

St. George's Church Vestry Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2023

Present: Sean Albert (telephonically), Jon Ewbank, Carol Gaige, Meg Hughes, Sandee Hughes, David Kennison, Paul Smigelski, Rich Unger, Jeff Wengrovius

Absent, excused: Gloria Kishton, Lynn Paska

Senior Warden David Kennison convened the meeting with a prayer at 6:33 p.m.

Sandee Hughes moved to accept the June meeting minutes; Carol Gaige seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Senior Warden's Report

Rectory Repairs/Cleanup

Senior Warden David Kennison reports that Fred Leger is on vacation this week and several items remain unfinished at the Rectory. The residence needs final cleaning; there is a linoleum floor in an upstairs bathroom that needs replacement; and there are issues with the toilets. A plumber has been called. We have one month to address these last-minute details, as Fr. Pettigrew plans to move the week of August 20.

Boiler Installation

Installation is still pending as our contractor has been busy attending to emergency A/C calls.

Bishop Search Update

The four bishop candidates are touring the diocese in August, with stops in Albany, Cooperstown, Plattsburgh, Potsdam, and Glens Falls. These meet-and-greets are also being live-streamed (refer to the diocesan website if interested). Election of the 10th Bishop of Albany will occur in a special convention at the Cathedral of All Saints on September 9.

Activities Calendar

- Stockade Art and Nature Garden Tour, Saturday, July 22. The church gardens are on the tour but the sanctuary is not (although we know it would attract visitors if open).
- Stockade Art Show Cafe Sept 9th. Brian is organizing.

- Fall Choral Evensong – date TBD
- No other major activities currently planned before All Saints' Day, Nov 1st.

Upcoming Services & Supply Clergy

Fr Vang is covering every Sunday until Fr. Tom's arrival.

New Rector Items

Fr. Tom is gradually moving books into his Cranmer Hall office. He has made two visits to St. George's to get up to speed, and celebrated a Friday Mass on July 14 with eight in attendance. He will celebrate another Friday Mass on July 28. His first Sunday Mass is September 3.

Status of Church Mutual Insurance-required Facility Work

We have taken delivery of 75 feet of custom manufactured handrail for the stairs to the Choir Loft. Bob McCloskey will contact a carpenter to arrange installation. We await delivery of a handrail for the side door of church.

We still need to remove weed trees, vines, and brush clogging an alleyway off Green Street between the Great Hall and a house next door. This has been thought of as a volunteer job but it's not a small undertaking and may be something we pay professionals to do. Meg Hughes believes there may be sufficient money in the Garden Ministry budget and would be willing to reach out to Giacomo Giglio, a landscaper who has done work for St. George's in the past.

Roof Repairs – Church, St George's, Cranmer

Roof repairs to the church, St George's House, Great Hall, and Cranmer have been completed by Mid-State at a cost of \$10,500 as quoted. Next, we need ceiling repairs quoted and completed. If the ceiling repairs and the total cost (roofs and ceilings) exceeds the insurance adjuster's estimate, we can get another \$5,658 for "Recoverable Depreciation," bringing the total insurance claim payout to \$21,447.

Survey of Security & Fire Alarms

David reported on the status of security and fire alarms across our campus. The systems in the church, St George's House, and Great Hall are all active and functional. The remote alert system in Cranmer House remains turned off as a cost-saving and the Rectory sensors appear to be functional and ready to activate. We are still lacking carbon monoxide detectors, which can be obtained for as low as \$15 apiece, and should be installed in the church, Great Hall, and

Cranmer House. We should also consider purchasing a defibrillator, which could cost about \$1,500.

Junior Warden's Report

Jon Ewbank had no additional information beyond what David and Rich Unger presented.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jeffrey Wengrovius reports that, year to date, 64% of anticipated pledge income has been received and 79% of budgeted expenses have been spent.

Our new bank account at Scotia First National is fully functional. Jeff will close out the TrustCo account shortly.

The Finance Committee has approved a plan to switch to Power Church software for our accounting. For the remainder of 2023, the Excel spreadsheet will continue to serve as the primary bookkeeping tool, but Jeff and Bob will begin populating Power Church and run it in parallel to the current system so they gain familiarity. In January 2024 the Excel tracking will be retired and we will be back on Power Church per the auditor's recommendation.

Pledge envelopes have been given to two new churchgoers. In other positive news, we are getting some respite from gas and electric costs due to warmer temperatures.

We are over budget on property maintenance/repairs and sexton costs, and security alarms.

With Vestry approval Jeff will amend the 2023 budget to reflect Fr. Pettigrew's start date of September 3. The Search Committee line item continues under budget and Jeff sees no problem in devoting some or all remaining money for an anticipated institution celebration this fall.

Community Liaison Report

Rich Unger noted two upcoming Stockade Neighborhood Association events:

- Stockade Garden Tours this Saturday, July 22, with select gardens open for

viewing.

- Annual Stockade Art Show September 9, with St. George's hosting a café on the front lawn.

Garden Ministry

Meg Hughes estimates that she, Gloria Kishton, Barb Wengrovius, Suzy Unger, Jean Greenspan, and Joyce Cockerham have chipped in 227 hours of labor since March 29 to keep the church grounds tidy. In addition to basic cleanup and weeding, the group was instrumental in rehabilitating the Rectory backyard. They recently installed large planters near publicly visible entrances to church property and are ready for visitors attending the Stockade Art and Nature Garden Tour this Saturday, July 22.

Book Club

St. George's book club continues to be coordinated by Pattie Wareh and will next meet on September 17. The selection is *Metrofix: The Combative Comeback of a Company Town*, by William B. Patrick, as recommended by Jon and Joan Pearson. Suggestions are being accepted for the book to be discussed in November.

Hospitality Committee

Sandee Hughes thanks all who have recently provided food for Sunday coffee hour and announced that as of this coming Sunday we will be switching to coffee pods, iced tea, and lemonade. This would have occurred sooner but coffee hour has seen several busy Sundays with the coffee pots almost drained dry.

Sandee urges thinking ahead to a special "thank you" coffee hour for Father Vang at the end of August and a special "welcoming" coffee hour for Fr. Pettigrew on his first Sunday. Suggestions welcome.

Communications

Lynn Paska's deadline for the fall *Georgian Report* is Wednesday, September 6

Archives

With help from David and Chris Henry, Sean Albert was able to access the documents in the safe and notes that there are several old deeds in there that should be digitized and

uploaded to the Cloud. Our photocopier is capable of scanning documents and saving them as PDFs.

Outreach

Paul Smigelski reports that we have collected 1,511 pounds of food in 2023 so far, and thanks Carol Gaige for delivering the donations.

The next YWCA bedding ingathering will be September 10t.

The SICM Summer Lunch program is at Faith Tabernacle Church the Week of August 14. An online training video and registration are mandatory prior to serving. Paul will offer a session after church on the 23rd for anyone interested, particularly those with no Internet access. Forms have been distributed through e-mail and are available at the back of the church. Current volunteers include Bob Lemmerman, Gloria Kishton, Tarik Wareh, Jean Greenspan, Meg Hughes, Paul Smigelski, and Joyce Cockerham. The lunch site is Faith Deliverance Tabernacle Church 1028 Ostrander Place, Schenectady. Volunteers should plan on being there from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Pastoral Care

Jim Wingate and Ann Duff report that Charlie Stamm, Helen Parker, and Jamie Taft continue to welcome visits. Pat Gibbons was reached by telephone recently. We greatly appreciate Jim and Ann handling this important ministry to homebound Georgians.

New Business

Fr. Pettigrew's Contract

Vestry convened in Executive Session for a review a draft of Father Pettigrew's job description and Rector-Parish Covenant Relationship.

Concern for Needy/Homeless

Joyce Cockerham had inquired whether St. George's could assist county residents recently evicted as a result of a local motel agreeing to help house an influx of asylum seekers. Joyce is in favor of the church supporting newly homeless and immigrants alike. Her suggestion was that we offer space for temporary housing.

Vestry discussed and agreed that St. George's is not set up to provide this type of charity. The sexton apartment needs repairs following a roof leak, and we have no dormitory facilities that meet safety codes. We lack bedding and adequate bathrooms. Liability is also a concern. We would need around-the-clock supervision to assure that guests remain safe and to protect church property. It is best that we leave such care in the hands of DSS and facilities that are designed to deliver safe, affordable housing.

A targeted donation of money from our charitable budget to a third-party organization involved in assisting immigrants and/or needy citizens is seen as a more appropriate approach.

Old Business

Asset Management Committee Report

Rich Unger summarized the progress recently made by the Asset Management Committee:

- West End Iron Works will finalize the railing repair at St. George's House in early August. They needed the bottom step to be repaired, which John Flower, mason, completed on Wednesday, July 19. He is charging us \$685 for the brick and masonry work.
- Repairs to the signs (front of church and at parking lot entry) are still pending. Olsen Sign Company has yet to submit a quote and the estimate we got from Pendleton Sign Company seems too high. Gloria and Rich will continue efforts to get this work done at a reasonable cost.
- Waiting on job estimate from John Flower for St. George's House ceiling and installation of door to access second floor of Great Hall.
- As David reported, roof repairs have been completed by Mid-State Industries and the committee is seeking quotes from Mid-State to repair interior ceiling damage.
- Two window AC units were purchased for the Rectory. Marcella's provided lower costs than Lowes, Home Depot, and Amazon. The total was approximately \$860, which has been charged to the rector search budget. The units need to be installed and a brace may be needed for the large one.
- The Rectory garage door opener has been fixed (no labor costs), although a new keypad and remote were purchased from Lowe's for \$80, also charged to rector search budget.

Rich thanked Gloria for her efforts cleaning the rectory basement, including the washer and dryer. The floor is in good condition but needs to be cleaned. Gloria would also like

to observe, during a rainstorm, the northeast corner of the basement where there is evidence of water seepage, which should be corrected. The walls of the basement are in great condition considering their age, but would benefit from a repointing by a qualified mason.

Gloria also highly recommends lining all kitchen cabinets and drawers with nonstick liners to save wear and tear on the nice cabinetry. She would be willing to do this somewhat tedious job.

Procurement and Contractor Oversight Policies

As noted at our June meeting, Vestry desires a more consistent procurement policy and a standard operating procedure for contractor selection and oversight. Rich provided Vestry with a draft Procurement Procedure Policy and a draft Personnel Policy for consideration. These drafts were gleaned from existing procedures adopted by other Episcopal churches and Rich worked to make them appropriate to St. George's Church. He asks that we review them over the next month and we can then discuss options and alternatives. They can also be shown to Fr. Tom for his consideration. Ultimately such documents should become two chapters in a *Church Operations Manual*.

Name Badges

This suggestion from Gloria Kishton (excused absent) did not get discussed and can be revisited at the August meeting.

Adjournment

Vestry adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Upcoming meeting dates:

Regular Vestry—6:30 p.m., Thursday, August 17

Respectfully,
Meg Hughes, Vestry Clerk