

**Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry Meeting
November 16, 2022 Saratoga Springs**

Attendance: Fr. Charles Wallace, Priest in Charge
 Darren Miller, Senior Warden
 Sara Manny, Junior Warden
 Karen Finkbeiner, Treasurer
 Mark Claverie
 Marcia MacDonald and Darby
 David MacVane
 Steven Rucker and Nick
 Holly Sofarelli
 David Wilder
 Ann Bullock, Clerk

Absent: Laura Kszan

Opening Prayer

The regular meeting of the Bethesda Episcopal Church Vestry was called to order at 7:09pm on November 16, 2022, by Fr. Wallace

Devotions:

Fr. Wallace offered devotions.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of September, 2022, were unanimously approved as corrected. (K Finkbeiner, movant; M MacDonald, second)

The minutes of the meeting of October, 2022, were unanimously approved as corrected. (H Soffarelli movant; M Claverie, second)

Priest-in-Charge Remarks:

Residential retreat at Holy Cross Monastery with nearly thirty people in attendance for Quiet Day.

Meeting at the Diocesan Center to discuss the election of a new Bishop; discussion of difficulties that parishes face in growing. There are few new families in attendance.

Talk at History Museum November 15, 2022 concerning Katrina Trask: the presentation included discussion of Bethesda in the Trask history. The lectern was donated to the church by Katrina Trask in memory of her eldest daughter. Lamb Studios built the lectern and may be able to restore it. (Recall that there was money raised for the refurbishment of the brasses.) The lantern over it may also be able to be refurbished at the same time.

The office staff continues to be a joy to work with. Work is done efficiently and pleasantly.

New visitor at 8am mentioned he is an artist at Yaddo (writer, poet) and also an Episcopal priest. He is preaching on Sunday, Nov 20 with some of the artists and with the Executive Director and Development Director of Yaddo expected to attend. This may be a good way to re-connect Yaddo with the Church.

Joan Bullock service on Saturday morning. All welcome.

Richard Russo has rented space in the Chocolate Factory in Ballston Spa in which he plans to start a traditional Roman Catholic church. He has asked if he may borrow some of our extra furniture now stored in the basement. Fr Wallace suggests that the longer this furniture stays in the basement, the more it deteriorates. Consensus is that appropriate excess furnishings should be offered.

Treasurer's Financial Report: K Finkbeiner, Treasurer

K Finkbeiner sent report noting that, overall, our performance is similar to prior months'. That is, we are underrunning our total Operational expenses, thanks to the volunteer coverage in the office. We do have some operational items that are overrunning, and we can expect these to continue to run at a high rate.

It is also good news that year-to-date October our Pledge and Plate income is over budget. However, it is not over budget enough to close the deficit we have in the budget. Our Operational deficit year to date October is \$15,506. Without approximately that amount in special giving - over our expected P&P for Nov and Dec - we will close the year with about the same level of deficit.

There will be an expected gap between expenses and revenue. Will need to close the deficit of \$15k to \$20K to avoid eating into the current cushion. We had sufficient revenue at the end of 2021 to allow for some comfort in paying winter expenses, but we need to be sure that we maintain this going forward.

Those who do not pledge make the difference: good Sunday attendance and Christmas Eve may be sufficient, but there may also be an approach to some who either do not pledge or may be able to give additional gifts, keeping in mind that this may be a more difficult giving year. K Finkbeiner will draft something to go in the bulletin to remind parishioners that expenses are a bit higher and encourage giving.

Special monthly gifts get a good response, but do not seem to be detracting from giving to the church. Since we cannot offer space to entities in need, we can offer a financial support from the parish: it's what a church should do.

There are no overdue invoices, so no Accounts Payable aging report was presented for the meeting.

Churchwardens' Report:**Senior Warden:** D. Miller

Discussion of use of the lot next to the church by Bonacio for storage of equipment:

Per John Criscione, this use should not result in an income tax issue to the church; Jim Cox requested to find out if the property will be taxable for City property taxes. S Manny to explore what we will need to have for insurance. M Claverie reports that Bonacio is anxious to get this under way as soon as possible.

Likely that the lot would be taxed by the city for property tax during the term of the lease at the value of a commercial lot. This tax could be built into the cost to Bonacio. Potential argument that this is a license to use the lot with a donation; but the income is treated as income and the substance of the agreement would control.

Junior Warden: S Manny

Stewardship appeals sent today with pledge cards. D Wilder suggested that the pledge appeal include a note on what an individual pledged last year. There was a pledge report sent in the summer and parishioners are encouraged to make sure that their 2022 pledge is up to date.

Building: M Claverie:

Scaffolding has been removed and the clerestory windows are being installed. Sano-Rubin to further evaluate the windows and the needed repairs to the moldings. Lamb Studios has repaired what they can do for now and will be finished with the present project this week, including the window insert in the fire stair door. There is still needed caulking or sealing around some windows and protective glazing on the clerestory windows, but it cannot be finished during the winter. The repairs to the molding and windows may make a difference in the heating—even if there are still some gaps requiring caulk.

Fire stairs are going in on Dec 7 and will be delivered to the site before that. M Claverie raised a question with Sano-Rubin concerning a leaf guard that has popped out of a gutter: we may need a snow guard just along the east side of the church to keep snow from being dumped along the side of the Church.

Church needs to be cleaned; decoration on Dec 11

Fire sprinkler to be inspected. Work on lift to be scheduled.

Many thanks to Mark Claverie for all his time, energy and attention to the structural needs of the Church.

New Business:**Annual meeting on January 29, 2023, following one service at 9am.**

Reduce the number of Vestry members; need a motion to amend the Bylaws at the annual meeting. Intention is to reduce the number by a class (a minimum of six members plus officers.) D Wilder to investigate.

Hildene Christmas open house opportunity offered to the parish.
New Skete may be open for visit likewise.

Pageant is December 18 during service. Children are encouraged to participate.

Next meeting:

Sunday, December 18, 2022, Christmas party. Any necessary business issues will be handled by email in the next month.

Blessing and Adjournment

Blessing by Fr. Wallace at 8:19pm.

Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ann C. Bullock, Clerk