

SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vestry Meeting

November 1, 2022

Present: Cheryl Boop, Mark Drew, Anice Ellis, Betsy Gillespie, Phil Glandon, Jodi Hess, Barbara Hyre, Julia Johnson-Davis, Bruce Johnson, Barb Keyes, Bill Mayr, Irina Reed, Lucas Skoracki, Roman Skoracki, Leslie Winters, Rev. Vicki Zust, Mathew Bester (Guest)

Absent: Martha Belury, Judith Grant

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mark Drew. Vicki Zust led Vestry in an opening prayer.

MINUTES of the October 4, 2022 meeting were reviewed. Upon **motion, seconded and passed**, the minutes were approved as written.

RECTOR'S REPORT

Vicki reported that she enjoyed the pulpit swap. She was invited to Saint Edwards in Whitehall, and the congregation was about 17 people.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Mark indicated that work on the parish hall AV system is finishing up. A couple of new people have stepped forward to help with Sunday AV duties, which is great timing since we are heading into the holidays.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Leslie Winters informed Vestry that utility costs are up. Leslie and Phil Glandon confirmed that both rate and usage are up, but rate increases are the slightly bigger contributor to the overall cost rise. It's hard to compare this year to previous years since the facility was being used by the pre-school before and then Covid hit. Anice Ellis asked if it would be possible to illuminate the walkways a little better. Vicki suggested that we look into solar powered lights, which wouldn't require wiring. Vicki said her church in Buffalo had them: they were pretty reasonable at about \$200 per light, and worked even in the winter with limited daylight hours to charge.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Since Vestry met so early in the month, Phil Glandon gave a brief financial report. Saint Mark's is on target with the revenue budget. A parishioner made a special donation of \$33,000. This amount covers the remainder of our stretch budget and then some. Phil also gave a stewardship update. We have 69 pledges in the door at this point, including 8 new pledging units. Based on past history, Phil believes about 40 more pledges are likely to come in. Phil estimates that a pledge total of \$437,000 is possible, which is up from last year's \$401,000. People who pledge early tend to be more likely to increase their pledges, so it's hard to say at this point if the trend is toward people upping their pledged amount.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Goals and Aspirations for the Music Program – Matt Bester led a discussion of Saint Mark's music program. Matt began by saying that it is a great program and has been for a long time. Covid has been a challenge recently. Having professional singers/section leaders is a huge contributor to the quality of the program. Matt's aspirations for the program include adding more section leaders. Ideally, Matt would like to add 4 more section leaders to stabilize things and keep things consistent week in and week out. The two comparable music programs in Columbus have several more paid singers; First Congregational has 8 section leaders and St Joseph's Cathedral has 16 paid singers. Section leaders are paid \$40 per "call" (a call is a session of singing). This rate is a bit low for comparable programs in Columbus, but in spite of this Saint Mark's has had great retention with our section leaders.

Matt would also like to expand our music series concerts, but there are two barriers to that. The first is that Matt's is a part time position, and the second is that we don't have a concert quality piano in the sanctuary. A concert quality piano is needed to invite high level performers for a concert series and would also allow us to accommodate special requests for weddings and funerals. Matt says a 7-foot grand piano is what he has in mind. A used piano could be OK depending on how much use the instrument has gotten. Given the expense, a new piano might be best funded as a part of a capital campaign.

Vestry inquired about how well the youths that have transitioned from Canterbury Choir into the adult choir are supported. Matt says the young people are very welcome in the adult choir, but the atmosphere is more business-like than Canterbury Choir. The Royal School of Church Music camp has been a good way to keep kids engaged with choir and to help prepare them for the adult choir. Another plus is when there are more than one or two kids that are ready to move into the adult choir.

Gift Acceptance Policy – Vicki and Mark discussed the need for a Gift Acceptance Policy. It is considered best practice to have a policy in place that outlines how/if a restricted gift will be accepted, and the Finance Committee has been working on preparing a draft so that Saint Mark's can have it in place before it is needed. Once finalized, the policy will be put on website and handed out at the annual meeting. Betsy Gillespie suggested adding language to state that if there is a cost associated with the gift it should be borne by donor. Betsy offered to send draft language; Vicki and Mark will send out a revised version of the policy for an email vote.

2023 Budget – Vicki asked Vestry to come to next month's meeting prepared to discuss next year's budget. The wardens, Vicki, and Phil will begin working on a draft between now and then. Since there are budget implications, Vicki also suggested that an item be added to next month's agenda to reflect on Matt's presentation about the choir program.

Vestry Slate – After prayerful consideration, both Mark and Leslie have decided not to serve a 3rd year in their positions as Warden. Outgoing Vestry members form the nucleus of the nominating committee (Irina Reed, Bill Mayer, Anice Ellis and Judith Grant), so Vicki requested that they, along with all Vestry, spend time thinking about candidates for the Wardens' and Vestry positions.

ECSF Grants – Vicki would like to pursue funding from ECSF for a project grant. ECSF typically favors projects which; 1) have a relatively long history of support from the parish of both time and

money, 2) provide seed money for very new projects, or 3) are done in collaboration with community organizations. Saint Mark's supports several projects that would qualify for such a grant. Upon **motion, seconded and passed**, Vestry's approved making a grant application to ECSF.

Environmental Grant – the Property Committee is planning to apply for an environmental grant from the Trustees of the Episcopal Church Foundation. Grant funds would be used to replace a water heater. A formal request for approval for this resolution will come by email.

Facilities Manager – Vicki was pleased to report that she has hired Matthew Waters as our new facility manager starting Dec. 1, 2022. Matthew has done this kind of work before and will work up to 5 hours per week.

New Landscaping Company – Leslie indicated that Hickman is going to be our new landscaping company. Their contract is slightly less than our current vendor.

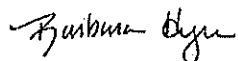
Tables for Parish Hall – Leslie received a \$6,800 quote to replace the tables in the parish hall. The new tables will be very much like the current tables but a different color. Upon **motion, seconded and passed**, Vestry approved the expenditure of not more than \$7,000 from the Major Project Fund to purchase the new tables.

Evensong Reception – Julia Johnson-Davis reminded Vestry that there is a sign-up genius for the Evensong reception. More people are needed to sign up to bring a couple dozen sweet or savory items.

Bishop Search – As part of the search for a new Bishop, The Diocese of Southern Ohio is holding several focus groups, one in person at St Patrick's and also a couple of zoom groups. Vicki encouraged Vestry members to participate in a focus group if possible.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm with a blessing from Vicki.

Respectfully Submitted,



Barbara Hyre

