

Vestry September Minutes 9/19/2022, 7:07 PM – Zoom Meeting

Present: Mother Barbara, Lucinda Brunner, Jennie Cummings, Marilyn Cleland, Lori Judkins, Rhys Prall, Steve DeGolier

Absent: Pat Brown

Guests: Rick Johns, Lorraine Langer, Susan King (Secretary)

Opening Prayer – Jennie Cummings

Minutes from August 2022 Meeting

No changes requested. Rhys motioned to accept the minutes and Marilyn seconded the motion.

Treasurer's Report

- We are within 1% of our budget on both income and expense.
- We probably will need to take from the Endowment Fund before the end of the year, but hopefully can keep in the 7% range.
- The Capital Fund has started earning interest. We have \$20,000 in Capital Fund pledge money.

Rick would like to be thinking about next year's budget. Natural gas cost has increased by a factor of 5, so utilities will be higher. Lori Buckle, the new housekeeper, is paid hourly instead of fixed amount, and has been averaging \$1200/month (Ellen was offered a raise from the \$800 a month salary before she decided to retire). We've spent more on printing than we planned as there were several funerals.

It was questioned whether the Audit Report was sent in. Susan will send to the Diocese.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's report was made, seconded by Lori.

Music Report

No comments except that it was deemed an "excellent report."

Rector's Report

Although Mother Barbara was dealing with being sick with Covid for two weeks, she was able to

- attend the ElderCare meeting,
- install the new the door signs,
- meet with Pastor Mack of Grace Place,
- attend Bishop Paula's Consecration,
- work a booth at Corn Fest,
- initiate Taize plans.

In addition, Mother Barbara tends to pastoral care meetings and responds to requests for assistance. We receive probably at least one request a week for assistance and in a typical week Mother Barbara attends to eight or so parishioners. Marilyn would like to start receiving more of a report on these demands on the Rector's time.

Contemplative Prayer, etc.

We are changing the length for the Wednesday event to a half an hour, to 11:30 AM-Noon on Wednesdays. Mother Barbara has some thoughts to offer Mindfulness Meditation training to the community – probably an hour a week course – in place of the Contemplative Prayer. This might be started in the first week of November with plans for a six week course. She is thinking of planning for Advent observations – perhaps on Saturdays, and would also like to start Book Club again - “a liturgy of reading” as Marilyn put it – perhaps for November Saturdays.

Kick Off Sunday

With over 30 in attendance, the opening Sunday was felt to be a success (and the burgers were great!). Three people came at 10:30 as the service was concluding – they did not have internet so did not know of the 9:30 start time. There also was a young woman in attendance, who was welcomed and she sang with choir. However, she is a minor, so we should be aware of Keeping God’s People Safe guidelines.

Grace Place

Jo Plenger-Schulz has been attending the Grace Place meetings and observed that one person came last week who appeared to be homeless. He came for the meal but disappeared for the service. While we think he probably spent the time in the men’s room, there was some concern about visitors wandering around the building, and that should be watched. Jennie is meeting with Pastor Mack next Thursday at 10 AM and welcomed others to come.

Jo also had some concerns about staff being here alone during the week. Lucinda asked Susan if she ever felt threatened, and she reported that she hadn’t had any issues.

Outreach

Kelsey Crawford-Scott reached out to Lucinda about a proposed program to relate stories of people of color. This was initially brought to Stage Coach Players, but they are no longer interested. It’s thought this group is simply looking for space, but Lucinda will follow up.

There is hope to reach out to retirement communities about the streamed services at St. Paul’s. Mother Barbara has spoken with OakCrest and they are again opening to clergy led services, and St. Paul’s will offer a service on the last Thursday of the month at 2:00 PM beginning in September. Jennie is trying to come up with a poster that can be taken to retirement communities.

Lucinda reported that there has been a lot of crime near our neighborhood – 14 shootings in 13 days. She’d like to create a donation to encourage after school programs to ameliorate the situations of families with young children. Marilyn voiced that the DeKalb Public Library is planning a satellite location in this area and a program of training for new parents to bond with their infants. This is similar to the Basics program that Lucinda has been working with. New Hope Baptist Church also has programs for youth.

Mother Barbara observed that there often are children playing at the playground here at St. Paul’s. Perhaps basketball hoops might be installed as an outlet for youth?

Snow Removal

Jennie stated that it was time to determine our plans for the coming season for snow removal. Rhys felt we should get at least three bids. Marc's Lawn has been satisfactory and responsive, and while we don't want to lose their loyalty, it would be good practice to check other service suppliers. Jennie also said checking other suppliers would give us a back up plan. She will follow up.

Canonical Requirement for Rector Retirement

Sierra Reyes, the Diocesan Associate for Ministries, would like to meet with the wardens before proceeding with discussions about clergy retirement plans. Mother Barbara assured that this was "pro forma" to meet with the wardens before meeting with the Vestry, but Jennie was concerned that she does not feel equipped to have discussions before guidance from the October 15th special Vestry meeting. Lucinda offered to take the lead on meeting with the Diocesan representative.

Taize Plans

We have publicity arranged, but still need leaders and helpers. Mother Barbara will make calls. Jennie offered to help and Marilyn also was willing to read.

Building and Grounds

Rhys has not been able to get much response from vendors for the gutter problems, so he will pursue the issue when he is back in Illinois in October.

Pet Blessing

With Pat Brown's birthday party set for October 2nd, the traditional Sunday for the Pet Blessing, it was decided to forgo the Pet Blessing this year.

Strategic Planning

The committee met today, Monday, 9/19, but has decided to wait until the clergy coverage has been determined to proceed further.

Capital Campaign

There has been \$20,000 pledged to date. Some members have had questions about the viability of keeping a building that needs expensive repairs. Jennie said she would be happy to meet with anyone who had concerns.

Next Month's Meeting

Since Mother Barbara will be on vacation on October 16th, it was decided to move the next Vestry Meeting to Sunday, October 23rd, at 12:30 PM.

Prayers for Students

Marilyn reported that Susan had suggested creating a new email that could be linked to a QR code that could be displayed on The Path for students to request that prayers be said. Marilyn has asked Gretchen Schlabach for help in implementing this idea.

Mother Barbara asked for a motion to adjourn, which Rhys made, and was seconded by Lucinda. After a closing prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan King
Clerk

Agenda Vestry Meeting

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

September 19, 2022, 7 PM

Opening Prayer – Jennie Cummings, Jr. Warden

Review & Approval of last meeting minutes (August)

Review, discussion & approval Treasurer's Report

Review, Music Ministries Report

Rector's Report

- Meeting, discussions with Capital Campaign and Strategic Planning Workgroups
- Eldercare Multidisciplinary Board mtg.
- Staff meetings/conversations with Music Director pertinent issues regarding music, worship and tech
- Put up new door signs re office hours and lawn signs for Wednesday prayer
- August virtual meeting with diocesan clergy and bishops
- Conversation with Pastor Mack Patrick re sharing space with Grace Place
- Pastoral care calls and meetings to /with members of the parish
- Pastoral care and financial help to community members
- Attend luncheon discussion with Presiding Bishop, consecration of The Rt. Rev. Paula Clark

- Corn Fest Booth
- Conversations with diocesan contact, the Rev. Sierra Reyes

New and Carried Over Business

- Community Outreach funding/discussion: Lucinda
- Transitioning re Rector retirement, 9/1/2023; Special vestry meeting
- Taize plans: Need volunteers to read
- Bldg. and Grounds: (Jennie and Rhys)
- Strategic Planning Group report/discussion
- Capital Campaign. “ “
- Anything Else?

Prayer and Adjourn, Mthr. Barbara+

Treasurer's Report September 19, 2022

As of September 18, our Heartland Bank checking account balance stood at \$48,285.08. I expect that we will need to take some more money from the Endowment Fund before the end of October. I am hoping that we can keep the total amount withdrawn to less than 7% of the fund's value, but this is not a guarantee. I will be talking about this more as the year progresses.

We spent \$19,236 from our General fund in June, and we took in \$8343 from pledges and regular contributions. We also took in \$1770 from the revolving and pass-through funds, and spent \$456. We have spent 66.4% of our budgeted figures so far this year; we are 66.7% of the way through the year.

As of July 29, the Endowment fund is valued at \$1,995,458.15 and the Capital Fund at Edward Jones is \$31,501.95. Our Apache stock was worth \$212.50 on February 22. The stock market fluctuates in unpredictable ways. However, I note that we are now earning interest on our money market-based Capital Fund for the first time in a few years.

Bill Cummings and Roy Mason submitted the audit report, although I don't know that it has been submitted to the diocesan office—I will check on this. They seemed satisfied that all is well, which makes me happy.

We are starting to get pledges for the Capital Campaign—at least \$20,000 pledged so far.

I want to mention a source of additional expenses we are facing: the cost of natural gas. In August 2020, the cost was \$0.24 per therm; in August 2021 it was \$0.53 per therm; in August 2022, the cost is \$1.23 per therm. This is approximately a 5-fold increase over the past 2 years, and it is contributing to a serious underestimate in our utilities budget.

Since our long term cleaning person Ellie retired earlier in the year, we have had an increase in cleaning costs. The exact amount varies because our new cleaner, Lori Buckle is charging us by the hour instead of having a fixed contract, but we are now paying about \$1200 per month instead of the previous \$840 per month.

It is getting to be time to start considering next year's budget (along with everything else that needs considering)!

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Johns, Treasurer

Music Ministries Report [September]

The St. Paul's Multi-Generational Choir:

- Much appreciation to our choir for singing so beautifully while enhancing our first worship service of the fall, Sunday, September 18, 2022. We had 6 of our 10 choir members in attendance, as well as a guest 10th grader.

Music Liturgy and Worship:

- Much appreciation and many thanks to Hannah Buckle (Assistant Director of Music and Pianist) and Kathleen Johnson (Pipe Organist) for leading the music in our worship services on Sunday, September 4 and 11;
- I continue to work on a draft of the Sept-Dec 2022 music schedule [anthems, service music, etc.,]; and
- I attended and participated as one of the "Bishops Musicians" (handbells and choir) for the Ordination and Consecration Service of Bishop Paula Clark (rehearsal Friday, September 16) on Saturday, September 17, 2022.

Administrative:

Relative to administrative work, I:

- Met with Mthr. Barbara and Susan for a staff meeting over the last month;
- Re-tweaking Taizé advertising (NIU, Midweek) a poster/flyer to **add streaming**, have a program template ready;
- Checked-in weekly with Susan King about music for the bulletin, weekly EBlasts, streaming updates, etc.;
- Got the Sanctuary piano tuned (\$150.00) (9/8) which is a part of the fixed budget; and
- Got the choir robes cleaned (248.00) prior to opening Sunday (9/18), which is a part of the fixed budget.

Streaming Ministries Report [September]

Enhancing the Quality of In-Person and On-Line Worship Services

Streaming Ministries is thriving! Thanks to members (Peg, Katt, Gretchen, Hannah) who continue to do an awesome job!

- Our Sunday morning services continue to virtually (via Zoom and YouTube) bring in members of our congregation who are not able to attend in person. These parishioners are very, very appreciative!;
- A Huge thanks again to Peg and Hannah for Leading the Streaming Ministries 9/4, with Katt on 9/11; and
- Another huge thanks to Hannah Buckle leading the Streaming Ministries for Bishop Clark's Watch Party (9/17) and also Peg Newby for leading the Hosting Ministries, in tandem!

The Sanctuary system:

- I am in contact with Integrity Systems (Audio/Video vendor) and will be scheduling a maintenance meeting; and
- Ongoing awareness and training is needed on the Lectern microphone. People are not close enough to mic, needs to be "navigated" per reader, directly in front at nose level, effects people in the pews and streaming.

The Parish Hall system:

- Though on pause, I continue to look into a more functional work area that is esthetically appealing; and
- Is essentially available for any meeting (book group, gatherings, vestry, staff, etc).

Lorraine Langer, Director of Music 09/19/2022