

Vestry Expectations for Decision-Making

As baptized Christians and members of the Vestry of St. Paul's, we believe:

1. The Church is the Body of Christ in the world today. As such, God has much to accomplish in and through us as we work together as the Vestry.
2. God is an active and living presence among the Vestry as we meet.
3. The Vestry must seek the mind of Christ when making decisions on behalf of our faith community.
4. Insight into God's call to *Innovative Mission for Christ* flows from our trust in God and our commitment to listen for God's guidance on all issues before us.
5. All Vestry members must respond with love and humility to what we understand to be God's call for our faith community.
6. Prayer is central to our work as a Vestry. As Vestry members, we commit ourselves to ongoing prayer and formation so that we continue to progress toward greater self-definition and renewal in the Body of Christ – offering ourselves in service for the good of our faith community.

To best serve God, the Vestry will:

1. Be clear and intentional in determining which matters the Vestry will decide and which matters the Vestry will delegate to others;
2. Own and support all prayerful decisions made as a body;
3. Not revisit a decision, once made, unless important new information becomes available or a majority agrees it is in the best interest of our faith community to reconsider;
4. Delegate authority to others as appropriate, trust those to whom we have delegated, embrace their service, and hold them accountable for appropriate action; and
5. Not disturb the decisions of those to whom we delegate responsibility unless they have violated our expectations for decision-making or the Canons of the Church.

As a Vestry, we will trust and support any person or committee whom we have asked to take responsibility for decision-making in our faith community provided this person or committee has:

1. Prayed for God's guidance on the question;
2. Gathered as much information as the decision-maker believes is reasonable, given the time and resources available;

3. Worked to ensure that all decisions and actions are consistent with God's call to *Innovative Mission For Christ*;
4. Made a genuine effort to consult those known to care most deeply about the matter (stakeholders); and
5. Acted in accordance with the Canons of the Church, in the best interest of our faith community as a whole, and within the authority delegated by the Vestry.

As a Vestry, we will hold all decision-makers, as we hold ourselves, accountable to these tenets. If the nature of the delegated authority is not clear, the Vestry encourages decision-makers to return to the Vestry for clarification or additional authority. In this way, we pray to deepen our love and our trust as we resolve issues and make decisions for our faith community.

To serve God and encourage the presence of the Holy Spirit, Vestry members commit to:

1. Respect one another's time – beginning and ending meetings on time;
2. Attend all meetings of the Vestry unless genuinely unable to attend - having given the Senior Warden advance notice and reason for the absence;
3. Be guided foremost by the interests of our faith community as a whole and by God's call to *Innovative Mission for Christ*, rather than by our individual or affiliated interests;
4. Express our prayers and opinions openly and without reservation, feeling free to disagree (without being disagreeable);
5. Respect and honor one another and affirm each person's right to express a different view;
6. Listen – to each other and to others in our faith community;
7. Recognize that conflict is normal, essential, and capable of being managed;
8. Address points of conflict directly, not through murmurs or triangulation, and insist that others do so as well;
9. Respect confidentiality; and
10. Trust God to empower us to do our best, knowing that God asks us to be faithful, not perfect.