

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
VESTRY MEETING
MINUTES
September 28, 2023

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

Absent: Anne Wood, John Corbishley and Rita Verespy

The meeting began at 6:00 with a special presentation by The Choir School of Newport County who performed several choral numbers. This was followed by refreshments and a "meet and greet" with the Choir School board and their director, Peter Berton.

Rector's Time – Jennifer Pedrick

Gibbs House Update

Gibbs House is ready to be listed as available. Richard U. made a motion, seconded by Dave B. that the Vestry give Jennifer Pedrick authority to sign a rental agreement. John C. was thanked for his efforts with the project.

Music Transition

The Choir School of Newport County "moved in" on September 1st. The Choir School will sing two Sundays (October 29 and December 17) at the Sunday morning service. On these two Sundays, our SMC choir will receive a well-deserved day off! Peter Bergon has also agreed to be our "staff musician" and lead St. Mary's Choir on several Sundays in November.

David Warfield, another staff musician, will not be returning this fall. Jennifer has a plan in place to get us musically through the next 3 months or so.

The 4 choir lay leaders – Brooke, Julie, Trish, and Harry – have done an amazing job leading the choir through this time of change. Jennifer said that we need to begin discerning what kind of person we want and what kind of music we need going forward. It is also important that we nurture the choir leadership that has emerged.

Associate Rector's Time – Meaghan Brower

Discernment

Meaghan is still discerning the best ways to serve families and children. The Family Dinner really brought a cross-section of folks together – which is a good thing. We also need to let the 5 p.m. service happen and see what emerges from that. It is her opinion, that although somewhat counter-cultural, it is wise to go slow and be careful about establishing new programs, etc.

Nominating Committee – Marlo P.

Going off the vestry in 2023 are: Julie Z., Lee F., Richard U., and Ann W. Going off the Executive leadership are: Marlo P., and George L. David B.'s term is also expired but he is eligible for re-election. All of these positions are for 3 years. There is one more 1-year vestry position open, that could be filled as well.

The Nominating Committee will begin meeting at the beginning of October.

2024 Budget – David

David is working on the 2024 budget, looking carefully at both income and expenses. A draft budget will be presented to the Vestry in October. The final vote will be in December.

The cost of a music director for St. Mary's is developing, and we need to be clear what kind of music we need and how much that might cost. We need discernment in several areas in order to make decisions competently around this issue.

IWC – Lee F.

Broadcasting the 9:00 a.m. service to the north or south side classroom is totally doable.

Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee has planned some upcoming events, including the Harvest Dinner on November 11th. The Committee thought that a "narrative budget" would be a valuable tool for stewardship purposes. David will create a narrative budget and have Marlo, Jennifer, George and Meaghan review it. He will try to get it done in time to go out with our annual stewardship letter.

A thank you went out to Meaghan and Alex S. (our first video star), for participating in and creating stewardship videos.

Junior Warden Report – George

- The area around Gibbs House has been paved and came out nicely.
- We might need more lightning rods along the peak of the historic church, in order to protect all our hard restoration work. George made a motion that the vestry approve the use of a \$12,555 donation, restricted by the donor, to fund the installation of lightning rods along the peak of the historic church by the Boston Lightning Rod Company, Inc. Alex and Richard seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- We are in the process of getting quotes to replace the posts, fence and gate around the Community Garden.
- Property Day is October 29th. George is working on a list of things to do.
- The Diocesan Solar Project is slowly moving along. There is one more permit left to obtain. This whole thing might be in place by 2024.

- There is a federal grant available to help with installing security lighting. George is looking at applying for this grant to install more solar lighting in the East parking lot.

Consent Agenda

Dave made a motion, seconded by Richard, that we pass the Consent Agenda, consisting of the Minutes and Treasurer's Report for August 2023. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mattie E. Gustafson
Clerk