

Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral

Minutes, Regular Meeting of the Vestry on Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Approved at the December 19, 2023 Vestry meeting

Vestry Members and Leadership Present In-Person: The Very Rev. Dr. Andrew C. Keyse (Dean), The Rev. James Yazell (Associate Priest), Candy McDowell (Sr. Warden), Michael Thomas (Jr. Warden), Julie Brogno, Sharon Cheers, Mathias Nichols, Steve Moore (Chancellor), Valerie Johnson (Clerk); Via teleconference: Kay Woolley, Pat Decker, Blain Lagergren, Paula Livingston-Lewis, David Barker (Treasurer); **Absent:** Sara Copeland, Ron Michka

The meeting was held in hybrid format (Multipurpose Room and via Zoom teleconference). The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Dean Andy with opening worship.

Approval of previous meeting's minutes Valerie Johnson presented the October 26, 2023, regular Vestry minutes that were distributed in the November Vestry Packet. Candy McDowell moved to accept the October 26, 2023, minutes and was seconded by Sharon Cheers. The motion passed with no discussion.

Dean's Report, The Very Rev. Dr. Andrew C. Keyse

Dean Andy introduced Fr. James Yazell to the Vestry and welcomed him to Kansas City. He will be preaching at the December 3rd worship services and celebrating the Eucharist at 5 p.m.

Diocesan Convention: Founders' Hall served as the main meeting area for convention this year and was preferred to the seating arrangement in the Nave. All resolutions, including budget, were passed except one that will be reviewed and rewritten for next year's convention. Because it will be a canonical change, it needs to pass two conventions. The current canons stipulate the Standing Committee is comprised of 4 clergy and 4 lay, but the clergy must be priests. This resolution in question would have allowed deacons to serve on Standing Committee. The national canons do not specify whether clergy serving must be priests so this resolution is intended to be consistent with that Standing Committee format. A resolution passed regarding the West Missouri Diocese beginning the process to potentially become a constituent diocese to the University of the South Sewanee. This would allow clergy and lay representatives on the Board of Trustees at Sewanee. An announcement of delegates will be in December and these delegates will be voting for the new Bishop next year.

Upcoming events: The Nativity puppets will be December 1-3; *Messiah* singalong (Dec. 9), City Come Again (Dec. 11); William Baker Singers (Dec. 17). On Advent 4 (also Dec. 24), there will be an 8 a.m. service that morning. There will be 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. Christmas Eve services and a Christmas Day service at 10 a.m. The regular worship service schedule will resume the following weekend.

Deacon Barbara would like assistance delivering poinsettias to our homebound members. Volunteers from the vestry were noted and they will be provided with plants and cards to deliver over the next 2 weeks.

A memorial gift in the amount of \$10,000 was received by the Altar Guild from the estate of Mary Byrne.

A Twelfth Night dinner/event is planned for January 5. This was discussed and Julie Brogno will coordinate help with games and fellowship activities alongside a chili dinner theme. Advent Workshop will take place after the December 3, 10:30 service and it was suggested large letters be made for the Founders' Hall windows to be visible to those outside. These would be displayed after Advent 3 Sunday. Clare Stern-Burbano and Julie Brogno will coordinate this craft and display.

Financial Report presented by David Barker, Treasurer

Dave Barker, Treasurer requested financial Reports from May, June, and July be tabled, again, until the December Vestry meeting since discrepancies are still being addressed regarding an interfund transfer. For some reason property expenses have been going into the Property fund line item that has been creating a \$150,000 deficit. In

May, the \$150,000 was moved out of operating account and placed in Property Fund. Ever since that movement was made, the \$150,000 amount has been surfacing 'all over the place'. He would like to continue working on figuring out this problem because he wants it properly noted. He will ask Julie Toma to take a look at it as others have not been able to figure it out. Dave recommended we consider October financials for approval and he highlighted: Pledges are trending down and off budget for several months. A single, large amount was received in the October Plate account. Gifts/Recurring Bequests that have come in October will be recorded in November—possibly December. Facility line reflects a 2022 expense that was just recently billed. Utilities are accurately on trend with budgeting despite fluctuations.

In the YTD, Plate is still up; Recurring Bequests still where we anticipated; and Users Fees are above expectation; Endowment to Operating is ok. The Interfund transfer shows \$157,218, which is the discrepancy under question. If we approve October financials and need to amend later (due to the amount in question regarding its accounting) we can always go back and address at a later time.

Michael Thomas moved to accept October financial report and was seconded by Julie Brogno. Motion passed after discussion.

Michael Thomas moved to table the May, June, July reports until December, as was requested by the Treasurer, Dave Barker, and was seconded by Sharon Cheers. The motion passed after discussion.

Discussion points: Dave clarified this is not an ongoing discrepancy—it is a clerical issue. Would a balance sheet transaction help better understand the issue? We are currently running under budget in Expenses by almost this \$150,000 amount. Why is this amount running through the operating fund? Diocesan assessment for 2024 is \$241,000 which is up \$10,000 from 2023. This is based on a 3-year rolling average.

Stewardship Report *presented by Steve Moore, Stewardship Chair*

58 pledges for 2024 have been received totaling \$207,767. The average pledge is \$3582. There are 76 non-renewed pledges (\$273,192 from 2023 records) and if all are reinstated, we will be close to the goal of \$500,000. We are trailing last year's campaign but had a later start on efforts this year. We will often continue to receive pledges through June. Pledging members do not always understand they must indicate their pledge every year and it does not automatically renew. Blessing of pledges will be at December 3rd services. To date, 4 vestry members have submitted their pledges and others were encouraged to submit their renewals.

Junior Warden Report *presented by Michael Thomas*

Buildings and Grounds (BG) committee met on November 14. Some repairs made in 2022 and February of 2023 were invoiced recently and these late bills pushed BG over budget for repairs. It was recommended there be faster turnaround on invoices or a better system that reflects costs incurred against the budget as bids are accepted.

Common Room work is scheduled to begin in January 2024 but requests for funding have not been forwarded to the Finance Committee yet. There is some question as to whether the project has been approved by the Vestry. A written plan will need to be approved by Vestry and sent to Finance Committee to determine where funds will be drawn from for the project. Projected costs are now approaching \$60,000 and is more than what is available in the BG account.

An unsolicited bid was made to power-wash the buildings. There is question if this is necessary or if it has the potential to damage surfaces. This will be researched further from an independent source but it will not likely be pursued at this time.

BG will request additional funding from the Budget Committee so to build a fund (separate line in budget) to prepare for maintenance and future HVAC needs so we are better prepared for large cost repairs.

Memorial Garden: Engravings are wearing/fading and they are researching way to better protect this problem. Also, space in the garden will be addressed at the next BG meeting. Vestry members were invited to make suggestions.

A question was raised about preventing further wear on the engravings. Michael Thomas indicated the damage by salt and water to the engravings on the columns of Founders' Hall might be relocated to another position on the columns. The engravings around the Memorial Garden have been discussed with Ric Sweeting who is experimenting with the sealant process, which has been used on the reredos. This, however, involves resurfacing and reengraving before treatment. BG will continue to discuss these wear issues at the January meeting.

Senior Warden Report *presented by Candy McDowell*

Vestry Nomination Process: No nominees have been forwarded yet, but a call for candidates is being published in parish communications.

Clergy Discretionary Fund (CDF): The current deficit shown on financial report for CDF is now \$5,103.43 instead of the previous deficit of \$7418.43 because clergy have been unable to provide grants this past month. Candy proposed, as done at last month's vestry meeting, that we consider: discontinue assistance for remaining 2023 or zero out the line and insert funds so more funds can be granted throughout 2023. These inserted funds would need to be found by the Finance Committee to cover that CDF line.

Discussion points: Vestry discussed the need for assistance is increasing at this time of year so we should ask the Finance Committee to insert funds, if possible. In the future, we should educate the parish about the use of CDF and that donations can always be directed toward the CDF. A suggested write up in the Annual Report could educate and inform how/where the funds are used. **SEE ADDENDUM to these Minutes.**

Other Committee or Vestry Liaison Reports

Social Outreach, *Paula Livingston-Lewis*

No report. Women of Grace project and luncheon will be held at 10 a.m. on December 9, 2023 in Haden Hall.

Community Engagement, Ron Michka; Safety/Security, Sharon Cheers; Children's Formation; Communications; Young Adults No reports

Old Business *The Nativity* has been very busy preparing for the upcoming performance weekend. A special 'thank you' to the property staff for supporting these preparations.

New Business

The Budget Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, December 6, at 5 p.m. It will be hybrid format from the Common Room.

The next Vestry Meeting will be Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Common Room and teleconference due to the Christmas holiday.

Michael Thomas moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mathias Nichols. The motion passed.

A closing prayer was led by Dean Andy. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

ADDENDUM to the November 28, 2023 Regular Vestry Meeting

Email motion and approval on December 1, 2023:

Dean Andy shared the following email to the Vestry on December 1, 2023:

“We had a conversation at our meeting on Tuesday evening about funding the Clergy Discretionary Fund so it can be used for much needed assistance at this year’s end. Since our meeting, Dave Barker has asked the Finance Committee for their recommendation to fund the account. They have approved a recommendation to transfer \$8,500 from the Vestry Discretionary Fund (current balance of \$72,099) to the Clergy Discretionary Fund, bringing that balance to \$3,397, and allowing it to be used for assistance this month. This action needs vestry approval. I am asking you to respond all to this email with a motion to make this transfer, a second, and any questions you may have. I will then ask for a vote of a “yes” to make the transfer or a “no” to not make the transfer. This action will be recorded as an addition to our November minutes.

A question was asked by the Finance Committee about whether this was a “one off” deal or if it would be recurring. Provisions have been made for the 2024 budget to make sure this will not happen again. Also, Barbara, James, and I will work to come up with a plan for better oversight of this account to make sure we are not in this position again. I, too, will do my part to better educate the Cathedral parish about the Clergy Discretionary Fund and how important it is to serving those in need in our community. Donations will always be welcome.

“I am grateful to the Finance Committee for their quick response.

Via email:

Blaine Lagergren moved to make the transfer from the Vestry Discretionary Fund (Line item 1008) to the Clergy Discretionary Fund (Line item 1109) in the amount of Eight Thousand Five Hundred and no/100 Dollars (\$8500.00), allowing it to be used for assistance this month. This motion was seconded by Mathias Nichols. Discussion was invited via email. The motion passed with 8 votes.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Blanco Johnson, Clerk