

Vestry Candidates for Election

Bill Blizzard

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Personal Context

Gifts: Sense of humor, analytical skills, vision

Contribution: Church leadership through the Vestry and member interaction within this body requires not only a person of vision and prudence it also requires an individual with the attitude and ability to build consensus with a dash of humor thrown in for good measure.

Expertise: Retired Managing Partner 40 person architectural firm; Board of Governors, St Pete Chamber of Commerce; Board Member, Leadership Florida; President and Board Member, Florida Association American Institute of Architects (AIA Florida); President and Board Member AIA Tampa Bay; Treasurer and Board Member, Victoria Shores Condominium Association.

Connection with the Church of the Good Shepherd

Membership: Before attending for the first time, I told Becky, "Any church that would hire a woman priest is worth considering." Fulfilling this expectation I continue to enjoy the moment of silence before worship, a time to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, sharing God's Peace, God phones, relevant sermons, a welcoming Eucharist, and community outreach.

Strengths of Congregation: openness, genuine civility, community feeling

Opportunities: grow the music program, seek greater diversity, and develop a few BHAG's (i.e., big hairy audacious goals)

Challenges: youth appeal, so many missions/so little time, re-purpose Peace Park

Service to the Church

Volunteer: Served on the 2016 Annual Audit Committee - Portion relating to The Furniture Thrift Shop and Compensation/Benefits

Fulfilling and Why: Exposed to the wonderful work being done by The Furniture Thrift Shop and The Little Thrift Shop, both for the community and with the money raised

Frustrating and Why: Not applicable

Service to Other Organizations

Volunteer: Choir - St Thomas Episcopal Church, Denver Colorado; Planning and Historical Commissions, St. Petersburg, FL; Statewide Outreach Director, Campaign for Florida's Chief Financial Officer, 2006; Policy Director, Campaign for Florida's Gubernatorial Candidate, 2010; Others listed as "Expertise" above.

Most Fulfilling: AIA Florida

- Led architects' focus on business acumen, community involvement and leadership skills
- Co-developed and promoted regionally focused initiative to unite AIA Florida with the Caribbean: "Business Horizons of the Americas"

Frustrating and Why: AIA Florida - Managing architects is like herding cats

Declaration of Candidacy

I am submitting my name as a candidate for Vestry, to be voted on at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation. In so doing I am affirming that I meet all of the requirements of an elector of the Church of Good Shepherd, as set forth in Canon VII, and I give permission for my responses to this questionnaire to be distributed to the members of the congregation to assist them in forming their decisions about which candidates to select.

Diane Niford

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Personal Context

I believe three of my strengths to be my faith in God, optimism and love for people – all people.

Past experience as a fiduciary while working in the retirement industry as a registered nursing home administrator, and later, as a financial advisor; a positive and caring attitude, belief in serving all God's children, a belief in actively assisting my church family in its worship/missions /goals is what I would bring to the Vestry of Good Shepherd. My career choices as a fiduciary, the "middle child syndrome" of working to bring people together despite differences and 50 years as an active congregant in 8 churches would be helpful as a Vestry member concentrating on mission and purpose.

Connection with the Church of the Good Shepherd

Good Shepherd's "motto" of COME AS YOU ARE drew me into a pew ... and the very warm and welcoming congregation led to my commitment to join and serve.

Our greatest strengths are 1) an engaged and joyfully spiritual Priest 2) the warm and actively involved congregation and 3) the emphasis on mission, outreach and inclusiveness.

Our most compelling opportunities are 1) the great need in our area, 2) the current need for "obvious/ongoing" ecumenicalism and 3) a constant awareness of the fiduciary responsibilities to our church family.

Three challenges I see are 1) an aging congregation 2) the need to replace/increase membership 3) being aware, also, of inclusiveness WITHIN the congregation.

Service to the Church

I currently serve on the Prayer Team, the Prayer Chain, serve as usher/welcomer, and on the Worship and Finance Committees. Prayer and people are my love – committee work is my responsibility to our church family and to God, as we do His work. I no longer enjoy kitchen work ...

Service to Other Organizations

Volunteerism began with Y Teens in high school and progressed to 30 years as a Sunday School teacher, Youth Group leader/Bible study teacher, participated/taught Bible studies, numerous church committees, Cursillo leadership; AAUW, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, HOA committees; and 20 years of "all duties as assigned" as a Methodist clergy spouse. I enjoyed all of it!

Vestry Candidates for Election

Cheryl Sharpe

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Personal Context

I have been a member of Good Shepherd since 1983. Brian and I were married at Good Shepherd June 29, 1985 and have been active in many areas since then.

My three greatest strengths are: desire to serve others, leader, community involvement.

Service to the Church

Served on three Vestries. Previous Sr Warden twice, previous Jr Warden twice, previous Endowment board president and Vice President previous delegate to convention, Christian Formation liaison, Prayer team, served on Fellowship.

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Delegate to Diocesan Convention Candidates for Election

Rhiannon Sharpe

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Personal Context

I would like to be considered for a Delegate to Convention. I attended Convention October 2017 for a period of time.

I feel my three greatest strengths are: Working with children and youth, team player, good communicator.

Service to the Church

I have served on previous search committee and am a Sunday School teacher and nursery assistant and am on the Prayer team. I have also been a lector and acolyte.

Declaration of Candidacy

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Endowment Fund Board Candidates for Election

Robert E. Bellavance

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Personal Context

- 38 years of chamber of commerce management as the chief executive officer. Retirement years spent in community service totaling 18 years. Organization development experience.
- Ability to develop agenda, executive objectives, develop annual reports, financial planning, visioning exercises. Establish strategic planning. Experience with both accrual and cash accounting. Public speaking skills.
- Graduate Institute for Organization Management, served as a class advisor in post graduate programs.
- Experience as volunteer District Commissioner of Boy Scouts of America
- Served on boards of directors of United Way
- Served eight years as chairman of Alexandria, Virginia Industrial Development Authority
- Served as secretary, West Hartford, Connecticut Center Development Authority

Connection with the Church of the Good Shepherd

Objectives: Keeping outstanding pastors and providing them with excellent living facilities now and in the future. Plan for the best use of Peace Park. Plan for the future of the furniture store complex.

Service to the Church of the Good Shepherd

Work with Parking volunteers— very gratifying effort. Member of Peace Park Task Force, which is a puzzle that needs far more attention. I enjoy both experiences.

Service to Other Organizations

- Dunedin Chamber of Commerce Government Committee
- City of Dunedin Committee on Aging
- City of Dunedin Public Safety Committee
- City of Dunedin Causeway Bridge Task Force
- Member and past president Dunedin Rotary Club

Endowment Fund Board Candidates for Election

Shirl Ahrens

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Personal Context

- Three greatest strengths: Commitment to service, analytical and organizational skills, honesty
- Able to contribute to the Board: 17 years experience on GS Endowment Board; Non-profit fundraising for private college
- Education/training/expertise: Collaborative work on other boards and professional committees; Graduate degrees from UCLA and The Ohio State University
- Competencies in reading/analyzing financial statements? Yes; Endowment Fund Board experience, small business partnership with responsibility for financial records, Former CA licensed tax preparer

Connection with the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Why a member: I chose Good Shepherd in 1997 based on solid doctrinal preaching, an active and vibrant parish that was welcoming and integrating, and was moving toward a program church with definitive goals and seemingly good leadership that would provide me an opportunity to serve God with others. My loyalty has continued through the thick and thin years since then.
- Greatest strengths of congregation: Revitalization due to Pastor Becky's energy and leadership... new members/players in leadership roles who have created fantastic new in-reach programs and many out-reach ministries serving as a beacon of hope to those in need; Loyalty to Christ-centered worship traditions; A welcoming and dedicated church family.
- Most compelling opportunities: To prioritize our outreach ministries and consolidate our volunteer efforts to enhance the Furniture Thrift Shop mission, thereby enabling growth/prosperity/community impact; For the parish to continue identifying itself and establishing its purpose within the Dunedin community; To continue opportunities for spiritual growth
- Challenges facing congregation: Strengthening financial base and financial stability so as to achieve zero-dependency on the Endowment Fund; Enlarging membership to include people of all ages; Establishing a long-range plan for the survival and enhancement of Good Shepherd in the future (in perpetuity!).

Service to the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Served as volunteer: Endowment Board, Finance Committee, Fellowship Committee, Shepherding Team, Visitors' Table, Greeter, Meals of Hope, Coffee Hour, Visioning Team, Wonderful Wednesdays, Rib Fest, Shrimp Boil, Parking Lot Team, Grace House, Peace Walk, Magnetic Church Committee, Audit Committee, Capital Campaign - Major Gifts comm.
- Why personally fulfilling: Collaboration in doing the Lord's work to help others, while having fun
- Any not enjoyable: Only when volunteers are unreliable

Service to other Organizations

- As volunteer: Chair, Heartland Board of Directors; Reception committee at former church; Macalester College Alumni Association (former Board of Directors, FL admissions chair, FL events chair, former CA regional admissions and events chair, Class Agent/Fundraising, Reunion Committees-Major Gifts)

- Most personally fulfilling and why: College alumni work; advancing the opportunities for education while working with reliable/committed people of all ages.
- Not enjoyed as much and why: A condo association committee — filled with negativity

Other Information

- Retired college professor
- Former summer restaurant owner in the Cape Cod of the Midwest!

Carolyn C. Hughes

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Personal Context

- Three greatest strengths: Personal integrity, responsibility and compassion.
- Able to contribute to the Board: I spent 33 years in the investment business either managing retirement, endowment and operating funds for large corporate and state and municipal entities or overseeing their management by others. I believe this background uniquely qualifies me to serve as a trustee of the Church of the Good Shepherd's Endowment Fund where I have been a board member for the last six years.
- Education/training/expertise: I have a BBA in Finance and my CFA designation (Chartered Financial Analyst) which is highly valued in the investment business.
- Competencies in reading/analyzing financial statements? Yes.

Connection with the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Why a member: I joined eight years ago after moving to Dunedin. I was drawn by the welcoming and warm congregation.
- I have become active in several aspects of the Church's missions, including as a lector and as a member of the choir. I am also a member the Bells of Hope which brings me great joy. I believe our greatest challenge and opportunity is to help grow our congregation. We are building a wonderful reputation in our local community and our active participation in community events is growing and recognized. I hope to help continue to grow that visibility and attract more members.

Service to the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Endowment Fund Trustee, Reader, Lector, Bell Choir and Choir

Service to other Organizations

- Current active member of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary where I am Boat Crew Qualified and participate in Search and Rescue practice drills with the US Coast Guard and conduct patrols in our AOR from Anclote to Clearwater. We are also active in training new crew and conducting classes in recreational boating safety in Northern Pinellas.
- I was a member of the CFA Society of Atlanta for many years where I served as Secretary, Vice President and President as well as a Trustee.

Other Information

- I respectfully submit my candidacy to The Endowment Board of Trustees and our congregation.

Delegate to Diocesan Convention Candidates for Election

Michelle Schombs

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Personal Context

I believe some of my greatest strengths are: the ability to work with volunteers, accepting the marginalized and consideration of how decisions will affect others. I hold a BS in Exceptional Student Education and a Masters in Education Leadership and Administration. I believe both of these educational degrees give me an understanding of the way in which the Diocese functions and how to serve others who may be persons who are not engaged in the church due to disabilities or circumstances. I would enjoy serving as a delegate to the Diocesan Convention so that I may help all voices in the Diocese to be heard.

Connection with Good Shepherd

One of my personal reasons for being a part of this parish is its size. Good Shepherd connects and serves many needs of the parishioners. We also, are big enough to accomplish great things within our community and for one another. Good Shepherd is a place where it is easy to find a place to serve each other and have opportunities for outreach in many ways. Currently my volunteer activities are: serving as Co-Director for the Pack-a-Sack team, as a chaliceist and lector, co-facilitator of the adult program, Surveying the Meadow, a member of various committees at time and as the ECW president-Elect of the Diocesan Executive Board of the ECW.

Service to other organizations

I have served at other churches on the Sunday Fellowship hour committee, as a member of the Cold Weather Shelter committee, teaching Sunday school and directing the Children's Choir. I have been a member and office holder for Assistant Principal's organization and the Council for Exceptional Children. I most enjoyed working with students with special educational/behavioral needs allowing them and their families to find success in often stressful situations. I have found that most of the service experiences I have encountered give me joy and a sense of accomplishment. The rare occasion when I have had less than satisfying experiences typically have come when I felt that I had not met the expectations of the group.

Miriam Benitez-Nixon

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Personal Context

- What do you consider to be your three greatest strengths or gifts? Honesty; dependability; willingness to serve
- Please describe any education, training or expertise that would be helpful in serving as a Delegate; College graduate; legal secretary/office manager for 30+ years.
- How will your experience, strengths, gifts or interests contribute to your ability to serve as a Delegate? My 30+ years in the legal field has prepared me to review and evaluate documents and proposals. I can be counted on to complete the required tasks expected by a convention delegate.
- Why do you want to serve as a Delegate? I want to serve my church.

Connection with Good Shepherd

- Why do you choose to be a member of the Church of the Good Shepherd: I enjoy my church family.
- In what ways have you served as a volunteer in this parish, currently or in the past? Manage The Little Thrift Shop; church directory; church brochure; lector, chaliceist, shepherding team; parking lot team member; shrimp boil/rib fest volunteer; anniversary dinner chair; anniversary dinner journal fund raiser; wherever I am needed.

Service to other organizations

- In what ways have you served as a volunteer in other congregations, civic groups, or service or professional organizations, currently or in the past? SHINE volunteer; Advisory Board of the Area Agency for the Aging Pasco Pinellas; lector, chaliceist, choir member (and anything else that needed to be done) at Grace Episcopal Church City Island; Usher at Ruth Eckerd and the Capitol Theater; co-founder of the City Island Theater Group; Clearwater Deanery Secretary of ECW three years; ECW Diocesan Secretary: two terms 2014–2017 and 2018–2020.
- Which of the above volunteer experiences have you found to be most personally fulfilling, and why? Funding the City Island Theater Group — started from scratch and built it to continue when we left City Island. It is now in 19th year.
- Which of the above volunteer experiences did you not enjoy as much, and why? I enjoyed them all!