

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA
Tuesday, September 14, 2021
7:00-9:00 PM via Zoom

Vestry members present: Paul Adkins, Jim Buck, Elisabeth Cooke, Lisa Davis, Al Greenough, Melanie LeBoeuf, Harry Miller, Susan Rushing, Tracy Steele, and Christopher Zafiriou.

Absent: Jennifer Copas, Jacques Vaucelain

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

Recorder: Francesca Merritt

Guests: Caroline Manogue and Carolyn Morris – Christmas Village

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

Approval of Consent Agenda

Tracy asked for a change on the last page regarding a typo. With that change the minutes were approved and the consent agenda was approved on motion by Jim Buck which was seconded by Harry Miller.

Committee Chairperson Report – Report on the Christmas Village Event

Carolyn Morris, Caroline Manogue, and Elisabeth Cooke reported on the plans for the Christmas Village event. The concept will be a Christmas village starting on Friday, November 19th for adult parishioners, guests and neighbors. Saturday, November 20th will be open to all parishioners and children. There will be a kickoff meeting next Monday and meetings will be held on Monday evenings and Tuesdays during the day. Volunteers are need for many areas including decorating, silent auction, baked goods, children's activities, and a treasurer is being sought.

Strategic Plan Updates

Open and welcoming – Peter reported that Jay and he met with John Pitocchelli, who has an extensive history in hospitality management and discussed pricing, hiring a custodial service for events and how to price as well as potentially marketing to caterers. He toured the building, reviewed our current drafts for rental agreements and pricing and discussed at length many options for building use and correlated support expenses. Jay has provided the proposed pricing along with building use guidelines to the executive committee for review.

Engagement with Redeemer Youth – Elisabeth reported that with the substantial changes made to the Sunday schedule, adding a Saturday service has been put on hold for the time being. The Redeemer Youth Group picnic took place on September 12th and there was good turnout. The second Sunday of the month there will be an afternoon service (4-6 pm) geared particularly for youth and families, the first is to be held October 10th. The youth will be encouraged to participate in the Christmas village event. In the new Sunday school format, the 6-8th graders will be engaged in the formation of the younger kids. Also discussed the need to meet with the Outreach Committee leadership involving the junior youth as volunteers.

Survey Communications - Al requested feedback on the test survey that was sent to the vestry. Melanie stated that there should be some indication that it might take some time to deliberate certain questions. Tracy added that there could also be some clarification that we want a survey response from each adult in the household.

Arc of formation – Peter stated that with the new service schedule we have more time after services for formation at all levels. The new Sunday afternoon opportunities have been designed to support the RYG by encouraging families to extend their involvement into the afternoon and evening. This might create a good bridge for youth to then naturally participate in RYG in high school.

Rector's Warden Report

Tracy reported that the picnic was a great success with many people returning to church. The bylaws committee will meet in the coming weeks to pick up their work after a summer hiatus. Elizabeth put the monthly attendance numbers into chart form. It shows that the online options are keeping more people engaged. Monitoring click rates was discussed.

Accounting Warden Report

Chris reported that the pledge receipts and the total receipts are on budget. Collections are running ahead of schedule. Members were added to the finance committee and the investment committee. The new members of the finance committee are Ellen Harvey, Dan Wesley, and John Pickering. The finance committee is going to look into the long term sustainability of church revenues by looking at the pledging units we have, the number that we usually lose each year due to death, and what will be required to replace lost revenues by younger generations who may not pledge at the same levels. Details will follow in the coming months. Chris added that the building is essentially on budget which is a great accomplishment, in light of the impact of Covid and the massive inflation rate of construction costs. CapEx hit list is being prepared by Jay and will be done by year end.

Administrator's Report

Jay reported that we are planning to add an irrigation system for the grounds around the Parish House. The first weekend in October will be the Villanova Day of service, and we'll be hosting a group of student/workers for the project. Jay reminded the vestry that new air conditioning and heating was put in the rectory this year, and there are a number of other repairs that will need to be done in the next few years. Chris and Jay are discussing the impact of inflation on the budget. Jay also discussed the need to form a churchyard committee as subset of the building and grounds committee. The question was raised about a call to arms for campus weeding.

Rector's Report

Peter discussed a request for two graves made by Jim Brunquell, the husband of Rev. Sara Batson, who worked as an associate rector here before moving on to Christ Church in Media. The vestry unanimously approved the sale upon motion by Jim Buck, which was seconded by Melanie LeBoeuf.

Peter reported on the request made by the diocese that Redeemer participated in a program to support the Church of the Advocate in North Philadelphia. The proposal asks for one clergy person here to contribute ¼ of his/her time to the revitalization effort for the Advocate. Peter drafted a reply to the diocese about a month ago, and he and Jay met with Shawn Wamsley, the Canon of the Ordinary to discuss our reply. No update has been provided by the diocese.

Two companies are being considered for supplying playground equipment. Tad Sperry and Peter are working on scheduling a Donor Recognition event for some of the major donors for the capital campaign.

Peter decided lectors may take their masks off to read.

New Business

Jo Ann requested approval for the Outreach committee to collect donations for the Afghan refugees who are temporarily housed at Fort Dix. The vestry unanimously approved on motion by Melanie LeBoeuf which was seconded by Susan Rushing.

Peter asked that the minutes reflect his thanks to Jay for his extensive work through the summer to ensure the Parish House grounds would be beautiful for the picnic.

Tracy asked vestry members to give some thought on how we can best cultivate new members for the vestry.

Jo Ann gave the closing prayer. The meeting concluded at 9:28 PM.