past year there have been 14 baptisms, 22 confirmations, 24 new families welcomed, four couples married, and 15 individuals buried.

Aside from statistics that do tell part of our story, we have also prayed, worked, and played together well. We are a peace-filled community, not distracted by issues that could keep us from unity and ministry. We have been able to accomplish so much due to shared responsibilities and mutual ministries. It is time for us to be thankful, each of us for all of us. This is what being part of the Emmanuel family means.

Our life this past year has been focused on the many prophetic voices among us whose roles are to get people ready for the possibilities that are yet to be. We don't always know how God's will unfolds for us over time. During this Advent season we have the ability to reflect on the invitation that comes to each of us to follow Jesus. We take these weeks to ponder that invitation, received also by prophets of the past. Advent is about active waiting, not about being passive. We are called to respond to God's grace, not just in Advent, but during all our days together. God's plan is still at work.

The complexion of Emmanuel is about to change. As external changes take place, so our interior lives can change. We build things as a church as a part of our purpose, creating spaces for people to grow in their relationships with God. We bring together what is scattered into unity, to prepare as those who have gone before us did and for those who are still to come.

Athens is changing and growth will happen. We can invite others to come and share our joy and welcome them into our community to continue doing the works of God, mission and ministry together. Even when there are so many needs in the world, it is alright and necessary to build buildings, as long as we always realize that God's temple is within the lives of those who love him.

Fr. Robert believes that the people of the church want to engage in God's mission, want to be involved in those discussions, and will fund God's mission. The "2011 Annual Report" speaks so well of how the parish has funded and supported mission and ministry in this church.

There is much more to be done—prayer, works, seeing God as we serve the poor, doing the work of evangelization. What would it be like if each family sought out someone who did not attend any church and brought them to Emmanuel? What if they stayed? Imagine how our church would grow.

Fr. Robert thanked the staff and vestry for their service and asked the congregation to support them with prayers. He closed by praying, "To God Alone Be the Glory."

Senior Warden's Report:

Butch Bush will remain Senior Warden for 2012 and feels privileged to serve in this capacity. He has been pleased with the level of volunteerism in the church. During the recent Thanksgiving dinner planned by Dee Forester and Lindsey Payne there were more than 150 volunteers.

Butch named and thanked the outgoing vestry members. He noted that Marty Kemp and Dee Forester, who both served as Junior Wardens with him, were the very best people to work with. Butch continued by honoring: Lee Albright and Sue Boatright (vestry clerks); Jenny Broadnax (Flower Guild); Debra Lassiter (Altar Guild, now Junior Altar Guild); Johnny Terrell (18 yrs. as treasurer); Marty Kemp (Evening of Chance, church picnic). There are many more unnamed volunteers. It has been a privilege for Butch to have his wife, Janie, help him stay focused as Senior Warden.

Butch has thoroughly enjoyed watching the growth of the building campaign. Our goal has always been 100% participation regardless of the amount. To date we have \$3.1 million pledged for the new building and that should be received over the next two years. The building costs bids are mostly under budget and should be finalized by the end of January 2012. As Butch prayed that we would not have a mortgage as we came to the end of the campaign, two wonderful events occurred. The Emmanuel Endowment Board voted approval of an outright gift of two million

dollars and another fortuitous gift of one million dollars was granted from the Luther and Susie Harrison Family Foundation. Butch added that we are very humbled by this grant.

Fr. Robert interjected that many hours have been spent procuring this grant and thanked Janie Bush for writing the grant. He added that there are several people in the parish yet to be heard from.

Butch verified that the Huddle House closed their business October 31. Their building will be razed soon and ground breaking for our new construction will begin in the spring. Ten months later we are expected to have occupancy.

Steve Fornier and Lee Gaby have done a wonderful job with the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). We are having a difficult time getting more volunteers for this ministry. These people have come to us for help. Please put this on your plate and consider helping IHN.

Butch thanked Mike Fitzgerald and the endowment board for their work. Matthew Hicks has done an outstanding job chairing MEMC (Missions and Extended Ministries) by distributing over \$1.5 million during the last three years in Emmanuel's name. Matthew has also been instrumental with the refugee ministry. We desperately need coordination for this. There will be volunteer signup boards set up soon for the IHN and refugee ministries.

Georgia Collier is the new director for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Butch mentioned Peg Wood's many dedicated years of service for this and thanked other team members: Erika Greene, Cindy Sullivan, Kerrie Hogan, Ellen Dolphus, Penny McLanahan, Jackie Campbell, Jay and Cathy Shinn.

Gus Backelant and Curt Collier coordinate usher groups for the two services. Women are also encouraged to participate in this.

Administrative Support Commission:

The Administration Support Commission has been formed that now coordinates the work of four earlier groups: Cornerstone Society, finance committee, endowment board, and stewardship. This change has improved communication. As head of this committee, John Albright has projected that our 2011 budget will be balanced with no deficit. Committee members (John, Butch, Billy Bowdoin, Fr. Robert, and others) have put together a balanced 2012 budget. Butch thanked the congregation for their contributions to make this a reality.

Debra Harden reported for the Naming Opportunities Committee consisting of Crysty Odom (chair), Janie Bush, Naomi Norman, and Debra. These are opportunities for contributions made to the capital campaign to be given in honor or memory of someone. This will be published in a special edition of the Tower with an update on the campaign. Name levels were chosen based on the commitment this congregation has to our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd: Blessing, Shepherd, Lamb, Manger, Candle.

Recognition of Godfried Nimely:

Fr. Robert told the story of Godfried Nimely, a young Liberian diplomat who came to us six years ago needing assistance. After working three jobs for several years, he has just attained U.S. Citizenship status. We are happy for him and his presence at Emmanuel. Godfried spoke and thanked everyone for the opportunities provided for him to become a citizen. Fr. Robert thanked Lee Gaby and Terrie Seward for helping Godfried.

Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Class:

Fr. Robert spoke of the outgoing vestry class that started out very strong three years ago. God has blessed us in so many different ways during their tenure. Fr. Robert shared some thoughts on each of them: Carol Bowles ably stepping in to fill Chuck Galis' term; Curt Collier, always there to give immediate historical perspective on issues; Joe Clement's passion for stewardship; Marty's dedication to fund-raising and doing new things; and Dee who never says "No" to anything she's asked to do. Fr. Robert presented each of them a gift as thanks for their service.

The "2011 Annual Report" cover has four pictures of the astoundingly building that will soon be a reality. This vestry class has been deeply involved with its planning, meeting almost weekly. The new plan will bring all ministries together. We will be able to expand and do much more by opening up the facilities to the public for those in need. God is blessing this effort. For those we haven't heard from yet, it is not too late to participate.

Questions/Comments:

Blue Wood spoke about the "Nets for Life" campaign administrated by Episcopal Relief and Development. When Bishop Alexander visited nine months ago, he noted that there is nowhere on God's green earth where the mission of Emmanuel does not extend. The diocese has set a goal of 35,000 insecticide-treated nets to go to 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Twelve dollars buys one net, and our church has set a goal of 250 nets. Checks may be put in the offering plate and directed to that mission. Please sign the list on the table by the office if you order nets from the ERD Gifts for Life catalog. Fr. Robert encouraged participation in this mission by adding that these nets will save lives by reducing incidents of malaria.

Mary Moore mentioned church outreach and thanked Erik Wells for his leadership in coordinating the building of the second Habitat for Humanity house. Among many Emmanuel volunteers were Lee and John Albright and Bill Bowdoin who were present almost every week.

Lee Gaby related a story of paintings of Bible scenes he saw at an art gallery. One represented a scene from Genesis with God speaking to Abraham, a reminder of the possibilities that God has prepared for us. Another painting showed Jesus with his disciples facing him and his back to the painter. Though you could not see his face, the face of Jesus was reflected in those of his disciples. Lee was inspired by the paintings and has seen the Lord in faces at Emmanuel.

Fr. Robert reminded everyone about the Christmas Pageant starting in the sanctuary at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 18, with a parish reception following in the Common Room. Melanie Rowell is directing it with the help of Jared Berry and Erika Greene. There will be music, dancing and treats.

Presentation of the New Vestry Class:

Fr. Robert thanked all who stepped forward and their willingness to serve. It was an honor to have all in the process, even if they were not elected.

Congratulations to the new vestry class: Carol Bowles, Kim Ripps, Jeff Stephens, and Allen Stovall.

Fr. Robert closed the meeting with a prayer at 11:35.

Approved by: John Albright, Carol Bowles, Butch Bush, Rob Byrne, Curt Collier, Dee Forester, Debra Harden, Sean Hogan, Matt Humphrey, Sandy Jarrett, Marty Kemp, Mary Moore, Beverly Sligh, Jason Miller

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Boatright