



**Minutes of Trinity Cathedral Vestry Meeting  
November 28, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.**

Present:

*Vestry Members:* Jeff Spiess, Sr. Warden; Kim DeNero-Ackroyd, Jr. Warden; Paul Herrgesell, Treasurer; Mark Biddlestone; Elizabeth Billings; Marie Curry; Martin Hermes; Diane Hexter; Audrey Hudak; Antoinette Ponzo; Cynthia Ries; Marilyn Valencia

*Staff:* The Very Rev. Bernard Owens, Dean; Dan Hout-Reilly, Controller

*Clerk of Vestry:* Darrell Lausche

*Guest:* Bill DiTirro, Chair of the Neighborhood Partnerships Mission Team

Absent: The Rev. Adrienne Koch, Priest Associate

- The Vestry meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.
- Mark Biddlestone led the Vestry in the opening devotional.

Formation

1. Mission Team: Neighborhood Partnerships

Bill DiTirro, shared the latest information from the Neighborhood Partnerships Mission Team. He reviewed the Vestry Charge to the mission team. Current goals are deepening relationships with current partners and develop new partnerships with people in the community. He discussed the various ways the Marion Sterling Partnership is supported. The urban farm, campus ministries, and Trinity's leadership presence in the Campus District, St. Vincent's Charity Campus, and LGBTQ Center were also highlighted. Upcoming projects were also a focus of the presentation, including a Central Neighborhood Block Party, LGBTQ Center of Cleveland Church Hurt Group Project, Urban Farm education program with Marion Sterling, etc.

2. Meeting Staff: Brett Boardwine

Dean Owens introduced the Vestry to Brett Boardwine, Trinity Cathedral's new Communications Manager. Mr. Boardwine was unable to attend the meeting, so he will be introduced personally at another Vestry meeting.

3. Skills Building: Healthy, Faithful, and Effective

Dean Owens lead the Vestry in the November skills building exercise. The discussion was rooted in The College of Congregational Development. The focus question was, "Why do we have congregational development?" Further information was made available in the Vestry Dropbox. Dean Owens invited conversation from the members of the Vestry and used the opportunity to transition to his report.

4. Dean's Report

Dean Owens discussed pledge patterns over the last 5-8 years. Trinity Cathedral is trending well and on pace for 2023. He shared more of what he learned from examining the pledge patterns over time. The loss in

membership from 2015-2020 still challenges the mission and services Trinity attempts to provide. The good news in the data is that 28% of the new pledges are a result of growth. There is a growing and enthusiastic base of members emerging. He reminded the Vestry that rebuilding is household by household.

### Fiduciary Work

1. Adoption of Consent Agenda
  - a. October Minutes
  - b. **Jeff Spiess moved “to accept the consent agenda.” Mark Biddlestone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

2. Stewardship Committee

Cynthia Reis updated the Vestry on the stewardship campaign. The most current stewardship dashboard was made available in the Vestry Dropbox. She shared that the Stewardship Committee is working on following up with members that have been regular pledgers but may not have submitted a pledge at this time. Pledges are accepted through to Easter. 75% of what was pledged for 2023 has been received to date.

3. Finance Committee and Treasurer’s Report

Paul Herrgesell, Treasurer, provided updates on the Finance Committee and the monthly finance reports. All the reports were made available in the Vestry Dropbox. The trends discussed throughout the year remain. 2023 is anticipated to end with a surplus.

4. Property and Sustainability Committee

Mark Biddlestone provided Vestry with an update on the capital improvements forecast. He reviewed the 2023 projects and identified adjustments to the budget that were made. He discussed the capital improvements planned for 2024, including lighting upgrades, server updates, stone privacy wall repairs, etc. Depending on the location of the capital need, the diocese contributes toward the work. The next phase of the stained-glass restoration was also discussed. Additionally, Mark shared other considerations such as crack inspection and/or monitoring, door restoration, etc. Discussion commenced on priorities and providing the Property and Sustainability Committee direction. The committee can then update the proposed totals for Vestry approval.

5. Staffing Updates

Dean Owens provided a staffing update. Shiloh Roby has been hired as the new Director of Music. Cheryl Williams has a lot of wonderful ideas as the Director of Development. Brett Boardwine has been hired as the Communications Director and is working on a social media plan.

An Operations Manager had been hired, but was not a good fit, so the process of hiring will begin anew. An additional challenge is the amount of work being placed on the Stewards and their capacity to complete those tasks. For example, there is a great deal of work in turning the cathedral around between a Saturday night reception and Sunday morning worship.



If Vestry considers a capital campaign, staffing levels will need to be examined. It could include additional clergy, office staff, Stewards, etc. Dean Owens cautioned the Vestry that every decision made should be weighed with how that decision is helping Trinity Cathedral grow, extend its mission, etc.

Strategic Work

1. 2024 Budget

Paul Herrgesell, Treasurer, led the Vestry in discussion about the proposed 2024 budget. He discussed the challenges of providing activities and services with staffing challenges. He cautioned the members of the Vestry to not use 2023 as a model for the anticipated 2024 budget. He also emphasized the importance of the endowment draw in Trinity's ability to carry out its mission.

Dan Hout-Reilly, Controller, discussed the methodology in developing a proposed budget, including analysis of past trends. He shared considerations for predicting revenue sources and expenses. The members of Vestry asked clarifying questions and offered suggestions and insight.

2. Major Events/Wedding Receptions

Dean Owens expressed the need to define what is desired for large events and receptions.

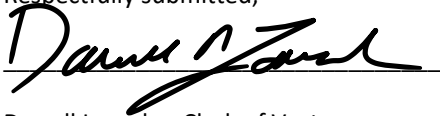
Closing Prayer

Mark Biddlestone led the Vestry in a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Next Vestry Meeting: December 19, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in person

Respectfully submitted,



Darrell Lausche, Clerk of Vestry

