 

St Margaret’s Episcopal Church Vestry

Subject: Minutes for 19 March 2024

**Attending-**: Peter Mayer (Rector), Patti Sachs (Associate Rector) Z, Kathy Wiernicki (Treasurer), Paul Schurke (Junior Warden) Z, Kathy Lang (Clerk), Dave Boyce, Matt Chasse, Bruce Hargus, Janice John Z, Lana Keelty, Lois Lechleider, Joe Marino, Jen Thomas, Dan Tootle Z, Ernie Tucker, Carol Williams, and Elizabeth Radley (Director of Operations) Z

Absent: Mary Holstine, Joseph Ross (Senior Warden)

Additional attendees: Christine Feldman Z, JoEllyn Fountain, Beth Kopack

A quorum was present.

This meeting was conducted in Hybrid format. Zoom attendees are noted by a “Z” after their name.

1. Opening prayer was given at 7:04 pm by Matt Chasse

2. The meeting was called to order by the Rector. The February 2024 Vestry minutes were approved.

3. The clerk reported on a motion that was submitted on March 1 via e-mail.

**Motion: From the $35,000 funds approved to come from the SMC Endowment, request the use of $5950 funds remaining from the Parish Hall refurbishment be approved for the removal of dead limbs from five large trees near the church exit and along Pleasant Plains Rd.**

**Motion passed.**

3. Submitted Reports:

**A. Treasurer’s Report** (submitted via Realm) - Operating results for period ended February 29, 2024 report revenues in excess of expenses of $58,070.67. Although a surplus is being reported for the period then ended, this amount is behind the 2024 Preliminary Annual Operating Budget (the “budget”) by $(1,897.57). Pledge receipts for the period ended February 2024 are behind budget by $(19,257.83) and Donations are behind budget by $(2,922).

The Treasurer explained the term timing differences which appear in the Profit and Loss (P&L) statement. These are expenses where checks have not been cut during the reporting period to cover an expense. This will make that area appear more favorable; however, that expense will be paid in the next report cycle.

The endowment did well in February and as of this reporting period had a total value of approximately $5.9 million.

No withdrawals were made from the Endowment. A deposit of $5,000 was made from the Gala receipts. This was to replenish a withdrawal that had been made in 2023 as seed money for the Gala.

There is an additional $105,000 being held in a designated fund that was a gift from the family of Vice Admiral and Mrs. George Dyer. They had previously made significant contributions during the enhanced restoration of St Margaret’s church in 1986 which included a window over a transept in the choir section of the church.

Our draw percentage of the Endowment is calculated three ways. First is on the basis of the prior balance. Secondly, a 3-yr rolling average and thirdly, a 5-yr rolling average. This provides a way to smooth variances that result from market changes as well as significant donations. The rolling average is calculated based on annual numbers.

The Treasurer also reminded us that we still have two positions that are unfilled, which makes our budget look good.

Christine Feldman, the Chair of the Grants Committee, provided an update about a request to purchase a software license that she had presented to the Vestry in November 2023. This is for Grants management that will help the program to run more efficiently. The cost is $4300 per year and would come from the Endowment.

**Motion: To approve a withdrawal from the Endowment of $4300 for a Grants Management software license.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The Grant’s Committee chair also provided a list of grant recipients for 2024. This report can be found in attachment 1.

Most of the recipient organizations meet one of the Grant’s Committee goals which is to “implement trust, enable reconciliation or confront structural racism and inequality”. This is one of five priorities used to determine awards.

There were 6 new recipients this year.

None of the grant recipients are from the Broadneck peninsula.

The Grant’s Committee chair was charged with finding promotional ideas to get the word out about the wonderful work that St Margaret’s promotes with its grants process. There is already work in progress on this. One idea is for a display wall in one of our buildings. However, we would like to find ways to get this work more widely publicized. This program is a beacon of light and we do not want to hide it under a bushel.

It would be good to get updates from the recipients on how they are doing as a result of the grant awards.

This discussion ended with a round of applause for the Grants Committee chair and all its participants.

**B. Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Task Force (TRRTF): Apology** – Verbal report

Two members of the TRRTF along with a vestry member of the TRRTF and the rector provided an update on their activities and where they stood on a draft apology to the members of the Asbury Broadneck United Methodist Church (ABUMC). During a meeting with ABUMC, they found out that one of the specific things that would like from St Margaret’s is help with writing grants. They also talked about future steps which will include a worship service at ABUMC on June 9 where St Margaret’s will present the apology.

The TRRTF also met after the Feb 20 Vestry meeting to consider the comments made at Vestry meeting. A revision was drawn up; however, it was determined that the revision didn’t take enough responsibility on the part of St Margaret’s. After considering the Vestry comments, the TRRTF decided that the original apology, as drafted, should stand. Text of apology -

*St. Margaret’s Church publicly apologizes for, acknowledges, and profoundly regrets its involvement and complicity in the sin of chattel slavery on the Broadneck Peninsula. We acknowledge the labor of, and unfair economic advantages over, enslaved people in construction of our church buildings. We recognize that the economic wealth established through the lasting effects of slavery built our parish and continues to benefit our church. Further, we are extremely sorry that we have been complicit in the Episcopal Church’s role in support of slavery and lack of adequate commitment to uphold human dignity.*

*We will work with all partners to dismantle systemic racism and repair the breach. We commit to making amends and establishing trust: to live differently so that we help create God’s kingdom on Earth. So help us God.*

It was said that the process of reporting back to vestry could have been better. It would have been preferable to understand what the TRRTF had discussed in light of the vestry comments and the reasons for their determination to not change the apology prior to the vestry meeting.

More discussion about apology -

There is still concern about the statements regarding our church buildings. Perhaps it would be more precise to say historic buildings.

The wealth of the church and property began from the wealth of many early families that made money from the planting and sale of tobacco. This enabled churches to be built and properties to be purchased eventually leading to the property that we use today.

My ancestors were not part of any slave-owning families.

I am a member of this church today. I benefit from the use of the facilities and land as it exists today.

**Motion: Approve the apology as drafted by the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Task Force (TRRTF).**

**Motion carried with a majority and one abstention.**

We do not know how this apology will be received from the entirety of ABUMC. There are indications that some of the intended recipients do not want to be part of this process.

This will be part of an ongoing process.

C. **Long-Range planning** (in-person report) – The committee hopes to have a report to the Vestry next month. They have 4 long-term goals.

D. **St Margaret’s** **Day School (SMDS) Report** (submitted via Realm) – The Day School director reports that some of the windows cannot be locked. A board member is investigating to see if there is an easy fix.

SMDS fundraiser and silent auction to be held April 13 at InGrano restaurant in West Annapolis. This is always a fun time, and our own Rev. Peter will be the auctioneer for the live auction! Tickets are available through the SMDS website.

E. **Outreach Council** (in-person report) **–** The outreach council will be meeting with a parishioner that has expertise in systems like Realm. They are hoping to do a deep dive into Realm to take advantage of all of its capabilities. The goal is to have a greater engagement from the congregation so that lay leaders can learn how to best use the talents of our parishioners. Additionally, any current vestry members that need help using Realm should contact Janice John for help.

The council has found a graphic designer that will improve the look of our website. The improved structure of the website won’t change.

The Meet Your Neighbor dinner which will be prepared by a local Afghan family is on April 20. So far 67 people have signed up. There is plenty of room for more!

May 5 – We are changing from Good Seed Sunday to Chili Cookoff Sunday. We will still have a combined 10:00 am service. Prizes will be awarded. More details to follow.

**F. Formation Report –** A comprehensive written Formation Report was provided. Formation is active at all levels – children, youth, and adult. For adult formation, the Senior Session has been re-branded to Gospel Sessions so that it is not age specific. Youth Formation has been busy with a trip to St John the Divine in NYC, preparing for youth Sunday (May 5) and supporting community projects in the local high school and possibly connecting with the Dageno Girls school in Tanzania. Children’s formation continues to be a vibrant ministry on Sunday morning and Monday evenings. Emily could use help with volunteers on Sunday mornings.

G. **Junior Warden/Buildings and Grounds Report** (submitted via Realm) –

Parish Hall Floor – project is completed.

Trees for Sacred Spaces – Jr Warden met with personnel from the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC). Our own Al Todd had started the ball rolling to connect the State of Maryland and their 5 million Trees initiative with IPC in an effort to plant trees at houses of worship. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources will plant the trees. We can get up to 100 landscape trees that will require weekly watering. We can also get up to 435 saplings for afforestation that are suited for large open areas such as our former joust field. The Jr Warden provided a diagram of proposed areas for trees.

Concern was raised about the amount of hosing required.

A question was raised about whether there is an overall plan for the field. There is one space that is designated as an amphitheater. Other thoughts about the field use – cemetery, an aquaponics area.

The Jr Warden will continue to research and provide updates.

4. **For the Good of the Order** –

Rev Peter gave a hearty thank you to Casey Pingle and Beth Arruda for their leadership during the week of Winter Relief. He also acknowledged Kathy Wiernicki for her work on ensuring the logistics for all of the meals went smoothly.

The first campus cleanup is scheduled for March 23; however, due to a rainy forecast it will most likely be postponed.

Holy Week is coming. Rev Peter urged all members to attend at least one of the Triduum services in addition to Easter Sunday service.

Meeting adjourned at 8:48.

Next meeting will be Tuesday April 16. Janice John will provide opening prayer. Worship Committee report is due.

1 Attachment – St Margaret’s Church Grants Program Recommendations for 2024

Attachment 1

**St. Margaret’s Church Grants Program Recommendations for 2024**

This year, the Grants Committee received 44 applications from organizations across the globe. The total requests added up to more than $715,000. The committee interviewed thirteen finalist organizations with their requests amounting to more than $170,000. We are recommending funding the following organizations at the indicated amounts. Assuming they are approved, we are grateful to the Vestry and the Masquerade Ball Committee for providing $130,000 in funds for these programs

**Dageno Girls Center, Tanzania - $17,000**

Provide supplies and labor for providing private water access for the campus from water on their land.

**Chase Lloyd House, Annapolis, Maryland - $15,000**

Funding for eviction prevention program for single woman households in Anne Arundel County.

**Next One Up, Baltimore, Maryland - $12,500**

Healthy, weeknight meals for participants in long-term mentorship program.

**Anglican Church of Burundi, Muyinga Diocese Africa - $12,000**

Construction of water springs for safe drinking water and latrines for very poor families.

**Annapolis Immigration Justice Network- $12,000**

Legal fund for four resident families facing deportation.

**Joel Nafuma Refugee Center, Rome, Italy - $10,500**

Staffing, Italian courses, food and emergency fund for refugees from across Africa, Middle East and South America.

**Cheyenne River Episcopal Mission, South Dakota - $10,000**

Provide supplies and funds for indigenous staff at equine camp for Lakota community.

**STAIR, Anne Arundel County, Maryland - $10,000**

New reading curriculum and staffing to train volunteers who work with second graders at 12 area schools.

**Court Appointed Special Advocate Anne Arundel County, Maryland - $10,000**

Staffing for two case supervisors to train and support volunteers who work with at risk youth.

**Feeding the Flock, Baltimore, Maryland – $7,500**

Funds to purchase nonperishable food and supplies for the neighborhoods under resourced residents.

**Hope for All, Anne Arundel County, Maryland - $7,000**

Clothing, furniture and partial staff funding for a program that turns houses into homes.

**Interfaith Service Coalition, Hancock, Maryland - $4,000**

Four months of food for backpack program in highly impoverished area of Western Maryland.

**Rebuilding Together Anne Arundel County - $2,500**

Funding to repair homes for aged, disabled and under resourced.