

**ST. MARK'S CHAPEL**

**MINUTES FOR ANNUAL MEETING**

**JANUARY 23, 2011**

**Call to Order:** The Annual Meeting for St. Mark's Chapel was called to order by Warden Scott Shaffer at 11:30 a.m. in the nave of The Union Church, Port Royal, South Carolina. There were 43 attendees.

**Opening Prayer:** St. Mark's Chaplain, The Rev. Dr. Robert Hansel, offered the opening prayer.

**Minutes of 2010 Annual Meeting:** The minutes of the 2010 Annual meeting, held on January 24, 2010, were read and were approved by acclamation.

**Chaplain's Remarks:** Fr. Hansel offered remarks on the status of the chapel. According to Fr. Hansel, the resilience and patience of the St. Mark's congregation is a marvel. We have much to be thankful for, especially the ministries that the congregation members have nurtured; as we develop those ministries, we will continue to be blessed. Fr. Smith, the chapel's Chaplain Emeritus, added that one of the greatest blessings we have is a devoted chaplain, Fr. Hansel. The congregation agreed.

**Treasurer's Report and Presentation of 2011 Budget:** Bob Pinkerton, Treasurer, distributed the year-end financial report and offered a short review: In 2010, rather than a projected 30% growth in revenue, the chapel experienced a 56% growth. In response to St. Mark's first stewardship drive, under the leadership of Paul Wiske, who was absent due to family illness, pledges are much higher than the national average. Ten percent of the chapel's unrestricted pledges/giving goes to The Episcopal Church, USA. As to the 2011 budget, the chapel is projecting a 39% growth, with a positive balance at the end of the year, despite the financial commitment associated with the Paris Avenue building housing the Sunday School and other chapel activities. The report was approved by acclamation.

**Warden's Review:** Scott Shaffer gave a thorough and often moving summary of the progress of the chapel since its organization in 2004. His report, too important to summarize, is reproduced *in toto* (with **emphasis** added as needed):

"...the Collect for Second Sunday after Christmas:

*O God, who didst wonderfully create, and yet more wonderfully restore, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, thy Son Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever. Amen*

Last year, this report was largely dedicated to the evolution of St. Mark's beginning with the initial founding in November 2003 and working through home church locations, services at the Room by the Bay of the Sea Island Inn, and for a brief period in 2009 services at the Port Royal Masonic Lodge.

In November 2009, we moved to this historic Union Church in Port Royal for the first service on Advent Sunday. Here we have enjoyed a very pleasant, **beneficial partnership with the Historic Port Royal Foundation** which was pleased to once again have this wonderful, historic building used on a regular basis for the worship of God. Cooperation with the Historic Port Royal Foundation has been possible through our contacts with the Foundation president, Anna Ellerbe, who has been so graciously supportive and helpful. Our **clergy support** has been excellent led by our Chaplain, Bob Hansel, with able assistance from Chaplain Emeritus, Roger Smith, and our frequent supporting minister for many St. Mark's years, Jack Nietert. Additionally, we have a list of about 8 volunteer supply priests located in the area, most of them retired, who have stepped up to fill in when necessary. Many of these saints conducted services during Chaplain Hansel's absence in the winter.

So my view as of last year's meeting was that of St. Mark's in a mode of evolution. My sense is that we spent the year 2010 in maturation. This being our first complete year in Union Church, we have focused on many of the plans and goals which were established in a Chapel retreat last February. Of 21 such foundations/wishes, we have progressed in most all areas, but I note **6 to be really strong areas of maturation** for us. They are: the work with families with children, promoting a sense of community (including becoming involved Port Royal activities), practicing unity and meaningful diversity with committed lay leadership and gifted clergy, encouraging visitors to become members and the incorporation of expanded music into our worship program.

Our commitment to children and Sunday school this year was a major one with our entering into an **agreement to rent the previous Twenge law office as support space**. This followed a search of the area for the best located, most appropriate, and least expensive space. We decided to enter into this agreement realizing there was some financial risk involved but also realizing that providing adequate space for our Sunday School program was non-negotiable. Since then, we have found the space, obviously, useful for other St. Mark's activities as well such as weekly Bible study, book study groups and our chapel committee meetings. We still would possibly entertain the notion of working with a suitable co-tenant if one becomes available. We also are beginning to explore the possibility of sharing the space for a reasonable expense compensation with another community service group, which would thus become a major outreach program for St. Mark's Chapel.

One sign of our maturation was reflected in **our initial service of Holy Baptism**, JAC Cadien was the first, and then later performed the role of the Christ child in the first ever Christmas pageant. Sunday school programs are in full swing; although it still is a small group, we expect continued growth. No one who saw it will ever forget **the Christmas pageant** in all its enthusiastic splendor. Nor will we forget a youthful, Spanish moss bearded Isaiah staring in a Sunday School rendition of scripture during a pre-Advent chapel service.

**Our attendance continues to grow** with usually over 50 in regular attendance and a record of 101 attendees on the Christmas pageant Sunday. The **lay ministry leadership** of St. Mark's is continuing the focus of spreading the word and our ministering to each other and to the outside primarily through the "SWEEP Program." This stands for Service, Worship, Education, Evangelism/growth and Pastoral care, and you will hear about this ministry structure later in today's meeting.

We have continued in **our outreach ministry** to Family Promise, the partnership with St. John's Lutheran and St. Peter's Catholic to homeless families. We have members who continue working with the Good Neighbor Medical Clinic, in particular the Medi-Assist part. Other members have worked with Habitat for Humanity, and we provide financial support for the Episcopal Research and Development Fund, the Hilton Head All Saints Episcopal ministry to the Dominican Republic as well individual participatory support of HELP and CAPA.

We are in the planning stages of **increasing our association with the All Saints Parish on Hilton Head**. So far, we have coordinated on some Christian education endeavors in which our DRE has assisted them. We are considering a forum of regular clergy exchange, perhaps monthly or quarterly, and will continue to be supportive of their Dominican Republic outreach. Under the leadership of Angie Twenge, St. Mark's held the first Halloween Trunk or Treat on Paris Avenue. Under the auspices of the Evangelism Commission, chaired by Alison Davidow, we participated in the Port Royal Christmas parade and won third prize, and we decorated a Hospice Christmas tree.

**Our music program** now includes more musical selections during each service and provides an opportunity for those wishing to participate in a "pop-up choir" to do so. The expansion of this ministry under Diane Mullis-Waddell, has been spectacularly on key.

A major focus this year was the establishment of **a formal pledge drive** under the leadership of Paul Wiske. That successful drive more than doubled the budgeted pledge receipts category for this year with 35 pledges and a pledge budgeted total of over \$41,000. That success will, obviously, help us defray the major expense of the St. Mark's Annex on Paris Avenue and hopefully enable a future increase in our contributions to outside agencies and ministries.

Now for some super news! A **meeting last Wednesday with the Bishop of South Carolina** here at St. Mark's Chapel was extremely encouraging in gaining support for increasing our association and shared ministry with the All Saints Parish. We will also have support in developing a Confirmation procedure as well as a process for the licensing of lay chalice administrators. Bishop Lawrence was very cordial, respectful, attentive and even humorous at times. We believe that he now sees the Chapel from a whole new perspective and was pleased with what he saw. We did not get into serious discussion about mission status for now. However, it was very clear that we see that as our eventual goal, and he seems content with that.

There is no question that we continue to be guided by the Holy Spirit and that this first full year in Union Church has been one of successful maturation, continuing to provide the foundation for our growth spiritually and educationally.

I want to have one final sad note in reminding you that **our chaplain of the last two years will be leaving** in May to become the Vicar at the Church of the Resurrection in Little Switzerland, North Carolina. This is a six-month position, and he will be back in South Carolina in October. However, our intent is to locate someone who will be able to take over the priestly leadership of St. Mark's Chapel.

We are not panicked about this. We have had changes before, and our lay leadership has always stepped up and provided the efforts necessary to keep St. Mark's on the move and growing. As indicated earlier, in Roger Smith and Jack Nietert, we have two stalwart contributors to St. Mark's over the last years, and both expect to continue working with us. We also have a cadre of other padres willing to step in when necessary. Obviously, we will keep the Chapel community posted as developments occur. In the meantime, I encourage your prayers, continued support of St. Mark's Chapel and your contributions to our continuing maturation. ..."

Warden Shaffer ended his comments with a reading from St. Patrick's Shield

**SWEEPS Ministries Reports: Plans for 2011:**

- Worship: Anne Errington, coordinator, requested that persons who sew would be greatly appreciated since St. Mark's is in need of altar cloths. For 2011, Anne would like to explore the concept of alternative worship services and more music added to our services.
- Evangelism: Alison Davidow reported that the Evangelism/Growth ministry, building on 2010, would like to develop a series of events, some for the St. Mark's family and some for the greater Port Royal community, that could use many members of the congregation to organize and assist and to look forward to as St. Mark's builds its own traditions. The events include a family Mardi Gras celebration, a community Easter Egg Hunt with Christian Education, a summer picnic, and a repeat of the Trunk or Treat and Christmas Parade events of 2010.
- Education: Lee Shaffer, Education coordinator, asked for additional volunteers for Sunday School. She thanked the current and past teachers as well as the Sunday School music director, Gail Hodsdon. She also talked of possibly expanding Education to include Adult education, which will involve a exploration of timing on Sunday, location, and topics of interest to adults.
- Pastoral Care: there was no report as such; however, the Warden was happy to report that Mary Anna Hanke and Jeanne Dunn have agreed to coordinate this ministry together in 2011.

**Chapel Committee Nominations Sub-committee Report:** After giving thanks to the departing Chapel Committee members, Warden Shaffer reported on the slate nominated by the Chapel Committee to serve for the next two years (one position) and for the next three years (two positions). The slate was as follows:

Jim Crower – term to expire at end of 2012

Christina Wilson – term to expire at end of 2013

Susie Kearney – term to expire at end of 2013

Each nominee rose and gave a brief background of their personal history and their experience with the Episcopal Church. The congregation voted for the candidates unanimously.

**Sharing: Issues, Discussion, and Suggestions:** Warden Shaffer opened the meeting for congregation comments:

- Anna Ellerbe offered to work with St. Mark's on placing its activities on the Port Royal community calendar which is planned for the Port Royal website. Kit Bruce, who works with the Port Royal Farmer's Market, offered to help, too.
- Nikki Cadien spoke about raising funds by placing a St. Mark's account in a consignment store; St. Mark's could also participate in a Port Royal yard sale.
- Patti Kraft spoke about fund raising by offering barbeque at Port Royal events, such as street concerts in the spring or July 4<sup>th</sup> at the Sands.

All of the suggestions were greeted with enthusiasm by the congregation; Warden Shaffer had to call the meeting back to order after animated discussion broke out.

**Dismissal:** The Annual Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Davidow

Former Clerk, St. Mark's Chapel Committee