

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2022
7:00 P.M. – WOMEN’S COUNCIL ROOM

*“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
Matthew 11: 29-30*

Quorum. The September Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. The following Vestry members were present, representing a quorum for the conduct of business: Ally Abernathy, Peter Bain, Margie Chandler, Sara Ingram, James Guyton, Erin Hagar, Dixon Harvey, Anne Haskins, Kristen Heerema, Kathy LaPlant, John Schmick, 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.

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

Approval of Minutes. Fern Riley presented the minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on June 21, 2022. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Rector’s Report [David Ware]. David reported the Parish Day School has begun the new school year with 155 students, the largest student body in the history of the school. The inaugural second grade class is meeting in the Cottage (formerly Mr. Vu’s house), and the students love their new classroom. The first grade class is meeting in the first grade classroom on the lower level of the Parish Hall. David noted the school is caring for the academic, social, and emotional needs of all its students as they are returning to school after the challenges posed by the pandemic over the past two and a half years.

David said PDS Building Growth Committee members Jen Barts, Ellen Chatard, Dixon Harvey, Lydia Kimball, Mary Knott, Chris Kurz, Noelle Savage, Tom Spies, Steve Sutor, and he have met with GWWO Architects to talk about the school and its mission as the architectural firm begins the conceptual design phase for the new building plans. These conversations are shaping ideas about the new building’s size, location, entrance and exits, and how it will integrate with the church. The firm and the committee will hold meetings with PDS faculty and church staff; community leaders from Govans Elementary School and Homeland and surrounding neighbors; PDS parents, grandparents, and alumni; and parishioners to understand their perspectives about the school and the community.

David noted the new program year for the church is beginning over the next several weeks with the return of the choirs, Sunday school, youth activities, and adult education offerings. Cristina Paglinauan will be leading Yoga Church at 5:00 p.m. one Sunday each month in the church, Yoga on the Labyrinth once a month in the Parish Hall, and Embodied Eucharist Wednesday mornings at 8:00 a.m. in the chapel. Freda Marie Brown will lead the all African American authors book club with parishioners from Redeemer, St. James Lafayette Square, and St. Michael and All Angels in person and virtually, and the Life in the Spirit discussion group virtually, exploring spiritual identity using the book, The Intuitive Way, by Penney Pierce. Ruth's Sisters will be meeting for women who are in times of transition or in the second chapter of their lives. The Rector's Bible Study will meet on Wednesdays from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in person and virtually, Wednesdays from 12:00-1:00 p.m. virtually, and Thursdays from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in person. The VOICES Speaker Series held its first presentation, "Geopolitical Domination by China, Russia, or the US: Global Disruption and Broken Alliances," in partnership with Great Talk, Inc. on Wednesday, September 14. National poverty and child welfare expert and advocate David Ambroz will discuss his book, A Place Called Home: A Memoir, recounting his family's experiences with homelessness and his journey out of poverty through resilience and determination on Wednesday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m.

The Vestry/Staff Retreat will be held at the Claggett Center on September 23-24, 2022. David said we will be discussing and learning new skills to help in repairing our church, families, neighborhoods, and Baltimore as we all focus on renewing our relationships following the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Senior Warden Report [Keri Frisch] The Redeemer History Working Group is researching the relationship between the church and the institution of slavery, the adoption of Jim Crow laws, and other practices in Maryland that disenfranchise communities. Keri Frisch reported the group has catalogued relevant resources from the Maryland Center for History and Culture, the Pratt Library, the Homeland Association, and the Redeemer archives. They have created a timeline chronicling important events from the time of slavery through the Civil Rights Movement, and a list of the rectors, clergy associates, Vestry members, and church leaders at Redeemer throughout its history. They will be meeting with other churches and faith communities to learn about their research approaches and findings. The group plans to share information they discover along the way with parishioners on a Parish Hall bulletin board and with periodic reflections in E-Redeemer as they continue their work toward the goal of reporting their completed findings to the Vestry in 18 months.

Junior Warden Report [Steve Sutor] Steve Sutor reported work has begun on the walkway from Charles Street to the chapel to replace the cracked stone path. A new grass walkway will be built, the chapel steps will be cleaned and repaired, and the railings will be replaced. The dead boxwoods have been removed, and the underlying cross outline will be replanted. Other stone work repairs will be made in St. John's Courtyard at the entrance to the church.

Treasurer's Report [Doug Riley]. Doug Riley reported Redeemer's finances are in good shape. Church revenue is up by \$65,000, and expenses are down by \$70,000 from budgeted amounts. Pledges and giving to the church have increased from last year, and plate giving has increased as more people return to attend worship services. The recent stock market downturn has meant losses to our Endowment, Heritage, and Covenant Funds; Doug said we will sit tight on our investments and wait for market conditions to improve.

Other Business. Ellen asked Vestry members to sign up for Sunday morning Vestry Greeters and for Vestry Meeting reflections.

Peter Bain said BUILD is planning a citywide action to meet with Mayor Brandon Scott and the gubernatorial candidates to present their plan for addressing Baltimore's vacant and abandoned properties at Coppin State University on October 16 at 4:00 p.m. The organization is hoping for a large turnout of supporters, and Peter said we are looking for 80 people from Redeemer to sign up to attend.

David noted Bishop Eugene Sutton will be visiting Redeemer on October 15 and 16, and he will be preaching at all three weekend services.

David said the choral a cappella group Voces8 will return to sing at Redeemer on Saturday, October 15 at 7:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events.

9/23-24 - Vestry/Staff Retreat, Claggett Center

Adjournment. David offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar