

Vestry February Minutes 2/19/2023, 12:20 PM

Present: Mother Barbara, Jennie Cummings, Freyja Rasmussen-Johns, Michael Wise, Pat Brown

Absent: Steve DeGolier, Lori Judkins, Marilyn Cleland

Guests: Susan King (Clerk), Rick Johns (Treasurer)

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Mother Barbara.

Mother Barbara distributed a “Vestry Covenant” she would like members to adopt. A motion was made by Freyja and seconded by Jennie to adopt the document as guidelines for Vestry members’ actions.

January minutes

A question was asked by Jennie about the date that the Safe Church training needs to be completed. It appears that the required completion date is in May from what the Diocesan reports say. A motion was made to approve the January minutes by Freyja, seconded by Michael. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report

- Rick has taken \$100,000 out of the Endowment Fund on the suggestion of our Edward Jones advisor, given the volatility of the stock market.
- The Endowment Committee will meet on March 25th.
- January expenses were a bit more than usual as some quarterly payments were due, such as the property insurance.
- A \$2,000 check was delivered to Youth Services. Freyja observed that we should have some publicity about that donation. Jennie will arrange for a photo op so the media can be notified.
- The Capital Fund will be put into a separate account to earn interest. We have \$26,000 of the \$48,000 pledged. There is a small fund called the “Apache Fund” – it represents a previous donation but is hard to roll over into regular funds.
- Rick has sent a budget spreadsheet to vestry members and observed that nothing is out of line right now.
- The congregation has no outstanding debt.
- An appointment with the bank will be made to change signatories on the accounts.
- It was suggested that another internal audit be performed this summer.

Freyja moved, seconded by Jennie, to approve the Treasurer’s Report, Motion carried and the Treasurer’s report was approved.

Building and Grounds issues

Jennie reminded that while the Rectory has a security system, the church only has smoke detectors connected to Alarm Detection Systems. The panic buttons discussed have been now added and are functional. A quotation for a camera at Door 4 was received from ADS. The cost would be \$720 to install and \$52/month to monitor. It can be managed by an app on a phone, as a Ring doorbell is. Since several people were not at this meeting, Jennie decided to table a vote on the system.

Davey has sent a proposal for emerald Ash borer treatment on the Ash tree in the rectory back yard. Recommended is a \$212 yearly soil treatment and an every other year \$266 trunk injection. Mother Barbara and Lynne have absorbed this cost in other years but it was agreed that the parish should take over payment.

The other treatment advised was for the Spire Spruce near Door 8 in the breezeway which seems to have some kind of infestation. The early spring treatment would be \$225/year. There was a motion by Jennie to request donations to preserve the tree, seconded by Pat. Motion carried.

Rector's Report

The agenda covers Mother Barbara's activities for the month. She added that there was an ElderCare meeting this month, too.

Hopes for the Coming Year

- Freyja would like to see the Garden Market resurrected as an outreach. Usually was done once a month and we still have the tables and tent. This might be a way to get people involved who might not be gardeners per se. We would still charge a nominal fee for produce as people are resistant to charity. The Green Team will be meeting on Friday and Freyja plans to attend.
- Rick feels there's a lot of equipment in the church that we don't know about. When Peg gets back he'd like to schedule a meeting with Pastor Mack to get more up to speed on what we have available.
- Another idea for outreach would be Garage Sales, perhaps at the end of summer and the same day as a garden market. There might be things students would be interested in. Items for a sale could be stored in the St. Timothy Center.
- We could have a library booth. There is a National Little Library group that helps organize lending libraries and Pat has seen a weather proof booth used. Pat will check into what could be done.
- Bishop Paula is offering retreats in Chicago and in Rock Falls on April 4 and 5. Jenny would be willing to drive there. Perhaps we could convince the Bishop to schedule another in between these locations – maybe St. Paul's. However, we'd want commitments from people to suggest that.

Vestry Responsibilities

One of the responsibilities of the vestry is to process the offerings from the services. Please continue training with the Safe Church program. The panic buttons have been activated and Jennie will make signs to remind people to use the buttons. It would be good if the Stream Team kept one during services.

Background Checks

All staff are supposed to get background checks when hired (both Mother Barbara and Susan had background checks performed). The Diocese also recommends credit checks, though not required. Rick and Pat noted that the Treasurers are bonded with our Church Insurance policy. Michael commented that if you don't determine criteria for what would be acceptable, there wouldn't really be a point in a credit check. Mother Barbara will explore further.

Mutual Ministry Review

Father Mike Dwyer, who is currently our Dean, and who helped with the mediation last fall, advised doing the Mutual Ministry Review with an outside person. Essentially, the Vestry members grade themselves on how they feel they are performing. It is more of a discussion than judgement about what is good and what could be better. Mother Barbara would like the Treasurer to be part of it. She will talk to Fr. Dwyer to set a date, probably after Easter.

Taize

Mother Barbara proposed doing the Taize evening on Good Friday and not in May-June-July. Several other schedules were discussed-perhaps quarterly instead of monthly. The attendees seem to be mostly from the community, not just parishioners. As Mother Barbara and Lynne will be leaving in the summer, perhaps we could ask Pastor Bob Hanson and his wife to help plan, and John Novak had expressed an interest. Mother Barbara will write a press release for the Good Friday gathering, and will explore more dates.

Grace Place

- Nicor will be conducting an energy assessment on February 21st. The assessment is free. It was last done about ten years ago when Mike Duffy was here.
- There is an ECW luncheon on Saturday, February 25th at Panera Bread.
- Comcast will be installing a new modem on February 28th. Jennie was able to review the service and secure a reduction of \$50/month.
- The Ulman Foundation 4K for Cancer bikers, who have come here the last two summers, will be staying overnight on June 23rd. We provide them with dinner and breakfast.
- Integra has ordered the new copier and will install when it comes in.
- Susan would like to ask that people take photos of events.

Next Meetings

As Freyja will be out of town on March 15th, The Vestry Meeting was moved to Sunday, March 26th.

Pat motioned to close the meeting at 1:43 PM, seconded by Jennie. Motion carried.

Mother Barbara offered a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan King
Clerk

**Agenda Vestry Meeting,
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
February 19, 2023**

Opening Prayer – Mthr. Barbara (or volunteer)

Welcome to 2023 Vestry! *Sample Vestry Covenant*
Review & Approval of January Minutes
Review, discussion & approval Treasurer's Report

Rector's Activity Report for Jan.-Feb.

- Work on 2022 Parochial Report
- Pastoral visits & phone calls
- Luncheon meeting with DeKalb Area clergy
- Diocesan Clergy Retreat

New and Carried Over Business

- What are individual's hopes for the coming year?
- Vestry responsibilities include knowing how to process the offering; lock church doors and on/off lights, AED Defibrillator YouTube review; Panic Button; "Safe Church, Safe Communities" completion (due 3/1)
- Background checks required of paid staff and Vestry, credit checks Treasurer and others who routinely handle the offering or other money
Permissions required from everyone for any check
- Mutual Ministry Review recommended by Fr. Mike Dwyer.
Discussion-Barbara
- Taize in March and April on Good Friday and with Good Friday evening service to end the year. Discussion?
- Bread and Roses back on March 5th, and Sunday evenings thereafter @ 7 PM
- Grace Place news: Jennie
- Building & Grounds reports: Jennie

Adjourn?

Treasurer's Report February 19, 2023

As of February 17, our Heartland Bank checking account balance stood at \$145,953.79. The large number is due to my having taken \$100,000 from the Endowment Fund recently. This is just under 5% of the fund's value and should carry us for several months. I spoke with Matt Myre, our Edward Jones advisor. He told me the stock market is having a "mini-rally" at the moment, and suggested that this would be a good time to take a large chunk of money out rather than taking several smaller amounts out over the next few months. The Endowment committee has a meeting scheduled for March 28, where we will discuss these matters more thoroughly.

We spent \$28,298.71 from our General fund in January, and we took in \$17,810 from pledges and regular contributions. This is an unusually high amount of spending, which is largely due to quarterly bills, especially property insurance (\$5,125), and a contribution of \$2,000 to the Youth Services Bureau (vestry request). Our monthly spending is usually about \$20,000. So far in 2023 we have spent 10.4% of our annual budget and taken in 6.6%. We are 8.3% of the way through the year.

The Rector's Discretionary Fund has \$196 in it. We took in \$135 and spent \$0 from our revolving and pass through funds in January.

Sometime in the next few weeks I intend to transfer more Capital Fund money to our interest-bearing account at Edward Jones. We need to keep some Building Fund money in our regular bank account to cover our expenses, but most of it can be earning interest for us. I am aware that we are going to have to spend some money for repairs on the furnace exhaust system. Rain has leaked into the exhaust ducts and is rusting them out and leaking. Rhys has been in contact with a vendor for this issue.

As of January 27, the Endowment fund was valued at \$1,987,773.33. The Capital Fund at Edward Jones was \$41,870.88. Our Apache stock was worth \$331.02 on November 22.

We have received \$25,917 for the Capital Campaign so far, with \$48,630 pledged. This should keep the building running smoothly. Thank you everyone!

Most of my Treasurer time over the past few months has gone into writing the 2022 annual report, preparing the 2023 budget, and most recently getting the budget sheet set up for 2023 so our detailed monthly income and disbursements can be seen.

With Susan's help, I got the annual giving statements out in early February, which is a few days late—sorry about that.

I should be able to get my part of the annual Parochial report (which is submitted to the diocese) done in the next few weeks.

Mack Patrick has some useful ideas for saving money on the computer and website.

Respectfully submitted,
Rick Johns, Treasurer

Church of the Transfiguration, Dallas 2014 Vestry Covenant

We will seek and serve Christ in each other by:

- Keeping the work of the Vestry in our daily prayers.
- Respecting each other's opinions by listening and seeking first to understand.
- Respecting each other's time by arriving to meetings on time, turning reports in on time and preparing for meetings by reading the reports ahead of time.
- Limiting Vestry meetings to two (2) hours in duration by being time-sensitive during discussions at meetings and taking a time check mid-way through the meeting.
- Supporting decisions agreed upon by the Vestry.
- Being open to change and discernment.
- Moving votes on non-critical issues to the following month if consensus cannot be found.
- Maintaining strict confidentiality of issues discussed in Executive Session.

We will be an example to the congregation by:

- Keeping the congregation in our daily prayers.
- Putting Vision items at the front of the agenda.
- Warmly welcoming all parishioners at Vestry meetings.
- Being transparent about the work of the Vestry through regular communication.
- Asking the hard questions.
- Keeping stewardship as a focus year round.