July 2026 Vestry Meeting
21 July, 2026
6:30pm

Meeting held on Zoom due to weather.

Minutes prepared by Scott Carter

Attendees: Charlie Merwin, Tiffany O'Neill, Scott Carter, Eric Rabe, Jim Jordan, Hope Knight, Danielle Trucksess, Cheryl Masterman, Jessie Caverly Rae, Rita Davis, David Woods, Rev. Peter Vanderveen, Rev. Jo Ann Jones, Joshua Castaño (guests: Glenn Beamer, Andrew Senn)

Absent: Daniel Wesley

Opening Prayer: Rev. Jo Ann Jones

Approval of Consent Agenda and June Minutes: Moved and accepted unanimously

New Business (item out of sequence)

Children's Ministry Report – Glenn Beamer

- Materials used from Mennonite Church (Shine) with appropriate modifications. Modified Stations of the Cross in work with Jeremy. Children were engaged and thoughtful with this work. Working on modifying the assistant teacher's scheduling, more similar to the method used by Bob Mikrut's method with Vergers
- Looking to make some upgrades to Christmas Pageant
- New program lessons for children's ministry. Would like to further integrate music with the children's ministry program. Once per semester Families in Faith. Will continue to have roughly six Redeemer specific classes
- Pleased with engagement with Children's Chapel
  B/w 16 and 20, up to 29 children at Children's Chapel in Spring Semester 2026
  Regular visitations from more senior parishioners in the works
- Children reporting that they often view Redeemer as a refuge from the stressors (increasing) of their daily lives. Strong engagement with lesson plan on faith and sports.
- Will need to add a pre-k program. Curriculum plan acquired but work needs to be done to fully establish and staff
- Question from Eric: are there unreached populations of kids that we should be finding ways to reach out to?
  Answer: Does not seem so. Glenn has done a lot of work to engage both major populations (9:30 attendees and music kids)
- Working to improve programming for for 6th -8th Grade population
  1. Book Club
  2. Evensong

3. 8th graders engaged in confirmation
4. Parishioner schedules are taxed, scheduling requires thought
5. Might be able to coordinate timing with RYG

- Jim Jordan expressed enthusiasm for stained glass/stations of the cross lesson

Organ Project Updates – Andrew Senn

Andrew identified **Dave Brown (Buzard Organ Co.)** as possible installation vendor. Brown prepared a report which includes:

- Brown's qualifications: Extensive knowledge on restoration and installation of Victorian organs and what is required to get them functioning properly.
- Introduction about Henry Willis and how the instrument was imported. Only two Willis Organs in the US, neither well installed.
- Redeemer would have the first properly restored and installed Willis in the US.
- Recommends moderate conservatism with the instrument and some modernizations to adapt to the space and make it as functional as possible, including electric actions, stop actions, blower etc.
- Report addresses decorated facade pipes and new console (outer shell, interior would retain Willis material).
- **Modifications to tuning and pitch of each pipe** – involves adding soldered tin to each pipe in workshop to match modern tuning practices.

  Question: Tiffany - A440 tuning, would require modification to all pipes? Metal worker? How does it modify the integrity of the organ?
  Answer: Andrew - Not damaging to the organ. Done by the organ shop, new metal soldered on. Any pieces removed are organized and archived.
  Question: Jim Jordan - Facade pipes orientation and function?
  Answer: Andrew - Facade pipes are "speaking". Not an organ case, a row of facade pipes the width of the archways, oriented in a W fashion
  Question: Jim Jordan - Would Redeemer have to ship to a shop?
  Answer: Andrew - Yes, the organ is repaired and erected in the shop, then disassembled and installed.

Organ Committee engaging **Scott Riedel to draft RFP** to send to Brown

- Music Committee funding should be sufficient to cover any initial **cost of RFP** process.

Andrew gathering information for **case statement**:

- Covers what will happen in the process of the project
- Statements from parishioners
- Presentation to be presented to congregation

- Ambitious date of **Easter 2028 for possible completion, or July 2028** organ convention. This is a possible proposed opportunity, not a binding date.
- If pursuing that timeline, would plan to sign contract in the next several months

Peter: A **letter of agreement** would put us in the work schedule that the work would be started by an approximate date and timeline. An early commitment makes fundraising for the project much easier, proven by previous experience with Parish House. There is significant interest in parish for supporting this project.

Charlie: We need a **draft Roadmap to review as Vestry**:

1. Show what tasks need to be completed in what order
2. Show what funding required for each task + anticipated source
3. Funding demand should be clear and demonstrate any gap between identified donations + grants vs. need.

Peter: A strong assessment is necessary

Question: Eric – what is **rough estimate of cost of project?**

Answer: Andrew - Estimate from Dave Brown last year is between **$1.6 and $1.8 MM**

Peter: from the beginning, stayed away from the idea of another capital campaign. We have hoped and planned to find grants and gift funding. Have not planned to go to entire parish for capital campaign.

Question: Cheryl - how long does the grant process take?
Answer: Joshua - depends on the grants, could be by end of 2027
Question: Hope - Could we draw from endowment, with possibility of replenishing with grants?
Answer: Peter- we would have to have a significantly stronger understanding of funding understanding. It has not been our intent but it is a possibility.
Eric: We could look at grant possibilities and begin a silent campaign.

Andrew said it would be helpful if each vestry member could think of something, posed in the form of a question which he can compile into an FAQ about the instrument and music in the church.

Administrative Reports

Rector's Report presented by Rev. Peter Vanderveen

- Word of staff appreciation for Cannie Shafer memorial

- Still have advertisement for Associate Rector, still have minimal to no response. Expecting that summer lull may have an effect, likely uptick in early fall
- Made a discipline of viewing livestreams from other churches in the area. Make an assessment of those livestreams. Makes it possible to be in two places at once, would request that vestry members make a regular effort to view livestreams from other churches, and address those services. Would be helpful to staff to be able to gather that information.
- Lots of work is being done over the summer to put things in place for the fall, going to be hitting the ground running.
- Jim: has viewed other livestreams and when the operator is prepared, the streams are good. With volunteers, makes the quality inconsistent. In the youtube video, credits can be populated, and would be useful to give service information (anthems, lessons, etc).
    1. Peter: technical difficulties are almost never operator error, but more often are mechanical gremlins. Complicated technological process, continual effort to be consistent.
    2. Eric: It can be difficult to mix sound properly.

Parish Administrator's Report from Joshua Castaño

Summer work: lots of time and money invested in buildings and grounds.

- Met with the director of Lower Merion Conservancy, was delighted to see the level of care and investment in our historic grounds and structures. Complimented the level of stewardship. Has contacts and leads on individuals who would be able to lead a tour of the churchyard.
- Cemetery data project moving along well. The public facing portion of web cemeteries would allow anyone to look up graves or information on the trees, and to facilitate the construction of tours.
- Still working on the audit. The main staff for the audit was on vacation, and they are wrapping up the transfer of information. First time working with this auditor (CLA), which requires a more involved process.

Status of Capital Projects:

- Masonry restoration has stalled slightly, as finding bricks is difficult due to brickyards being consolidated. Looking for more samples this week.
- Tower Repair: roofers on standby to inspect and bid for parapet wall on tower. Looking for methods to keep the roof dry until winter. Tower repair is not a 2026 project due to scale.
- Chimes/bells: install date of Sep 1, 2026.
- Pump motors for HVAC in church failed, being replaced ($3,400). The boiler motor needs to be reconstructed or replaced.

- Door replacement on bathroom entrance of church. Work by Cumby ($16,000 for construction, several thousand more for installation). Finance committee approval needed.
- Parish House Ice machine needed serious deferred maintenance, requires more maintenance than expected or planned for.
    - Looking to budget a more accurate, increased amount for annual maintenance
- Rectory ceiling damage from radiator
- Church HVAC needs to be repaired
- Church lighting system malfunctioned, fixtures wired in such a way that some electrical panels were significantly overloaded. Electrician rewired/reconfigured so that each panel was at appropriate load.

Acoustic Project in Burns Hall:

- Project has been difficult due to:
- Trouble getting the right bidders for installation
- Specialty material, requires specialist firms
- Late refusals, one bidder in the works.
- No bids yet. Trying to find a second bidder to push to come through with a bid.
- Still possible to complete project by Christmas Village
- Possible to move forward with one bid, given consultation with knowledgeable individuals to assess the bid.

Budgeting

- Approx. $14,237 remaining in the budget for repairs and maintenance.
- Donations cover significant chimes/bells costs
- Masonry repair budget increased over quote.
- In addition to remaining budget lines, additional funding to be discussed
    a) $18,000 remaining from insurance payout usable for church building at discretion
    b) Remaining lighting campaign funds

Church Door repair – Joshua requests Vestry action to address

- **MOTION**: Eric requesting a vote on an additional funding of up to, but not exceeding, $50,000 for **church interior masonry and church door**. Up to the finance committee to find the correct source for this. This is in addition to the $18,000 from the fire insurance payout.
    - Scott motions to approve the additional $50,000
    - Hope seconds the motion.
    - **Motion approved unanimously.**

Accounting Warden's Report presented by Eric Rabe

- The current status of income surpasses the budgeted income.
- Expense overrun is $22,000 dollars.

2. Utilities have been significantly above budget
3. Cost of audit
4. Building repairs

- Joshua: small bump in pledge fulfillments after statements sent out two weeks ago.
- Question: Cheryl - Does plate vary significantly seasonally?
- Answer: Eric and Joshua - Most funds are given through pledge.
- Finance committee working on assessing the value of Redeemer properties, working to determine the correct course for mothballed cottage.
- Investment Committee is recommending to the Finance Committee to redistribute some of the investments due to market volatility.
- Finance committee agreed that gifts which exceed $10,000 will be put into the endowment, gifts less than $10,000 will be used for operations.

Rector's Warden's Report presented by Charlie Merwin

- Morning meeting scheduled for September 19th. Final morning meeting of the year.
- Encourage small group committee meetings before that September meeting. It is important to keep momentum on small group committees.
- When Vestry returns in September, Vestry recruiting campaign begins again. Tiffany O'Neill will be chairing this process.
- Will be beginning discussions on 2027 budget starting in September,
- Joshua: December Vestry Meeting will put forward a budget, review in January, approved in January.

<u>New Business (reopened in regular sequence)</u>

Sub-Committee Reports

- Diocesan Relations
  - Met last week, members have changed around slightly.
  - Introductory to history of relations to the diocese
    a) Broken into bimodal parish structures, financially sound and financially strained.
    b) Competing bishop priorities
  - Discussed the letter from James Pope. Response from Diocese was positive.
  - Worked to identify Diocesan pressures on Redeemer.
  - Peter: There is momentum with the letter, looking for continued relations.
- Anchor Institution
  - Hymnathon not planned for the upcoming year
    c) One of several low cost, high return events
    d) Would need volunteers

    - October 4th (Blessing of the Animals)
    - Joshua: we don't think enough people in the Redeemer really know how we are working in our capacity as an anchor institution.
    - Tiffany: Wonderful and strong tradition of work in the community. Looking for a way to demonstrate to the community all the ways.
- Grants Committee did not meet
- Volunteers Committee
    - Met once
    - Peter shared his experience with the altar guild.
    - Produced a list of questions to interview the various groups of volunteers to find barriers for function, scheduling, recruitment, and performance of the group in order to address those problems.

Parochial Communications

Peter discussed current state of correspondence with James Pope

- Articulated that the suggested endowment withdrawal was unacceptable
- Expressed willingness to give funding approx. $12,000 through grant program, given specifics of the proposed programs
- Looking to work more clearly with the diocese to work with the diocesan office. More avenues of communications.
- Grants committee has approved the funding. Money not raised through Grants committee, thus they are not exercising control over the funding, and has granted approval.
- Peter can go to the donors and can ask for their directions for the funds.

175th Committee

- Peter is working to create a schedule with more concentrated work commencing in the fall.
- The initial meeting expressed interest in continuing the work on that committee.

Closing Prayer: Rev. Jo Ann Jones, from the prayer book, as used last Sunday with the vergers.

Meeting closed at 8:35pm