

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

*A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”*
Isaiah 40:3

Quorum. The December Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. The following Vestry members were present, representing a quorum for the conduct of business: Margie Chandler, Michelle Gutberlet, Kathy La-Plant, 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 members were absent: David Frisch, Anne Haskins, Mary Lord, and 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 November 19, 2024. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Reflection. Jean Mellott offered a spiritual reflection.

Nomination for Discernment. David welcomed Allison Harmon to the meeting to meet the Vestry and discuss her process of discernment as she considers a call to ordination to the priesthood. She has been a parishioner at Redeemer since 2012 and recently has been an intern at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Ellicott City. At Redeemer, she taught middle school youth in Journey to Adulthood (J2A) and Rite 13 and participated in outreach. She served as Middle School Chaplain at St. James Academy in Monkton, MD and is currently serving as Upper School Chaplain at the National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C. She earned a Master of Theological Studies degree from Loyola University and a Doctor of Ministry degree from St. Mary’s Seminary and University’s Ecumenical Institute. David thanked her for coming to the meeting. The Vestry subsequently signed a letter of nomination for Allison to enter the Diocesan Discerning Ordained Vocation program.

Rector’s Report [David Ware]. David said the Vestry/Staff Retreat will be held on February 1 with the History Committee and former Vestry members to discuss the Committee’s report of their research and findings on the relationship between Redeemer and the institution of slavery, the adoption of Jim Crow laws, and other practices in Maryland that disenfranchise communities and to consider next steps for the parish.

Newcomers to the church are continuing to join the parish, and David said we would like to offer another House Meeting group to begin in January. He asked anyone interested in hosting and leading a new group to talk with him after the meeting.

Parish Day School first, second, and third grade students helped this year in leading the Lessons and Carols Service on December 15 along with community partners from Govans Elementary School, Johnston Square Elementary School, Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO), and Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD). David said the service was well attended with 75 more people than at last year's service for a total of 535 in attendance.

2025 Proposed Budget [Doug Riley, Ellen Chatard]. The 2025 Proposed Budget was distributed to the Vestry at the November meeting, and Doug Riley said three line item amendments have been made to the budget since then: General Giving has been increased from \$100,000 to \$105,000, Unemployment Insurance has been increased from \$2,600 to \$2,932, and Contemporary Music Salaries has been increased from \$38,776 to \$41,776. A motion to approve the above amendments to the 2025 Proposed Budget was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Ellen Chatard gave an update on the 2025 Stewardship Campaign, reporting pledges totaling \$1,285,664 have been made from 313 households, compared to \$1,132,000 from 297 households for the 2024 Stewardship Campaign at this time last year. She noted 191 households represent new pledges, increased pledges, or those who did not pledge in 2024, for a net increase of \$144,370. Pledges from 60-70 households are still expected to be received, and we will be sending out a second stewardship letter to households who have not yet pledged.

A motion to approve the 2025 Proposed Budget as amended was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Doug said he will report final 2024 year end financial figures at the February Vestry meeting after all the current year transactions have been settled. As reported last month, we are expecting a slight deficit for the year, and Doug noted the 2025 Proposed Budget is slightly smaller than the 2024 Budget. The accounting firm Gross, Mendelsohn and Associates will be conducting the 2024 church audit.

Other Business. David said Chrishna Williams has begun her work as the development director for the Parish Day School Capital Campaign. She met with the Campaign Committee and has scheduled a retreat for the Campaign leadership in January. She is doing research to identify additional funding sources for early childhood education projects.

Lucy Neale Duke gave the Vestry Greeter Sign Up link to the Vestry and encouraged everyone to help in extending welcome to parishioners and newcomers on Sunday mornings.

David said we will celebrate Assistant Facilities Manager Chuan Phan and his 32 years of service to Redeemer on Sunday, January 12 with a special coffee hour after the 10:00 a.m. service. He will be retiring on January 31.

Upcoming Events.

12/24 Christmas Eve: 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Connections Choir

4:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist with children's tableau pageant, Choir School of Baltimore, and Redeemer Choir

8:30 p.m. Choral Prelude and 9:00 Festive Holy Eucharist with Redeemer Choir

12/25 Christmas Day: 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

1/12 Coffee Hour celebration for Chuan Phan following 10:00 a.m. service

1/21 7:00 p.m. Vestry Meeting

2/1 Vestry/Staff/History Committee Retreat

Adjournment. Doug offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar