

Minutes of the Meeting of the Vestry
Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA
Tuesday, June 16, 2020
7:00-9:00 PM via Zoom

Vestry members present: Susan Adeniyi-Jones, Jim Buck, Elisabeth Cooke, Lisa Davis, Al Greenough, Melanie LeBoeuf, Mackie MacLean, Harry Miller, Andrew Masterman, Carolyn Morris, Tracy Steele and Jacques Vauclain.

Redeemer staff present: The Rev. Peter Vanderveen, The Rev. Jo Ann Jones, The Rev. Michael Palmisano, Francesca Merritt, Jay Einspanier.

Guest presenter: Valerianna Amorosa, Epidemiologist

Recorder: Francesca Merritt

The meeting of the Vestry was called to order at 7:08 PM.

Reopening Protocols and Concerns

Valerianna Amorosa, Medical Director for Penn Home Infusion Therapy, spoke with the vestry regarding Covid-19 and protocols for re-opening the church. She noted that the incidence of COVID is going down locally, but that the documented prevention measures should be maintained. These include: wearing masks, keeping distance between one another, and, if possible, eye protection, particularly for individuals who are at highest risk. Hand hygiene should be practiced, either washing or alcohol based sanitizer. Performing services with a limited number of people and using these preventative steps as a basis would be the safest way to conduct services. Capitalizing on the season and doing things outdoors, keeping further distance apart, might be something to consider.

Peter asked about air conditioning and air flow within the building. Valerie said that her instinct is maybe open windows are better.

Jim asked about the use of fans. Valerie stated there is not a lot of data and did not know if using the fan would be any better than air conditioning.

Jacques asked about the use of leaflets. Valerie said they should be used by one person but not shared. She cautioned that if an usher is handing them out they might be getting close to another person. If the leaflets could be handed out in a way that is very cautious, with both parties are masked, the risk is very low.

Peter asked if services are limited to one per Sunday, would this allow for cleaning of the church to be done during the week. Valerie agreed that under such circumstances, cleaning could be delayed.

Carolyn asked if regular glasses provide any eye protection. Valerie responded that glasses are better than nothing, but because they are not 180 degree protection, they are not as good as goggles.

Peter asked if Valerie thought it was appropriate, from a risk management standpoint, to open the church. Valerie stated it would be appropriate to open following the protocols for safety to manage the risk. Peter stated we were targeting the 12th of July for opening. Vestry agreed that that date was appropriate.

Jo Ann asked if someone in the parish community contracts COVID from the church what should be done. Valerie said the church should contact the Montgomery County Department of Health and folks in contact with that person should quarantine for 14 days.

Susan requested that the messaging around the re-opening be clear: that we are putting protocols in place but by inviting people to come out there is an increase in risk. Valerie added if individuals are masked there is a 17 fold protection versus someone who is not masked.

Peter said that Chris Zafiriou emailed him about the annual summer camping trip and that there were a number of families interested. The vestry said since the church is not open right now, it would be counterproductive to endorse this activity or advertise it at this time.

Minutes

Andrew asked for the May minutes to be approved. They were passed with the amendment that the request for funds for COVID relief, initiated by the Outreach committee, were passed on to the Executive Committee for their approval.

2020 Strategic Plan

Andrew proposed that the vestry set a goal to gather in August to review the work of the Strategic Plan sub-groups. Andrew asked the groups to get together a couple more times before August.

Rector's Warden Report

The vestry agreed, at Andrew's request, to meet though the summer via Zoom.

Peter and Andrew toured the new building. Andrew was impressed by the transformation that was occurring.

Accounting Warden's Report

Mackie stated that operations are similar to the month before: spending is less than budget, and revenues are more. A number of parishioners have advanced their pledges; some parishioners have slowed down their giving. This may have consequences for the third and fourth quarter and the Finance committee will be looking at this.

The cashflow for Legacy into Promise is on target. Spending YTD is down because of the COVID slow down.

Tara Walsh, Esq. has agreed to serve as a trustee for the BNY Mellon funds that are being moved to the church's Vanguard account.

The Vestry unanimously approved Tara Walsh to be the trustee.

Administrator Report

Jay stated that there are a lot of repairs taking place. The office server was damaged by electrical surges after a major thunderstorm. Large tree branches came down as well.

Rector's Report

Peter asked for the vestry's feedback on the work of the church throughout the COVID restrictions and in response to the renewed protests against racism happening nationwide.

Peter noted that Jo Ann, Michael, and he have been discussing how to best coordinate enduring efforts of the Redeemer so that antiracist work will be part of the life and fabric of the church. We want to build the conversation, the programs, the identity that changes us long term. This will take time, intention, insight, understanding, and conversation.

Jacques said we should keep the weekly conversation going even while we are thinking. He added the Paul Adkins video was excellent.

Peter discussed changes to the church's communications for the summer. Morning Prayer will no longer be offered via Zoom but the daily meditations will continue. Compline will be adjusted to a Monday through Friday schedule. There will be more programming educationally for the summer.

Jacques asked if we ever sent a response to the Bishop regarding the 2020 pledge for Mission. Peter said that Mackie drafted an excellent letter. Peter will make some amendments and then send out to the vestry.

Jo Ann gave the closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 pm.