 

St Margaret’s Episcopal Church Vestry

Subject: Minutes for 20 February 2024

**Attending**: Peter Mayer (Rector), Patti Sachs (Associate Rector)Z, Joseph Ross (Senior Warden), Kathy Wiernicki (Treasurer), Paul Schurke (Junior Warden), Kathy Lang (Clerk), Dave Boyce, Bruce Hargus, Mary Holstine, Janice John, Lana Keelty, Lois Lechleider, Joe Marino, Jen Thomas, Dan Tootle, Ernie Tucker, Carol Williams, and Elizabeth Radley (Director of Operations)Z.

Not Attending: Matt Chasse

This meeting was conducted in Hybrid format. Zoom attendees are noted by a “Z” after their name.

A Quorum was present.

1. Opening prayer was given at 7:01 pm by Carol Williams.

2. The meeting was called to order by the Rector. The January 2024 Vestry minutes were approved as amended.

3. Submitted Reports:

**A. Treasurer’s Report** (submitted via Realm) - Operating results for period ended January 31, 2024, report revenues in excess of expenses of $27,03128. Although a surplus is being reported for the period then ended, this amount is behind the 2024 Preliminary Annual Operating Budget (the “budget”) by $(17,203.84). Pledge receipts for the period ended January 2024 are behind budget by $(25,248.93) and Donations are behind budget by $(1,873). The preliminary budget passed by the Vestry in December of 2023 estimated Pledges at 100% of the Stewardship Campaign goal of $990,000. The budget will be reviewed and updated as additional information becomes available. For the period ended January 31, 2024, total expenses were under budget by $(10,278.09). As noted on P&L for the period ended January 31, 2024, PPP loan funds were transferred from the General Endowment into the Church Operating Account in January to pay the final 2023 PPP related staff bonuses. This transfer was recorded temporarily as a negative staff bonus expense on the P&L. The bonuses were paid with the February 2, 2024 payroll and this negative expense was reversed. All budgeted expense areas were under budget as of the end of January, primarily as a result of timing differences.
During January 2024, there were three withdrawals from the Church Endowment Accounts. $60,0000 was withdrawn from the General Endowment, with $54,000 going to restore the Church’s Operating Account and $6,000 designated for the 2024 Grants Administrator’s fee. $58,600 was also withdrawn from the General Endowment from the remaining PPP loan proceeds for payment to Church staff as the second-half of COVID appreciation bonuses approved for 2023. Finally, $13,125 was withdrawn from the Capital Maintenance Endowment as the initial payment on replacement of the Parish Hall floors.

The finance committee recently met with the investment advisors for the Endowment. All are pleased with how the funds are performing. Although we still have not completely made up the losses from 2023, the funds are in good shape. The finance committee will be meeting quarterly with the investment team.

All PPP loans have now been expended.

A concern was expressed about continuing to use $990k as our pledge line since we currently only have $877k in pledges. If the pledges do not come in as expected, then the staff will review expenses for possible cuts. They are already reviewing this. Historically, pledges continue to come in through February, March and throughout the year. This will continue to be monitored through the coming months.

Endowment withdrawals – We discussed withdrawals for Grants ($100k), the Grants coordinator ($6k) Grants Administration software ($5k), Light House shelter ($12k) and SMDS scholarships ($10k). It was thought that the Grants Administration software had previously been approved. Also, we have not had a firm dollar amount request from the Day School for scholarships.

**Motion: Approve a withdrawal from the Endowment Fund in the amount of $118,000. The withdrawal is for three items 1) $100,000 for the Grants Committee; 2) $6,000 for the Grants administrator; 3) $12,000 for the Light House Shelter.**

Carried unanimously.

**Motion: Approve transferring $30,000 from the designated account for the Gala to Grants Committee.**

Carried unanimously.

**B. Rector’s Report** (submitted via Realm)

Bishop’s visit – The Right Rev. Carrie Schofield-Broadbent will visit St Margaret’s on March 17 and attend all 3 services. After the 11:15 service, she will meet with the Vestry for approximately 45 minutes. Clergy will not attend.

Draft apology to the African-American community of the Broadneck Peninsula – There was a lengthy discussion about an apology that has been drafted by the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations (TRR) Task Force. The Task Force has spent the last three years establishing relationships with local African American communities. Their prayerful discernment was that this was the correct next step in repairing the breach between the communities. Many viewpoints were presented. Will it appear hollow or too little too late? Does this mean giving money? How will it be received? Is it specific enough? Feedback - We do intend to follow up with specific actions. Some suggestions – providing a scholarship to help further the education of an African American student, working with Asbury Broadneck church in designating a space to study their history and making our archives available, providing a non-competitive grant where they come back and tell us what they did with it, offering our facilities to African American non-profits at no charge, co-hosting an annual event like the Parent-Child dance, working alongside the clergy of Asbury Methodist to address specific issues of systemic racism through [ACT](https://www.actaaco.org/campaigns/) (to re-join ACT, would require an annual contribution).We recognize that some of our outreach efforts have not always been taken up by intended recipients. We recognize that we do not know how the apology will be received. It is important for our congregation to know how this congregation has benefitted from slavery and systemic racism. Although our current buildings were not built by slave labor, they were most likely built by African American labor which we know were subject to Jim Crow laws and overt discrimination. Some current members’ ancestors were not slave owners and this congregation was on the verge of bankruptcy as recently as 35 years ago. Systemic racism is a denial of opportunity. We can help to reverse that denial of opportunity by tapping into the expertise within our congregation. In some cases, this has already happened. We don’t want to tell anybody what they need. We need to use prayer and discernment throughout this process. The Vestry will review a revised apology in March.

C. **Day School Report** (submitted via Realm) – SMDS fundraiser and silent auction to be held April 13 at InGrano restaurant in West Annapolis.

D. **Long-Range planning** (in-person report) – The committee hopes to have a report to the Vestry next month. They are looking at 5 long-term goals. This plan would begin in 2025 and is a 4-year plan.

E. **Junior Warden/Buildings and Grounds Report** (submitted via Realm) – The Caring for Creation program continues. The Vestry agreed to continue to be the caretakers of the Columbarium.

Parish Hall Roof – Junior Warden has a plan for replacing roof shingles on Parish Hall roof. A vestry member can help with procurement and storage of the shingles. There is a more difficult problem in dealing with asbestos abatement. Requests for Proposals are being drafted. If approved, this will be a 2-week project that will need to be de-conflicted with other activities in the church and Day School.

Other projects – Junior Warden will work on providing a priority list and expected costs to go on the long list of projects that have either been deferred over the last few years or are new items.

F. **Senior Warden Report** (submitted via Realm) – Senior Warden has had many discussions with parishioners, former senior wardens and Diocese personnel as he finds his way.

We need someone to be a point person for Good Seed Sunday, May 5.

4. For the Good of the Order – A vestry member would like to take on understanding and re-invigorating the St Margaret’s Legacy Society.

A vestry member highly recommended the book, “Madness: Race and Insanity in a Jim Crow era”, which is about how African American people with mental illness were treated at the Crownsville Hospital. It is another way to get insight on how unfairly African American people in our local community were treated.

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 with the singing of the Doxology.