

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2024

Present: Fr. RJ, Leslie Redmon, Sr. Warden; Sara Strattan, Jr. Warden; Beth Bletzacker, Kent Clark (via Zoom), Joe Hoot, Ken Jaeb, Rick Werren, Kathy Wise, John Willoughby

Not Present: Karen Violand, Clerk

Guest: Charlie Kiesling, Treasurer

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm by Fr. RJ. John provided the devotion and played a video from Bishop Jolly from the day after the elections.

Rick **motioned** to accept the minutes of the October 2, 2024, meeting. Kathy seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Rector's Report

- The Diocesan Convention will be held November 8-9, 2024, in Perrysburg, OH. Delegates Leslie Redmon and Gary and Grace Giammarco will be in attendance.
- Fr. RJ commented briefly on the Parochial Report. St. Mark's is doing well compared to other parishes at this time with our average attendance of 74, which does not include online attendance.

Wardens' Reports

- **Senior Warden**
 - The Blessing of the Animals was held October 6, 2024, in the Betty Fortney Sanctuary and was well attended by parishioners and their pups.
 - Bob Morrison was celebrated for his 99th birthday with a program held October 6, 2024, at Crossroads United Methodist Church. Many friends attended from St. Mark's including most of the choir, who also participated in the music program. The program included favorite organ music, a video of Bob's lifetime career, and various speeches from dear friends, including Fr. RJ.
- **Junior Warden**
 - Sara reported on this year's Stewardship campaign.
 - Materials provided by TENS were very helpful and are recommended for future Stewardship committees.
 - Two dinners were held with food prepared by Carol Popovich's team and were well attended.
 - Speakers were Kent Clark, Brynn Pelger, Sara Strattan, Lindsay Wise, and Fr. RJ.
 - Pledges and committee sign-up sheets are being returned and will continue through the end of the year. Charlie commented that 48 pledges have been returned to date, with more anticipated by the end of the year.
 - The Vestry will be asked to sign thank-you notes which will be available at church on December 17. Follow-up reminders will be put in the Lion's Pause, emails, or in some cases phone calls.

Financial -- Q3 and Pledge Update and 2025 Budget

- Charlie presented the Q3 finance recap.
- A budget of \$289,973 is currently planned for 2025, which reflects reductions in office staff, church cleaning, and medical insurance.
- The proposed budget shortfall for 2025 is \$50,000. The Finance Committee is recommending not taking money out of Trust funds to cover this shortfall, but to take it out of cash reserves. Therefore, no funds will be taken out of Trust funds in 2025. If the need arises, however, Trust funds can be tapped. There is a Trustee meeting on November 10. Charlie will report updates again next month

Liaison Reports

- The Outreach Committee is planning to meet at the beginning of the year to determine fundraising needs for various outreach projects, and to determine the procedure for handling the various projects. Tony Kovacevich is the committee chair.
- Sara **motioned** to provide \$1,500 to Gibbs School's Thanksgiving dinner. Rick seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.
- Beth reported that the Sunday School completed 2,494 hygiene kits for Hope Outreach in 2024, surpassing last year's amount. This outreach will continue next year.
- Beth reported that the December 22 Christmas Pageant will be totally planned by the children, followed by their own pizza party celebration in the undercroft. The pizza party is for the Sunday School only.
- The casket pall was discovered in the sacristy by the Altar Guild. Rick **motioned** to rescind the previously approved request authorizing up to \$1,000 for a new pall for a casket from the Memorial Fund. Sara seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Buildings and Grounds

- Joe reported that the date for decorating the church for Christmas will be Saturday, Dec. 14 at 9:00 am. Sara will communicate the date to Altar Guild.
- The external panels above the windows in the undercroft have a lot of holes, and estimates are still being requested for repair or replacement.
- A new drainage system was completed in the Columbarium garden area around Fr. RJ's office. Joe **motioned** to authorize spending no more than \$3,000 from the Memorial Fund for the drainage project. Fr. RJ explained that memorial money is given and designated for the church. Therefore, the drainage expense can be taken out of Memorial Fund. Sara seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.
- A request was made to provide brighter lighting in the choir area. Joe will follow up.

Old Business

- **70th Anniversary Update**
 - Leslie reported that the design for the T-shirts has been determined and will include, in the upper left side, the Episcopal shield with St. Mark's Episcopal Church above the shield, and 70th Anniversary below the shield. Shirts will be available in red and navy blue.

New Business

- **Vestry Candidates**
 - Fr. RJ reminded the Vestry that John, Leslie, and Sara will be completing their three-year service, and three new candidates will need to be nominated for Vestry.
- **Annual Reports**
 - Vestry Liaisons were asked to request committee reports from their respective ministries for the Annual Report. Fr. RJ will ask Tasha to issue an email reminder.
- **Altar Flowers**
 - Beth passed along a suggestion that there might be an opportunity for cost savings and efficiency by using non-live altar flowers. Sara commented that this has been raised in the past but will share this again with the Altar Guild.
- **Bylaws**
 - Sara raised the question of bylaws needing updated and will report next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40pm with a **motion** by Joe, seconded by Rick, and approved unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 6:00pm.

Ken will provide the Reflection and Prayer for the meeting.

The minutes were compiled from meeting notes taken by Leslie in Karen's absence.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Violand
Clerk