

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Wilmington, NC  
Vestry Meeting  
January 16, 2023**

**Present:** The Rev. Caleb Lee (Rector), Bill Anlyan (Rector's Warden), Brian Buss, Chip Carter (People's Warden), Layne Dupree, Ashley Eason, Anne O'Dell, Sally Pope, Denise Sheehan (Vestry Clerk), Rhonda Stroud, Meaghan Thomas, Judy Wilson (Treasurer).

**Absent:** Matt Langley, Steve Martin

Fr. Lee called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. In honor of Martin Luther King Day, he opened with a short video of Mahalia Jackson singing to Dr. Martin Luther King. The video was an example of how joy and worship can inspire and fill all with the Holy Spirit.

**Approval of the December Meeting Minutes**

Bill Anlyan made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting, with one addition in the attendance, and a correction in the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Chip Carter. The minutes were amended and approved.

**Rector's Report**

Worship attendance has been strong, with a full house on Christmas Eve and doubled Christmas morning attendance. Since then, attendance has continued to be very good. While a full church is a good thing, it also presents some opportunities/challenges. With continued growth, we will need to begin discerning how to accommodate that growth. Will we require another service? That is a big undertaking, but it may be necessary down the road.

Fr. Lee expressed his thanks to the vestry members who were assigned and submitted an annual report. The Annual Meeting will be held January 29, 2023 and, among many other things, we will be honoring our outgoing vestry members. He encouraged all to be present for this important annual event. While the Annual Meeting has no governing authority outside of electing members of the vestry, is a very informative meeting where the congregation can be updated about various things going on in the parish. It is also a time to celebrate St. Paul's, its people and the Patronal Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

We will not be electing Diocesan Convention delegates for 2024 at this Annual Meeting. There needs to be an intentional period of time of discernment, and identifying candidates. It should not be rushed. The vestry can elect delegates at any time and choose any way to do it.

All is set for this year's Diocesan Convention. Fr. Lee has been nominated by Catherine Powell and Michael Singer to be a candidate to attend General Convention in July of 2024. That is all subject to an election at Diocesan Convention.

As an Honorary Canon of the Cathedral, Fr. Lee is called back from time to time to fulfill certain duties. This year, he has been asked to preach at Grace Church Cathedral for the Annual Kirkin' O the Tartan on February 5.

The Vestry Retreat on Saturday, February 18 will be once again at Topsail. This is an opportunity to be together with the new vestry, to take a look at the year ahead, and to discern where we are headed.

Father Lee told the vestry that Merry Ann Wright had received our card the Tuesday before her death and was truly touched. Her funeral service was well-attended, not only in person, but with over 1200 views on YouTube. Fr. Lee thanked Bob Crafts for his work in live-streaming the event.

Before ending his report, Fr. Lee reminded the vestry, that with so many new visitors each Sunday, they are ambassadors for St. Paul's. The vestry's interactions with new people are vital to visitors' welcome and the church's growth.

### **Rector's Warden – Bill Anlyan**

Bill Anlyan reported that the Mutual Ministry Assessment Committee had looked into better ways to acknowledge and thank those volunteers who contribute so much to the life of St. Paul's. They looked at ways, other than "dustables" and/or a sheet cake, to honor their work.

To this end, the committee has created a beautiful pin depicting the Agnus Dei stained glass window. This pin will be given to selected individuals in recognition of their service to the church.

### **People's Warden Report – Chip Carter**

Chip Carter was happy to report that since the last vestry meeting, Francisco Castillo has begun work on the most crucial of projects for the church building - sealing the western (16<sup>th</sup> Street) wall. This is one of three projects considered crucial due to water intrusion. The other two are repair of windows in both buildings and repair of some roof deterioration.

He thanked our Treasurer, Judy Wilson, for her assistance in finding the funds for the sealing of the wall (\$37,000). The windows and roof work will have to wait a bit before funds can be found to tackle these projects.

All three projects are vital. With water intrusion, we are starting to see cracks in the interior walls of the nave. This will continue to plague us until we can get the wall and windows totally sealed. There is a great deal of confidence in Francisco Castillo, who performed the same project on the eastern wall (Andrews side) of the church ten years ago, and it still does not have any cracks in the plaster.

When all three projects are completed, we can breathe a sigh of relief, and turn our attention to repairing the cracks that are starting to widen on the nave floor. While we are working on some changes with the long-range plan, we must also keep our eyes and efforts on the existing buildings we have.

Other projects where Building and Grounds spent their efforts included:

- Repair of a lavatory leak in the women's rest room adjacent to the library.
- Repair of a flush valve problem with the men's urinal adjacent to the library, for which we had to hire a plumber due to the location of the valve (between the wall separating the two restrooms).
- Repair of a leaking hot water supply line in the basement bathroom, discovered and repaired by Bob Belaustegui. This was a tough fix as it involved a "pin hole" leak in the copper line in the middle of a wall stud.

The GNP continues to work with St. Fiacre group in maintain and improving the grounds.

- The GNP assisted the Flower Guild in decorating and then later removing the Christmas tree, garlands, potted plants, etc.
- The GNP set up the Parish Hall for Merry Anne Wright's funeral reception. This involved moving the large serving table and setting up 10 round tables with 10 chairs at each table.

Brian Buss also reported that the GNP is testing a new lighting system that will better illuminate the Agnus Dei window in the church.

### **Treasurer's Report – Judy Wilson (see attached report)**

Judy began her report with a special thanks to Chip Carter for his work as People's Warden. His detailed and timely information was extremely helpful to the work of the Treasurer.

She also thanked Father Lee for his efforts to increase membership. Membership drives finances, and 2022 was a good year.

Judy then presented the first draft of the 2023 budget. The final revision will be submitted in September.

She particularly pointed out several changes in the budget:

1. The projected increase in plate offerings reflects the increase in membership
2. The projected decrease in general funds reflects revenue that may not occur in 2023
  - Monies from the movie studio filming in the church
  - FEMA funds (used in January to pay for west wall repair)
  - Ormond Center income
  - Voided checks
3. A projected decrease in Gifts and Grants
4. A projected increase in revenue from Ministries (music and weddings)

For expenses, the following will see increases in budget:

- Cost of living increases/Administrative and support staff
- Increase in Diocesan assessment and Convention fees
- Utilities
- Tech support
- Community Outreach

Bill Anlyan made a motion to approve the 2023 budget as presented; seconded by Chip Carter. The budget as presented was approved.

Bill Anlyan asked the vestry to begin to think about how the vestry will designate “special monies” coming in 2023 from bequests and gifts. Can we begin to formulate short term and long term strategies? The Endowment Board is also beginning these discussions.

### **Stewardship – Anne O’Dell**

As of today, Anne O’Dell is pleased to report that we have received 141 pledges totaling \$570,000 for the 2023 annual stewardship campaign.

The stewardship team is continuing its work behind-the-scenes, and if past patterns repeat themselves, Judy Wilson, Treasurer, is optimistic that we may be able to increase the total amount pledged to \$600,000. Compared to a year ago at this time when we reported a total of 139 pledges equaling \$485,000, we are up an amazing \$85,000.

Anne expressed thanks to all who pledged, encouraged others to pledge, and helped with the writing of thank you notes. It is her understanding that almost all of the thank you notes have been completed and mailed. If you need assistance, please let her know ASAP.

As a new year begins, we continue to monitor the payment of 2022 pledges. Through December, we have collected 97% of the total dollars pledged. As previously reported, we had to write off a couple pledges, but expect to receive the remainder of the outstanding unpaid pledge balances and increase the pledge fulfillment rate to 98%.

## **Human Resources/Membership – Meaghan Thomas**

Meaghan reported a good response to the dinner groups. With 42 survey responses, the responses were split between quarterly and monthly gatherings. The committee will meet again soon to discuss the results and move forward with scheduling these events.

The committee will also discuss updating the welcome bags, as well as new ideas to bring new members and visitors into the life of St. Paul's.

Father Lee thanked Meaghan for all her hard work on vestry and on this committee.

## **Facilities**

Father Lee reported that the committee continues in the long-range planning process. This will be an intentional, deliberate process; there is no deadline. The committee's next meeting will be January 17.

## **Vestry Nominating Committee- Sally Pope**

Having received no other nominations, the nominees to fill the five vacancies on the Vestry are:

- Carol Fields
- Steve Haughey
- Elizabeth Sanders-Park
- Denise Sheehan
- David Tousignant

## **New Business**

### ***Endowment Board Appointment***

There was a motion by Bill Anlyan and second by Layne Dupree, to appoint Dick Rowe to a three-year term as a member of the Endowment Board. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Old Business**

The amendment of Endowment Policies and Procedures continues to be discussed by the Endowment Board. This issue is tabled until further notice.

## **Closing Prayer and Adjournment**

Father Lee blessed and thanked the outgoing vestry members for their service, support, and affirmation. Not only were they vestry members, but friends and brother and sisters in Christ. All of St. Paul's is grateful for their service.

Rhonda Stroud closed the vestry in prayer. There was a motion (Bill Anlyan) and second (Sally Pope) to adjourn. The motion was approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.