



Vestry Minutes
Thursday, March 4, 2021

Highlights:

- *During Holy Week, we'll have a whole range of services: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. These will include outdoor events on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.
- *Vestry reviewed a proposed Payment Policy which would set out checks-and-balances protocols for who approves payments to vendors and others. Vestry also reviewed a summary of the funding to pay for various capital projects, and referred some questions back to the Finance Committee.
- *Christ Church plans to apply for a matching grant to pay for work on our buildings that would enable us to become a center for music and music education in the community, thus going beyond the necessary repairs and maintenance that our planned capital campaign will fund.

Present: Rev. Emily Williams Guffey, Rev. Anthony Estes, Ruth Boeder, Claire Brown, Mary Brown, Denise Crenshaw, Desmond Jones, John Leney, Carolyn Maher, Howard Matthew, Anthony Mitchell, José Rodriguez, Jim Treece, Betty Warner. Action items underlined.

Reports received: Two memos from the Finance Committee and January's financial statement.

Betty led our Opening Prayer:

Lord, our Rock and Redeemer, thank you that you are perfectly faithful; you never forget, never fail and never take back a promise. You have promised that, when your people gather in your name, your presence is here with us. Fix our eyes on you and let our ears be attentive to your voice. Restore to us the joy of our salvation as we worship you. May we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To you be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

The **Minutes** of the February 18, 2021, meeting were **approved** as corrected.

In a **Worship Update**, Emily explained that the Bishop's Directive on gatherings and building use during the pandemic remains unchanged. There briefly had been hope that we would move to Phase 2 (where we were in the summer, allowing outdoor weekday prayer, etc.) from Phase 1.5 currently (no gatherings indoors or outdoors, though there's some access to the building – e.g., maximum of 5 people inside for filming video services or funerals). When the pandemic began, we were in Phase 1 (no building access whatsoever). The threshold for moving to Phase 2 from phase 1.5 is when two-thirds of Michigan's counties are rated yellow or green, based on Covid-19 cases and more, for seven consecutive days; when that happens, the change in phase will happen two weeks later. Last week, we had five straight days, but then the cases started rising again, in part because Michigan is one of the states experiencing a high level of Covid-19 variants. In addition, each parish decides how to operate within the current directives. When we get the go-ahead to Phase 2, the Property Use in

Pandemic will send out another survey to determine levels of comfort, and will weigh such issues as our ventilation and the level of vaccinations in our community.

During Holy Week, we'll have a whole range of services: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Palm Sunday will include a drive-through event, when members can pick up palms and Holy Week materials, and will have a chance to donate to the Lenten sock drive. Emily's Angels will deliver Easter flowers after the video is made, likely on Good Friday. Emily's Angels will meet next week to determine who will be getting flowers.

In the **Buildings & Grounds Update**, it was confirmed that the Vestry voted via email to **approve** the contract with Managed Way for fiber-optic installation. More info to come in the next Vestry meeting.

Contractor W-3 had bid and was given the contract last year to repair the damaged supports under the sanctuary floor, but we didn't have the funds on hand. Now we've identified a source of funding and asked when could they start. They replied that due to increased materials costs, the project now will cost a total of about \$99K, which is still about \$15K less than the next bid. **Motion:** That the Vestry approves in principle a new quote from W-3 for \$99,500 to repair the sanctuary's east and west walls and the related flooring. **Approved.**

In the discussion, it was noted that the Finance Committee's memo implies that not all of the financing has been secured. We still need to get an approval from a certain donor to the memorial fund to use that money for this purpose. The feeling of the finance committee was that there was unlikely to be any objection, but as a courtesy we definitely need to talk to the family involved.

We have received new stormwater-project quotes, but no vote is needed yet because the B&G Committee needs to review them. We also have grants and special donations to offset much of the costs, but need to get the diocese's approval to accept the city's grant and its accompanying strings.

The January 2021 **Finance** report, sent out for last meeting, still shows the budget for Religious Education/Emily's Angels as zero, which is a clerical error. That will be fixed and the report reviewed next meeting.

We reviewed the payment policy, as laid out in a memo from the committee. The proposed document will be revised before our next meeting. It needs to address the minimum amount that requires review, and the window of time in which approvals are needed. As background, this attempts to formalize some practices that we've adopted during the pandemic, and specifies who would be check signers and approvers.

Likewise, upon reviewing the capital funding memo, Vestry expressed great appreciation for the way it laid out the costs and funding sources for several major Building & Grounds projects. We agreed that the figures should be shared with the congregation in preparation for and as part of the planned capital campaign. That said, Vestry had several questions and asked for clarification on some points. Jim or Howard will relay the following to the Finance Committee:

*Please give specifics of each donation/gift referenced. (E.g., the second sentence in the paragraph beginning "The Church has received a \$10,000 grant from the Diocese and..." includes the phrase "the individual gift described above..." In fact, two gifts were referred to above, and Vestry wasn't certain which one this meant.)

*Could we have some form of tabular presentation?

*Could we include some indication of phase 2 and 3 of the Bell Tower project?

*Where are we getting the money to pay back the loan to the diocese?

*Are we depleting the \$92K bell tower fund (say, to pay current invoices for the other projects)? Should we be preserving more of that money for phases 2 and 3?

Note: The Finance Committee can make recommendations on capital outlays and how projects might be funded, but the fiduciary responsibility for making the final decisions rests with the Vestry.

In other items:

*The finance training session for the new vestry will take place Sunday, March 21, at 1:00.

*We budgeted \$3K for the year for the now-vacant bookkeeper position. The job is significantly different than it was last year, due to the need to work remotely. The candidate for the post works for an accounting firm, so we'd be compensating that firm. They're offering a courtesy rate for non-profits: \$25/hour, vs. \$20/hr we had anticipated. Assuming 5 hours/week most weeks of the year, that would come to \$6K for 2021, but since we're starting a few months in, we anticipate a total outlay of \$5K. **Motion:** Vestry agrees to spend \$5,000 on a part-time bookkeeper this year. **Approved.**

Christ Church plans to submit a Letter of Intent, the first step in applying for a matching grant from the National Fund for Sacred Places. Their money can't go towards work already done and paid for, so we're looking beyond the bell tower, sanctuary floor, and stormwater projects. They also won't give money if they think the congregation can pay for the work on its own. Based on some of our sessions with Partners for Sacred Places last year, we're framing our application thusly: Our current spending and planned capital campaign target urgent, needed repairs. With the Fund's grant money, we want to enable new missions, ones we otherwise may not be able to cover. Specifically, we aim to become a center for music education and performance. We hope to ask for money to soundproof the education rooms, upgrade the kitchen and Ledyard for receptions, and make our sanctuary a better concert venue by restoring the balconies, safeguarding the stained-glass windows in those balconies, and adding air conditioning to allow summer concerts. We're waiting for cost estimates on those projects from Quinn Evans next week to see which ones we will actually include in our pitch. If we're rejected this year, there's no downside—we can reapply next year.

In **other business**, Emily led a quick review of our Bylaws, and Betty first went over our committee organization chart and then reminded Vestry members to sign up to be Vestry Rep during the weekly worship service, with their recordings due to Emily by Saturday. Several members who attended the virtual annual conference of the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes praised it.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Treece, secretary

Upcoming Vestry Meetings

- **Finance Training: Sunday, March 21, 1:00**
- **Thursday, March 25, 6:00-7:30pm**
- **Thursday, April 15, 6:00-7:30pm**
- **Thursday, April 29, 6:00-7:30pm**
- **Thursday, May 13, 6:30-8:00pm Mutual Ministry Review (subcommittee)**
- **Thursday, May 20, 6:00-7:30pm**
- **June date(s) TBD**

Additional upcoming events & committee meetings (Zoom unless otherwise noted):

- **Faith, Legacy, and Dignity:** Sundays, March 7, 14, 21, 9:15-10:15am
- **Lenten Bible Study:** Tuesdays through March 23, 6:00-7:00pm
- **Outreach Committee:** Tuesday, March 9, 7:30-8:30pm
- **National Fund Grant Meeting:** Wednesday, March 10, 5:00-6:00pm
- **Deep River:** Wednesdays through March 24, 7:00-8:00pm
- **Worship Commission:** Thursday, March 11, 6:00-7:30pm
- **Men's Group:** Tuesday, March 16, 7:00-8:00pm
- **Palm Sunday drive-through event:** Sunday, March 28, 2:00-4:00pm, parking lot