

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA
Tuesday, January 10, 2023
7:00-9:00 PM in Rm 125 and via Zoom

Vestry members present: Paul Adkins, Catherine Caruthers, Chris Chojnacki, Elisabeth Cooke, Jennifer Copas, Al Greenough, Kevin Leahy, Melanie LeBoeuf, Harry Miller, Susan Rushing, Tracy Steele, and Chris Zafiriou

Redeemer Staff present: Jen Leith, Francesca Merritt, The Rev. Jo Ann Jones, The Rev. Winnie Smith and The Rev. Peter Vanderveen

Recorder: Francesca Merritt

The meeting of the Vestry was called to order at 7:02 pm. Jo Ann Jones gave the opening prayer.

Executive Session. The elected vestry members and Peter Vanderveen held an Executive Session.

Approval of Consent Agenda - The consent agenda consisted of the December 2022 vestry minutes and committee reports. December minutes will be amended to read the draw for our endowment will be increased to 4.25% from 4%. Melanie made a motion to approve, and Elisabeth seconded. The consent agenda was unanimously approved.

Stewardship Report – Chris Z. updated the vestry on stewardship as precursor to discussing and voting on the budget. The budget for 2023 is looking good in terms of pledging revenue. As of 1/10/23 there are 298 pledges for a total of \$1.04 million. There has been an 8% increase in pledging, with increases coming particularly from the middle pledgers. The median pledge has increased 20%. Stewardship has collected 15 new or returned pledges. 6 families were deactivated in 2022 and we have 15 new or returned pledges. The long-term view is still of concern. Those who give most generously are generally of advanced age. The average pledge for those lost to age or death is \$3,500, while the average pledge for new givers is \$1,200. Focus needs to be placed on increasing the number of new pledges in the future. Chris thanked the stewardship committee for their exceptional work this year, even with the markets performing so poorly. He also gave a special acknowledgement to all the hard work that Ken Garner does for stewardship.

Accounting Warden's Report – Chris Z. reported that pledge revenue for December was strong and resulted in a year-end surplus of \$27,500. This surplus will be counted as revenue for 2023. He also noted that the value of the endowment fell significantly in 2022, and this will lead to less money being available to be taken out in the coming years. The new budget is conservative with regard to both revenues and expenses. Chris complimented Ellen Harvey, who has been doing a great job of overseeing the endowment.

Budget – Chris Z. highlighted adjustments in the 2023 budget, namely the vestry transfer of \$27,500, the initiative for growth line item (\$15,000) and an increase in funding for Christian formation due to additional staff. Most line items have been escalated at the 6.5% inflation rate. The budget projects a modest deficit at the end of the year. The Finance committee feels confident that the revenue line looks solid for the year. Chris Z. noted that we have had surpluses for several years, and this says something about how we conduct ourselves as a church. Harry Miller made a motion to approve the budget and Al seconded the motion. The vestry unanimously approved the 2023 budget.

New Business

Music Committee – With the resignation of Michael Diorio, he and Peter have been talking about the spring music events schedule. The Dining with Divas concert will be cancelled since it typically raises money for the tour, which will not take place. There will be no Garden party. As part of the music series there is a big

band concert scheduled for June 11th and consideration is being given to changing the church picnic to an evening event and promoting the Artcinia concert as one big event to celebrate the end of the year.

Old Business

Nominating Committee Update – The Nominating committee has not received any other nominations after their slate of candidates was made public. The deadline for additional nominees via write-in is January 21st. Al asked the vestry to approve the slate of nominees consisting of Lisa Raymond, John Black, Edwin Shafer and Joe Spadaro. Catherine made a motion to approve the slate of vestry nominees and Melanie seconded.

The vestry unanimously approved.

Strategic Planning Group Updates – Al talked with Dan Wesley about how best to use the available attendance statistics. The original reason to collect attendance figures was to get a base idea of what the typical attendance was, and to measure growth against this. Al asked John Black, who has been nominated for election to the vestry, to take that responsibility going forward. Jennifer asked how our attendance was in 2022 compared to 2021. Peter remarked that it was significantly up over the Christmas cycle. The pageant had the best attendance in 5 years.

Rector's Report – Peter passed out demographic information that came to him from the bishop's office. The bishop would like to meet with the vestry before the Confirmation service on January 29th. Feb 5th is the Annual Meeting. Peter asked for vestry volunteers to help with the voting process.

Peter noted that the new playground has received good feedback about it from parishioners and neighbors. We will be soliciting families with children to consider making pledges in the names of their children. It is hoped that new pledges will cover the \$20K difference between the playground budget and the actual cost.

Peter reported that the Community Awareness Task Force met a couple of weeks ago. The discussion centered on identifying and utilizing new digital technology for communications. Peter will be in contact with a professor from Villanova University whose class, on a pro bono basis, provides organizations with 1) a full review of current practices and 2) a strategic plan on the best way to move forward with new media.

Peter was pleased with the whole Christmas cycle. The entire staff did outstanding work to make it a good experience for anyone who came. A lot of people who attend the pageant, with kids, we don't know. Next year in the service program, we are going to encourage people to let us know who they are, give them information about Redeemer, and invite them to consider joining us.

Paul asked about the status of the Wednesday Rector-planned breakfasts. Peter said they are just about ready to launch. Melanie asked if breakfasts on Sunday could be run with more regularity. The Adult Forum breakfast was very successful, and people seemed thrilled to be there. Peter said he was considering having more breakfasts.

Rector's Warden Report – Tracy reported that she was planning the Annual Meeting (2/5/23) and Vestry retreat (2/25/23). She noted that the 2023 schedule adheres to the 10 meeting requirement in the church charter but is more flexible and respectful of our time by moving various vestry meetings to Sundays post church. The Shrove Tuesday pancake supper will be held on February 21st; Tracy requested that someone take the lead on that and Melanie discussed the planning information available from last year.

Administrative Report – Jen thanked everyone for passing the budget. She wanted to underscore the positive sign that we have new tools for growth, including the addition of a new part time position in Youth formation. Jen reported that a new camera is going to be put up on the back of Parish House facing the playground. Jen also noted that she met with Kyle Lissack to discuss masonry fixes to the façade of the church. There will be some roofing work done on the flat roof of the rectory, but we are currently waiting on an estimate from Russell Roofing. The Finance committee is also looking at the long-term plan with the

houses. There is roof repair needed on those properties as well.

Winnie gave the closing prayer. The meeting concluded at 8:47 pm.