

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Wilmington, NC  
Vestry Meeting Minutes  
December 11, 2023**

**Present:** The Rev. Caleb Lee (Rector), Bill Anlyan (Rector's Warden), Tori Cannon (Vestry Clerk), Layne Dupree, Ashley Eason (via Zoom), Carol Field, Anne O'Dell (People's Warden), Lisa Sanders-Park, Denise Sheehan, Tom Sramek, David Tousignant, Judy Wilson

**Absent:** Steve Haughey

**This meeting was held at the Ormond Center due to the church being used for community events. Father Lee called the meeting to order at 6:02pm and opened the meeting with a prayer on the 3 phases of Advent.**

**Approval of the November Meeting Minutes**

David Tousignant made a motion to accept the November 13th minutes, seconded by Anne O'Dell and were unanimously approved, without corrections.

**Rector's Report**

I report to you tonight with a bit of a leftover cold.

Here we are in the Ormond Center; the future home of the rector and staff offices. Thank you for your flexibility tonight as we have multiple events taking place over at the church.

We have been having a great Advent so far. Attendance is stellar. We have been seeing a lot of new faces to join our fairly new faces as well as our familiar faces. Just yesterday, a couple who have been visiting us for about a month handed me a visitor's card that said, "we want to join." Having Bishop Parsley with us yesterday was a welcomed little boost. The choir has been busy and will continue to be. I give thanks for their faithfulness during this season. Although not as well attended according to years past, this year's Messiah was one of the better performances. I call your attention to the various special services happening.

We are moving along with nominations for vestry and look forward to releasing a very robust slate in the near future. Mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting, which is Sunday, January 28th at 9:00 AM. Nominations for Vestry will need to be distributed to the congregation by December 28 allowing 2 weeks more for further nominations from the floor, if there are any. I call your attention to the Annual Report(s). If your name is on the list, please write a report highlighting the year in the life of the ministry for which you are responsible.

I am happy to report that we have a new Executive Assistant to the Rector, Bella Dolande. She is very capable and I look forward to the continued journey. I think it will be really helpful that she is here on Sundays singing in the choir.

Hopefully we are now in a period of stability with this position.

There has been a lot moving and shaking in the arena of the Capital Campaign. I wanted to show you a poster that will be going up around the church, which will prime the pump and get people talking and asking questions.

We want to keep this energy going and are currently consulting with Gray via Mona Clites about what we need to do to get the ball rolling on next steps for making this idea more of a permanent reality. So, the rubber is meeting the road. The money is beginning to come in just based on preliminary quiet conversations. Wouldn't it be great if at the Annual Meeting we were ready to present our case and then say, and we have already raised \_\_\_\_\_ amount and we are already Building. The Way. Forward. with the project?

### **Rector's Housing Allowance Declaration**

*Whereas The Reverend Caleb J. Lee is compensated by St. Paul's exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel; and whereas St. Paul's does not provide Fr. Lee with a rectory, therefore, it is hereby Resolved, that the \$37,000 out of Fr. Lee's total compensation is hereby designated to be a housing allowance; and it is further Resolved, that the designation of \$37,000 as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2024 and all future years unless otherwise provided.*

### **Nomination and election of Virginia Chiarello to serve another 3 years on the Endowment Board**

#### **Diocesan Convention Delegates**

Bill Anlyan  
Anne O'Dell  
Karen Smith  
Leon Tillery

#### **Alternates**

Bill Smith  
Scott Sheble

### **Annual Reports - Annual Meeting**

#### **People's Warden Report—Anne O'Dell**

##### **Additional Parish Updates**

In addition to the events discussed in the Rector's report, there were a number of outreach opportunities during the past month.

The Angel Tree went up before Thanksgiving with double the number of gift requests compared to last year. The congregation responded enthusiastically, filling every request. The wrapped gifts were brought to church and blessed this past Sunday prior to their delivery to Snipes and Freeman schools. Special thanks to Cecelia Peers for organizing this annual event.

The congregation also heartily supported a pajama drive organized by The Daughters of the King (DOK). Donations were given to Pajama Jam, an organization founded in 2008 and dedicated to providing new pajamas to children in need. Over 20,000 kids in Hampton Roads, VA and Wilmington, NC have been helped since its founding.

On Monday, Dec 4 about 45 people gathered at Nourish NC and together packed 800 meal bags in a little over an hour. These 800 bags translate into about 2,000 weekend meals for elementary school children in Wilmington. Special thanks to Steve Bucci for organizing this annual event.

### **Grant Team**

No updates to report.

### **Building and Grounds**

At present, the GNP (Gentlefolk of Noble Poverty) is in full "Holiday Survival Mode". In addition to their normal responsibilities, yesterday members of the GNP gathered after the 10:30 service to prepare the chancel for this evening's Hoggard High School Orchestra Concert. Tomorrow morning, they will restore the chancel to its rightful configuration. On Wednesday, David Tousignant and company will put lights on the Christmas tree in the baptistry in preparation for the Blue Christmas service, and on Thursday they will assist with garland placement in the church prior to Advent 3. On the morning of Thursday, Dec. 21, the GNP will prepare the chancel for another concert; the Tallis Chamber Orchestra is scheduled to perform in the evening. The following day the GNP will restore the chancel in preparation for Advent 4 and Christmas. On Saturday, Dec 23, the GNP will help the flower guild with the greening of the church.

Given the above schedule, there are no major projects underway at this time, but work continues. In the past month, the repainting of the hospitality storeroom was finally completed. New lights were installed in the gym, and additional repairs were made to stabilize the banister in the north stairwell.

Repairs to the blinds in the Choir Director's office are on hold pending the arrival of the RIGHT replacement piece. Due to scheduling difficulties, Schronce Electric in Bolivia has not yet been able to repair the flickering chancel lights.

Bob Belaustegui is spearheading a project to refurbish and repaint the wrought iron fencing surrounding the church grounds. With over 700 linear feet of fencing, this will be a labor-intensive project; the fencing needs to be sanded, then immediately primed and, in time, painted, all under optimal weather conditions.

Efforts are also underway to improve the planning and the budgeting process for Building & Grounds. Fr. Caleb, Bob Belaustegui, David Tousignant and Anne O'Dell will be meeting after the first of the year to revisit and revive some of the projects/practices that were put aside because of renovations to the Ormond Center, Hurricane Florence and COVID.

For other project updates, please review the report submitted by Steve Haughey.

### **Treasurer's Report—Judy Wilson**

As of 12/11/2023:

Total income is \$655,517.81 which is 86.3% of the approved 9/11/23 budget.

Total expenses are \$652,176.64 which is 85.8% of the approved 9/11/23 budget.

This leaves a net income of \$3,341.17.

The Endowment Fund Total reflects \$905,164.68 and the balance of the Reserve Savings Account is \$203,423.49.

As of the end of November, 87% of pledge payments have been received.

Denise Sheehan made a motion to accept the 12/11/23 Operating Fund Treasurer's Report, seconded by David Tousignant.

Judy also included a draft of the 2024 budget.

### **Stewardship Report—Denise Sheehan**

At the November Stewardship Committee meeting, several strategies were discussed to improve the response to the campaign. These included a message in the Thanksgiving-week editions of the E-News and bulletin. Fr. Lee also discussed creating a Thanksgiving edition of Conversations with Caleb, which would focus on gratitude and specifically ask parishioners "What are you grateful for at St. Paul's".

As of December 6, we have received 121 pledges worth \$553,710. Last year, the 2023 stewardship campaign received a total of 143 pledges amounting to \$555,000.

Judy Wilson has identified about 30 households who pledged last year, but have not, as yet, pledged this year. The committee is in the process of determining the best way to reach out to these people. The ultimate goal is to convert them to pledgers, but equally important is to talk to them about St. Paul's, discuss the importance of giving, and ask them if they have any questions.

Packets of thank you cards were distributed to Vestry members to write and send out, thanking parishioners for their pledges and service to St. Paul's.

### **Membership/Human Resources—Lisa Sanders-Park**

- Monthly Dinner Groups 2024: Monthly dinner groups continue successfully. Lisa will reach out to Karen Day and Barbara Bucci to organize these groups for 2024.
- Quarterly Dinner Groups 2024: Meaghan and Lisa plan to meet in January 2024 and choose dates for all 4 QDG in 2024 so we can secure hosts early on and encourage interested parties to save the date. We will do registrations the month prior for each. We will encourage groups to take pictures for "Moments of Joy."

#### **Recommendations:**

- Plan a Spring Newcomer's Social-May?
- Actively pursue leadership for the committee in Q1 of 2024

Fr. Lee stated that Membership and Outreach are two areas to strengthen in 2024.

### **Building & Grounds—David Tousignant**

Updates in this area were included in the People's Warden report.

### **Ormond Center—Steve Haughey**

- Access Codes for all former OC tenants were turned off as of November 1.
- Refund check for Support the Port unused rent was mailed early November.
- AURORA Painting completed sanding and painting of back stair railing on Monday December 4.
- Received cost estimate from Salt Rock Builders (Jimmie Spivey) for wall move and associated work in the OC on Tuesday December 5.

### **Nave Flooring**

- Reviewed proposal from Carolina Foundation Solutions and attempted to compare the details to our original proposal. Emailed STATURE Engineering on November 27 with questions about the CFS proposal. He has not reviewed the proposal but will once we establish our commitment to proceed and identify our timeline for when the work will be performed.

### **Capital Campaign**

Fr. Lee displayed a poster illustrating the potential improvements to St. Paul's that the Capital Campaign would fund. This poster will be available to parishioners for viewing.

### **New Business**

- The Vestry Nominating Committee, consisting of Fr. Lee, Layne Dupree, Tom Sramek, Anne O'Dell and Bill Anlyan, are considering candidates for the new Vestry term and will put those individuals forth at the Annual Meeting on January 28, 2024.
- Clergy Housing Allowance Declaration: Bill Anlyan made a motion to approve the designated amount for a housing allowance (as referenced in the Rector's Report), Layne Dupree seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- Ashley Eason reports that the DOK will be delivering the flowers from Sunday services to people who are unable to attend church. She also suggested writing notes to people who are ill or haven't been seen in church recently. Ashley suggested pairing up with Pastoral Care and a conversation on this matter will be initiated with Fr. Lee and Fr. Michael Singer.
- Bill Anlyan made a motion for reelecting Virginia Chiarello to serve another 3 years on the Endowment Board. Layne Dupree seconded this motion.
- Judy Wilson informed the Vestry that the Finance Committee will be moving its meeting to January 10th and proposed moving the next Vestry meeting to January 15th. Rescheduling the annual retreat to mid-or late February was also proposed.
- Fr. Lee distributed a list of reports requested from the leaders of various groups and committees within St. Paul's. These summaries serve to highlight accomplishments and provide a resource to new members. Reports are due to Fr. Lee by January 7th and will be archived.

**Old Business**

- The Diocesan Convention delegates include Bill Anlyan, Anne O'Dell, Karen Smith and Leon Tillery. Alternate delegates are Scott Sheble and Bill Smith.

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by David Tousignant and seconded by Denise Sheehan at 7:03pm.**

**Layne Dupree offered a Christmas prayer in closing.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Tori Cannon  
Vestry Clerk