

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
MINUTES OF THE VESTRY MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025
7:00 P.M. – WOMEN’S COUNCIL ROOM

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.
Luke 6:36

Quorum. The January Vestry Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. The following Vestry members were present, representing a quorum for the conduct of business: Michelle Gutberlet, Anne Haskins, Kathy LaPlant, Mary Lord, Karen McGee, 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: Margie Chandler, David Frisch, and Jean Mellott.

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

Approval of Minutes. Fern Riley presented the minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on December 17, 2024. A motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Reflection. Noel Morelli offered a spiritual reflection on the inner light in every person and the individual gifts each one brings to the world.

Rector’s Report [David Ware]. Chrishna Williams, the development director for the Parish Day School Capital Campaign, met with the campaign committee last week, and David said they discussed the underlying vision and need for the school building expansion and the requisite work ahead to move forward. The school offers a child-centered approach to early elementary education from age 2 through third grade, allowing students to learn slowly and organically within an Episcopal framework honoring each child. PDS is continuing to grow, spearheaded by the families that came during the first wave of the elementary division expansion in the years following the pandemic and want to stay. The committee discussed timelines and fundraising goals. David said the call for the school to grow under this educational philosophy is deeply resonant with who we are as a parish and embodies what we most deeply believe.

Housing Allowance. Doug Riley presented and asked the Vestry to address the 2025 Clergy Housing Allowances. Following in the tradition of providing a rectory or parsonage for the clergy and their families, Doug said religious institutions may designate a portion of clergy compensation as a tax-free housing allowance. A motion to approve the 2025 Clergy Housing Allowances as noted in the 2025 Operating Budget was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Junior Warden's Report [Steven Sutor]. Several projects are in progress in the church to enhance our worship services. Steven Sutor said the second phase of switching to longer lasting LED lighting in the nave is now focused on improved lighting for the altar, pulpit, and lectern. The sound system in the church is being upgraded for better live streaming clarity, and the sound system in the Parish Hall is also being improved. Repairs to the heating system are planned, and repairs have been made to the roof over the chapel sacristy. We are also replacing and adding trees for those that were lost to storm damage.

Vestry/Staff/History Committee Retreat. David Ware welcomed History Committee members Christina Way and David Wallack to the meeting to help the Vestry prepare for the Vestry/Staff/History Committee Retreat on February 1. Following Vestry and parishioner participation and learning in the Sacred Ground anti-racism course, the Vestry called the History Committee in February, 2022 to form and research the relationship between the church and the institution of slavery and the laws of the Jim Crow era. They presented their findings in a series of discussions to the Vestry and to the parish over the past program year, and David Wallack wrote a report to document their research this fall. Retreat participants will gather to more fully digest the findings and discuss next steps to offer and invite the parish to engage in a deeper understanding of our church history. Christina, David, Anne Haskins, and Jim Stipe led the Vestry in a discussion of thoughts, feelings, and responses to the report prior to the retreat.

Other Business. The Vestry signed a letter of nomination to the Diocese for Allison Harmon to be admitted as a Postulant for Ordination to Holy Orders.

Upcoming Events.

1/25 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Vestry Vitality Day, Cathedral of the Incarnation

2/1 9:00 a.m.-1:30p.m. Vestry/Staff/History Committee Retreat

2/18 7:00 p.m. Vestry Meeting

Adjournment. Doug offered prayers for social justice and for our country from *The Book of Common Prayer*, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Fern Riley, Registrar