

**St. Brendan the Navigator
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
March 30, 2020**

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

Senior Warden Lis Ingoldsby called the meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. Fr. Dufresne offered an opening prayer.

Review and Acceptance of January 28th and February 10th Meeting Minutes

Tom moved to accept the Minutes of the January 28th meeting; Meg seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved. There is a follow-up item: A policy needs to be developed that would help us respond to persons acting in ways that could disrupt parish community life.

February 10th Minutes: Meg suggested a change in the wording clarifying the names of the two new funds established at Fidelity. The Minutes were tabled for consideration and after editing will be sent to the Vestry for approval by email.

Lis noted that the Parochial Report has been finalized and filed with the Diocese.

Finance Ministry

- Review of February financials

Bill reported we are doing well through February. He doesn't know how we are doing with pledges in light of the COVID-19 virus and suggested we think about other mechanisms for people to fulfill their pledges. We discussed several options including looking into paying online through the website (Miriam will look into the cost of adding this capability). Other options were mentioned: sending a check through snail mail or asking your bank to mail a check to the church through "Bill Pay". Carolyn Mor needs to be consulted about these options. Lis stated this needs to be put on a priority path and asked the Finance Ministry to come back to the Vestry with a recommendation for a viable option. She also suggested putting something in the Newsletter as a gentle reminder to parishioners to keep their pledges up-to-date.

- Report to the Vestry from the Investment Committee

Our funds were taken out of the Maine Community Foundation before the big downturn. We had to leave 10% of our accrued investment there as they would not allow us to withdraw the entire amount at once. Fidelity now has our funds which have been placed into the premium money market account and will be held there. Meg stated there was consensus to move the funds from MCF to Fidelity. Before the Investment Committee was established, Meg ran this by Rich Paget and Ruth Robinson, advisors to the Committee; however, neither one were voting members of the Investment Committee. Lis stated the Vestry and the Finance Ministry appreciates the

expertise of the Committee. Fr. Dufresne asked if these changes would be reflected in the balance statement. Meg said they should be reflected in the April statement.

Revisit discussion of Bylaws and 2020 Nominating Process

We had a lengthy discussion about the Nominating Guidelines as they pertain to the Bylaws. Specifically, how to resolve the discrepancy between the documents regarding the length of time a person can serve on the Vestry. Fr. Dufresne said the Guidelines are changed by the Vestry; the Bylaws are changed by a congregational meeting.

Barbara asked: “What is best for St. Brendan’s?” Fr. Dufresne stated the Guidelines do not have the power to supersede the Bylaws. He asked if the Bylaws are what we want for the best of St. Brendan’s. He said if they are, we have them. If not, we will make a recommendation from the Vestry to the congregation to change and modify the Bylaws as to what is best for St. Brendan’s. Fr. Dufresne clarified that the Bylaws are foundational; they are meant to endure through thick and thin. His recommendation was to stick to the Bylaws as written unless we want to change them.

Lis said this is a time of great uncertainty and she voiced her concerns about continuity with the Vestry since many members are terming out. Fr. Dufresne suggested this concern should be brought to the attention of the Nominating Committee and they will need time to do this important work. He suggested establishing the Committee sooner rather than later. Upon being asked to provide some guidance for them once the Committee is established, Fr. Dufresne agreed to do this.

Barbara moved to have Miriam spearhead the Nominating Committee, approach church members to serve, and then report back to Vestry at our next meeting with a list of names of persons willing to serve on the Committee for our approval. Tom seconded the motion. The motion passed.

We tabled changing the Bylaws. Bill said he hoped we could revise the Guidelines to come into line with the Bylaws. It was suggested the Committee could take note as to what is and what is not working. Fr. Dufresne suggested we could direct the Nominating Committee to be guided by the Bylaws and where they do not conflict, the Guidelines. At the end of their work, the Committee could revise the Guidelines to be in harmony with the Bylaws. Then, either present these changes to the Vestry or the Bylaws might be changed in a congregational meeting. The Vestry agreed this was a good approach.

COVID-19 Updates and Ministry Review

Lis has been participating in the Bishop’s Town Halls for updates on the Diocesan response to the COVID-19 virus. Lis’s main concern is the safety of our church members. She repeated the Diocesan’s guidelines of extremely limited use and access to the building. She suggested a tighter rein on things until we hit the peak of the curve. She said the building should not be used unless it is absolutely essential.

We discussed finding an alternative for music rather than having the building used. Lis stated we are in support of music for our Sunday service, but we need to provide a safe environment for music to happen.

Lis reported that Anna Edgerly-Moore, our administrative assistant, is working from her home and is comfortable getting the mail and scanning it. Jo and Anna will cycle through and check on the church. We will retain the cleaners and pay them for the foreseeable future.

Outreach: Tom reported that a few more donations around food have been made. He stated Outreach needs a bigger plan on priorities for the bulk of their budget. Initiating a new program right now doesn't make sense; supporting what is going on now does. At their April 9th meeting, Outreach will try to assess how to move forward amidst the COVID-19 crisis.

Pastoral Care: Jo reported she spoke with chair Diane Greenlaw who informed her the Pastoral Care Ministry has established a phone tree to keep in contact with members of our congregation who live alone or are vulnerable. Currently four people are making calls to 16 individuals. Jo informed Diane of the supply of frozen food available at the Congregational Church and that lunches are available Monday and Thursday through Healthy Island Project. An update is needed for the Navigator. We briefly discussed how to help the folks who are self-quarantining once they return to the island.

Other Business

- Office support: Anna Edgerly-Moore provided a wonderful update of what she has been doing. Her report was a review of the projects she has worked on in the office (sorting and organizing the office files for retention) and included information on her research and observation outside the office regarding current and potential Outreach projects. Meg said we should consider putting part of this report on the website. Lis stated that Anna is proactive and cheerful; it is great to have her on board.

Our next Vestry meeting will be Monday, April 20th at 1 p.m.

We closed the meeting by reading the Prayer of St. Brendan together. The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Barbara Kourajian,
Clerk