

CHRIST CHURCH VESTRY MINUTES

March 19th, 2023

01. Call to Order & Quorum

- a. Present were: Mark Reneau; Danese Sizer; Charlotte Boatwright; Jennifer McKinney; Susan Brooks, Jr. Warden; Troy Eichenberger, Sr. Warden; and Fr. Will Levanway, Priest in Charge. Also present was Phil Johnson.
- b. Apologies: Karla Fowkes.
- c. Upon declaration that a quorum was in attendance, the meeting was called to order at 12:37 pm.

02. Opening Prayer

Fr. Will Levanway.

03. Previous Minutes

- a. Tabled until next meeting.

04. Mutual Ministry Review

- a. Fr. Will said he has a meeting with Canon Bolt this week about the Mutual Ministry Review. He does not know who will do it, but he believes it's the diocese's responsibility to set all that up. Once the review is completed, then we can move forward with the call process. He said he will update the vestry when he knows more.

05. Finance (See Appendix I)

- a. Fr. Will noted there has been some changes with the finance committee. He said this is part of a wider process of getting committees to rotate their leadership a little more often. Chip has rotated off as chair, and Phil Johnson has taken on as chair. Seth Sizer has agreed to oversee our audit.
- b. He also noted we are still looking for someone to fill the role of treasurer. Jennifer McKinney asked who has been taking on the treasurer's responsibilities in the interim. Fr. Will said the finance committee has been doing a little bit of it, and Brian Henry has been doing most of it, but that that is not really in line with best practices.
- c. Fr. Will also brought up the topic of which Sunday should be designated for loose offerings to go to the discretionary fund. He asked if there was any thoughts on designating the second Sunday of each month for this. Everyone agreed. Troy noted there should be an announcement about that.
- d. Phil gave a brief overview of where we stand financially.

06. Parochial Report

- a. Fr. Will said he thinks we're almost done with the parochial report save for the finance portion, and then he will send the final report via email to be approved.
- b. Fr. Will wanted to highlight that our Average Sunday Attendance in 2021 was in the 20s, and for 2022, our ASA went up to the mid-40s, a mixture of some people coming back and new people joining.

07. Building & Grounds (Appendix II)

- a. **Pews.** Fr. Will passed around the total bid for refinishing all the pews from Dave Perry. It will be around \$1,000 a pew. He's happy to accommodate whatever pace we find affordable. Fr. Will suggested we let the Finance Committee and the Building and Grounds committee discuss it further before we make a decision.

1. Danese suggested we advertise this project to see if we can get donors to help with the cost of this. Fr. Will agreed, but noted the question is do we want to put names of donors on the pews. He noted some people are fine with this and some people have reservations about that. Danese noted it wouldn't have to be a large name plaque.
 2. Troy spoke against names on the pews, saying that this is an opportunity to reflect on our Anglo-Catholic heritage, noting that Church of the Advent, Boston was the first church in Boston to offer rent-free pews and didn't have any names on the pews, and was a community that was truly open to all.
 3. Danese suggested that we have a plaque with the names of donors, but *not* on the pews themselves. Charlotte noted that would be more inclusive of folks who would donate money towards pews but not enough for a whole pew.
 4. Mark asked what the refinished pews will look like. Fr. Will said the two back pews on the west side of the Nave are refinished if he'd like to see them. Multiple people chimed in on how beautiful they look.
- b. **Choir Loft HVAC Unit.** Susan relayed she hasn't heard any updates but she will call Rita Heckrotte and ask, noting she thought it was supposed to happen in March.
 - c. **Organ Loft HVAC Unit.** Susan said she is still waiting on the new bid for the replacement, but she said she told Cornerstone to just go ahead and order it because we want to move forward with it quickly even if the bid will be a little higher.
 - d. **Boiler Thermostat Repair.** Fr. Will said we're having some trial and error with it. Cornerstone replaced the thermostat, it didn't work, they came out and adjusted some settings and said that should work, and it didn't. Fr. Will said he messed around with some more things and has seemingly gotten it working, but he's not sure.
 - e. **Janitorial Services.** Susan said she is working on getting bids but does not have an update yet. Jennifer McKinney asked if we're still having issues with our current service. Susan said absolutely, there's so many problems and poor communication, and she's definitely going to suggest a change.
 1. Mark asked how many people are coming to clean. Susan said two people at most, noting this isn't a proper commercial cleaning service. Mark said his cleaning service sends five people just for his house, and said he will get the name of that service to Susan.

08. Invite, Welcome, Connect

- a. Fr. Will said he thinks he's gotten enough volunteers to be greeters, and we'll hopefully be starting that on Palm Sunday. Danese asked who's in charge of that, and Fr. Will said currently just him. Danese said she would be happy to take that over.
- b. Fr. Will said we're doing alright getting people on our lectors rota, and asked if anyone knew someone who was interested to pass on those names.
- c. Susan relayed that the Eichenbergers will handle the Easter Sunday reception since she will be unable to, noting it will be a smaller reception anyway since people generally prefer to get going home quickly.
- d. Susan also asked that we make an announcement asking for a general headcount for the Agape meal on Maundy Thursday so we can have a rough idea of how many to prepare for.
- e. Fr. Will noted he had little business cards made with our address, website, and service times on them. He's left a stack of them in the narthex for folks to take if they want to pass them out to anyone. He also reminded folks there are postcards with the Holy Week schedule on them if anyone wants to take some and send them.
- f. He said the Wednesday night inquirer's class the last few weeks, and that's been going well, a good mix of folks. Jennifer McKinney asked if those talks were archived, and Fr. Will said yes, they are available to listen to on the website. After Easter, he would like to start planning a regular bible study, possibly not at the church itself.
- g. He also relayed that Sept. 29th at 7 pm, we will have the Silver Anniversary celebration of our organ. Keith Reas has agreed to come and play for that. He said the money for that can come out of the music fund.

09. Security

- a. Fr. Will relayed that we had a very helpful security walkthrough with two folks from the police department. He said there were a lot of good points raised, including that a shooting doesn't necessarily happen from only strangers, it may be someone familiar to the parish, and that there weren't a lot of places to really hide in the Nave.
- b. Danese asked how many people roughly have this as a big concern. Susan said she thinks there's a few people it's a big concern for, but a lot more who have wondered about it generally.
- c. Susan relayed that we're going to set up a workshop for awareness on what to do and what to look for, especially for those ushering and greeting, and coming up with a security plan on paper, which includes a plan for severe weather or a fire too. It was generally agreed that a Sunday after church would be the best time for the workshop.
- d. Susan also noted they suggested getting security cameras from EPB, which the police can view in the case that a call comes in.
- e. Fr. Will said noted the other thing we are considering is asking the officer who directs traffic to come a little earlier so they could be there for our 8 am service.

10. Outreach

- a. Fr. Will noted that while Audrey has stepped down as chair of Outreach, no one has felt comfortable taking on chair just yet. Instead, while Audrey is still doing some coordinating, each project is being largely coordinated by different committee members instead. He suggested that, as no one currently on vestry is also on the outreach committee, it would be good if we could designate someone to check in with Outreach every once in a while to keep communication flowing.
- b. Phil relayed that Ginger had bought three whiteboards for the Outreach table to announce the projects and collections they were working on, and they have since disappeared. Susan said she will check around upstairs, she believes they were just moved upstairs to prepare for the funeral reception, and just didn't get brought back down.

11. Holy Week

- a. Fr. Will noted that the different times is partly to accommodate Chorus Angelorum practices, and partly to accommodate folks who can't make certain times work, so we end up with a variety of times.
- b. Jennifer McKinney asked if there was no 8 am service on Palm Sunday. Fr. Will said they're still discussing it.
- c. Fr. Will also said there's been some feedback about Maundy Thursday and the footwashing. He said he will be the only one washing people's feet, and he will emphasize it will be optional.
- d. He also noted that next year, while Chorus Angelorum won't have their full choir available to do Tenebrae, a smaller portion of them are happy to come and do that service with us again.

12. Questions to Clergy & Wardens

- a. Susan asked if we needed to revisit the budget. Fr. Will said unless the Yates distribution is largely different than what we expect, we won't need to revisit it unless there's a reason to.
- b. She also relayed that her sister, Brooke Montague, has offered to take on the job of caring for the garden, noting she's very knowledgeable about all that. She asked if we could solicit donations to the garden fund for the planting of new flowers and such.
 - 1. Mark suggested we suggest an amount per year to folks with family in the garden to cover the costs associated with upkeep.

2. Danese also suggested putting a notice in the Exsultet that we're trying to freshen up the garden and to please donate towards that.
3. Charlotte asked if there was a ballpark number Susan had in mind. Susan said she thinks they could do a lot with even \$100.
4. Susan also said the walkway out there needs attention importantly as its starting to wear down and come apart and is not level. Jennifer emphasized that that is our only accessible entrance, so it's important we take care of that.

13. Closing Prayer & Adjournment.

Fr. Will Levanway.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian J. Henry

Appendix I
Finance Report
March 2023

The in-depth finance appendices are available upon request to the church office.

1. The Finance/Stewardship Committee was convened at 3:45pm EST, March 2, 2023, via Zoom. A quorum was declared with all members present: Rachel Lamar, Phil Johnson, Seth Sizer, Troy Eichenberger, and Chair Chip Caldwell.
2. P&L – Year-to-date through February results showed a loss of \$(23K) vs \$4622 better than expected. Giving was \$1600 lower than expected, However, expenses of \$36K was \$6K better than budget. The yearend projection suggests a loss of \$(48K) vs. budgeted loss of \$(76K), \$28K better. See Appendix A for detail. On the Balance Sheet side, the EEC fund balance increased \$30K in the 4th Quarter 2022, settling in at \$500K-ish, but still down \$87K in 2022. (Appendix B)
3. New Finance/Stewardship Chair. Upon **MOTION** made, seconded, and unanimously approved, Phil Johnson is recommended to Father Will for appointment.
4. New Treasurer – the position remains unfilled.
5. Audit Committee - Upon **MOTION** made, seconded, and unanimously approved, the Finance Committee requests the Vestry commission the Audit Committee and recommends Father Will appoint Seth Sizer as Chair.
6. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:46pm.



Chip Caldwell

Appendix II
Pew Estimate

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March 10 2023

Christ Church Episcopal

Dear Father Will, Professor Oren, and Christ Church Congregation,

First, I'd like to say how pleased and honored I am to repair and refinish your pews. They are beautiful and thoughtfully built. The original builders chose methods and materials that would allow the pews to be readily disassembled and repaired with minimal damage. They've served faithfully these hundred years or so, and with some love and attention they could serve a hundred more!

I've delivered two finished pews and have two more underway in my shop. The first ones took some experimentation to find the combination of chemicals that would consistently remove the assortment of stains and finishes that have been applied over the years. In order to present a consistent color and sheen on all 28 pews they need to undergo the same chemical process, using the same tools and techniques.

The pews have obviously been repaired by various well-meaning people over the years, by various means. Some of the repairs have left their own scars and mis-steps, especially when large nails and screws were added just to get by a little longer. This is common, and much like you and me, the scars are part of the story of their long life in service.

Erasing all these scars is not very practical, and in my valuation, not highly desirable. It is my goal to remove all trace of the old stains and varnishes, to repair structural joints, and apply consistent new color and durable, washable, clear finish.

Each pew presents its own history of care and has its own challenges to a consistent look. Some seem not to have suffered much at all, while others have gouges, cracks, off-colors, and missing chunks. (Again, much like you and me!)

Rather than pricing the deeply damaged ones higher and the more gently used ones lower, I am working to arrive at a per-unit price that applies equally to all of them.

The first two took the longest. I disassembled them completely and tried a variety of stains and finishes to achieve what I believe was the original color. I used the bottoms of the pews, which have never been refinished, as a guide to get closer with each iteration. Once I achieved the original color and sheen, I just needed to make it reliably repeatable. One can get lucky, fooling around with product, but can he repeat it 28 times with the same result? I now believe that I can.

I kept careful record of time and materials as I worked. I despise wasted time and I loathe wastement of material, so i believe this to be a conservative accounting.

The first two pews showed actual cost in time and materials of \$1,438.00 each.

When I project that cost over 28 pews plus two frontings at the chancel rail, it seems to me too high. It is my goal to reduce that per-unit cost by getting faster at each stage, reducing material use and streamlining the workflow. I hope to reduce future costs by 20 - 30% for the remaining pews, bringing down the price per pew to between \$1000.00 and \$1,150.00. This price includes removal and reinstallation of each pew and transportation cost. There's no allowance for hired help, so I'll be praying for the occasional volunteer to appear. (So far it's worked!)

I've not prepared an invoice for any of the completed work. I'd like to give you an opportunity to consider the pace of the work and how it fits with your monthly budget. I can maintain a pace of 2 pews per month for the duration of the project if that suits your needs. Or, as I streamline the process we can pick up the pace. It could be that with streamlining I could hire help without increasing the cost significantly.

Your Brother in Spirit,

David Perry

Proprietor