

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
VESTRY MEETING  
MINUTES  
March 30, 2023

**Present:** Senior Warden-Marlo Pratt, Junior Warden-George LeBlanc, Treasurer-David Brierley, Clerk-Mattie Gustafson, Rita Verespy, Richard Updegrove, Lee Ferreira, Cory Thurston Lallo, Lauren Lema, Alex Simmons, and the Rev. Jennifer Pedrick.

**On Zoom:** John Corbishley

**Absent:** Anne Wood

Jennifer opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m. with a prayer.

**Reconnecting with Each Other in the presence of God – Jennifer**

After thanking Jason DeFalco for his skills as a communicator and the Vestry members who served as facilitators for the small groups, Jennifer asked two questions about the recent Coffee and Conversation: What did you hear? Where does what you heard invite us to go?

**Reponses included:**

- The community seems to trust its leadership. (Now it's time to lead them somewhere!)
- Everyone seems to love coming here.
- We need more time together – coffee hours; pot lucks; etc.
- Our signage is important.
- Several people there said they discovered us on Facebook – especially the worship services and daily Evening Prayer.
- Another service would be good. Folks with children are especially interested in Saturday evenings, as this time doesn't conflict with sports. But while most think another service is a good thing, they are afraid that we might go back to being a divided community.
- Both Jennifer and Meaghan are inspirational.
- The grounds are beautiful. Folks appreciate our community outreach efforts. They love the music. They see faith in action here.
- There is strong support for the Bible study. Maybe one during the week could be added?
- People know my name!

What do people want next?

1. More worship services
2. More fellowship opportunities
3. More support in practicing faith and prayer.
4. Keep the current welcoming and faith-filled attitude into the future.

Jennifer related that in April planning will begin for worship outdoors. This outdoor service involves a lot more work – for altar guild, audio-visual folk, etc., etc. She has plans to create a Signup Genius form to elicit more help for set-up and for outdoor worship in general.

We should probably plan to hold Coffee and Conversation every 6 months or so. And the format just used (with small groups, etc.) seemed to work well, and provided opportunities for many folks to talk and share opinions.

### **Music Transition** – Jennifer

- Michael's last Sunday directing music will be Easter Sunday. He will be here on April 16<sup>th</sup> at which time he will be preaching the sermon – and we will have a celebration in his honor.
- There will be a choir and musician pot-luck dinner Friday, March 31.
- On Palm Sunday there will be a meeting after the service of the choir, the two new staff musicians, Jennifer and Michael.
- A committee has been formed of 4 choir members: Brooke Kaminsky (leader), Harry Gustafson, Trish Culver and Julie Zecher. This group's task will be to determine our music needs and configuration going forward into 2024.
- This is a time of transition (on many levels) and we all need to be patient and flexible.

### **Sara Gibbs Trustees** – Jennifer

Jennifer briefly explained what the Sara Gibb Trust was and what the responsibilities of the Trustees were. Essentially the Trust needs to approve any major changes that are made on or to the land. Jennifer made a motion, seconded by Richard U. that the Vestry approve the nomination of Cory Lallo as the newest Vestry member of the Sara Gibbs Trustees. The Vestry Trustees are

- David Brierley (term expiring 2024)
- John Corbishley (2025)
- Cory Lallo (2026)

### **Investment Committee Appointments** – Jennifer

Jennifer explained the Investment Committee is elected annually by the Vestry. Most of our investments are managed by a professional company whose management and decisions are overseen by the Investment Committee. The Vestry has ultimate fiduciary responsibility for our investments. David made a motion that we elect the five members as proposed. Richard U. seconded the motion. The motion passed. The Investment Committee members for 2023 will be

- Chris Bartlett, chair
- Jeff Belden
- Ted Bierman
- Edye DeMarco
- David Burke
- David Brierley, treasurer, is a member *ex officio*.

Richard U. suggested that we need a written policy outlining what our investment objectives are. This policy should be reviewed and approved annually. Also, to keep the Vestry aware of what's going on David B. will report to the vestry about all IC meetings.

### Newport Children's Theater – Jennifer

The Children's Theater will be using our Chapel and choir room for rehearsals for their summer production. For this use, they will give us \$1500.

### St. Mary's Archives – Jennifer

The history of St. Mary's is reflected in the many archival documents and realia that are a part of our heritage and gift to future generations. Many of these documents have been stored at URI in their archival section. Alex Allardt has undertaken the enormous task of organizing and cataloging what is actually at URI. For the remainder of what we have, Alex recommends we keep it on site. She is currently organizing and cataloging those documents, etc. We are currently storing these in the basement.

Hard copies of all our important records are probably best, as who know what kinds of equipment digital files will require in the future.

Mattie will review what she has on digital files and investigate what documents and records we have stored in the vault. Mattie will call Alex and ask how we can best store these church records.

### Invite, Welcome, Connect – Lee

Accomplishments during the past months

#### **Children and Families**

- A six-week pilot program for children with the theme of Creation Care, will begin on Sunday April 16. Classes will begin at 8:45 and children will join the service at the Peace. Four people have volunteered to teach.
- A note was included in the e-News of March 24 under *A View from the Pew*. It was addressed to all parishioners and was a reflection on the challenges of bringing young children to Church.

#### **Updating St. Mary's Informational Material**

- IWC would like to take the lead in creating a **pictorial** parish directory. We will be working on this project during the summer, with a goal of having a new one available in the fall.
- Plans are to create a proto-type smaller directory as a test case. We would like to use Vestry members and a few select others as our subjects. For this test we can use a variety of submitted and newly taken pics. Details on all of this to be worked out.
- We are exploring the idea of producing a map of the St Mary's Churchyard as an aid to new people coming onto the Church grounds. It would highlight the features of the grounds and not necessarily be drawn to scale.

### **Rest and Play as Spiritual Practice** – Jennifer

The Living Compass booklets we often get for Advent and Lent affirm the importance of rest and play as an actual spiritual practice. Jennifer suggested that we all could use some rest and play that inspires and enriches and brings us joy and fellowship.

#### **Some ideas include**

- Availability of outdoor games (croquet, bocce, cornhole, etc.) for play after the outdoor worship service and also during the week. It would be helpful to have a team of “gamekeepers” to help maintain the equipment.
- Music opportunities during the summer will include two concerts, one in July and one in August.
- We are planning a strawberry festival for sometime in June. We need people to work on this, as well.

### **Junior Warden Report – George L.**

A Property Day has been scheduled for Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup>.

We have purchased a new mixer for the historic church.

George, reporting for Lynn, told us of a planned Day of Service – April 23<sup>rd</sup> – which will include 3 local projects. The Outreach Committee will need 8-10 people in each of the three areas. The committee will create a Signup Genius form and ask for volunteers.

### **Consent Agenda**

Richard made a motion, seconded by David B., that we pass the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Vestry Minutes and Treasurer’s Report for February 2023. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m. with all saying The Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mattie Gustafson