

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2021
7:00 P.M. – HALE AUDITORIUM

*The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.*
Zephaniah 3:17

Quorum. The November Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. The following Vestry members were present, representing a quorum for the conduct of business: Ally Abernathy, Peter Bain, Nancy Bowen, Sara Ingram, Sean Goldrick, James Guyton, Erin Hagar, Dixon Harvey, Kristen Heerema, Anita Richardson, Peter Shafer, and George Tracy. The following clergy members, staff members, and officers were present: David Ware, Ellen Chatard, Rebecca Ogus, Keri Frisch, Steven Sutor, Doug Riley, and Fern Riley.

Opening Prayer. David Ware opened the meeting with a prayer.

Reflection. Sean Goldrick offered a spiritual reflection.

Approval of Minutes. Fern Riley presented the minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on October 19, 2021. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Rector's Report [David Ware]. David began a discussion of the recent Vestry/Staff Retreat by reading the poem, "Horses at Midnight Without a Moon" by Jack Gilbert. Vestry members said they appreciated the opportunity at the retreat to get to know one other and the discussions about the challenge and responsibility of managing the church's financial resources and advancing the church's spiritual mission. David acknowledged the centrality of relationships in all our work, and he pointed to the model Jesus offers in listening and honoring each other even when we disagree. He indicated we will continue these conversations in the new year.

David read his 2022 Stewardship letter mailed last week to the congregation and posted on E-Redeemer. He related the story of the Rev. William Temple preaching in 1931 at Oxford, asking those in attendance to search their hearts for the words of the hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross": "Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all." David called on the parish to reflect on Redeemer's programs at church and in the city during these challenging times and to consider how giving to fund our commitments to affordable housing, job readiness, food equity, local historic Black colleges, and other opportunities to come will help to make us all whole.

Senior Warden's Report [Keri Frisch]. Keri Frisch said five new Sacred Ground anti-racism discussion groups are forming this fall. She asked those who had been involved in a previous group to talk to others in the congregation about their experiences and encourage them to sign up for this year.

Keri reported on the Diocesan Convention held virtually on November 13, 2021. She said a resolution was passed for the Diocese to support a Maryland General Assembly bill to develop and implement an African American history curriculum in public schools. The Convention also passed a resolution in favor of the Maryland Environmental Human Rights Amendment to the Maryland Constitution, guaranteeing every person's right to a healthy environment. Keri said the General Convention of the national Episcopal Church will be held in Baltimore on July 7-14, 2022.

Junior Warden's Report [Steve Sutor]. Steve Sutor noted we are moving into addressing needed maintenance and repair work to areas of the church that may be less visible. We are interviewing stone masons and getting estimates to repair the walkway from Charles Street to the chapel and also considering plans for replanting this area. A video examination of the church storm drains has been done to look for roots in the system, and the Buildings and Grounds Committee will decide what work is needed. They will also address areas of the foundation around the Parish Hall and the chapel in need of repair. The estimate to replace the nave lighting in the church with LED lights, initially hoped to be \$60,000, came in higher than expected at \$113,000. The Women's Council Room refurbishing has been slowed by pandemic-related supply chain delays in receiving materials and furniture. When all the work is able to be completed, the room will have improved technology capacity for laptop use, and the fireplace will be reopened and fitted for gas fire use.

Treasurer's Report [Doug Riley]. Doug Riley reported an unrestricted estate gift to the church has been received and placed in the Endowment Fund with plans to consider an appropriate use for the gift over the next few months.

Doug introduced and distributed copies of the 2022 Proposed Budget, previously emailed to the Vestry by Ellen Chatard. He explained the budget is initially drafted by the staff based on last year's budget and actual income and expense figures for 2021. It is being reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee, and their recommendations will be made to the Vestry next month. The Vestry will adopt it in its current form or make changes at the December Vestry meeting.

Regarding projected income, Doug said the 2022 Proposed Budget has planned for a \$40,000 pledge increase from 2021 pledges, and Christmas and Easter offerings have been budgeted for higher amounts. In addition to these increases, he noted the budget income is supplemented by a 5% contribution from the Endowment Fund. Last year's Endowment supplement was \$289,000, and the 2022 supplement will increase to almost \$355,000, an increase of \$65,450 from last year. Doug said the

Vestry had adopted a policy before the pandemic of weaning down reliance on Endowment income in the belief that the parish, from year to year, should fund its current program and operating expenses with pledge income. Prior to the pandemic, the Endowment supplement to the budget had been decreased gradually from 5% to 4.6%. In 2022, we are back up to the 5% level.

Regarding projected expenses, Doug said water, electricity, and natural gas costs will be higher, our Diocesan contribution has increased by \$20,000, and staff health insurance costs are 4% higher than last year. After no changes in salaries for 2021, we are proposing a 5% increase in clergy and staff salaries for 2022. Doug said he would be available to answer any questions prior to voting on the budget at the December Vestry meeting,

Other Business. David discussed plans and schedules for Advent and Christmas. An Advent Quiet Day, led by Cristina Paglinauan, Colleen Novak and Joanne Tetrault, will be held in the chapel on Saturday, December 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The Lessons and Carols Service is planned for Sunday, December 19 at 5:00 p.m. in the church. On Friday, December 24, two early Christmas Eve services will be held in the church, at 10:00 a.m. with the Connections Choir and at 1:00 p.m. with the Redeemer Choir. At 4:00 p.m., three services will be scheduled: a children's pageant service in the church with the Choir School of Baltimore and the Redeemer Choir; a chapel service with traditional carols; and a "Keeping Watch" service outside on the front lawn with a fire, apple cider, and Christmas carols. An evening service is planned for 9:00 p.m. with an 8:30 p.m. choral prelude by the Redeemer Choir. On Saturday, December 25, a Christmas Day service will be held virtually at 10:00 a.m. On Sunday, December 26, the congregational Lessons and Carols service will be held at 10:00 a.m. in the church. Sign-ups for the Lessons and Carols service and the Christmas Eve services will be available on E-Redeemer.

Rebecca Ogus said she is leading a pilgrimage to Ireland in July for the 2021 and 2022 youth confirmands. Fundraising events for the teens are being planned. She thanked Erin Hagar and Paul Smith for their help with planning the trip.

Adjournment. David offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar