

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2022 7:00 P.M. – WOMEN'S COUNCIL ROOM

*By your endurance you will gain your souls.
Luke 21:19*

Quorum. The November Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, November 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, Margie Chandler, Sara Engram, James Guyton, 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. The following Vestry member was absent: Erin Hagar.

Opening Prayer. David Ware opened the meeting with Jan Richardson's poem, "A Prayer for Choosing".

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

Reflection. Sara Engram offered a spiritual reflection.

History Working Group [Christina Way, Keri Frisch]. In response to the February 15, 2022 Vestry resolution to create a working group to research the relationship between Redeemer and the institution of slavery, the adoption of Jim Crow laws, and other practices in Maryland that disenfranchise communities, the Redeemer History Working Group was formed and has been researching the church's past. Group members Christina Way and Keri Frisch presented a timeline and discussed their work. Christina said the group had their first meetings in April and May, worked through the summer and early fall to identify archival sources at Redeemer and the Diocese, and are currently reading through these materials. By February 2023, they will have finished their research, and they are planning a series of Lenten dinners with their group and the Vestry to understand the meaning of the information and its impact on our relationship with each other and the community. They will present a brief update at the April 2023 Parish Annual Meeting and will write a final report over the summer. The Vestry and the Working Group will discuss the findings and how best to share this information with the parish and with others in the community. The Vestry discussed the value of a written report with photographs and artifacts to display and the importance of many opportunities and formats for parish conversation, acknowledging the work may be difficult and painful but necessary if we are to evolve. David noted the parish is beginning to meet for

training in talking to each other about challenging subjects and across differences. He said this will be a process of telling our story to understand and reconnect with our past and learning how we grow together as a parish family. Keri thanked Christina for leading the discussion.

Treasurer's Report [Doug Riley]. As noted in September and October, Doug Riley reported current church finances are in good shape and ahead of budgeted amounts, and he said we will likely end the year with a small surplus.

Doug distributed copies of the first draft of the 2023 Proposed Budget to the Vestry. He said David, Ellen Chatard, and Katrina Schisler drafted the initial budget, and it has been reviewed by the Treasurer and the Budget and Finance Committee prior to Vestry evaluation. He explained the 2023 Budget is conservative as we are still uncertain about pledges and expenses in this phase of the pandemic. It includes a 5% increase in staff salaries; Keri pointed out this aligns with the recent Maryland Diocesan Convention resolution recommending a 5% cost of living adjustment of 2022 salaries for 2023. Doug noted the budget includes a 4.9% allocation from the Endowment, down from the 5% allocation in 2022. He asked the Vestry to review the budget and to bring questions to the December Vestry Meeting for discussion prior to making changes or voting for approval in its current form.

Ellen gave an update on the 2023 Stewardship campaign, reporting \$763,000 in pledges have been made from 216 households, representing an increase of \$25,600 from the same number of pledges last year. Pledges from 167 households are still expected to be received for an additional \$675,000.

Rector's Report [David Ware]. Following the Parish Day School expansion presentation for the Vestry at the October Vestry Meeting, David said Mary Knott and he have held meetings to discuss plans for PDS growth through third grade with the parish, the school community, the Redeemer staff and PDS faculty, the neighboring community, and the PDS Board. The meetings were well attended with challenging questions and ideas raised at each session. David said more discussion is needed to continue to explain the impetus and mission of the school expansion and for the parish to know more about the school. A timeline for fundraising will be drafted, and the general contractor is generating cost figures for the building expansion.

David discussed the one-on-one relational meetings the congregation participated in at weekend worship services on October 29 and 30, noting the parish was engaged and many have shared positive feedback about the experience. Additional training in the practice will be offered on Saturday, November 19 from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. David said this methodology is grounded in scripture and models how Jesus interacted with people, teaching us to listen deeply and genuinely connect with those we encounter. A workshop in storytelling will be offered on Saturday, December 3 from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon for parishioners to focus on their own stories so they may know what to share in these conversations.

Junior Warden's Report [Steve Sutor]. The Buildings and Grounds Committee met to talk about potential projects for next year, and Steve Sutor presented their ideas. Outdoor lighting to highlight the stone wall of the new West Columbarium and to illuminate the South Transept window for evening services is being considered. Indoor relighting of the nave with LED lights began this summer, and the Committee is planning for the second phase of the lighting project in 2023. The Chapel is in need of exterior stonework repairs to the tower and spire and interior painting. Memorial plaques about the history of the Women's Council Room and the Youth Council Room were also discussed.

Steve said this year's maintenance work to the Chapel continues as the rebuilding of the stone steps from Charles Street is nearly finished. Pricing for planting the turf walkway to the Chapel entrance and plantings in the cross-shaped area of the former boxwoods is being reviewed.

Adjournment. Doug offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar