

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA
Tuesday, January 11, 2022
7:00-9:00 PM via Zoom

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

Absent: Harry Miller

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 7:02 pm. Michael gave the opening prayer.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consisted of the December 2021 vestry minutes and committee reports. Chris Zafiriou noted that the investment *strategy* document should properly be referred to as an investment *policy statement*. Al moved to accept the consent agenda, which was seconded by Peter Vanderveen. The vestry unanimously approved.

Announcement

Peter informed the vestry that Jay had given him a formal letter stating his intent to retire as administrator, effective October 1st of this year. This had been informally discussed for several months. Peter noted his gratitude for the extraordinary dedication that Jay has shown throughout his tenure. The process for reviewing the position of administrator will begin immediately, with the goal of having a new administrator hired in the early August, which would allow significant time for overlap.

Old Business

Budget approval - Chris reported that 2021 was a good year with the church finances remaining in very good shape. Pledge revenue came in very strong. The 2022 budget is a more conservative budget which was approved by the finance committee yesterday. The surplus from 2021, about \$97K, will be moved into the 2022 budget. The endowment draw will be reduced from 4.25% to 4%. Because of continuing Covid restrictions, projected Parish House rental revenues have been reduced. Michael Diorio's sabbatical is an added expense. The capital repairs line has been significantly increased, providing extra funds for the replacement of the church roof on the south side of the building. The budget shows a surplus of \$6K. Jay has also reduced his hours from 5 days a week to 4. The resulting reduction of expenses should provide funds for a new administrator to begin before Jay's departure. Jacques made a motion to approve the budget. Jim Buck seconded. The vestry unanimously approved the 2022 budget.

Stewardship update – Jacques opened by stating the 2022 budget is prudent from a stewardship perspective. Statistically, two years ago on January 6th, pledges amounting to \$867K from 282 units, had been received. Last year, at this same date, pledges of \$948K from 292 units had been received. This year, to date, pledges of \$950K from 291 units have been received. The committee expects the pledging number to get above the million dollar mark. Also notable, to date 22 pledges for 2022 reflect a decrease from 2021, for a total amount of \$31,700. This is offset by 21 new or returned pledgers for a total amount of \$33,500. For 2021 we have almost a 100% collection rate on pledges.

Communications and the Survey – Al reported a poor response on the survey, about 76 responses. 300 people who opened the survey did not finish it. It is possible people thought it was too invasive or they thought they were getting set up for responsibilities. Suggestions were made to minimize the number of write in questions, to make paper copies available at the annual meeting, and to use the time of the annual meeting to relaunch the effort. Al also reported that from the responses received ¾ of the interest was in the music program and 85% in social activities.

New Business

Community Awareness Task Force – Jacques sent out to the vestry a position statement which stated the task force will focus on people who are members of the greater community but may not be aware of the church and its programs. The group will be small and include Michael Palmisano, Ken Garner, Peter Vanderveen and, preferably, a vestry liaison.

There is an element of experimentation in this and to try to create some awareness the task force will need to have some fun and patience. Jacques is collecting names of potential committee members and asked the vestry for recommendations of potential members.

Rector's Warden Report

Tracy reported on the attendance numbers, which were very strong over the holidays, both in- person and online. Jim Buck suggested adding adult forum numbers to the attendance spreadsheet. There was also discussion about having Adult Forum in Burns Hall and Coffee Hour in the hall outside the kitchen. Jim stated the committee is discussing this option. The Annual meeting is February 13th, February 8th is the next vestry meeting, and the executive committee meeting is on Feb 1st. The vestry retreat will take place on February 26th.

Accounting Warden Report

Chris opened his report with the exciting things that are happening on the Finance committee. Ellen Harvey is drafting an investment policy statement. It will provide guidelines regarding asset allocation, the investment draw, and other processes and procedures. It has also been determined that the Investment committee will be a subcommittee of the Finance committee. The Finance committee will also again review the benefit of keeping our rental properties on Pennswood Road.

With regard to the Legacy into Promise capital campaign, we have a loan of \$950K outstanding to repay. Dan Wesley will present his work on long-term pledging trends to the vestry. It is important work that would allow us to look at the budgeting process 5 years out.

Administrator's Report

Jay reported that we have experienced problems with both of the new boilers in the Parish House. Jay is working with our maintenance company and the boiler installers to identify the reason for the failures. The county health inspector inspected the Parish House kitchen. Only small changes were required.

Rector's Report

Peter was pleased with the Christmas services attendance and noted that on-line attendance after Christmas has remained very high.

Next Sunday will be Michael Diorio's last Sunday service before his sabbatical. Paul Fleckenstein will be our substitute organist. Hope Knight and Katy Gentry, both staff singers, will be filling in to direct the choir.

Peter has received very positive feedback about the online format of the Voice and is hopeful that may lead to increased readership. Lisa made a suggestion that the morning meditations be deliverable as a podcast so that it can be listened to as well as read. Peter is looking into this possibility with Ken.

Peter was contacted in August by the head of the Board of Examining Chaplains, on which he had served for 12 years. He had been the chair of the ethics team, writing and grading the ethics question for the Graduate Ordination Exam. Peter was asked to return to be on the ethics question writing team. He served in this capacity, finishing the work in December.

The bishop is planning to be here the first Sunday in February. Peter asked that vestry members be available after the 9:30 am service on February 6th. The annual meeting has been moved to February 13.

Melanie asked if we could hold the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper breakfast this year. Peter hopes that we will be able to do it, especially since the kitchen was built with that event in mind. Melanie also remarked that that event is a great event to bring visitors.

Jo Ann gave the closing prayer. The meeting concluded at 8:53 PM.