



## St Margaret's Episcopal Church Vestry

Subject: Minutes for 19 October 2021

Attending: Peter Mayer (Rector), Patti Sachs (Associate Rector), Kristen Berthelotte (Senior Warden), Paul Schurke (Junior Warden), Katherine Wiernicki (Treasurer), David Allen, Stacia Bontempo, Marti Engstrom, Barbara Friedmann, Cory Greene, Alden Gross, Elizabeth Kopack, Kathy Lang, Chris Prender, Susan Roberts, and Jim Barnett (Clerk)

This meeting was conducted in person in the Parish Hall, socially distancing and mask protocols in place.

Not present: Elizabeth Radley (Director of Operations), Charlie Lang (Asst Treasurer), and Luke Morgan

A Quorum was noted per the SMC Bylaws.

- 1. Opening prayer was given at 7 pm by David Allen.**
- 2. The meeting was called to order by the Rector and the September 2021 Vestry minutes were approved.**
- 3. The Clerk requested that speakers remove their masks to facilitate audio reception and note taking. A vestry member was "uncomfortable" with this request so mask wearing was the order of the day.**

#### **4. Submitted reports:**

##### **A. The Rector's report.** (Posted to Vestry)

A lot remains up in the air. We just don't know how this pandemic will progress. People are out of rhythm for Sunday. We cannot predict what the protocols will be for November and December.

Keep Patti in our prayers, they are very much appreciated. Patti will let us know when her schedule becomes known.

It is great to be meeting in person for church and associated activities. Families are coming back as youth formation begins to ramp up.

The Rector expressed his pride in our church and leadership throughout the pandemic.

##### **B. Treasurer's report.** (Posted to Realm)

August was tentative because pledges were running behind. They remain about \$34,671 as of the end of September. While revenue is down, expenditures are also below budget, so we are about \$55,000 in the black.

We are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. That having been said, there was a market pull back in our portfolio of about \$224,000.

A draft 2022 operating budget has been provided to Vestry with the monthly Treasurer's Report. The budget currently reflects an operating deficit of approximately \$70,000. This draft was provided to Vestry to gage their pulse on various issues. The floor was then opened to hear Vestry thoughts.

In keeping with current Vestry protocols, the meeting was closed, and minutes were transcribed to an addendum.

The meeting was reopened.

It took a lot of work to put this budget together. How do you even write a budget that starts with a \$70,000 deficit? This draft is high level as a point of departure and begins the dialogue for the hard decisions down the road.

When will we have a better appreciation of the Stewardship campaign? Ideally, we will approve the budget in December, but pledges will continue to come in. In fact, some won't pledge until the first of the year. So far, we have 64 pledges for \$366,000. We are in the "matching zone" with \$52,000 in that fund. Today we have 3 who have reduced their pledge and 33 who have increased with 3 new pledgers this year. We are ahead of last year with families.

The Rector reminded the Vestry that we are in much better shape than many other churches. Our challenges are good ones. We always have the endowment to fall back on. We also have very generous parishioners who will meet whatever challenge comes up, like the new organ.

Along that same line, \$54,000 was taken from the Endowment as up-front money for the organ. It could be returned to the Endowment or held as a "safety note" for later consideration against the deficit. We will probably have a \$70,000 deficit and we need a plan to cover that next year.

If you have any questions regarding this proposed budget, please contact the Treasurer.

### **C. Formation Report (posted to Realm) Cory Greene.**

Vestry members felt this was a "great report."

Gwen Davis has taken the time to organize and sort the Godly Play equipment. The Vestry applauded this effort and the Rector wanted to make sure **this** was noted with great appreciation and applause.

The Women's Guild will hold their annual fundraiser this spring. They fund various things around the campus as needed like "organizers" for the kitchen in the Parish Hall.

#### **D. Day School Report (provided to Vestry) Kathy Lang**

Kathy Lang provided a report on scholarships awarded. The Day School very much appreciated the scholarship donation from SMC during the Pandemic. Thank you letters, including student notes, were passed around. The school is thriving with full enrollment. There will only be one kindergarten class next year.

A question was asked about outreach for diversity objectives. Is there any kind of program for either students or teachers of color to join SMDS? The school is advertising to communities with diverse populations. Kathy was not sure if it is in their mission statement. It was noted that the school does an excellent job with diversity of children with educational limitations. It was further noted that two years ago a young lady of color was given a scholarship with the help of the church. Her attendance was laudable, but transportation issues precluded her sustained attendance

#### **E. Bylaws rewrite David Allen**

The Rector asked David Allen to undertake a review and rewrite of the current SMC bylaws.

The first working draft has been discussed with the Rector and provided to the EXCOM.

The update includes things like virtual and hybrid meetings, proxy voting, Officer appointment, scheduling, accession planning, an expanded quorum, and expanded Vestry participation. It was noted that "The Diocese's Canons dictate an oath for Vestry members." "Are we a duly constituted Vestry without a signed oath?"

With the Annual meeting scheduled for January 23, 2022, and the congregations' approval requisite for validation, changes need to be published by January 9, 2022, but hopefully closer to December 2021. Therefore, comments are requested by this Friday for discussion at the November Vestry meeting and additional reviews after that.

It was noted that the current bylaws are discordant from the Canons and the draft is an attempt to remediate that. We do need to keep in mind "best practices" as we consider the draft.

#### **F. Trust, Reparations and Reconciliation Task Force (TRRTF) update (Beth Kopack)**

As presented at last month's Vestry meeting, 2 of the 9 Activity Proposals (AP) were approved by the Vestry. The Coffee Hour Chats will be every third Sunday commensurate with the Third Sunday Band. They will start after the 9AM service on November 21<sup>st</sup> and suspend through the Holiday season They will begin again in January 2022.

Coupled with this AP is the TF request to begin a media effort (AP-10) with text, pod casts and maybe short videos depicting cultural differences. It would not be just the Black community down the road. It would incorporate a self-study site and spin off the coffee hour chat subject of the month. We need to work with a tech savvy individual who can help us manage the requisite technology. The TF can provide one person to work with a web master. The Diocese already has such a web page, and we would need to be careful with what we post on ours. If we use what

the Diocese posts, then we should be covered. With this web page, we can help SMC parishioners who have questions coming out of the Coffee Hour Chats with directions that may answer or at least help with their questions. A question came up about liability in that we are attempting to educate. We can provide a disclaimer. While we are in the baby steps here, we will not be comfortable putting out anything not already on the Diocese web page. This will provide our parishioners with short cuts to answers. We don't need to put everything on our web site. What are the impacts on our staff, we do not want to put more work on Laura. The web master would put it together and then provide it to Laura, but she would still have additional work to do. It must be Laura because she manages the SMC web site. We could consider hiring to this position. Even a simple link to the Diocesan web page is not that simple. It is important to get something attached to the SMC web site to project our beliefs. It will tell people who we are. It will follow the way the syllabus is broken down: Key aspects, format specific, 90% discussion, "guiding Principles," safe place, and nonjudgmental. It will provide you one thing you can click on each month as the coffee hour presentations induce thought provoking topics. It is hoped that at least a link to the Diocesan web page on this topic would be a no brainer. We can then retain our own sensitivities beyond that. Another idea is to keep it on Realm so it would remain internal to SMC. We would then need an additional "Group Page." We could use the TRRTF as a resource group for further vetting. The Vestry seemed to be comfortable with the Diocesan and "National" products. It is then available if someone wants it. We cannot hide our light under a bushel. But we do need to be careful about how we proceed. The easiest is to post to the Diocesan website and then the challenge for SMC is how we react to that. We will take this idea back to the TF to flesh out the logistics of this idea.

The TRRTF does not have a budget line in the 2022 draft as presented. If they find that they have a need for funding, it was suggested that they could apply for a grant from the SMC Grant's Committee. If it is hard copy products that are needed, then look to the Missions Commission. We do not have the budget flexibility at this point so work with Formation for this year and then we can look at a budget line in the next budget.

#### **G. Junior Warden's report.** (On Realm)

Water is still coming out of the tap when I last checked.

The organ platform will go the entire length of the attendant wall. It will be possible to still place such items on top of the reredos wall. We will install the speakers in early November. The vents approximate to the platform are returns so that is not an issue.

We continue to await parts for the HVAC system.

#### **H. Senior Warden's report.** (On Realm)

Al Todd has taken the time to segment the campus into 12 garden beds for "adoption." We need to post names of the adopters to show ownership and generate pride. We will initiate this ministry in February to get ready for spring. We will all be working together to make this campus beautiful. We could do some sort of "draft" and allow parishioners to bid on specific plots. We

do have a resident auctioneer so that might be fun and generate some money. We could incorporate a Chili Cookoff and really make this fun.

We should have the brackets installed for the organ 12-15 November. The speakers will then go in 16-22 November. The preliminary organ will sound 200% better than what we have.

Prayers were offered for the Children's' ministry.

**GI. For the Good of the Order.**

The Third Sunday Band will have a concert on the grass this Thursday.

October 31<sup>st</sup> will be the Fall festival and we will dedicate the All-Saints Lounge after the service.

November 11<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate Veteran's Day and live stream to honor our veterans.

The Archive Committee is looking for old notes and letters that parishioners may want to get rid of. They continue to work on current history, and these may be helpful. The Committee does have copies of previous bylaws if anyone is interested. They also have the files from the previous B&G Committee.

The meeting ended at 8:46 PM with prayers for Patti and the singing of the Doxology.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jim Barnett

