

**Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting**  
**September 21, 2021**  
**3 Beacon Hill Drive, Saratoga Springs**

**Attendance:** Fr. Charles Wallace, Priest in Charge  
Darren Miller, Senior Warden  
Kate Berheide, Junior Warden  
Karen Finkbeiner, Treasurer (via Zoom)  
Pam Houde  
Laura Kszan  
Marcia MacDonald  
Sara Manny  
Steven Rucker  
David Wilder

**Absent:** Ann Bullock, Clerk  
Field Horne  
John Van der Veer

**Opening Prayer**

The regular meeting of the Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry was called to order at 7:15pm on September 21, 2021, at the home of Marcia MacDonald, by Fr. Wallace.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of August 18, 2021, were found to have some incorrect dates in Fr Wallace's remarks. It was requested that those errors be corrected, and the revised minutes re-circulated to the vestry.

**Priest-in-Charge Remarks:**

*Altar Guild:* Steve Rucker and Mark & Kathleen Anspach have joined the Altar Guild. Their training day is October 2.

*Parish Work Day:* The next work day is Saturday October 16. Steve Rucker will oversee the day.

*Legs Miserable Walking Group* – The group will meet on Thursdays at 2:30: 14 October, 21 October, and 28 October.

*Book Club:* Mary Sander Shartle will lead the next book group discussion on October 28. The book is *The Nine Tailors*, by Dorothy Sayers

*November Bible Study:* Jonathon Beck will lead "On Reading Scripture," an exploration of how scripture has been read from the time of the Early Church through to the modern era.

*Remembrance Sunday:* On November 14 there will be a Requiem Mass. Names of those who have died this year will be read at the Mass.

*Thanksgiving Service:* will be held on Wednesday November 24 at noon

*Christmas Decorating:* will begin December 11

*Children's Christmas Pageant:* will be held December 19

*Christmas Services:* Christmas Eve at 4pm and 10pm; Christmas Day at 9am (said service only); Sunday December 26 one service at 9am, and no church school that morning.

*Christmas Cleanup Day:* January 8, 2022

*Annual General Meeting:* There will be one combined worship service on Sunday January 30, 2022, at 9:15am, with the Annual General Meeting to follow. Fr Wallace intends to hold three combined services per year.

*Ash Wednesday:* There will be two service on March 2, 2022, at 2pm and 7pm.

*Lenten Book Study:* We will read Dante's *Paradise Lost*. The group will meet March 10, 17, 24, 31. Should we need to move this group due to roof repair work, the Methodist Church has kindly agreed to let us use their space for worship, pot lucks, etc.

*Holy Week Services:* Palm Sunday, April 10 at 8am & 10am; Wednesday April 13, Stations of the Cross at 7pm; Maundy Thursday at 7pm; Good Friday at noon; Holy Saturday at noon [no vigil]; Easter Sunday at 8am & 10am

*Parish Picnic:* will be held on May 22, 2022. On this day there will be one combined worship service at 9:15am. Fr Wallace has an outdoor venue in mind. This will be the final week of church school.

*Parish Retreat Weekend:* will be held October 21-23, 2022, at Holy Cross Monastery, an Anglican/Episcopal Benedictine monastic community, located just south of Kingston, NY on Route 9W. A \$50 deposit will be required to hold a spot for the weekend.

*Remembering Fr Parke:* March 5, 2022, will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fr Parke's death. We will remember him during the services on the following Sunday, March 6.

*Music at Services:* Due to costs, there has not been music at the 8am Sunday service for some months now. Going forward, the 8am Sunday service will officially be a said service unless it is a high feast day, while the 10am Sunday service will be a full service with music. The choir is supposed to start back in November, however there are concerns about rising Covid infections even among the vaccinated population. The choir would have to sing masked, and those masks cost \$200 each. Cost would need to be covered by the church. Steve added that, from a medical professional's point of view, the return of the choir is premature due to the Delta variant. All vestry members agreed that it is better and safer to wait. For Advent and Christmas, we will hire vocal soloists.

*Michael Thomas Matching Gift Challenge:* Proceeds from Michael's matching gift challenge will be split evenly between Operations and Capital Campaign. Several parishioners have said they would also contribute. \$25K goal for a total of \$50K. Marcia will lead the fundraising committee for this project. Will work with Theresa Behrendt and Kathleen Anspach and Bob Bullock. Important that this doesn't have a negative affect upon the Stewardship Campaign.

*September 12 Parish Meeting Review:* Feedback has been good. People were pleased with the presentation, but disappointed about the project. Nobody has indicated that they are leaving the church.

**Treasurer's Report:** K Finkbeiner

Expenses are under budget YTD but will catch up. Next year, expenses will increase due to inflation. We have some catching up to do with giving. PPP loan will not be available next year. On the plus side, we have had \$10K special income from weddings, etc., this year. At the end of September, an email will go out asking the parishioners for assistance to meet our year end expenses. Karen will also send out a note at year end. Karen is preparing a high-level preliminary budget for the stewardship campaign happening in October. We will not be receiving SPAC rental income this year, as they are not producing indoor concerts due to Covid concerns.

The financial report was received unanimously.

**Churchwardens' Reports:**

**Senior Warden:** D. Miller

*Parish House:* Darren is trying to meet with attorney Jim Cox to discuss an email in which he lays out legal and contractual issues with Sano-Rubin and JG Waite. Karen noted that she was on the call about the roof work. Concerned about the Bell Tower work not having been approved. Asked them to slow down on the tower at this time. David requested that in settling up with the architects, we take delivery of the plans, specs and drawings for which we have paid. These deliverables will be useful in the future, especially the site analysis and renovation plan for the church building.

*Stewardship/2022 Pledge Drive:* The 2022 Stewardship Drive will run October 17, 24, 31. The mailing will go out on October 12. This year's theme is "Count Your Blessings and Make Your Blessings Count."

**Junior Warden:** C. Berheide

*Legs Misérables:* will meet on Thursdays at 2:30pm on October 14, 21, 28. Locations: October 14, Saratoga Springs State Park; October 21, Glowegee Creek Trail in Galway; October 28, Christ the King Conference Center in Greenwich

**Commission Reports:**

*Audio Visual/Streaming/Website:* L. Kszan

The zoom transmission on September 12 was not technically adequate. Diane Robinson has asked about possibility of purchasing audio visual equipment, however this is not a priority at this time. Laura to work with Genna Henderson, Diane Robinson and Fr Wallace to coordinate social media and website so that a unified message is presented.

*Building Report:* S. Rucker

*Covid Workplace Policy:* The State requires us to adopt a policy for workplace airborne viruses. We agree to adopt the NY State boilerplate language for Bethesda.

*Hot Water Heater & Boiler:* We will not have hot water because the chimney that was torn down vented the exhaust from the gas heater. All agreed that we will wait the four weeks to install a new hot water heater at the same time as the new boiler installation. Bourque says we will take delivery of the new boiler in four weeks, with a completion date of November 1.

*Roof:* Examination of the East transept brings good news that there is stone under the flashing. We are getting an estimate to remove the south chimney. Some leaking into the handicap entrance during rain has been reported, so Steve will have them investigate that as well.

*Sprinklers/Fire Suppression:* The sprinkler issue is still a problem. On Call Service may be able to bypass the valve. Kate noted that the fire inspection is coming up soon. Steve to investigate further.

*Building Priorities:* We need to establish what we will do next, after the roof and boiler work. 1) Fixing the undercroft drainage and the bell tower will require several hundred thousand dollars each. 2) Asbestos is found in the floors, in the choir room, in the old boiler room, around the heating pipes. We could remove the asbestos and Rainbow quoted \$50K to encapsulate and remove the asbestos. 3) Dripping water in the basement. We need proper insulation on the cold pipes. 4) Fire escape on east side of the sanctuary twisted and the exit door is not operable. This is a safety issue. Kate noted that the Fire Inspector was OK with only the basement and Washington St exits functioning. We need to train the ushers on escape plans in the event of fire. 5) Sprinklers must be functioning, but we have no estimate yet.

*Consensus:* We will start with the Sprinkler system, then investigate fixing the Fire Escape, and then the dripping pipes in the undercroft. Steve will follow up with the Fire Inspector. We are very concerned about the water damage in the undercroft, and Kate urged Steve to get an estimate for water remediation. Steve will also contact the LA Group Landscapers regarding creating a parking lot on the empty lot next door.

**Next meeting: Wednesday October 20**

**Blessing and Adjournment**

Blessing by Fr. Wallace

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Laura Kszan, on behalf of Ann C. Bullock, Clerk