

# EARLY RETURNS ARE IN: re Last night's Service Times discussion by Vestry.

July 18, 2018 at 12:28 PM

From Ed Kelaher

To Vestry, "carybuckingham@aol.com", "(edkelaher@aol.com)"

 [Vestry Sun...t Comments.docx 21.94 KB](#)

Dear Vestry,

I sent the email below (and attached in pertinent part) just this morning.

Since then, I have spoken to some clergy, our Music Minister, and our Children's Minister. All key stakeholders in this. I received immediate and wise feedback.

They love our thinking and are on board ***except, except, except*** for a couple of things we did not anticipate. The main issue is the recruitment and presence of Sunday School teachers who are not amenable to being here until Noon. Katie Freer, our Children's Minister, reports that recruiting teachers is a big and ongoing difficulty ordinarily. Having Sunday School at 11:15 will make it far worse she says, dreading the prospect. Others think strongly that our 11:15 education proposal will drag things past Noon negatively. There was also a strong consensus that Sunday School attendance will drop significantly if it begins as late as 11:15. Of course, each of you is free to directly contact and speak to Katie, Peter, Gary, Nate, Matthew, David Reeve, or anyone else you may wish to consult. While the final decision rests with the Rector, my heart and style are set on seeking your wisdom as I pray.

But there are some positives in the changes suggested by these key stakeholders (note though, I have not yet shown all this to our Verger, David Reeve, who is a genius at this sort of stuff, nor to our Greeters and Ushers.)

Here is the way the staff and clergy would change what we discussed last night, summarized by me to you earlier this morning:

## Suggested Model Number 2

8:00 (not 7:45) out by 8:50	Rite I Worship (this is usually a 50 minute service). Continental Breakfast follows. ( <i>Peter Crisafulli suggests this change.</i> )
9:00	Sunday School, Family Forum, Rector's Forum, Choir Rehearsal. ( <i>Good that 8 o'clockers can attend.</i> )
10:15 (not 10:00)	Rite II Worship, switching to Rite I during Advent and Lent. ( <i>10:15 opens needed time buffer or in-between time.</i> )
11:15 or so.	Chef Glenn's Brunch for the entire 10:15 community. An adult education offering in the Library or Memorial Hall.

This goes against the Senior Warden's appealing comment that it is better to worship first and THEN go to a Family Forum session. It also goes against Elizabeth's reply comment this morning that kids might roll in disruptively if Sunday School is at 9. But the stakeholders speaking to me this morning are making clear that it would not be functionally good to go that route. Katie feels it will be a big negative and she is central and key to all of this.

My feelings about this Model Number 2 proposal are good (but this is not from the whole Staff by any means). I like its simplicity, I like its flow. Those who already come at 9 can still come at 9. Those who prefer things later will still have an educational opportunity after the big service. Starting at 10:15 gives a full hour for education (from 9 to 10), while leaving 15 minutes for drop-off/pick-ups of kids and any "late class starts" due to Elizabeth's proper concern that kids may dribble into the class at the start. The change makes Chef Glenn's meal a major focus point for everyone.

I'd be glad for your reactions. Again though, remember what was spoken last night. There is NO perfect plan. We cannot optimize this but merely maximize the results given the complicated constraints. We need to choose something simple that is best for our people and best for newcomers walking in to be with us. Right now I like the what we said last night, as altered by the Staff above. Your thoughts?

Ed+

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**From:** Ed Kelaher

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 18, 2018 10:29 AM

**To:** Vestry <Vestry@allsaintschurch.net>; 'carybuckingham@aol.com' <carybuckingham@aol.com>; '(edkelaher@aol.com)' <edkelaher@aol.com>

**Subject:** Last night's Service Times discussion by Vestry.

Dear Vestry,

I was blessed by your enthusiastic and spirited discussion about service time changes. It wasn't even on our Agenda, but clearly it should have been because your responses were inspired and wise. It was of great, great help to me and my prayerful discernment of the way to go forward.

Below and attached is what I remember of the discussions. Will you please feel free to correct me by sending any additions, deletions, or modifications you might recall or suggest?

The biggest impacting change is having the Forums and Sunday School at 11:15 instead of 9 o'clock. That takes some thinking, but as spoken last night, the consensus of the Vestry is that your newly suggested lineup is just fine for most all concerned.

The bright spot, is that families will not have to get up so early and scramble and hurry to church. Perhaps the ease of coming later will encourage greater attendance by some households. That needs to be prayed over, too.

Thanks you over and again. Your collective wisdom will make us so much better.

I will now take this to the Staff and ministry leaders for their reactions to your good work.

The final decision may not be true to what is below and attached, but we now have a great starting point.

God bless you!

Ed+

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## VESTRY CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION FOR SUNDAY MORNINGS

**Present:** Rip Wilson, Cindy Wade, Bill Gray, Elizabeth Wrege, Catherine Dunlop, Susan Billington, Cary Buckingham, Stephen Awad, Jonathan Stroebel, Matthew Kozlowski, Ed Kelaher.

**Absent:** Charles Fiegl, Dan Batlle, Thomas Espy.

### Helpful Thematic Composite Quote

*"I've been in a lot of churches.*

*There is NO perfect Sunday morning lineup.*

*No matter what is done, there will positives and negatives.*

*Each church does it their own way.*

*We need to choose a format that is best for our people and most friendly and accessible to new people at our church."*

## First Choice By Majority (not unanimous)

7:45 Rite I Worship  
 9:00 A separate Adult Education/Forum type offering  
 10:00 Rite II Worship, switching to Rite I during Advent and Lent  
 11:15 Children's Sunday School, Rector's Forum, Family Forum  
 Food service to be provided through the morning in some form or fashion.

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### RANDOM, YET HELPFUL COMMENTS FROM INDIVIDUALS PRESENT.

(The Rector's paraphrases.)

1. We love the new 10 o'clock service because it's easier than 9 to get up and get there, the Choir is present, the congregation is larger, the spirit is better, it solves the 11:15 attendance concerns, it's easier on the Altar Guild, it's easier on the Ushers and Greeters, it's easier on the Acolytes, and it looks better to newcomers to see a full church instead of a sparsely attended service. ***(This is a composite of several comments.)***
2. We don't want a 9 o'clock Family Forum. We like when the Family Forum follows worship. So, let the Forums and Sunday School begin at 11:15.
3. I'd rather have Family Forum and Sunday School at 9 and Worship at 10. It gets us out earlier and we don't want a drawn-out morning.
4. I wonder if Sunday School attendance will suffer if it is scheduled at 9 o'clock.
5. It's good to have some kind of an adult offering at 9 no matter what else happens. It will give the early service something to go to for the first time ever.

And those who are determined to arrive at 9 will have something solid to attend. if we switch to a 10 o'clock service.

6. Perhaps have the later service at 9:30 instead of 10 to help get everyone out earlier.
7. 9:30 is too early for my elderly family member to get up, get dressed, and be there, and that will be true for several others for sure.
8. 9:30 is too early for the Choir to come, vest and rehearse for an hour, and be ready to sing.
9. 9:30 is too drastic a change for 11:15 people.
10. We're not doing anything else Sunday mornings, so we don't really mind if we stay until 12 instead of 11.
11. As a current 9 o'clock attender, being at church from 10 to 12:00, or so, isn't much different than being there from 9 to 11:00, or so. Our current schedule is far later for those who attend the 11:15.
12. Not mentioned but of concern to the Rector: Parking congestion if we have one service. Yet, it works fine on our larger Sundays already.
13. A member of my family likes the option of coming to a Rite II service at 9 or a Rite I at 11:15. This will remove that option and the 7:45 service doesn't have enough music to make it a viable alternative.
14. ***Don't mess with the 7:45 service whatever you do.***

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