

**St. Brendan the Navigator
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
June 19, 2020**

Present by ZOOM video conferencing: Lis Ingoldsby, Josephine Jacob, Bill Scaife, Miriam Antich, Meg Graham, Barbara Kourajian, Tom van Buren, Pastor Elaine Hewes and Pastor Edward Dufresne.

Pastor Elaine Hewes called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and offered two openings prayers, one commemorating Juneteenth.

Review and acceptance of May 19th Meeting Minutes

Miriam moved to accept the Minutes of the May 19th meeting; Tom seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Finance Ministry

- Review of May Financials

Bill reported we are in good shape. He presented a chart comparing YTD Income and Expenses: our income is \$55,871 and our expenses are \$34,083 resulting in a net income of \$21, 788. Lis asked how this compares with last year at the same time. Bill said we are down about \$4500 in pledges from January through April of last year. Miriam noted the surge in pledges after an article in the newsletter. Lis suggested putting something in the newsletter each month as a reminder the church depends on these funds.

- Update on Fidelity accounts

Meg reported that all the accounts have been set up at Fidelity and she and Pete are working through having the right amount in each account. Fidelity has named the accounts and there is some confusion on the labels. We need to make sure Pete's nicknames for these accounts go with the right labels.

Pastor Dufresne noted we have four accounts: Endowment, Capital Reserve, a Current account (might be named a Ministry Reserve - a rainy day account), and a Checking account. Bill said all of the funds are in the Premium Money Market. Meg mentioned these accounts were discussed at the recent Investment Committee meeting and the committee decided they might like to invest the Endowment in growth-oriented investment products.

- Endowment Proposal

The Endowment Fund was discussed and Pastor Elaine will do some research and reach out to persons who might be potential donors. She will report back to the Vestry.

We briefly discussed the Endowment Fund guidelines and agreed they need to be reviewed. Pastor Dufresne stated that his experience with endowments is that they are used to expand or sustain a parish's ministry; if monies are restricted, you can't put them into the Endowment. Lis suggested it would be the work of the new Vestry to

examine these guidelines and consult Episcopal resources for best practices. Pastor Elaine asked if the Finance Committee could appoint three people to look at best practices around endowment funds for small congregations like St. Brendan.

Follow-up items from the May 19th Vestry meeting

- Diocesan Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) grant

We have received about \$3500 to date. In a recent diocesan town hall, Terry Reimer, Canon Missioner for Finance and Stewardship, asked if churches still need these funds. Lis received an email from him today saying the Feds have extended the time the PPP money can be used and that funds returned by congregations will be added to a pool of money which will be offered to needy Diocese of Maine churches, Jubilee Centers and Camp Bishopswood to help cover July 2020 pay and benefit costs.

Do we return any of the funds we received? We decided to table this until our July meeting and asked the Finance Ministry to revisit this at their next meeting.

- Options for online/electronic giving

Bill stated the Finance Committee thought what we are doing is enough. He offered to bring the idea of a “DONATE” button on the website back to the Committee for their consideration. Miriam said “Square” is included in our website contract – there would be no cost to us. She added there are two requirements: 1) Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) would have to be in place, and 2) we should check with Carolyn Mor about taking on the extra paperwork. Lis suggested Bill and Miriam follow-up with Carolyn and Pete Dane about adding a “DONATE” button to our website.

- Propane bill

Lis reported on her conversations with Russell at Percy Brown Plumbing. There was an error on our bill and Russell was sincerely apologetic. It was an honest mistake in his office and it will be adjusted.

Update from the Nominating Committee

Miriam reported all the positions have been filled. Vestry received an email this morning with the proposed slate of nominees. The slate will be announced in next week’s newsletter (June 26), a month before the annual meeting. The newsletter article will mention the names of outgoing Vestry members, announce the slate of nominees, and state that additional nominees, if any, can be proposed on the floor of the Annual Meeting on July 26th.

Bylaws changes/proposal

The Nominating Committee has spent considerable time revising our current bylaws. Pastor Dufresne walked us through the proposed changes. There was considerable discussion on Article II which defined “Members.” There was concern that the language around “members” and “communicants” sounded exclusive. Both Miriam and Pastor Dufresne clarified the intention of the committee was to make the guidelines line up with what we are already doing and that they were written in the spirit of opening up the membership.

Barbara felt it was not clear that Members-at-Large could serve two consecutive three-year terms. Pastor Dufresne will insert revised language to clarify this point.

Lis moved we accept and support these revisions to the bylaws as a working document and move it forward with the understanding and caveat for further work to be done with our own records and Pastor Dufresne's consultation with the diocese before presenting it to the congregation. Miriam seconded the motion. The motion passed.

It was suggested a narrative or "Cliff Notes" be presented with the revised bylaws. Pastor Dufresne will check with the Diocese on the expansion of our definition of membership as presented in Article II, Section 3 and we need to check our Registry for the record of baptisms of our members.

Thanks was expressed to the Nominating Committee for their hard work on tackling this revision.

Update from COVID-19 Task Force & Worship & Music Ministry

The Task Force at their June 16th meeting decided we are not going to meet for in-person worship until August at the very earliest. We will also have to provide some type of Zoom worship for those unable to attend the service. Barbara mentioned the Worship & Music Ministry's desire to try worship in various locations (church, parish hall) when we actually meet. Anna Edgerly-Moore, our Administrative Assistant, has done a great job of putting signs up around the building outlining best practices for social distancing and safety.

Both Lis and Elaine have received requests for use of our building. Elaine stated that they have had to say in the nicest way possible that we can't have people in the building now because we are not meeting for in-person worship yet. Both she and Lis agreed it has been hard to say "no," but we don't want to put people at risk. When possible, they have tried to offer other options.

Ministry Reviews

Buildings and Grounds:

1) Roof: Jo reported she got a bid from Horch Roofing in Warren for \$15,000. She has another estimate from two years ago for approximately \$13,500. We decided we need more information and also estimates on metal roofing. This item is tabled for our next meeting.

2) Internet: There doesn't seem to be a solution to our internet woes – it's just the way it is on the island. Jo will do some research on a booster she has heard about.

Outreach: Jo reported the Ministry has been really active around the issue of food security. Outreach has already prepared one meal for Simmering Pot and has been invited to do so once a month going forward. Members of the Ministry continue to pick-up and deliver Simmering Pot meals for the island. The garden at the church is planted and will help support the Magic Food Bus program. The Baking Train is continuing with

some seasonal members now helping. We've accepted a proposal from Ready by 21 to use our kitchen on Wednesday afternoons to cook and produce food products for sale. They are loaning us their equipment if we need to use it.

Pastoral Care: Jo believes Diane Greenlaw has been in good touch with folks that haven't been able to attend our services and also with folks that are still away.

Education and Spiritual Development: Miriam mentioned the two summer book discussions planned for July as well as a three-week session on spiritual Bible reading by Joan Maxwell. It is likely we will start the Episcopal Church's *Sacred Ground* series on race and faith beginning in August.

Welcoming and Hospitality: The ministry chair (George Pazuniak) and Vestry Advocate (Miriam) have been attending the COVID-19 Task Force meetings.

Annual Meeting and Parish Forum

Lis outlined the timeline to prepare for the Parish Forum on July 19th and the Annual Meeting on July 26th:

- July 1: Content and Ministry updates for the Annual Report are due
- July 3: Announcement/notice posted for Parish Forum and Annual Meeting
- July 10 and July 17: Annual Report completed/distributed via eNewsletter
Printed copies will be sent via USPS as requested.

The Bylaws and annotations will be sent from the Vestry as a separate item prior to the Forum on July 19th. The Forum will be an opportunity for information and conversation about our ministries and other matters.

Other Business

- Ongoing Ministry consultation with Pastor Dufresne: Lis proposed continuing Pastor Dufresne's ministry consultation through the end of the year. She commented this would be an insurance policy that our work continues. We agreed we would like to avail ourselves of Pastor Dufresne's gifts. She envisions Pastor Dufresne working 5-10 hours a month. The budget item would be less than \$1500.

Miriam moved to extend Pastor Dufresne's revised contract (as appropriate) as Ministry Consultant through the end of 2020. Meg seconded the motion. The motion passed.

- DISHS Emergency Evacuation Proposal: This is an agreement between School Union 76 (specifically DISHS and DISES) and St. Brendan for use of the church in the unlikely event of a school evacuation/emergency. Lis said we could accommodate up to 200 students and personnel. She inquired if the school insurance would cover the situation. We are in agreement with the proposal granted we can work out the insurance piece.

- Black Lives Matter events: Pete Dane asked if St. Brendan could bring the

Episcopal flag to Black Lives Matter gatherings. Pastor Elaine asked Pete to write to the Bishop for his opinion. Bishop Brown wrote back with a hearty affirmative response thanking Pete for bringing such an idea forward.

Jo mentioned the situation in the community at present is a little tense and wondered if this is a wise thing to do. Pastor Elaine will draft a letter to Pete reflecting our conversation and stating he would have the Vestry's blessing provided certain provisos are met. She will run this letter by the Vestry first.

Pastor Elaine emphasized we are trying to honor process, practice, and perception.

- Personnel update: Pastor Elaine has asked Anna Edgerly-Moore for a written sign-off on the proposal we have made to extend her contract. Anna is excited to stay on and is fine with all the terms of the agreement.

Our next Vestry meeting will be Friday, July 10th at 10 a.m.

We closed the meeting by reciting the Prayer of St. Brendan together. The meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Barbara Kourajian,
Clerk