

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA
Tuesday, February 8, 2022
7:00-9:00 PM in Masterman Hall and via Zoom

Vestry members present: Paul Adkins, Jim Buck, Jennifer Copas, Lisa Davis, Al Greenough, Melanie LeBoeuf, Harry Miller, Tracy Steele, Jacques Vauclain and Christopher Zafiriu.

Absent: Elisabeth Cooke, Susan Rushing

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 of the Vestry was called to order at 7:03 pm. Jo Ann gave the opening prayer.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consisted of the January 2022 vestry minutes and committee reports. In the minutes, under announcements, the language “with the goal of having a new administrator be hired in the early fall,” was changed to “with the goal of having a new administrator hired in early August.” Paul made a motion to approve the change and the Consent Agenda and Jennifer seconded both. The vestry unanimously approved both.

Old Business

Stewardship update – Jacques opened with the stewardship statistics. There are 21 decreased pledges in the amount of \$26,000 down, but it is more than offset by the 28 new and returned pledges in the amount of \$51,000. Jacques asked the vestry to give their thanks to Arden Saligman and Ken Garner who have worked hard on the stewardship messaging. Dan Wesley is joining the stewardship committee. Jacques stated the importance of taking responsibility in replacing committee members when turn over occurs.

Community Awareness Task Force – Jacques gave an update that he and Ken Garner will have the first committee meeting towards the end of the month. Paul Adkins will be the vestry liaison with Michael Palmisano and Ken Garner as the staff liaisons. From the congregation, Sean Nevins, Bailey Sperry and Katherine Joyce will serve on the task force. Jessica Harper will be our consultant.

Communications and the Survey – Al reported that another round of the survey solicitation will take place at the end of February. Al will send out a note that can be sent out to the committees to support the survey. A paper copy of the survey will be given at the Annual Meeting. Tracy asked Al to consider a small committee to consider how to move forward with the responses.

New Business

Annual Meeting planning update – The annual meeting will be held on Sunday in Burns Hall and via Zoom. Ken and Fran have been working hard to put together the Annual Report which will go out first thing Thursday morning. The retiring vestry members have the role of counting the votes for the election. Peter asked Jacques to monitor the Zoom (record the people that are present). The votes will be counted on Zoom by only registering any oppositions or abstentions. Al Greenough will fill in for Jim Buck at the Annual Meeting. Three persons among the vestry need to act as judges and these will be Jacques, Melanie, and Harry.

Graveyard petition - Jay discussed a request from a non-parishioner who has stage 4 metastatic breast cancer to be buried in the graveyard. After discussion, Jacques moved approval of the request and Melanie seconded. Ten vestry members approved. Two opposed. The motion was passed.

Jennifer and Harry requested that Jay look into the going rates at other graveyards and Vestry will consider raising the prices for nonmembers. Jay will have some more information on grave prices for next month.

Rector's Report

Peter asked for feedback from the vestry regarding the bishop's visit. Bishop Gutiérrez was very impressed with the design and the vision of the building. Peter also asked for feedback from the vestry about our interim organist, Paul Fleckenstein. Paul has been a delight to work with and will be joining the staff on Wednesday for the liturgy discussion. Regarding adult forum, Peter is thinking about having a person or two who comes to the adult forum write about their experience so that those who weren't in attendance could read it.

Peter mentioned with Covid we are performing a lot of gravesides and private baptisms. Jacques requested that private baptisms be highlighted in the next week's news since we highlight funerals.

Rector's Warden Report

Tracy reminded the vestry that the retreat will be on February 26th from approximately 8 am to 3 pm. Tracy mentioned that we had a dip in the in person attendance in January but our overall attendance numbers, taking into account those online, were strong. Michael talked about the need for considering how we will use the rooms in the parish house long term and the best way to equip these rooms with livestream equipment. Tracy asked if we would consider fundraising for this specific purpose. Jay will be in discussion with the firm who has done our audio and sound.

Accounting Warden Report

Chris reported our financials are in great shape. Ellen Harvey is working on an investment policy statement that will be shared with the vestry at the next meeting. The Finance committee is also discussing having a plan in place should our trustee, Tara Walsh, leave this position. Betsy Wolford, our accountant, has made the suggestion that we move to Meridian Bank because they have better technology and interest in our business. This is being considered. The finance committee is evaluating the options of what to do with the rental properties. Also, there are two accounts that have money earmarked to be used to send people to seminary school. We are considering going to orphans' court to expand these accounts for educational use, such as continuing education for staff.

Administrator's Report

Jay reported that water has encroached into the Parish House hospitality suite after recent rains. Workers from Cumby will be breaking through the exterior concrete walkways, and they will waterproof the subsurface wall. They will then re-pour the concrete and slope the sidewalk to direct water away from the building. If we still have water issues and need to install a dewatering system in that room, it would cost about \$4,500.

One of the two Parish House boilers is now running. Jay is pushing for the second boiler to be repaired.

The tenants in 205 Pennswood have given notice that they are moving out at the end of April.

Community groups are considering renting the parish house again, after the latest lull due to Covid restrictions. These include the Lower Merion Conservancy and the Lower Merion School Administrators.

Bids have come in for the replacement of the lower roof on the Pennswood side of the church. They are running in the \$60-70K range.

We have also received bids for an irrigation system for the parish house which is running about \$30K. This amount is in the contingency budget for the capital campaign.

We plan to receive approximately \$1.4 million in Legacy into Promise pledge payments over the next 2 years. We are currently holding approximately \$200,000 at Bryn Mawr Trust and Meridian banks. With approximately \$1.2 million in remaining expenses, including repayment of the loan, we should end up with about \$400K at the end of the project. There is an additional \$1.8 million in Planned Giving committed to the Campaign.

We have received a number of new design proposals and quotes for equipment for the playground. These will be reviewed by the members of the Operating Committee. Jennifer asked if we have to get approval from the township. Peter said our lawyer said that it is important to inform the township of this but we will not need special permission for this.

Peter noted that this is the last meeting for Jacques, Jim, and Lisa. Peter reflected on that fact that these vestry members started their terms at a very challenging time, and then Covid hit. He thanked everyone for their patience with zoom meetings and all the changes that came with Covid restrictions. But this has also been a time of incredible development. Peter thanked the vestry for their devoted leadership in the development of the campus, and he reminded everyone of the difference that this project will make for the future. He expressed his hope that they never forget that they were a part of this work.

Michael gave the closing prayer. The meeting concluded at 9:04 PM.