

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

**MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022
7:00 P.M. – HALE AUDITORIUM**

*If one member suffers, all suffer together with it;
if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.
Now you are the body of Christ
and individually members of it.
1 Corinthians 12:26-27*

Quorum. The February Vestry Meeting was called to order virtually on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, 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, Anita Richardson, and George Tracy. The following clergy members, staff members, and officers were present: David Ware, Ellen Chatard, Keri Frisch, Steven Sutor, Doug Riley, and Fern Riley. The following Vestry members were absent: Kristen Heerema and Peter Shafer.

Opening Prayer. David Ware opened the meeting with the poems, “Winter Morning” by James Crews, and “Notions” by Paula Gordon Lepp.

Reflection. James Guyton offered a spiritual reflection.

Approval of Minutes. Fern Riley presented the minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on January 18, 2022. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Rector’s Report [David Ware]. David said the Parish Day School Discernment Committee meets monthly and is continuing to envision and reflect on how the school is growing. They are working on publicity to share the school and its growth with the community, and they hope to publish a story about the “Hi, Neighbor!” first grade partnership with Govans Elementary School. David said Ally Abernathy, Beverly Griffith, and Sean Goldrick are working on the bylaws for the school, and he is forming a building expansion committee with Ellen Chatard, Mary Knott, Mark Schroeder, and Tom Spies to begin to think about future space needs. Mary is preparing a list of alumni and parents and grandparents of alumni to contact about the plans for the school’s growth.

David announced the VOICES Speaker Series will begin in person and on livestream on Wednesdays starting on March 9 at 7:00 p.m. with the following speakers:
3/9 - Poet and theologian Pádraig Ó Tuama will discuss his work exploring themes of language, power, conflict, and religion;

3/16 - WBAL-TV News reporter Jayne Miller will moderate a panel discussion for International Women's Day with PNC Regional President of Greater Maryland Laura Gamble, and Judy Postmus, Dean of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, youth organizer of the Period Poverty Project, and a leader in gender equity for refugees from Catholic Relief Services;

3/23 - Johns Hopkins University Professor of History Francois Furstenberg will talk about the history of the United States and the Atlantic World in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries drawing from his books, *In the Name of the Father: Washington's Legacy, Slavery, and the Making of a Nation*, and *When the United States Spoke French: Five Refugees Who Shaped a Nation*;

3/30 - Authors Betty Kilby Baldwin and Phoebe Kilby will speak about their book, *Cousins: Connected Through Slavery*, describing their story of sharing and connecting their family histories and their search for reconciliation;

4/6 - *New York Times* correspondent and former *Baltimore Sun* reporter Erica Green will discuss her work covering the U.S. Department of Education and federal education policy, focusing on civil rights and educational equity in schools.

David also noted we will be offering two films for viewing and discussion in February at 7:00 p.m.: *My Name Is Pauli Murray* on 2/16, and *I Am Not Your Negro* on 2/23. He encouraged the Vestry to share these events with the community.

Junior Warden's Report [Steve Sutor]. Steve Sutor noted the Heritage Trust Fund provides a yearly sum to address the needs of the buildings and the campus, and this year's allocation is just over \$200,000. Several new and continuing projects will be funded. The church LED lighting work will be done this summer. The fireplace in the Women's Council Room will be cleaned and reactivated using gas, and new technology in the room will allow for livestreaming and laptop use. New cabinetry, lighting, and reupholstered furniture will make the room more comfortable, useful, and elegant. The Buildings and Grounds Committee is considering how to repair the historic entrance to the chapel from Charles Street. The chapel shows signs of possible foundation settlement and will be evaluated by an engineering firm. The sewer line was scoped last year and noted some root intrusion in a section of pipe along the west side of the Parish Hall; we have hired a plumber to clear the line.

Treasurer's Report [Doug Riley, Ellen Chatard]. Ellen Chatard gave an update on the 2022 Stewardship campaign. The church has received 368 pledges totaling \$1,439,000, nearing our 2022 budgeted total of \$1,465,000, and represents an increase of over \$100,000 from the same pledges last year. The total number of pledges last year was 401. Ellen expects more 2022 pledges will be returned.

Doug Riley noted the Vestry and the parish had been moving in recent years to using less of the Endowment Fund for our annual operating expenses. The contribution to the budget had been weaned down gradually from using a standing 5% allocation

per year to using a 4.6% allocation in the 2020 budget, but due to the uncertainties of the pandemic, the level was returned to 5% starting in 2021. Doug suggested the Vestry think about going down again to a 4.9% allocation in the fall for the 2023 budget and to gradually go down by 0.1% per year in subsequent years, or doing away with the allocation entirely to support our mission without using the Endowment Fund.

Doug reminded the Vestry that the \$500,000 estate gift from last year is now in the Endowment Fund and could be considered in the future for use in the Parish Day School capital plans.

Working Group to Research the History of the Land and Buildings of Redeemer [Keri Frisch]. Keri Frisch asked the Vestry to consider authorizing the creation of a working group to research the history related to Redeemer's land and buildings as a next step following the Sacred Ground anti-racism training that members of the parish have been and are engaged in studying. As part of Becoming Beloved Community, the national Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice, the Church envisions the way forward as a journey through a labyrinth containing four quadrants: telling the truth, proclaiming the dream, practicing the way of love, and repairing the breach. By researching and documenting the history of our church, Keri said we could be truth tellers and could gain insights into the mission and pathway ahead for our parish.

After discussion by the Vestry, the following motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved:

Resolved that a working group be appointed by the Rector to research the relationship between the Church of the Redeemer and (1) the institution of slavery, (2) the adoption of Jim Crow laws, and (3) other practices in Maryland that disenfranchise communities, and report to the Vestry within 18 months the effect of these relationships on the holdings, wealth, character, and mission of the Church of the Redeemer.

Other Business. Ellen said she is organizing the Vestry Nominating Committee to consist of out-going Vestry members Nancy Bowen, Sean Goldrick, Anita Richardson, and Peter Shafer, and three or four other parishioners. All nominations must be received by April 7 to be considered for the Vestry slate prior to the Annual Meeting on May 1.

Sean Goldrick announced the Redeemer Youth Group will be presenting the musical, "Beauty and the Beast" in the church on Friday, February 25 and Saturday, February 26 at 7:00 p.m., and Sunday, February 27 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment. David offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar