

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING
MINUTES
December 15, 2022

Present: Senior Warden-Marlo Pratt, Treasurer-David Brierley, Clerk-Mattie Gustafson, Lee Ferreira, Rita Verespy, Ann Wood, Julie Zecher, John Corbishley, and the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick.

Absent: Junior Warden-George LeBlanc, Peter Collins, Ray Edler, Matt Spohn, and Richard Updegrove

Present via Zoom: Ron Machtley

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. with a celebration dinner (pizza and salad – thank you Marlo!), and an informal discussion about the year that was passing and what there was to celebrate. Here are some of the ideas that were shared –

- We made it through another year!
- We completed the restoration of the historic church – and came in under budget! A true miracle.
- The commitment and generosity of our parishioners and even other people was amazing and a true gift from God. This generosity will pave the way for St. Mary's ability to set aside funds for on-going and necessary maintenance and upkeep. It will also help with meeting building and grounds emergencies.
- This "new" church has already enabled us to serve the community with funerals and baptisms.
- 16 parents attended the St. Nicholas Day Coffee and Conversation to discuss how St. Mary's can better serve children and families.
- We have accomplished a tremendous amount of work on our grounds and buildings, more specifically the rectory, the siding on the parish house, maintenance on Gibbs House and attention to the trees on our grounds.
- Our Property Management leader and team are wonderful.
- The Vestry has learned a lot over the past year, and has worked very well together.
- Looking even further back, our response to COVID was innovative and spiritually rich – including Zoom coffee hours, outdoor worship, our welcoming spirit, developing an online presence – and through it all we managed to keep the spirit of community.
- We had a wonderful celebration for the historic church and the reception afterwards was a great way to talk to people and develop more connections.
- COVID may have many lasting bad effects, but we also managed to become (and hopefully remain) very flexible and not afraid of change or failure. If something didn't work, we did something else. We realized we didn't need perfection and we could make mistakes and not collapse.
- Jennifer mentioned and was grateful for the support that the parish gave her to walk the Camino pilgrimage.

- Outdoor worship has become a really special time for families.
 - We had a wonderful Bishop's visit this year with confirmation and reception.
 - We have a great staff that works very hard.
 - Last year's Vestry retreat went well.
 - Music has become a major and wonderful part of our worship.
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The formal part of the meeting began at 6:30.

Final Historic Church Report – Ron M.

Ron Machtley zoomed in and very briefly presented his *Final Report of the St. Mary's Historic Church Restoration, December 7, 2022*. His 16-page report was incredibly detailed and summed up a major project that has been completed. Ron reminded us

- Although all the internal work is done, there are still some external projects that have not been tackled.
- Ron praised Dave B. and his commitment and efficiency with regard to finances and billing, etc. Dave was also wonderful to work with on the sound and acoustic system.

Additions to the Staff – Jennifer

Jennifer has devised a music plan for the next year which will include a music minister and two organists. Music has become a strength of our community's ministry and is growing. There is also a plan in place for the new Assisting Priest (to be hired for October 2023).

Housing Allowance 2023

David B. made the following motion:

"Whereas, Internal Revenue Code Section 107, as well as the associated Regulation and Revenue Rulings, provide that the portion of a minister's remuneration, designated as a rental/housing allowance by the employing church or other qualifying organization, is excludable from the minister's gross income under Section 107 of the Code; and

Whereas, St. Mary's Episcopal Church of Portsmouth is a qualifying organization, Now, Therefore, be it Resolved that a portion of the compensation paid the Reverend Jennifer Pedrick during 2023 is designated as a rental/housing allowance in accordance with the provisions of Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code as follows:

Fair Rental Value of Church provided parsonage	\$22,200
Utilities and related costs paid by St. Mary's	\$8,000
Total 2023 Designated Housing Allowance	\$30,200

John C. seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Budget 2023 – David B.

David presented the proposed budget for 2023. (This is the operating budget only. Historic church restoration budget and funding are totally separate.)

Comments

- David has separated out from “Miscellaneous Income” all those expenses having to do with the churchyard. These expenses will now have a separate category. Miscellaneous Income will contain only those monies (e.g., Amazon Smile, etc.) that are truly miscellaneous.
- Sea Rose is going to renew their lease, for 1 year beginning June 1, 2023, at the new rent, which is \$2100 per month. This reflects a 15% increase over what their rent had been.
- John C. suggested that instead of having a line item labelled “Surplus from previous year” we should still keep it as a separate line item but call it “Investment in the future.”
- Anne questioned the fact that the insurance did not increase. Dave B. has been in conversation with our insurance company, the Church Pension Group, and they said an increase was not necessary.

John C. made a motion, seconded by Dave B. that we accept the proposed budget for 2023. The motion passed.

Stewardship Report – Rita V.

As of December 13, 2022, we have received pledges for \$249,885. Rita and Chris are still working on calling folks who have not yet turned in their pledge.

Invite, Welcome, Connect – Lee F.

Lee presented a report based on IWC’s Goals and Accomplishment Statement that had been shared with the Vestry at the November meeting. Progress thus far –

#2. – Training for greeters about welcoming both parents and children occurred 19 Nov 2022. This was led by Murry Edwards.

#3. – Clipboards with an explanation of the meaning of the particular Sunday service, as well as some activities were available beginning November 20. These activities are not yet geared for particular age groups.

#5. - An initial meeting was held with parents on St. Nicholas Sunday. 16 people attended a discussion led by Jason DeFalco, while the children were “entertained” with ice cream sundaes and Christmas crafts. There was a lot of engaged discussion, and the groundwork was laid for more discussion in the New Year.

#6. - This had an informal start when the children received their first clipboards. They sat or laid on the floor to work on their activities. The parents at the discussion group appreciated this.

#7. - Jennifer invited the families with children to the altar on December 4. Again, this was warmly received by the parents.

There is a planned demonstration of *Godly Play* for Sunday, December 18th. This is for both parents and children.

Consent Agenda

John C. made a motion, seconded by David B., that we pass the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Vestry Minutes and Treasurer's Report for November. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m. with all reciting The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Mattie Gustafson