

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA
Tuesday, October 27, 2020
5:30-7:00 PM via Zoom

Vestry members present: Jim Buck, Lisa Davis, Al Greenough, Andrew Masterman, Carolyn Morris, and Tracy Steele.

Absent: Susan Adeniyi-Jones, Elisabeth Cooke, Melanie LeBoeuf, Mackie MacLean, Henry Miller, and Jacques Vauchlain.

Redeemer staff present: The Rev. Peter Vanderveen, The Rev. Jo Ann Jones, The Rev. Michael Palmisano, Francesca Merritt, and Jay Einspanier.

Recorder: Francesca Merritt

The meeting started at 5:35 pm.

Peter opened by stating that he discussed with Jo Ann and Michael the information that came to us in August and asked Jay how to build it into the strategic plan. Jay gave a presentation to vestry that pulled the ideas into slides to provide a structure.

The framework for consideration is the strategic goal and strategic objectives. The strategic goal is to aggressively be the church. The strategic objectives are to increase diversity and participation of our parishioner base, establish a more active and substantial community presence, and to articulate and engage others in an Episcopal vision of worship and formulation. The three pillars that support those three objectives are an open and welcoming community, to worship, learn and grow, and to support each other and our world. Redeemer's key foundational resources and assets include our music program, outreach that supports our community, pastoral care, stewardship, finance, grounds, buildings, children and youth programs, adult education and formation, newcomer ministries and Episcopal liturgy and traditions. Jim Buck suggested that our location in an affluent and educated suburb as well as our history and traditions are assets although some may see our history as not being an asset. Peter stated that there is a lot of commitment to Redeemer that is generational. Andrew also added that we are in the midst of multiple educational institutions though we have not taken advantage of it in a deliberate way.

Jay continued that the strategic leadership, who will lead us through the process for the next five years would include vestry and staff and the formation of three core vestry groups (a diversity group, community group, and worship and formation group). These groups will be ongoing standing committees of the vestry. Carolyn suggested if we are going to have standing committees of the vestry we may want to add these to the bylaws. Jay suggested that maybe in five years the groups would be under different objectives. Al asked that these groups have a chairman and reporting responsibility. Jay stated there would be a formation of annual goals in each committee.

Jay continued by highlighting how COVID has forced Redeemer to innovate including using technology to livestream, increase our communications, and adapt our services such as having a Wednesday Eucharist. The key positive is that we are open to change. We need to act and innovate without disengaging from our tradition and values.

The next step would be a five year aspirational goal that we talk about and adapt in November. The three vestry objective groups and who the members are we can target for December and then prepare for the

2021 plan for each group in January. We should be ready to launch at the annual meeting in February 2021.

Andrew shared that he thought we should build upon the groups that we already have rather than start all over. Jay said he would distribute the reports to each group and they can pick out of those three reports elements that are very valuable. Andrew said rather than having a chair that is a vestry person, he thought a clergy person who is doing it full time would be preferable. Al added that we have not really gotten to a plan of opening the parish house and that we should emphasize short term goals and not look out so far.

Peter said it is important to note we felt a lot of what had been well thought out and considered in terms of growth there were a lot of tactics but not a strategic unification of those. What Jay had presented is how to bring that strategic glue to what things we could do in terms of growth. We could then use that strategic plan to give the people a sense of identity about who we are trying to be and we have ideas of what we can do with the parish house. Michael added our objectives map to the current pillars. Andrew stated that we have not come up with specific ways to use the parish house in the short and long term. Andrew believed growth and parish house could be accomplished in the short term. Jay suggested that we send out the three reports to the vestry and by the next vestry meeting that everyone have read the reports and come back and give an evaluation. Putting it into a common structure, and come back out using this structure to report out the findings. Andrew suggested having three pillar group meetings in the next two weeks and then during November and December. Peter added that people have found their way to the church who had nothing to do with us, they heard about us through word of mouth and because we kept our doors open. He has also heard from the neighbors about their deep appreciation for the campus. We have to be eloquent about what this new building means and why. Peter added Jo Ann's group did some phenomenal work talking about the work of outreach and how it can be more edifying and understood activity and by framing it in a strategic way.

Andrew suggested taking growth and the parish house and define around this investment how that can be the focus of what we develop between now and the February meeting and reintroduce the mission statement, identifying the pillars and how it relates to the parish house use short term and then long term. Carolyn said that I think on our list of assets we didn't really mention our parishioners, we have bright educated group of people involved and they are an asset we can use for growth. Carolyn was concerned about the low attendance on the call and that the newer members will be carrying this load and we need to get their buy in. Carolyn suggested that we could have someone like the Philadelphia police chief come and speak and Peter added we will have the facility to do that, but we need to consider why it is important to us to have people come and hear someone like that and connect it to show we are.

Andrew asked Jay if he could reach out to the three pillar groups, creating thoughts about the usage and things we can do around those pillars and introduce the strategic elements around the parish house. There will be a meeting with members of each of the groups and Jay will add structure so that we get similar results in all the groups.

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.