 

St Margaret’s Episcopal Church Vestry

Subject: Minutes 21 November 2023 **DRAFT**

Feast of William Byrd, 1623; John Merbecke, 1585; and Thomas Tallis, 1585: Musicians

Attending: Peter Mayer (Rector), Patti Sachs (Assistant Rector) -Z , Kristen Berthelotte (Senior Warden)-Z, Paul Schurke (Junior Warden), Kathy Wiernicki (Treasurer), Kathy Polk (Temporary Clerk), Dave Boyce, Matt Chasse-Z, Kathy Lang, Alden Gross, Janice John-Z, Mary Holstine, Carol Williams, Chris Prender, Susan Roberts-Z, Dan Tootle-Z, Lana Keelty and Elizabeth Radley (Director of Operations)-Z.

(\*Z indicates Zoom participation)

Absent: Austin Canuel, Ernie Tucker

Also attending; Christine Feldmann-Zoom

All reports have been submitted on Realm.

1. Opening prayer on the Holy Spirit was given at 7pm by David Boyce.

2. The minutes from the October meeting were approved as amended. The presence of a quorum was noted. In a prior meeting the Clerk advised that all reports would be reflected on Realm and will be noted in the minutes and no longer attached to approved minutes.

3. **Submitted Reports**

The Rector introduced Kathy Polk as Acting Clerk and **Christine Feldmann, Grants Administrator**.

A. After a warm welcome of applause, Christine submitted a proposal for **Grant Management Software.**  The Grants Committee is looking to increase efficiency, reduce paper, be environmentally sustainable, maintain accurate records both historically and in the present, and track applications in a secure cloud server. Research was done and Foundant was deemed to be the most practical software option for St. Margaret’s. Other options – Blackbaud and Submit were dismissed because of costs and size. Foundant has been successfully utilized by Anne Arundel Women Giving Together and the Arts Council of Anne Arundel. County. The costs ($1,500 one time set up fee and training; $8,500 two-year license subscription) would include training and support with an annual cost after the initial process to be $4,250 per year. Christine suggested that the yearly administration costs could be reduced. A question was raised to determine if the Diocese or national Episcopal Church has a similar resource. The Vestry is in favor of using this software – after first checking with the Diocesan resources. Christine agreed to research with the Canon to the Ordinary and return for the December 19 Vestry meeting. It is too late to use for this year’s grant applications but could easily be implemented for the 2024-25 process. There was a question if the funding would come from the Endowment or Missions. It will be included in the draft budget at the December meeting. Christine was thanked for all her hard work in ministry.

**B.** **Treasurer’s Report: Kathy Wiernicki**

Operating results for period ended October 31, 2023 report revenues in excess of expenses of $12,547, this is cumulative income for 2023 through the end of October. This amount is well ahead of the year-to-date approved budget through the end of October by $106,818. Pledge receipts are currently ahead of budget by $82,155. Donations continue to run behind budget by $(23,262). All budgeted expense areas except for Building and Grounds continue to run under budget. This unfavorable variance is primarily due to ongoing HVAC maintenance issues in the Day School, increased cost of trash removal and additional fall clean up and trimming work. Maintenance problems will continue to escalate as systems age. It is also becoming clear that while environmentally green to satisfy Silver LEED qualifications, many items are no longer available for replacement or repair. There are different efficiency options available now that can be considered. Kathy would like the vestry to consider PPE money that was not utilized to be used for employee bonuses to compensate for their hard work and loyalty during a difficult time for everyone. The absence of the Program Assistant has left multiple tasks reassigned to others. They would like to consider the position of a Media Director for the bulletin and Dragontails. It is important to consider if expenses are “operating expenses” or “capital improvement” for budget purposes.

It is anticipated that the pledges will amount to approximately $930K. A letter affirming the spiritual foundations of giving will go out along with thank you notes. The vestry may be asked to call and give personal thanks to those who support the church both financially and with their ministries. Pledging is a individual thing, and people must be understanding of personal preferences. The church has received 106 pledges so far.

**C. Rector’s Report: The Rev. Peter Mayer**

Peter+ encouraged people to pray and/or attend the diaconal ordination of Karin Ekholm at the Cathedral in Baltimore on Saturday, December 2 at 11 am. The last time St. Margaret’s sponsored someone for ordination it was John Willard+ in January 2015, with former rector The Right Rev. Mary Glasspool officiating.

**D. Day School Report – Kathy Lang**

Kathy Lang noted that tuition is going up but not substantially. The school would like to know ahead of time if St. Margaret’s will support scholarships. Annually St. Margaret’s gives $10K but during Covid we gave $20K. The scholarships represent no more than 40% of the tuition. Parishioners comprise 30% of Day school students. The school is running in the black. The Vestry would like to see the budget. It is a little “awkward” as the Day School runs on a school year calendar instead of a January calendar. Kathy recommended that $10K be set aside from the Endowment towards scholarships. The exact amount will be determined once all the requests have been received. Requests for scholarships vary.

**E. Missions Report – none**

**F. Vestry Retreat Report** – Mary Holstein, Lana Keelty, Austin Canuel and Carol Williams

Mary returned the vestry binder to Kathy Lang. Kristen can help. How do you prepare candidates to be on the vestry? A date and a place need to be determined. Kathy Lang, Anne Sessions, Susan Roberts, and Fran Becker recruited first six and then five candidates who said they would like to be considered. The names are due by December 27. If voting is required, it will be challenging to do with a hybrid meeting. Alden Gross, Kathy Lang, Ernie Tucker and Susan Roberts are going off the vestry. Matt Chasse will be in charge of the Annual Meeting. Peter+ said if a candidate is not elected he would definitely find a way to use that person’s talents.

**G. TRR Report – Dan Tootle**

The committee recently held a Coffee Hour Chat on Sunday, November 19 to discuss findings from the parish survey. Attendance was good and most in attendance are favorable to the proposals. Specific suggestions were made detailing things St. Margaret’s could do immediately – renaming the “Dixieland Band Mass” for example or adding plaques to the stained glass windows indicating slave owners. Long range and continuing efforts are being considered as the church continues on its journey to right racial iniquities.

**H. Junior Warden’s Report – Paul Schurke**

Paul said an asbestos roof may need replacement. He suggests a campus leaf cleanup on December 2 followed by cider, marshmallows, and meats roasted on sticks. The sanctuary speaker in the Narthex is not functioning properly.

**I. Senior Warden’s Report – Kristen Bertholotte**

Kristen was very pleased with the extremely successful Masquerade Ball. It was a fun evening with diverse guests taken out of the usual “church” environment. It was also a financial success. In December, the Vestry can decide if the proceeds will go to the Endowment or Missions. There was a lively discussion: whether to have it annually or every two years; whether to appoint a project manager; whether to not have it during a pledge drive – but also not to compete with the Day School auction; whether donors/workers may feel imposed upon. An after action report has been written and submitted to archives along with a link to pictures. Next month at the budget meeting there will be more discussion.

The Long Range Planning Committee presented action items. It was suggested that perhaps a strategic plan might help get the process moving. Matt Chasse said that is his field of expertise and he volunteered to help with this evolution. He questioned if the items were “actions” or “goals.” Kristen invited everyone to send her emails with comments to be addressed in December.

4. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm with a Happy Thanksgiving and Safe Travels

Faithfully,

Kathy Polk

Temporary SMC Clerk

**ADDENDUM**

St. Margaret’s Church was previously designated as a remainder beneficiary of a trust. The church was notified that secondary beneficiaries have all passed and that the Trust is in the process of being liquidated. St. Margaret’s is a 20% remainder beneficiary under this Trust. The vestry is asked to discern multiple opportunities for this generous gift while keeping the matter confidential at the present.