

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023
7:00 P.M. – WOMEN’S COUNCIL ROOM

*For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction,
so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures
we might have hope.*

Romans 15:4

Quorum. The January Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. The following Vestry members were present, representing a quorum for the conduct of business: Ally Abernathy, Peter Bain, Sara Engram, 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, Steve Sutor, Doug Riley, and Fern Riley. The following Vestry member was absent: Margie Chandler.

Opening Prayer. David Ware opened the meeting with Paul Laurence Dunbar’s poem, “Invitation to Love”.

Approval of Minutes. Fern Riley presented the minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on December 20, 2022. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Reflection. Steve Sutor offered a spiritual reflection on hope.

Rector’s Report [David Ware]. The Parish Day School Development Committee has been at work reviewing lists of PDS alumni students, parents, and grandparents from the past seventy years, and David said they are seeking to engage a small group of interested families to take the lead in financial giving, organizing, and commitment to the school’s expansion through third grade and to help in imagining the next steps. He noted Mary Knott, Tom Spies, and Dixon Harvey are taking a careful look at the proposed building plans and materials and returning to the committee’s initial ideas about additional facility needs to find ways to trim costs.

David said just over 1,000 people participated in last month’s Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services with the following attendance: 146 at the 11:00 a.m. Christmas Eve service, 525 at the 4:00 p.m. children’s pageant service in the church and 15 at the chapel service, 295 at the 9:00 p.m. service, and 51 on Christmas Day. By comparison, 2019 pre-pandemic attendance for these services was just under 2,000, services in 2020 were held virtually, and 2021 attendance was 840. Bigger crowds were expected for the 4:00 p.m. “Keeping Watch...” outdoor service, but the weather was too cold and the service had to be moved indoors to the chapel. Despite the lack of heat in the church, David said he did not move the services to the heated chapel

or parish hall because we have a significant constituency of parishioners who are unable to attend in person and participate by watching the live-stream services from the church; over 200 people had viewed the services virtually by the next day.

The Vestry passed a resolution at the December Vestry meeting to become the sponsoring organization for BSA Troop 612 for Girls, and David said they have accepted Redeemer's invitation. The troop has decided to change its name to BSA Troop 635 for Girls in recognition of its brother BSA Troop 35 at Redeemer. Scout Sunday is scheduled for Sunday, February 5, and members of the new troop will participate in the service as readers and greeters.

Senior Warden's Report [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 is continuing its work, and Keri Frisch said they are making plans to review their findings with the Vestry. The Working Group will meet with the Vestry on March 5 to discuss church history from the era of slavery and on March 21 at the Vestry meeting to discuss issues from the Jim Crow period. Keri also noted the Diocese of Maryland Trail of Souls exhibit will be installed at Redeemer from March 3-25; an Adult Education session will be held in March to view the accompanying documentary and meet with parishioners from Memorial Episcopal Church to hear their story. Keri said the Working Group is on track to deliver a report of their findings to the Vestry in time for the fall Vestry/Staff Retreat.

Treasurer's Report [Doug Riley]. As the church closes its financial books on 2022, Doug Riley said 2022 income is up by about \$71,000 and expenses are down by about \$73,000 from budgeted amounts, indicating a likely surplus of about \$144,000.

Ellen Chatard gave an update on the 2023 Stewardship campaign, reporting 365 pledges have been made totaling \$1,276,841. Pledges from 50 households are still expected to come in for an additional \$165,000, bringing the expected pledge total to about \$1,440,000. David said we are in an amazing financial and spiritual place, and he hopes we can have conversations to acknowledge this strength so that we may consider ways to improve in our mission to offer what we have to help a world in crisis with greater engagement, efficiency, and focus. Many people who are brand new to the church are coming to Saturday and Sunday worship services, and David said the staff is creating ways to help newcomers find their way and become involved.

Junior Warden's Report [Steve Sutor]. A new heat pump for the church has been delivered and installed, and Steve said the heat has been restored. He noted the old heat pump will be maintained in case it is needed in the future. The Buildings and Grounds Committee is making plans to plant the turf walkway to the chapel en-

trance in the spring with grass, flowers, and some boxwoods, keeping the cross outline from the former walkway. Additional projects include installing new audio speakers in the church, continuing the church lighting project, and painting the chapel chancel.

Other Business. David said three Redeemer parishioners and two clergy led twenty-five participants yesterday in a one-on-one relational training session at the Cathedral of the Incarnation as part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, and they have been invited back to lead a storytelling workshop to help participants learn to share their stories. He also noted the CollegeBound Foundation received a \$5 million gift from the Baltimore Orioles yesterday; the Foundation, created in 1988 by BUILD, Mayor Kurt Schmoke and other community leaders, provides college advising, scholarship funding, gap financial support, and mentoring to low income and first generation Baltimore high school and college students to help them apply to college and complete their college degrees. David said this gift highlights the work of the Foundation and the efficacy of BUILD and community organizing.

Adjournment. Doug offered a closing prayer written by Martin Luther King, Jr., and the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar