

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

Vestry members present: Paul Adkins, Catherine Carruthers, Chris Chojnacki, Elisabeth Cooke, Al Greenough, Kevin Leahy, Melanie LeBoeuf, Susan Rushing, Tracy Steele.

Absent: Jennifer Copas, Harry Miller, and Christopher Zafiriou.

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

Guest: Sophie Tachna

Recorder: Francesca Merritt

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

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda consisted of the February 2022 vestry minutes and committee reports. Melanie made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Elisabeth seconded. The vestry unanimously approved.

### **New Business**

Eagle Scout Project Proposal for Approval - Sophie Tachna gave a presentation on her proposed Eagle Scout project consisting of a fire pit, benches and a long table for the youth cottage lawn. The benefit to the community includes providing a place to sit down and talk, the fire pit would provide warmth, and it would be nice place to meet. Building permits and burn permits are not necessary for this project. The cost and materials (pressure treated wood, screws, and stain) is projected to be approximately \$860. Funds will be raised through several sources, including a Go Fund Me appeal under the direction of Sophie. Scout troop members, youth group members, the Tachna and church families will all be invited to be involved in the project. The scouts needs to approve the project, and Peter suggested that, pending vestry approval, someone should serve as a coordinator to facilitate the work on this project. Tracy stated the vestry vote will be conducted by email in a week and requested all vestry members to stop by the cottage property to better understand the proposal in the context of the property and to provide feedback/suggestions, if any, to Tracy by March 15.

Community Awareness Task Force – Paul requested that one more member, who works in a creative capacity, be added to the task force. Peter suggested that Ginger Woods may be a great resource. Al suggested the group may want to consider branding with its own identity.

Tracy asked if there was any feedback on the article regarding the sale of church property by “Leading Ideas.” Chris Chojnacki asked about the state of the interior of the buildings. Jay commented that there is nothing wrong with anything, but that we have to take a look at the roof and the interior of the house at 205 Pennswood (the current lease ends April 30). Financially we break even on the properties. Chris added that stock market returns are historically better than property returns.

### **Old Business**

Strategic Plan – Elisabeth thanked everyone for their participation during the retreat. New initiatives for 2022 identified at the vestry retreat include: broadening the audience for the adult forum, syncing adult and youth topics in formation programs, engaging a marketing consultant, having an open house, expanding use of social media, adding events, investigating the potential for a Saturday service. Some of the new initiatives fit into topics already in our strategic plan. Elisabeth suggested we reserve time in the next vestry meeting to reevaluate the topics that need to be worked on and add the new vestry members into the established pillar groups. Peter emphasized the importance of the strategic nature of the plan, in distinction from tactical approaches to growth.

Grave pricing – Jay presented to the vestry his findings in grave prices at local cemeteries and churchyards. Currently the price of a grave in the Redeemer churchyard is \$1500. The most expensive graves in the area are \$5000. West Laurel Hill sells graves starting at \$2500. Jay proposed that the price of a grave in the Redeemer churchyard should be raised to \$4500. Current pledging members of the church would be able to buy graves at \$1500 each. Al made a motion to approve an increase to the cost of a grave for non-pledging members or persons not affiliated with the church to \$4000, Melanie seconded. The vestry unanimously approved.

Committee Liaison Assignments – Tracy will circulate the assignments in the coming days. The purpose of a vestry liaison is to be the eyes and ears for vestry on the committee, but monthly written reports to the vestry will continue to be solicited from the committee chairpersons.

### **Rector's Report**

Peter asked for vestry approval to distribute to the congregation information on how individuals could make financial gifts to aid those effected by the war in Ukraine. Al moved to approve an email to parishioners regarding relief efforts in Ukraine and Melanie seconded it. The vestry approved.

Peter noted that there would be a further reduction of Covid restrictions for worship services, effective the following Sunday. Masks will be optional for all in attendance, including choir members.

### **Rector's Warden Report**

Tracy thanked Melanie for organizing the pancake supper and thanked everyone for volunteering. Melanie remarked that 85 persons attended the supper.

### **Accounting Warden Report**

Jay gave the report on behalf of Chris Zafiriou. He noted the pledge receipts for February were under budget by \$23K, following an unusually high amount of payments in January. Another item of note was the overage of \$8K in the contract services on the buildings line. This is due to an extra bill for electrical repair, state required maintenance of the fire suppression hood, and the preventative maintenance on the HVAC system.

The investment committee has formulated an investment policy written by John Pickering and Ellen Harvey. Jay provided copies to the vestry. Dan Wesley continues to work on analyzing pledge data for the last twenty years, with the hope of forecasting trends in pledging for the coming years.

### **Administrator's Report**

Jay stated that he is receiving bids on replacing the lower south end of the roof of the church. He anticipates the cost will be between \$50K and \$60K.

He has also received proposals on the installation of an irrigation system, which the finance committee has approved and the Operating Committee will review this Friday.

Both boilers in the Parish House are now up and running.

There have been no additional water issues in the hospitality suite. The University of Rhode Island will be using the space in a week from this Sunday.

The renters of 205 Pennswood have decided to move out early and they have paid rent through April.

Jay distributed the new proposed pricing sheet for room rental in the Parish House. The pricing is broken into three levels: 1) a retail rate, 2) a reduced rate for multiple rental dates and for non-profit organizations, and 3) a further reduced rate for multiple rental dates for non-profits and a parishioner rate. The vestry approved the use of the pricing sheet.

Michael gave the closing prayer. The meeting concluded at 8:45 PM.

The vestry then held an Executive Session with Peter Vanderveen.

Post Script: The vestry voted 11-0-1 (abstention) in support of the following motion: To approve the proposal by Sophie Tachna that she fundraise for the cost of, and build, as her Eagle Scout Project, a fire pit, table and benches in the yard of the Cottage property, subject to the following: (i) building a table and benches of a size that are easily movable; (ii) obtaining prior approval from the church Administrator as to the location of the project on the property and the materials for the fire pit, table and benches, with a preference for selecting a location that minimizes the slope in the yard and/or accounts for it in the resulting design of the project; and (iii) undertaking any necessary pruning of tree cover, if necessary, for safety purposes related to the fire pit.