

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry  
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr  
Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Vestry Members Present: Elizabeth McLean, Jan Clarke, Susan Adeniyi-Jones, Caroline Manogue, Andrea Cayley, Carolyn Morris, Jay Brown, Carter Williams, Andrew Masterman, Mackie Maclean, Phil Jodz

Redeemer Staff Present: Peter Vanderveen, Jo Ann Jones, David Romanik, Jay Einspanier

Recorder: David Romanik

The meeting was called to order at 7:03.

Peter offered an opening prayer.

The minutes of the December meeting were approved.

*Report of the Rector's Warden*

Andrew made mention of David's announcement on Sunday that he would be departing for a new call. He indicated that one of the topics of the Vestry retreat would be to discuss the call of a new Associate Rector. Peter noted that the job had been posted the previous week, and that he had already received a fair amount of interest. Peter also indicated that he had discussed adjusting Jo Ann's job description in light of the arrival of a new priest. Andrew reminded the group that the Vestry retreat is scheduled for Saturday, February 23, which would provide space for more expansive discussion and deliberation. He made note of three "chunky" issues that would be discussed: David's departure, Legacy into Promise, and Stewardship.

*Report of the Accounting Warden*

Mackie indicated that there was a small surplus for the final 2018 budget. The surplus is the result of some additional endowment income and an underspend in expenses. He stressed that there was also a shortfall in pledges. This is consistent with a pattern, as the last six or seven years have seen a steady decrease from a high water mark of \$1.1 million in pledge receipts. The proposed 2019 budget is conservative. It accounts for a pledge shortfall, which was at least partially attributable to a late stewardship campaign and the coincidence of the capital campaign. The forecast 2019 expenses are a "moveable feast," since we aren't sure how long we will be in the Parish House. The capital repair line has been increased, since several projects are on the horizon: the church roof, the narthex windows, etc.

*Report of the Parish Administrator*

Jay noted that the Finance Committee had recommended several financial resolutions: to adopt a 4.25% spend rate on the three year rolling average of the endowment, to move the \$24,000 2018 surplus into the building fund, and to make a \$10,000 pledge to the diocese. The motions were seconded and approved.

Andrew moved that the 2019 budget proposed by the Finance Committee be adopted. Elizabeth seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mackie noted that there had been a long conversation in Finance Committee about annual giving. Though the average gift is up from \$2600 to \$2900, it was expressed that it would be important to have a discussion about annual funding at the retreat. Peter indicated that Jacques Vauclain (Annual Giving Chair) had pledged a full court press to make up the shortfall. It was further expressed that we are in good shape financially, but the current trend is not sustainable. Several people indicated a need for new membership on the Stewardship Committee.

Mackie and Andrew noted that we are close to meeting the ultimate goal for Legacy into Promise, and that we will be contacting banks about a revolving line of credit. Carter asked that the Vestry receive an update about the endowment at some point over the next few months. Jay indicated the information is on the balance sheet; Mackie agreed that the Vestry should be attending to investment performance on a regular basis. The Finance Committee is considering a recommendation that we move the funds from BNY Mellon to Vanguard. There has also been some discussion among the Finance Committee about moving Vestry designated funds from the Church Foundation to Vanguard. Some discussion followed.

Peter offered some comments on stewardship. He noted that he had sent letters to 60-70 parishioners whose 2018 pledges were in arrears. He had received several calls from people indicating that they had no idea they were behind, leading to speculation that there had been a failure of communication. He also noted that the annual giving campaign had gotten started about five weeks late, in part because so much Legacy into Promise activity had coincided with the normal start of the stewardship campaign. There doesn't seem to be any particular reason people are LYBUNTS (Last Year But Unfortunately Not This Year); in fact, several people who had been very generous to the capital campaign were among the LYBUNTS. The shortfall mostly seems to be an issue of timing, and is not unique to Redeemer. Peter has received several calls from comparable parishes that are also having a lag in stewardship response. Some have speculated that the new tax law has affected receipts, while others have wondered about the volatility of the stock market. Susan asked if holding people accountable for their pledge or the shift in terminology from "giving" to "funding" is part of the reason for people's reticence about pledging. Peter commented that "to fund" is "to create that which could not have been" and doesn't preclude giving. Andrew said we are not in a terrible place and that we should have a better sense of whether there is a problem at the Vestry retreat. Carter remarked that we need to be ready to in terms of stewardship in September. Elizabeth suggested that we stress maintenance of the physical plant with the congregation.

#### *Liaison Reports*

Elizabeth (Youth Education) noted that there is a lack of clarity around the age requirements for Confirmation and Rite 13. Caroline noted that WGP-13 is doing a drive for Cradles to Crayons on January 29.

Jan (Outreach) reported that the grants subcommittee had solicited grant applications from interested people in the parish, and that the deadline is January 31. The committee has received three applications so far. Joyful Giving collected more than \$5000 for four agencies. The

community services subcommittee of the Outreach Committee is updating the serving others tab on the website, pulling information about parishioner community service in ACS, and encouraging the mentioning of outreach opportunities in the Prayers of the People.

Susan reported that the Stewardship Committee was pursuing LYBUNTS.

Caroline (NEW) announced that the Vestry was invited to the Newcomer Coffee at the Rectory on Sunday, March 17. She also noted that the committee is looking for “Legacy Greeters.”

Carolyn (Bazaar) reported that the wrap up meeting had taken place the night before. She indicated that attendance at the 2018 Bazaar dinner was down 30% from 2016. The Committee has tentatively booked the Merion Cricket Club for the Friday before Thanksgiving for the 2019 Bazaar Dinner.

Jay noted that the Nominating Committee had concluded its work.

Carter indicated that the MEG Committee is focused on promoting Evensong and is looking for two new members. He wondered if it would be appropriate for there to be a champagne toast at this week’s MEG Coffee Hour. The Vestry expressed disapproval.

Phil wondered if the Churchyard and Buildings Committee was necessary.

Mackie (Music Committee) mentioned that the choir was in the midst of its Chili Fundraiser. He noted that Lessons and Carols had been very successful, and that the choir was making plans for the Winter Concert on March 30. The Committee has also begun discussing the 2020 Tour.

#### *Reports of the Associate Rectors*

David announced that the author and cultural critic Alan Jacobs would be at Redeemer for a series of talks on March 2 and 3. He encouraged the Vestry to attend. He also announced the beginning of an Adult Confirmation Class.

Jo Ann announced that she would be offering a pastoral presence at Bryn Mawr College beginning next week. She also indicated that Youth Confirmation Class was underway, and encouraged the Vestry to attend the upcoming Wrecking Ball.

#### *Report of the Rector*

Peter commented that we had great attendance for Christmas Eve services, even though we expected numbers to be down slightly. He offered comments about each service, specifically mentioning the new costumes at the pageant. He noted that the Christmas Day service had been covered on the Channel 10 news in a segment that included a “beautiful” collection of moments from the service. It had the largest attendance in Peter’s memory.

He reported that the construction documents for the new building had been compiled and that volunteers were going through them in great detail. They are out to bid and we hope to have a Guaranteed Maximum Price by early February.

Peter offered an update on Legacy into Promise pledges, noting that we are \$175,000 short for 2018; Peter is following up on timing. He wondered if a separate Legacy into Promise reminder statement might be helpful in dealing with some of these timing issues. Peter also indicated that members of the Operating Committee are beginning to talk about when to officially close the campaign.

Peter offered words of thanks to the departing Vestry members: Elizabeth McLean, Caroline Manogue, Jay Brown, and Phil Jodz. He expressed gratitude for their indispensable leadership and asserted that they had made Redeemer a better parish. Elizabeth indicated that she was grateful to see what this parish has become.

David offered a concluding prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15.