

## **Petition to Dissolve St. Brigid's of Kildare in Rio Vista.**

We, the undersigned, being the Senior Warden and Secretary/Treasurer of the Mission Committee, make the following petition based on the unanimous consent of the Mission Committee, which consists of 7 members:

### PETITION FOR DISSOLUTION

This Petition of St. Brigid of Kildare Episcopal Church, Rio Vista, California, is addressed to the Convention of The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Northern California, and represents the following:

- I. St. Brigid of Kildare Episcopal Church, Rio Vista, was established as a mission congregation of this Diocese on November 8, 2013 by affirmation of the Convention of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Northern California and has retained mission status to the present day.
  
2. The Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) in 2013 was 20. In 2021, after services resumed in person in the church, the ASA was 13 which included an average of 8 in the sanctuary and 5 on Zoom. In 2022 for the year through August 14, the ASA is 11, again including in person (7) and online (4). Of course all those numbers include supply priests and deacons. Those online are either physically not able to come to the church or are located at a distance too far to attend.
  
3. In 2005 20 people organized as a group of worshipers in the home of one of the founders, the Harris family. That group eventually moved into rental space in various locations in Rio Vista. Its final home is its current space which has been our home since 2009. For many years we had no Priest but used supply Priests and a volunteer Priest. In 2013 we employed Rev. Lucretia Jevne in a part time position as our Priest-in-Partnership. She presided 2 Sundays per month and her husband, Father Walter Phelps, presided alternately. During the years since 2013 St. Brigid's organized community service projects such as an annual Children's Clothing Exchange, a Health Fair; we have organized and hosted benefit concerts, held a very popular afternoon tea, all proceeds of which supported our local community needs. In addition, most of the members have been involved in many community service projects. Since Rev. Jevne retired a few years ago, St. Brigid's has employed three supply Priests who serve in a regular rotation for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Sundays of the month. Morning Prayer services have been held on the other Sundays led by lay members of the church.

4. St. Brigid's suffers not just from a declining membership and attendance but also an absence of anyone willing and capable of leadership. Of the seven current attending members of St. Brigid's 5 are members of the Mission Committee and have served on the Mission Committee in one position or other for the last 4 years. A sixth person, not a member of the Mission Committee, is our Clerk. The current Senior Warden has served 4 different terms as Senior Warden and has been on the Mission Committee for 8 of the last 9 years. Our Treasurer has served in that position for 4 years both on and off the Mission Committee. Our Treasurer also serves as our "church administrator" creating bulletins, reports, newspaper announcements, etc. Our Junior Warden is serving her second term on the Mission Committee and has also served a year as Senior Warden. Another member of the Committee has spent many years at St. Brigid's as our only Altar Guild person and our ex officio "sexton", doing whatever necessary to set up for the Sunday service, putting up the signage, sweeping down the walkways, feeding the landlord's cat and even cleaning out the litter box!
5. Rio Vista is a small, rural community that reflects the current nationwide trend of declining church membership in rural areas. In spite of many years of events and programs enjoyed by our community, none of these outreach efforts have resulted in new members. During the COVID shutdown we conducted services every week on Zoom and once returned to the Church in person, continued to hold hybrid services. The result has not been encouraging and there has, in fact, been a decline in attendance. Under the circumstances, we see no way forward for St. Brigid's to continue as an organized mission of the Diocese.

THEREFORE, we pray that the Diocesan Convention act by acclamation to order dissolution of the organized mission pursuant to Canon 30.12.

The motion was seconded, and passed in both orders.