

Worship and Music Committee Minutes **Wednesday, January 9, 2008**

Participants: David Roden, Anne Pickett, Becky Davies, Sherrie Cathcart, Paul Stetsenko, Jan Dickerson, and Carolyn Carmack.

David Roden opened the meeting with prayer.

Month in Review

Festival Sunday with the Commonwealth Brass was well received. Larry Hayward welcomed the Alexandria Choral Society to our church at their 4:00 PM concert.

There was some confusion about not having an early service on December 23rd. The transition from the 5:00 to the 10:00 PM Christmas Eve services went well thanks to Anne Pickett and Carolyn Carmack.

The Slaying of the Innocents was dramatic and effectively portrayed on on December 30th.

Communion was served on January 6th. Issues of clean-up and waist were discussed along with concerns about the overall length of the service.

Month Ahead

Materials are in-place for the Baptism Renewal service on January 13th.

The committee has not been asked to provide ushers or other support for Casey FitzGerald's installation service on January 20th. Paul Stetsenko will ask if anything is expected.

Materials for the Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 PM on February 6th are in-place. Karen Blomberg wishes to mix the ashes with oil herself.

February 10th is the next communion service. The suggestion was made that the Confirmation class may want to help prepare the elements for this service.

Other Business

Requests were received and approved for serving communion at the Confirmation retreat on April 6th and the Flying Solo retreat in the fall.

A proposal from Patty Chamberlain, the churches Wedding Coordinator, to increase the custodial fee for weddings from \$100 to \$150 was discussed and approved. The \$100 fee was original set over ten years ago. This led to a general discussion about the organist's fee which has not changed for at least five years. Inquiries about fees charged by other churches was suggested to determine if a change was warranted.

The 2007 worship and music expenses were discussed. The worship expenses were more than double the 2007 budget. Some of this was due to one-time expenses from moving into our renovated space and other unanticipated costs (like a reception after the community Thanksgiving service). Many of these expenses would have been paid by committee members in the past, but David Roden has been encouraging committee members to submit their bills to the church so that the budget process has a clearer picture of the true cost of supporting worship at Westminster. In considering these expenses, the committee recommended increasing the worship budget request for 2008 from \$750 to \$1000.

Preparations for the Lent and Easter services were discussed. A decision was made to focus on palm crosses for Palm Sunday and purchase only 100 palm fronds for the children and choir. The afternoon Palm Sunday service will focus on Pontius Pilot as a person and feature music by Rossini. Publicity for the event has been difficult to arrange. Greg Ogden will be asked to help with fliers and special mailings. A publicity budget of \$300 and a musician budget of \$3000 were allocated for this event.

Arrangements and options for Easter flowers were discussed. Anne Pickett will check with Nancy Bea about what has been done in the past and then talk with Behnke's to determine what types of flowers might be available on March 23rd. Since Easter is early this year and a plan for displaying flowers in our new configuration has not been developed, the possibility of a special Easter flower arrangement like the one prepared for 2007 may be desirable.

The Alexandria Choral Society has asked to use our sanctuary for a concert on February 10th and April 13th. The February 10th concert is a Stabat Mater offering by an all women's chorus. The April 13th concert will be offered by a children's chorus. Both concerts were approved by the committee.

The Alexandria Choral Society has also approached Paul Stetsenko about the possibility of a joint performance of J. S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion on Palm Sunday of 2009. The work is 3.5 hours in length and in German. Several committee members expressed reservations and concerns. The cost is estimated at \$15,000 and the Alexandria Choral Society would typically raise their share of the expenses through ticket sales and advertising in the program. The committee expressed doubts about the Session's willingness to consider such an arrangement when our church choir is participating. Becky Davies made the motion to ask the Session for authorization to study the feasibility of a joint presentation by the Alexandria Choral Society and the Westminster Adult Choir of St. Matthew Passion on Palm Sunday 2009 that would likely require ticket sales.

Carolyn Carmack reported that the capital campaign furnishing committee requested that the proposal for new bell table covers be sent to the campaign decorations committee for review. This was done and a few small changes in the proposed color scheme were made. The committee also approved Carolyn Carmack's arrangements to have the maintenance performed on the church's handbells. The maintenance was scheduled for January 24th at a cost of \$2000. This expense will be charged half to the music budget and half to the special offerings account since spending the endowment funds now requires Session approval.

The status of the organ pipes was also discussed. The contractor has been unresponsive and there is no firm schedule at this point. Planning for a May dedication service for the new piano and chancel furnishings will proceed even if the organ is not included.

There was some confusion about when the Advent and Christmas decorations should be taken down. The committee recommended keeping the decorations in place until after Epiphany from now on.

Problems with heating the worship prep room on Saturday mornings prior to communion and improving the seal on the outside door near the worship prep room were raised. Nancy Bea will be contacted to arrange heat for communion preparation.

The committee discussed a concern expressed by Faye Woodrow about the allocation of ushers during the collection of the offering. Having one usher handle both sides of the center aisle in the back of the church has frequently been problematic. If the head usher helps, the collection is less complicated. Adding instructions to this effect will be discussed with Ken Niemann.

Suggestions for the worship and music components of the church's annual report were discussed. Many special music offerings, worship services, and new sanctuary amenities were identified.

David Roden closed the meeting with prayer.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 13, 2008 at 7:30 PM.