

St. Thomas Episcopal Vestry Meeting

April 17, 2023

6:30 pm

Present: Rev. Canon Lisa Fry, rector; Elizabeth Moran, senior warden; Br. Donovan Bowley, junior warden; Terry Mello, interim treasurer; Anne Rogers-Popejoy, clerk; Sarah Groman; Benjy Lowry; Jan Lyle; Gwen Prosser; Jacqueline Recht.

Absent: Kendra Watkins

Rector opens the meeting in prayer.

Motion to pass minutes as approved: Senior Warden, second Benjy. Motion passes.

Report of the Senior Warden: Elizabeth Moran. Reports that God and the people on this vestry will keep the church afloat during Rev. Lisa's sabbatical. Junior and Senior Wardens will meet at the church on Thursday mornings for informal office hours. Sr. Warden Elizabeth will handle administrative responsibilities; Jr. Warden Br. Donovan will handle buildings and grounds. Elizabeth asks that the vestry be on standby to assist as needed, particularly at the end of July. The Summer Fair is chaired by Kate and Eileen. On May 7, both services will hold a welcome coffee hour for Fr. Paul. The regular Wednesday service will be Celtic Morning Prayer held on alternate Wednesdays, lead by Br. Donovan.

Report of the Junior Warden: Br. Donovan Bowley. Br. Donovan will be the initial pastoral care contact during Rev. Lisa's sabbatical. Sexton needs assistance while recovering. There is some electrical work that needs to be done over the summer including the sign on the front steps and adding an outlet under the rector's desk. Additional projects include: an internet check; spring clean up, which will include the cloister garden, flower beds, and help from volunteers to adopt planters; signage for the memorial garden.

Treasurer's Report: Interim Treasurer Terry Mello. Because there are not reports for the first four months of 2022, it remains difficult to compare year to date finances. Treasurer will include a gentle reminder regarding the tight nature of finances in Tidings. Drawing on the endowment now, as opposed to in October in past years. \$44,000 available to spend this year from the endowment. Oil is under budget, snow removal has met budget. By June, treasurer will have a clearer financial picture for the year. Moving to QuickBooks online, which will bring substantial savings through TechSoup – a non-profit service for purchasing software. Treasurer has trained additional vestry members in weekly deposit procedures, which will help to deposit critical operating funds weekly.

Rector's Report: Rev. Canon Lisa Fry. Rector is not worried about how things will run during her sabbatical; things will calm down in the office, but stay busy on Sunday mornings because of increased attendance. Sends congratulations to the audit committee.

Benjy gave a summary of the audit process:

- Diocese provides a checklist of internal controls.
- Since we are using an external accounting service, the committee recommends that the vestry or the finance committee review bank statements monthly.
- Further, a two step (two person) process to move money from the savings accounts.
- Recommends replacement of lockbox with a safe.
- Improve frequency of deposits to improve safety of money in the building,
- Pledge statements released more frequently.
- Succession plan and written documentation of financial processes.
- Insurance appraisal last completed in 2014; due to be completed soon.

Terry and Benjy will send the audit report out to the Vestry for approval in May, and then it will be sent to the Diocese.

The sexton has been quite ill and hospitalized; will be several weeks before he has recovered. The rector would like to ask the previous sexton to come in and cover this absence. Vestry concurs.

During the Rector's Sabbatical:

Rector will designate outreach to the office volunteers. If someone in the congregation needs financial assistance or food – the vestry will facilitate a collection to get them what they need. Elizabeth will help with housing issues.

Need people designated to open and close the church on Sundays: Terry will open the building and communicate with first service regarding scheduling, Br. Donovan will close and coordinate closing with the second service when he is away in July. Altar guild needs to reset the altar between services.

The rector has created a laminated FAQ style list regarding who to contact in specific scenarios. If you would like to add additional items to this list, please let her know in the next two weeks. This list will be posted in the office.

The Fundraising Committee will be chaired by Edmund Hartt. He will assemble and convene the committee. The committee will report to the vestry.

The altar guild will be chaired by Elizabeth Moran; Sarah Groman will chair the flower guild.

Musician pay: Minister of Music will be away for two consecutive Sundays; Rector would like to pay the substitute musician out of the supply budget. Vestry concurs.

Rector calls an executive session from 7:40-7:45.

Junior Warden moves to rescind the stipulation that parish employees cannot be members of the congregation. Senior Warden seconds.

Next vestry meeting is May 15 at 6:30pm.

Meeting adjourns with the Lord's Prayer and a blessing at 7:55pm.