

St. Mark's Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting
Minutes
December 18, 2023, at 4:30 pm

Present: Roy Tripp, Cheri Thayer, Jim Phelps, Susan Grimes, James Tetler, David Whitworth, Nicole Passeggio, Lewis Tabb, Bob Hydorn, and Cheryl Gaillard. Kathlyn Gray joined remotely.

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer: Roy called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. and opened with a prayer.
2. Approval of Consent Agenda: Susan requested to add a discussion of Technology classes under New Business. Bob made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Jim seconded the motion and the Vestry voted to approve the agenda as amended.
3. Approval of Minutes of the November Vestry meeting: Nicole made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2023 Vestry meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Jim. The motion was approved with abstention from Bob who was not present at the November meeting.
4. Reports from Parish Committee Liaisons:
 - a. Outreach and Mission: Nicole - Report attached.
 - b. Building and Grounds: Jim - Report attached.
 - c. Congregational Care: Kathlyn –Roy reported that the A/V equipment currently being used by Sacred Ground is being borrowed from a parishioner. As the equipment is a component of Sacred Ground, Roy would like A/V equipment to be purchased by Saint Mark's for future use. He noted that a projector and screen could be purchased for approximately \$600. Lewis reported that there were funds available for the purchase by the church. Full report attached.
 - d. Christian Formation: James – Report attached.
 - e. Parish Life: Susan and Bob – Cheryl reported that a Newcomers Reception has been planned for January 21st from 4-6pm at the home of David and Anne-Marie Irwin. Vestry members will be invited and asked to bring food. Full report attached.
 - f. Endowment Committee: Jim - Report attached.
 - g. Worship and Rector's Report: Roy - Report attached.
5. Treasurer's Report: Lewis - Report attached.
6. Budget – Lewis reported 119 pledges have been received for a total of \$390,000 including 10 new pledges and 3 reinstatements. 40 pledges are increased from last year. More pledges should be received by years end.
7. Old Business
 - a. Diocesan Convention Delegates: Cheri passed out a list of recommendations for 2024 Convention Delegates and Alternates. She will begin to contact people to see if they would be willing

to serve. Since the Southern Deanery will be hosting the convention, volunteers will also be needed to assist with the convention which will be held the weekend before Thanksgiving on Hilton Head Island.

8. New Business

a. Preliminary Annual Meeting Agenda: Roy/Cheri – Cheri passed out a draft of the Annual Meeting Agenda. It is similar to last year's with the addition of Parish Governance Resolutions which will be voted on at the beginning so that the meeting can be run according to the new Bylaws. The three resolutions, including a notice of the Annual Meeting, will be emailed out with link. All three resolutions will be voted on as a block.

1. Shall the proposed BYLAWS OF ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, INC. (as approved by the Chancellor of the Diocese on 11/21/23) be adopted to replace the Articles of Association (as approved January 20, 2019)?

2. Shall the Articles of Association (as approved January 11, 2015) be removed from the Articles of Incorporation on file with the Secretary of the State of South Carolina?

3. Shall the Articles of Incorporation on file with the Secretary of State of South Carolina be amended to include the proposed Additional Provisions as required by The Episcopal Church in South Carolina?

b. New Signature Card for Endowment Account: Lewis – Kathleen asked to be removed as a signatory for the Endowment Account since she will be doing a review. An addendum to the minutes is attached with the motion, second and vote of approval for the new signatories.

c. Classes for Technology: Susan asked about the possibility of setting up some classes for those in the parish who need help with computer skills. After some discussion about the best way to go about providing this service, it was suggested that Susan create a list of those willing to tutor as well as what specific needs might be. It might work best if a certain time was set up each month and have people sign up. It was also suggested that this might be a ministry organized by Women of Grace.

9. Visioning Together – Susan shared that she recently ran into a woman who had stopped by St. Marks booth at the Pride Festival. She commented that her church, by saying or doing nothing, said volumes. Nicole said that the women who gathered to make Advent Wreaths enjoyed it so much that next year they might make additional wreaths to share with shut-ins even possibly having people sponsor the cost of one to give away. Cheri said that she envisions a Stewardship Commission for Saint Marks that would promote year-round stewardship. A Ministry Fair would emphasize that time and talent are an important aspect of stewardship. Cheryl noted that she was interested in that and suggested a Ministry Fair during Epiphany with a title Find a Place to Shine Your Light at St. Mark's. Roy suggested a date of February 4th. He and Cheryl will meet after the first of the year to work on the details.

10. Going Around the Table – the meeting was concluded by individuals sharing thoughts and significant events.

11. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Gaillard

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach and Missions

Submitted by Nicole Passeggio

Thanks are due Judy Utter for preparing my report this month!

The O&M Committee met on November 28, 2023. Guest speaker Chris Thompson, Executive Director of Thumbs Up, spoke to the group. Currently, Thumbs Up is working with kids at the Robert Smalls school, helping to make connections and growth opportunities for the kids. Hopefully, programs will be enlarged this summer.

O&M budget stands at \$1,378. The committee approved the following:

- \$750 was allocated for 15 \$50 gift cards for CAPA kids.
- \$200 was donated to Ken for a discussion group study.
- \$300 was donated to Resorts of Beaufort c/o Grace Marshall, a volunteer at Resorts, for treats for the residents.
- The remaining \$128 was donated to St. Francis.

Barbara reminded O&M that there were already several grants pending for 2024. O&M will continue in 2024 with the same membership.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Submitted by Jim Phelps

- The Christmas/New Year's Eve services banner was put in place. Thank-you George.
- The broken latch on the banner cabinet door in the sacristy changing room was replaced. Thank-you Dave.
- The Christmas banner will be put in place late in the week of December 18th. Thank-you Jack and Chris Nietert.

Congregational Care Committee

Submitted by Kathlyn Gray

There has not been much change since the November report.

All ministries seem to be functioning well:

Prayer Ministry-nothing new to report.

Card Ministry -Gayle and her volunteers are sending Christmas cards to nursing homes as well as birthday cards to parishioners.

Meal Train - Judy Utter organized meals for one parishioner.

Altar Flowers - Mary Bryan is enjoying having the help of her new volunteers.

Transportation Team - Mary and Sally will advertise for volunteers in January.

Christian Formation

Submitted by James Tetler

The parish has been enrolled in Stephen Ministry. A small group attended the information session, and more are interested but were unable to attend.

Parish Life

Submitted by Susan Grimes

A few happenings:

Advent Wreath Making was so much fun! We had a small but vibrant group for this event on the green. Nicole ordered supplies, brought garden gloves/clippers. Thank you to all those who brought greens and expert advice. The wreaths were really beautiful.

Women of Grace thank Carol Whitworth for playing the piano for our sing-a-long which was held last Wednesday. We collected toys for Port Royal Elementary School. We felt good sharing Christ's love for all.

Oyster Roast coming up in January-please get checks in to Julie Petroff.

Endowment Committee

Submitted by Jim Phelps

- The Endowment Committee did not have a December 2023 meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 10, 2024.
- Promotion of the endowment in December is purposely aggressive to encourage donors to fund gifts before year-end.
- The balance of the endowment investment account on November 30, 2023 was \$238,813.31. This represents a November 30, 2023 YTD gain of approximately 7.7%/\$17,066.

Rector's Report

Submitted by Roy Tripp

Our Advent journey has brought us to the outskirts of Bethlehem. We are so close to Christmas, to the angel's announcement to unsuspecting shepherds, to the baby's birth and to God's incarnate presence manifested in the most unlikely place. Add to all this, the layers of secular Christmas, the decorations, the parties, the shopping, and for many, the traveling and it is easy to see why some people feel overwhelmed. And while we are still very much in the season of Advent, my attention is being drawn towards the new year and to...(wait for it) Lent. Lent begins earlier this year than in previous years, robbing the season after Epiphany of a couple of weeks. Ash Wednesday is February 14 (tell me God doesn't have a sense of humor). All this is to say that ministers who are tied to the Church Year are like merchandise buyers; we are always looking ahead to the next season. Meanwhile...

- Our Thanksgiving Eve service was widely received, and our turnout was up slightly from a year ago.

- After much fine tuning with regards to the sound of our live stream, we now seem to have the audio close to perfect. My thanks to Carter Hoyt, Dave Olszewski, Preston Tripp and TZiPi Radonsky for their help
- The adult ed class for November offered a look at the Gospel of Mark. It was held on Wednesday mornings and attendance was good.
- A four-part series on Living the Way of Love for Advent has been held on Wednesdays throughout Lent. It's paired with a meal (always a positive enticement). Attendance was strong.
- Our service of Advent Lessons and Carols took place at the 11:00 AM Sunday service on December 10. Attendance was just shy of 100, with 53 views online. The 9 AM service had 56 in person and 93 views online, making Advent II one of our highest attended services.
- A wonderful video produced by the Episcopal Church invites individuals and families to come and experience the joy, love, and hope of Christmas. The video is up on our website and Facebook page. Carter has attached a listing of our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services to the ending of the video. I encourage you to view it.

Action Items:

Our series "Sacred Ground" adult ed series is now into its second and third classes. The curriculum relies on the use of video. Sallie and Leigh Stone have graciously provided their video projector and screen for our use. I propose we purchase a projector and screen, allowing us to use this media. The cost is approximately \$ 600.00. Lewis Tabb has told me with have the financial resources to purchase these items that will allow video to be used for education and other events.

In December, it is customary to inform the Vestry regarding the portion of my monetary compensation that is designated as Housing Allowance. This designation does not alter the amount of my salary. It is only a formality for tax purposes. I am allocating \$30,000.00 for housing in 2024.

I rejoice for the gifts of your servant leadership at St. Mark's. Blessings as we transition from Advent into Christmastide and the New Year.

Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Lewis Tabb

There is nothing particularly noteworthy about November. Pledge receipts are below budget as many people have already paid their full year pledges. Non-pledge receipts are unusually large because of a couple of sizeable gifts received during the month. We often receive large gifts in December, so I imagine some of this is people paying earlier than usual. Expenses remain under control, and we have continued to run a year to date surplus. We received a couple of large gifts during November specifically designated for the rector's discretionary fund which show up in non-operating revenue. In addition, we received a gift for O&M this month. These funds can carry over to 2024 if not spent and will be reflected as restricted funds on the balance sheet similar to the restricted music fund. The discretionary contributions are not restricted but are in the discretionary fund bank account. This always carries over.

The balance sheet shows a good cash position. I predict that we will end the year strong.

#End#