



St. Margaret's Church
Westminster Parish
Vestry Meeting
Tuesday, April 18, 2017



Two days after Feast of Mary (Molly Brant Konwatsijayenni)
Witness to the Faith among the Mohawks, 1796



Attending:

Peter Mayer+, Rector
Charlie Lang, Treasurer
Nellie Bowers
Julia Drooff
Tim Parker
Doug Seybert
Tom Wenz

Jane Hague+, Associate
Kathy Polk, Clerk
Maggy Cullman
Christine Feldman
Paul O'Donnell
Al Todd

Anne Sessions, Senior Warden
Fran Becker
Gwen Davis
Ruth Harmon
Trish Schilling
Valery Weekley

Absent: Steve Brennan

Also attending: Elizabeth Radley, Senior Administrator; Izzy Winn – Grants Administrator; Sam Sloan – Head of the Grants Committee

1. Opening Prayer –Anne Sessions offered the opening prayer.

2. **The minutes from January, February, and March were unanimously approved and accepted.**

3. **Rector's Report:** The Rev. Peter Mayer

Peter+ did not prepare a written report with all the Easter activities. Instead, he shared:

- Kate Caldwell will head a planned giving committee that will dovetail with Stewardship. The concept is to instill better communication about planned giving. There is already a list of 20 names but they would like to increase the number of people who will remember St. Margaret's in their wills.
- Jane+ will be having surgery next week. Please keep her in your prayers. Peter+ will focus on pastoral care as there are a number of parishioners in need.
- Edna Ferris died this morning.
- The alarm in the church annex goes off regularly. There is a fault in the wiring. The IT team of Jim Weekley and Mark Torrence has been working on a solution.
- The Holy Week attendance was taken seriously. All volunteers were thanked for contributing to this outstanding effort. There were approximately 260 people at the 11:15 service. The 9:00 service was "shoulder to shoulder". The Parish Hall service of about 168 went well. Improvements have been made over the years. There is consideration of moving the 11:15 to 11:30 to allow for the Easter egg hunt and parking considerations. The staff was thanked for all their extra efforts to ensure success. Parking "ushers" may be utilized in the future.
- St. Margaret's Day School will host their Silent Auction on Saturday, May 6 at 7pm.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** Charlie Lang

Charlie noted that we were \$16K in the "red" in March, but that is nothing unusual for this time of year. **From** the 2016 overage we have allocated \$6,000 for Izzy Winn's 2017 Grants Administrator costs, the first invoice

from Riedel and Associates for \$2,199.53 for the organ study, and the second R&A invoice of nearly \$2,300, which is within the "not to exceed \$5K guidelines" authorized by the vestry at the November 2015 meeting. A summary of the construction loan interest payments as well as the Annual Parochial Report were distributed. The Diocese uses this assessment to determine each parish's obligation. The non-operating and mission expenses are not counted.

MOTION: To accept and approve the Annual Parochial Report to be signed by the rector, treasurer, and clerk. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. (At the conclusion of the meeting, Peter+, Charlie, and Kathy signed the report for Elizabeth Radley to be submitted.)

5. Parish Life Report: Trish Schilling and Al Todd

Trish and Al handed out a written report "St. Margaret's Parish Life Update". In keeping with the vestry priority of focusing on volunteers, they touched base with Faith and Fellowship, Coffee Hour, and Foyers. Jenelle Mejia is happy with all the support she has been getting. Things have been improving and attendance is getting better. Kathy Lang, Sarah Hyde and Leah Drooff would like to see more volunteers. The coffee machine has been repaired. There is a need to rearrange things more efficiently in the kitchen. They need a frost-free freezer. It was suggested to advertise for a donation on Facebook. A chest-type freezer would not be practical. They suggest a more formalized succession—many ministries revolve around one person. We need to build on that knowledge and experience. Have schedules and priorities written down. The kitchen should be included in the long-term study. There are opposing opinions regarding having a dishwasher. Jane Piche is currently suffering from a neck injury. She has done an excellent job with Newcomers and Foyers, but is another example of one person doing the ministry. "Parish Life" is more than the "big ticket" items. There will be a parish picnic in June. Looking towards succession – who is your back-up? There will be a volunteer luncheon on Sunday, May 21. The vestry can support this by attending. Some programs like Sunday school are thanked at "term end", but there should be one large event to recognize volunteers. There will be door prizes and little gifts. Extend a personal invitation to those you know who have served. They are asking for RSVPs.

6. GRANTS: Izzy Winn, Grants Administrator and Sam Sloan, Grants Committee

Parishioners traditionally serve on the Grants Committee for three years. The vestry has the fiduciary responsibilities. This year the committee had \$90K to work with. It was not the lowest but they have had \$140K in the past. This year there were 29 applicants (high has been 60 with an average of 39 – 40). The application process was tightened. There were 13 finalists this year with a November 30 deadline. The applicants were ranked from top to bottom. Any amount will make an impact. Liaisons will maintain contact. The intent is not to give grants year after year. The relationship/partnership is more personal. Applicants were questioned about sustainability.

MOTION: To accept the Grant Committee's recommendations as submitted. UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

The committee and liaisons were thanked. The results will be published at a later time.

7. Long Term Goals: Fran Becker

The "Vestry Approved Priorities of March 2017" were distributed with vestry member assigned. Peter+ recommended that vestry officers and staff be included.

- a. Authorize a new study of the existing campus: Maggy Cullman, Tom Wenz, Nellie Bowers, Bud Billups, and Steve Brennan
- b. Set fiscal priorities and benchmarks: Doug Seybert, Tim Parker, Julia Drooff, George Saroch, and Charlie Lang
- c. Develop strong lay leadership: Trish Schilling, Ruth Harmon, Fran Becker, Valery Weekley, Christine Feldmann, Al Todd, Paul O'Donnell, Gwen Davis, Kathy Polk, and Anne Sessions.

Everyone was charged to meet as a group by May 9. Set goals and priorities. Lay leaders will be asked to join. There is a financial deadline as the budget should be ready in November for approval in December. Teams will check in monthly. The Annual Meeting will be January 28. We need to report that we've taken on this task and show benchmarks. In November 2015, the MMR indicated we didn't have a plan. Now we have the beginning of a plan with practical goals.

8. Scott Riedel and Associates: Organ and Acoustic Analysis Report, March 15, 2017

The vestry discussed the possibility of a need to replace the present electronic organ. Peter+ wanted the costs to be taken out of the initial inquiry. What are the questions? Next month, Scott Riedel will be available to answer questions. James Fitzpatrick will be at the May meeting. This is a church decision. The organ needs to be replaced. What does the congregation want? Is St. Margaret's the church for a pipe organ? Does it fit with who we are? The music program is significant to worship. In larger churches, the organ is in the back. What accommodations should/can be made regarding the Third Sunday Band? Do we gain or lose seats? What is the net fall-out on seating? In the long term is the space appropriate for now or the potential growth in the church? Are we reconfiguring space to accommodate the organ or is the organ accommodating to the church? There is concern that visually, the pipes will overwhelm the altar. There is a need to ask the parish how they feel. Is a pipe organ "suitable" for a "country church"? Vestry members would like to see other options such as digital and hybrid models before deciding. Where are there other types of organs in churches that are similar to ours? It was noted that the sanctuary space underwent major changes 40 years ago. St. Anne's went through \$50K in maintenance on their organ. What are the heating/cooling/mold issues and environment with the potential new structure in a church with a history of mold issues? We need to include maintenance expenses in the discussions. This may also have staffing considerations. Riedel wants a pipe organ. Schoenstein would have other options. If we buy a pipe organ and in ten years we decide we need a new sanctuary, what happens then? Peter+ has a colleague – The Rev. Dr. William Bradley Roberts, Faculty Consultant in Music with the Virginia Theological Seminary – who could help as an objective consultant.

9. Junior Warden Report: absent

There are HVAC a/c issues. The thermostat works only in two-degree increments. There is \$3K available for repairs without consulting the vestry.

10. Senior Warden Report: Anne Sessions

Anne reported that personnel notes have been incremented to create guidance for administration. There is a proposed 325th Anniversary Celebration budget of \$3,738.25. The Senior Warden's Report itemized promotional items. They are working on a logo – a symbol that will have an impact. It was noted that any logo with more than three colors has a significant price increase.

MOTION: To allocate money for the 325th Anniversary October 21 – 22 and 23, 2017 as itemized in the report to the vestry. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Other Business

Tommy Bowers submitted a request to the vestry to consider a cross that was created from a pine tree taken down during construction of the Formation Building. There is protocol in place to determine acquisitions with regard to esthetics, insurance costs, maintenance costs, etc. A committee of two parishioners as well as two "experts" outside the church considers each application on a one-time basis. It is not a standing committee. Previously, a cross that was submitted by Al Todd was approved to suspend from the ceiling in the niche in the lobby of the building. Peter+ will discuss this donation with Tommy.

Gwen Davis submitted the newly revised "Bylaws of St. Margaret's Day School". One of the updates was to include a bylaw to eliminate a school board member if necessary. It was suggested that Vestry consider revising its bylaws to include a provision for the removal of a vestry member.

Tim Parker will head the Finance Committee.

Christine Feldmann said that the relationship with Windsor Farms Elementary had to be terminated because of barriers created. Christine was commended for the excellent manner in which she handled the situation.

Vestry members were asked to write thank you notes to the music program, altar guild, and altar flowers.

The meeting concluded with the singing of the Doxology at 9pm. The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 16 at 7pm in the Formation Building. The Formation Committee will present its report –Nellie Bowers and Gwen Davis – Day School; Julia Drooff- Youth Formation, Ruth Harmon – Children Formation, and Valery Weekley – Adult Formation. Trish Schilling will lead the opening prayer.

Faithfully,
Kathy Polk, Clerk