June 22 Parish Meeting Summary

The June 22 parish meeting provided an opportunity for parishioners to hear directly from Vestry members about the recent decision to transition the Ministry Coordinator and Music Director positions from full-time to part-time, effective January 1, 2027, and to ask questions about the decision and the future direction of St. John's.

Vestry members explained that the decision was made after several months of reviewing the church's financial position, staffing model, and long-term sustainability. They shared their belief that reducing personnel costs will create greater flexibility for future ministry priorities, including outreach, youth ministry, facilities, and support for a new rector. Vestry members also said that the timing of the decision was influenced by guidance the Vestry received during the diocesan transition process to address significant financial and organizational issues before calling a new rector.

Much of the discussion centered on differing perspectives regarding the church's financial outlook. The Treasurer presented financial information indicating that the church is currently meeting its financial obligations. He said staffing changes are not necessary at this time. Vestry members acknowledged the church's current financial stability while emphasizing that their concern is the long-term sustainability of the parish and the need to reduce reliance on a staffing model they believe is not sustainable over time.

Parishioners shared a wide range of responses to the decision. Many expressed appreciation for the ministry and dedication of the affected staff members and voiced concerns about the potential impact on worship, music, pastoral care, children's formation, volunteer coordination, and other parish ministries. Many expressed deep hurt, concern, and frustration with not only the decision but the process for the decision.

Others asked about plans for maintaining these ministries should staffing levels change and encouraged the Vestry to continue developing a long-term vision for parish growth.

The meeting also included discussion of several operational matters. The congregation was informed that the parish bookkeeper and IT support will be leaving at the end of July, and Vestry shared that efforts are underway to recruit and train replacements to ensure continuity of financial and technology operations.

An update was provided on the rector search process. The Search Committee has completed interviews with a finalist and anticipated completing its discernment work in the coming weeks before making a recommendation to the Vestry.

Throughout the evening, parishioners asked questions regarding staffing benchmarks, volunteer capacity, future budgeting priorities, children's and youth ministry, communication with the congregation, and the process used to reach the staffing decision. Vestry members responded to these questions, acknowledged that some implementation details remain under development, and committed to continuing communication as plans progress.

The meeting concluded with encouragement from clergy and lay leaders for continued prayer, respectful dialogue, and unity as St. John's continues its season of transition.