

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024
7:00 P.M. – WOMEN’S COUNCIL ROOM

*Show by your good life that your works are done
with gentleness born of wisdom.*
James 3:13

Quorum. The September Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. The following Vestry members were present, representing a quorum for the conduct of business: Margie Chandler, David Frisch, Michelle Gutberlet, Anne Haskins, Kathy LaPlant, Mary Lord, Jean Mellott, Noel Morelli, John Schmick, Paul Smith, and Jim Stipe. The following clergy members, staff members, and officers were present: David Ware, Ellen Chatard, Lucy Neale Duke, Steven Sutor, Doug Riley, and Fern Riley. The following Vestry member was absent: Karen McGee.

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 18, 2024. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Reflection. Lucy Neale Duke offered a spiritual reflection on the opportunity of new beginnings at the start of the school and program year.

Rector’s Report [David Ware]. David invited the Vestry to share their thoughts on the recent departures of Freda Marie Brown and Rebecca Ogus. Several Vestry members expressed feelings of loss and gratitude, and everyone appreciated the final services and celebrations to honor each of them and the gift of their presence at Redeemer, including David’s sermons and remarks about the many ways they helped us to grow. David thanked the Vestry for acknowledging and honoring their feelings and for helping to carry these sentiments for the parish; he said the mark of a community’s health is visible in how we say hello and say goodbye.

David said the search for new clergy has gone well, and he will be announcing a five person clergy team to the parish. The Rev. Anna Noon has begun her part-time work at Redeemer as Director of Children’s Ministries and will bring her prior experiences as a parish priest, a minister to international pilgrims walking the Camino de Santiago, and a musician to lead the Sunday School program. In addition to serving as Director of the Center for Wellbeing, Thomasina Wharton has started her new role as Chaplain to the Parish Day School where she leads chapel services and is available to minister to staff and families. The Rev. Josh Laws is beginning his posi-

tion as the new Chaplain to Youth and Young Adults. He is an ordained Roman Catholic priest currently working as an administrator at The Baltimore Station, a residential treatment program for veterans with housing, addiction, and mental health issues, following his work in parish ministry and is in discernment for a call to the Episcopal priesthood. David and Cristina Paglinauan will join these three ministers for a presentation on Sunday, September 29 to discuss their journeys and new roles at the church. David said he is excited about this new model of bi-vocational ministry with leaders who are engaged in the work of the church and in the outside world. He will assess the pastoral needs of the parish over the fall and consider a search for another priest in the spring.

David reported Amanda Kell will begin working as the next parish Administrative Assistant on October 7 to overlap with Barbara Hart for two weeks prior to Barb's retirement. Amanda worked for 35 years in journalism as a reporter and editor at the Associated Press and the Baltimore Sun and has been a member of the parish for 10 years. We will celebrate Barb and her nearly 29 years on the staff on Sunday, October 20 with a special coffee hour after the 10:00 a.m. service.

David said a job description seeking a development officer to lead the Parish Day School capital campaign has been posted and is being circulated.

House Meeting sign ups will appear in E-Redeemer this week for newly interested parishioners to join an existing or new group.

Plans for the fall Voices Speakers Series entitled "Mind the Gap: Conversations Across Difference" are underway. David will be leading a discussion at the Ivy Bookstore with Dr. Hahrie Han, Professor of Political Science and Director of the SNF Agora Institute, on her new book, "Undivided: The Quest for Racial Solidarity in an American Church" on October 3 at 6:00 p.m.

David said the Vestry/Staff retreat will be postponed to a later date when more members are available to attend.

Treasurer's Report [Doug Riley]. Reporting on Redeemer's finances through August 31, 2024, Doug Riley said revenues are \$34,277 below budgeted revenues and expenses are \$16,400 below budgeted expenses for a net difference of \$17,800, a 1.1% deficit in actual versus budgeted amounts. Doug noted pledge income is \$28,000 less than budgeted and \$43,000 less than last year at this time, and he said utilities fuel and system repair expenses are \$15,000 more than budgeted. He said overall income is \$3,000 more than income in 2023 and will likely increase over the next four months, particularly during the Christmas giving season.

As discussed at the June Vestry Meeting, Doug reported Redeemer transferred \$200,000 from the Endowment Fund to the Operating Fund as we have done in past years to cover expenses over the summer when church attendance and giving are low. At its September meeting, the Budget and Finance Committee recommended to

the Vestry that a motion be considered to retroactively approve this transfer. A motion to approve, retroactively to June 2024, the transfer of \$200,000 from the Endowment Fund to the Operating Account to cover the anticipated short-term cash flow needs of the church during the summer months was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. Doug noted the Budget and Finance Committee will meet this fall to consider making a recommendation to the Vestry as to what threshold amount should be brought up for Vestry approval in the future, and to consider whether the Vestry should retain some of the annual surplus from the previous year in the Operating Account to cover potential future temporary cash flow issues.

Junior Warden's Report [Steven Sutor]. Steven Sutor said the Buildings and Grounds Committee meets regularly to consider work that is needed to maintain the church buildings and campus funded by an annual allocation from the Heritage Trust Fund, and he reported on current church projects. The bluestones in St. Mary's Courtyard outside the parish hall were taken up, repaired, and replaced, and the underlying drains were cleared for better water handling. The first phase of changing the lighting in the nave to clearer, energy saving LED lighting was completed in the last program year, and the second phase to highlight the pulpit, the lectern, and the altar will begin this year.

Diocesan Convention Delegates. Ellen Chatard presented the following parishioners for the proposed slate of delegates to the Diocesan Convention: Lucy Neale Duke, Patty McLean, Peter Shafer, and Rayner Wharton. A motion to approve the proposed slate of delegates was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Other Business. Lucy asked Vestry members to sign up for Vestry Meeting reflections and to be Vestry Greeters. David said many new people are coming to church services, and we are eager to connect with them. The Welcome Card in the church pews is being redesigned to help us get to know newcomers, and the ushers will be meeting to review their roles to help everyone feel welcome.

David said the Parish Picnic and farewell to Rebecca was well attended with about one hundred more people than last year. He thanked Jack Kidd, Scout Troop 35 and Troop 635 for their help in cooking, serving, set-up, and clean-up.

David said the Diocese will hold a Vestry Vitality Day on October 19. Cristina and the Rev. Canon Kristofer Lindh-Payne are organizing the conference to help church leaders gain skills to develop their congregations and communities, and David will be teaching a session on creating one-on-one relationships. He invited Vestry members to attend to explore how we can engage and welcome newcomers.

Adjournment. Doug offered a closing prayer of thanks for the blessings of autumn, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar