

**MINUTES OF ST. MARK'S VESTRY MEETING
ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WASHINGTON, DC
JANUARY 22, 2012**

PRESENT:

- Clergy: Paul Abernathy, Rector
- Wardens: Cecilia Monahan, Senior Warden; Phil Guire, Junior Warden
- Vestry Members: Ed Corr, Bill Dickinson, Rick Hayes, Grady Hedgespeth, Charlotte Murray, Marilu Sherer, Jim Steed, Janet Vail
- Officers: Mary Cooper, Register; Crane Miller, Treasurer; Karlyn Stanley, Counsel
- Visitors: James Ryder, Canvass Co-Chair
- Absent: Vestry member Vicki Street and Assistant Rector Justi Schunior

1. Officer Reports

Register:

A. The minutes of the December meeting, which had been distributed electronically, were **APPROVED.**

B. Register Mary Cooper reported that the Meditation Center Charter was voted on electronically and had been unanimously **APPROVED.**

Treasurer:

Treasurer Miller reported that for the full calendar year of 2011 pledge income had exceeded budget by nearly 5% but cautioned that some prepayment on 2012 pledges was included in that figure. Expenses were within budget.

There was discussion of the audit and establishment of timelines for meeting national church requirements. The Treasurer has requested that all groups have their finalized figures for 2011 to him by May. The parish audit is due to the Diocese in September.

Junior Warden:

Junior Warden Guire reported that the Hill Pre-School needs to move out of the Church of the Brethren, in part because the building has too many steps to allow the church to provide infant care because of the difficulty of evacuating babies in the event of an emergency. Ed has explored with them

Approved by the Vestry February 26, 2012

the possibility of moving their operation to St. Mark's and adjusting our building plans to accommodate their needs.

The changes required in our building plans would mean revisiting permits. Ed Corr estimated that it would cost about \$4000 to have the contractors explore building options. The Senior Warden suggested that the Day Care Center be asked to reserve a portion of spaces for families needing scholarships, especially because there is currently no group infant care available on Capitol Hill. It was noted that space used by the pre-school would not be available for parish use during week days until after 6 p.m. but could be used for church programs on the weekends.

The Junior Warden was requested to continue the conversation with the Pre-School and to develop an estimate of costs (up to \$5,000) for further investigation of this possibility. Vestry members Sherer and Hedgespeth moved and seconded approval of this expenditure. With one abstention and one negative vote (cast by Bill Dickinson), the expenditure was **APPROVED**

Counsel Stanley said such expenditures should include the cost of insurance and obtaining permits.

Senior Warden:

The Senior Warden reported that plans for Shrinemont are moving forward. She proposed that we consider having a pub brunch with a slideshow to encourage parishioners to see it as a family camp event.

She noted that there had been a good response to the letter to the parish from the Rector and Wardens regarding the Vision 2020 process, coupled with the Steering Committee report. The intent of the mailing was to provide maximum transparency with regard to this project.

2. Pillar/Liaison Reports

Arts: There will be no Mardi Gras party this year because nobody volunteered to lead it. The Rector requested that this information be publicized in a bulleting announcement.

Race and Reconciliation: The Race and Reconciliation class had been cancelled because of low enrollment. Marilu Sherer and Jim Steed suggested that the focus be expanded to include class.

Outreach: There are new co-directors for the soup kitchen work. Gretchen Willson and Penny Hanson are retiring from the Board of Samaritan Ministries and new people with fund-raising expertise are needed to replace them.

3. Annual Canvass

Bill Dickinson reported that there are 289 pledge units so far for 2012, the lowest number in 12 years, totaling \$730,497, which is \$70,000 below last year's total. Mike Townsend has organized people to call all non-pledgers. A total of about \$780,000 is anticipated eventually. Marilu Sherer asked that the Rector write to all who have not yet pledged and he agreed to do so.

The Rector noted that the demographics of the congregation are changing and that we can't keep raising the budget when the income doesn't keep up with the need. People in the church are retiring, aging, and leaving the area. Increasingly, we have a younger congregation without the history of giving and with family demands and less capacity to contribute at a high level. It is increasingly necessary to develop a number of approaches and to do theological work around stewardship all year long.

4. Green Lions Charter

The Green Lions advise the church on how to be more environmentally sound. Their proposed charter was distributed to the Vestry and questions were raised about Article IV, which said that the group could amend its own charter, since only the Vestry can amend and approve charters. The proposed document will be returned to the Green Lions to correct this section and will then be circulated to the Vestry for an electronic vote.

Ed Corr noted concerns with portions of the proposed charter that were too specific to the current Capital Campaign and specific projects; that the charter should address a more visionary future, not an immediate project. He highlighted that the charter notes that its Conveners are responsible to reach out to the other entities and that if interested in current building renovations, the Green Lions approach the Steering Committee and manage its interest with the Committee.

5. Nominating Committee

Vicki Street is chairing the Nominating Committee. The members are Ed Corr, Vicki Street, Susan Sedgewick, Jim Brooks, Ray Hahn, Erica Lehman, Cecilia Monahan and Phil Guire. The details regarding running for office will be publicized through the website, Facebook and the electronic mailing list. Grady Hedgespeth and Charlotte Murray will arrange for food for the parish meeting and Marilu Sherer and Rick Hayes will handle registration.

Vestry members are urged to help with recruiting candidates.

6. Space Use Policy

This document has been delayed because of two areas that need more work:
Placing Community Engagement in one pillar is problematic because it relates to numerous areas of activity; and
Language regarding groups outside the parish and groups within the church needs to be very carefully framed.

7. Mite Box Outreach Project

This proposal was circulated electronically and was unanimously **APPROVED**

8. Clergy Housing Resolutions

The following resolutions were circulated electronically, discussed by the Vestry, moved by Bill Dickinson, seconded by Grady Hedgespeth and **APPROVED**

A. Rector's Housing Allowance Resolution 2012

Approved by the Vestry February 26, 2012

Whereas, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to him as part of his compensation to the extent used by him for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

Whereas, the Reverend Paul Roberts Abernathy is compensated by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, exclusively for the services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, does not provide the Reverend Abernathy with a rectory, therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that \$42,000 (forty-two thousand dollars) (33.6%) of the total compensation paid to the Rev. Mr. Abernathy for calendar year 2012 is hereby designated to be a housing allowance, and be it further

Resolved, that, after the date of this resolution, should the Vestry approve a cost of living adjustment to, or increase in, the Rev. Abernathy's total compensation, the Rector's Housing budget line will be the same percentage of the revised total compensation.

B. Assistant Rector's Housing Allowance Resolution 2012

Whereas, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of her compensation to the extent used by her for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

Whereas, the Reverend Rebecca Justice Schunior is compensated by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, exclusively for the services as a minister of the gospel;

Whereas, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, Washington, DC, does not provide the Reverend Schunior with a church-supplied lodging, therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that \$19,500 (Nineteen thousand five hundred) (33%) of the total compensation paid to the Rev. Ms. Schunior for calendar year 2012 is hereby designated to be a housing allowance.

9. Next Meeting – Sunday, February 26

Proposed items for discussion at the next meeting:

The website

Membership growth

Conversation with Linda Ewald, Treasurer of the Capital Campaign

10. The Rector offered the closing prayer.

Submitted by
Mary Anderson Cooper, Register

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