

**St. George's Church Vestry Meeting Minutes**  
**June 15, 2023**

Present: Sean Albert, Jon Ewbank, Carol Gaige, Meg Hughes, Sandee Hughes, David Kennison, Gloria Kishton, Lynn Paska

Absent, excused: Rich Unger, Jeff Wengrovius, Paul Smigelski

Senior Warden David Kennison convened the meeting with a prayer at 6:32 p.m.

Clerk Meg Hughes noted that there was one wording change to the April minutes (a corrected reference to the Schenectady County Historical Society). David moved to accept the May meeting minutes as amended; Carol Gaige seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

**Senior Warden's Report**

*Rectory Repairs/Cleanup*

Senior Warden David Kennison reports that work on the Rectory has shifted to the second floor, where several finishing touches are needed. We are preparing for a late August move-in date. David is happy to note that Fred Leger's health seems much better, but he will need support to finish the job. Parishioners might be called upon for cleaning duty. There is a linoleum bathroom floor that needs replacing, and a bedroom carpet that needs deep cleaning at a minimum. There are also two gas fireplaces in the residence that no longer function. We should consider having them professionally cleaned and reconditioned for use.

*Boiler Installation*

All parts of the new boiler are now in the Cranmer Hall basement (a herculean effort). Installation starts next week. We will owe contractor Jack Guarneri \$30K at project completion. The Great Hall boiler (installed April 2022) has a minor leak. The manufacturer said boiler section tie bolts sometimes must be tightened after the first season of use. Jack will do that next week (and document the situation with photos).

*Diocesan News*

We still have four Bishop candidates, two local and two not. The finalist will be chosen at an Election Convention at Cathedral of All Saints, September 9, 2023. We anticipate consecration of the 10th Bishop of Albany to occur at the Cathedral next February.

Mother Elizabeth Papazoglakis has returned from sabbatical and has been informed of our decision to call Fr. Thomas J. Pettigrew as our 20<sup>th</sup> Rector.

### *Activities Calendar*

- No special worship services are on the calendar for the immediate future.
- Choir is taking a well-deserved break until September 3. Vestry salutes them!
- David has fielded a request for a baby baptism and will consult with clergy.

### *Advertising*

We should plan on advertisements when our new Rector begins. First Reformed did this and it made a great impression.

### *Upcoming Services & Supply Clergy*

- June 18th celebrant is Fr Jason Radcliff.
- Celebrant for all of July and August will be Dean Marshall Vang.

### *New Rector Agenda Items*

David will verbally announce the hiring of Fr. Pettigrew this coming Sunday, June 18, which will coordinate with an announcement by the Rector to his own current parish. David will also write an announcement to send to all on the parish email list.

Both churchwardens (David and Jon Ewbank) met with Fr. Tom on Thursday, June 15, enjoyed lunch, and discussed several things. The Rector's first Sunday will be September 3. Choir will be called back one week early for the occasion. Unfortunately, our new Rector (and David) will miss the Stockade Art Show on September 9 since Bishop election is that day.

### *Update on Church Mutual Insurance-Required Facility Work*

Bob McCloskey has been spearheading the church's effort to remedy a variety of safety hazards as mandated by our insurer, Church Mutual. Tasks begun but not yet completed include the installation of handrails to the choir loft and at the side door of church. We also need to finalize the clearing of brush behind the Great Hall.

As discussed in the May Vestry meeting, patching of the parking lot was done, but not very well. Bob negotiated the original \$4,250 cost down to \$4,000, which still seems out of proportion for what was done. Vestry are troubled by the irregular procurement process that led to this situation. As noted in the minutes of our April 20 meeting, Vestry

agree that “a more consistent procurement policy and a standard operating procedure for contractor selection and oversight would be advantageous for the church, and Vestry should work to implement such a procedure. In the meantime, it is critical to keep David and Jon in the loop on all property inspections and repair decisions, and Jeff with regard to expenditures.” Vestry resolved to institute a more standard procurement policy. Rich Unger has some draft language to be considered.

### *Roof Repairs – Church, St George’s, Cranmer*

We have two quotes in hand:

- TNT Roofing, \$27-30K for all three
- Mid-State has reconfirmed its quote of \$10.5K total (Church, \$3,500; Cranmer, \$2,500; St George’s House and Great Hall, \$4,500)

We still haven’t secured quotes from Battenkill or Vanguard but the Mid-State quote is looking good and we are familiar with the quality of their work. Pending finalization of the insurance situation, we are leaning towards hiring Mid-State.

A Church Mutual adjuster inspected the three roofs in question on May 24, and gave a verbal report to Bob. David has requested a written adjuster’s report. There is some confusion as to the amount we will be reimbursed, but it is currently looking like about \$15,000, intended to cover roof repairs and interior damage resulting from leaks. (Note: Ceiling repairs were not included in above contractor quotes.) Gloria Kishton moved that we obtain quotes from Mid-State for necessary repairs to the ceilings of the sanctuary and St. George’s House. Sean Albert seconded the motion and all voted aye.

### *Alarm Systems*

At the May meeting, David was asked about the status of the church’s alarm systems. He reported back that the church has a fully functional system (minus a carbon monoxide monitor). The other buildings are also lacking CO detectors and some features have been disabled. He would like to turn this project over to the Asset Management Committee for a fuller consideration of what alarm features should be added or restored.

### **Junior Warden’s Report**

Jon Ewbank had nothing to add to David’s comprehensive overview of work going on at St. George’s. Jon acknowledged that the last six months have been a challenge for him

and his church obligations have taken a backseat. He thanked David, Rich, Sean, and Gloria for their efforts on the Asset Management Committee and remarked on “the yeoman’s work” that Bob McCloskey has performed in addressing the Church Mutual lists of repairs. Jon appreciates everyone’s understanding and promises that he will be more attentive to his Junior Warden tasks going forward.

### **Follow-Up on Asset Management Recommendations**

Gloria has followed through with reporting three problematic trees on Green Street to the City of Schenectady. She also noted that Rich has continued to communicate with Marilyn Kaplan of Preservation Architecture NY regarding the evaluation of our structures as a first step towards applying for grant money for repairs. David noted that Church Mutual intends to send a structural engineer to assess the interior support structure of the church roof. He himself has studied the issue and has ideas on shoring up the beams.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

Treasurer Jeffrey Wengrovius filed a written report that was reviewed by Vestry. Notably, we were able to garner \$113,000 by liquidating the Education Fund and Pew Rent Fund as discussed and approved at our last meeting. This amount should be sufficient to cover the remaining cost of our boiler installation plus most of any uncovered expenses for roofing repairs.

The other item Vestry discussed was the status of a transition of our bookkeeping back into the Power Church software platform (a measure recommended by our auditor last year). Jeff’s report states that this work is ongoing. It may be 2024 before the transition is complete. Vestry would like to keep this project on the front burner, as well as a review of any other outstanding tasks that the audit recommended.

### **Community Liaison Report**

Rich Unger was absent, no report this month.

### **Garden Ministry**

Meg Hughes reported on the use of some large earthenware planters that Fred Leger gave to the church. One has been installed at the front of Cranmer and another will be

planted and displayed at the corner of our property near the Little Library on Ferry Street. (Meg also noted that she and Barb Wengrovius have been maintaining the Little Library and encouraged Vestry members to donate books of general interest.)

The fallow garden on the south side of the church is being maintained but not planted just yet. The boiler installers were using heavy machinery in the vicinity, so it seemed prudent to leave the area alone. Eventually that garden will feature flowering shrubs.

Meg inquired as to the status of the automatic sprinkling system. David advised that the system has been set to water every other morning before business hours.

### **Hospitality Committee**

Sandee Hughes had no formal report but asked if St. George's foresees hosting a dinner event in the fall to celebrate the new Rector's institution. It is a little early to begin planning but that is something we will want to do. Another recommendation the Hospitality Committee may want to follow up on is some type of reception at Coffee Hour on Fr. Vang's last Sunday with us at the end of August.

Jon Ewbank remarked that he and Meredith have tentative plans to host an outdoor party for Vestry, spouses, and Fr. Pettigrew as a welcome later this summer. He also floated the idea of Vestry pulling together a so-called "pounding party" to welcome our Rector. This is a rural tradition that entails folks welcoming a new neighbor by each presenting a literal pound of a food item (e.g., flour, sugar, coffee, beans) and/or other household staple. Of course gift cards for local businesses would also be appropriate, but Vestry agreed that the "pounding" concept could be fun and a homey touch that Father would appreciate.

### **Communications**

Lynn Paska announced that the June *Georgian Report* would be available at church on Sunday. She also cooperated with Paul Smigelski to post photos online of our Diocesan Convention representatives and the service from Corpus Christi.

### **Archives**

Sean Albert is still hopeful of gaining access to the documents in the safe.

### **Outreach**

Paul Smigelski reported that our June SICM food collection totaled 209 pounds, bringing our YTD total to 1,206 pounds. He is grateful to Carol for delivering the food and to Gloria and her husband Bob for taking a large supply of bedding (estimated dollar value of \$400) to the YWCA.

### **New Business**

Gloria added an item for Vestry's consideration: name badges. This is something that other churches do to make it easier for existing parishioners to get to know one another and for visitors to feel more comfortable. It could be something as simple as the clear plastic, pin-backed ID badge holders one generally sees at events. Gloria could design insert cards that are St. George's-specific, using a jpg of the Episcopalian shield. Another suggestion was to order something more durable and attractive (i.e., magnetically backed metal plates that would not require poking holes in church attire). She will investigate the options and report back.

### **Old Business**

Gloria reported that she has ordered and received a new sandwich board for the front of church. She and Tarik Wareh will develop an insert panel to advertise the Shape Note Singers. Other inserts can also be prepared.

Gloria also updated Vestry on repairs being made to the porch railing of St. George's House. A mason will be needed to finalize the job, as the new metal railing needs to be seated properly in the steps. Gloria advised that we should also employ a professional mason to repoint the bricks around the entry door to Cranmer Hall.

### **Adjournment of Regular Vestry**

Vestry adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Upcoming meeting dates:

Rector Search—6:30 p.m., Thursday, July 6

Regular Vestry—6:30 p.m., Thursday, July 20

Respectfully,

Meg Hughes, Vestry Clerk