

Vestry Minutes – Church of Our Redeemer

Wednesday, December 21 – 7:30 p.m.

Handley Library, Church of Our Redeemer

Attendance: The Rev. Kate Ekrem (Rector-elect), Connie Parrish (Sr. Warden), George Murnaghan (Jr. Warden), Frank Kern (Treasurer), Paula Antonevich (Clerk), Bob Bettacchi, Emily Charlton, Susan Emanuel, Ian Fox, Sandy Keshishian, Peter Lund, James Surprenant. Special Attendance: Jim Neumann (Assistant Treasurer). Absent: Anna Kern

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Kate Ekrem and began with prayer offerings through the use of the hand labyrinth.

Budget 2012 (Frank & Jim):

A summary of pledge data was reviewed. There are 27 pledge units that are currently outstanding but anticipated. The final pledge data will be reviewed at the January vestry meeting.

An updated *2012 Budget Working Version for Vestry Consideration* was previously distributed for review over email. The preliminary 2012 budget revenues show an increase in Unrestricted Offerings, a reduction in rental income with the loss of Sprint lease, reduction in Endowment fund income bringing total projected revenue to \$498K. Additionally, George reported that there has been positive progress in the engagement of a lease agreement with the Lexington Playcare Center and will reset the rent providing significant increase to rental income beginning in September 2012.

The expenses show increases to personnel, property, programs as well as the Diocesan assessment increase of \$5400, for projected expenses of \$525K, creating a deficit of \$26K.

Jim presented a series of cost-cutting options to balance the budget. Finance Committee will continue to meet to work on the budget as the FY draws to a close and 2011 income and expenses are nearly final and when the Stewardship Drive is complete.

Without final numbers, Vestry is reluctant to vote on the whole budget. However, in an effort to meet the personnel committee recommendations and assist in personnel planning, a MOTION was made and seconded to accept the personnel portion of the budget as proposed by the Personnel Committee on November 3, 2011. The motion was approved unanimously.

The final budget will be review at the next Vestry meeting on January 18, 2012.

Safe Church Policy (Kate):

In a continued effort to comply with Diocesan guidelines and Massachusetts' state law, the Church of Our Redeemer's Safe Church Policy was reviewed and updated. Youth leader Cathy Burns and Atrium parent Kathy Hodges updated the draft and then it was sent to all Christian formation leaders and pastoral visitors, who contributed their edits and suggestions for the final version. This was draft was previously distributed for review over email. It was noted to make two adjustments: in *Section H. Off-Site Travel and Events* and in *Section J. Media* the word "should" to be replaced with "must."

A MOTION was made and seconded to accept the Safe Church Policy, *with* suggested edits. The motion was approved with two abstentions.

Housing Allowance Resolution (Kate):

The resolutions allow clergy to exclude housing allowance when computing Federal Income Taxes as permitted by section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code. (Attachment 1)

A MOTION was made and seconded to accept the presented 2012 Housing Allowance Resolution for Assistant Priest, the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons and Priest-in-Charge, the Rev. Katherine Ekrem. The motion was accepted unanimously, *with* minor corrections to the date (“22 December 2011” changed to “21 December 2011”) and the removal of the word “which” (from Kate’s resolution, paragraph 4).

Vote on Music Fund collection at Advent Procession (Kate):

A MOTION was made to approve the Music Fund collection at the Advent Procession that was previously polled and approved on email, after the November 16 Vestry meeting. The electronic discussion generated questions regarding current and future practice of soliciting donations and it was determined that it would be reviewed in greater detail in the next vestry year. The motion was approved unanimously.

Rector Election (Connie):

To comply with Redeemer’s by-laws, a special meeting has been called for January 8, 2012 to elect the Rev. Kate Ekrem as our Rector, an affirmation of Vestry’s vote and call by the Wardens on December 10, 2011.

Minutes (for approval) (Paula):

A MOTION was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the Vestry meeting of November 16, 2011, previously distributed for review over email. The motion was approved with one abstention.

A MOTION was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the special Priest-in-Charge Discernment Committee and Vestry meeting of December 10, 2011, previously distributed for review over email. The motion was approved unanimously, *with* noted edit attributed to Bob Bettacchi’s remarks regarding future of Redeemer.

Treasurer’s Report (Frank):

There are some outstanding pledges and Frank or Jim will follow-up with the individuals or families. Programs and utilities are currently running under budget and the fuel is over, which, depending on pledge revenue we may end the year with a surplus between \$5K – 9K.

A MOTION was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer’s Report previously distributed for review over email from the month of November 2011. The motion was approved unanimously.

The audit has been successfully completed. There are few findings and they are already being addressed. A MOTION was made to approve the recommendations of the audit committee and to transmit the audit findings to the Diocese. The motion was approved unanimously.

Vestry Liaison Reports:

Property (Peter): The driveway side windows were painted and re-glazed this fall. The steeple project will be completed once the urns arrive and are placed. When gutters were being cleaned wood rot and holes were found in fascia board and will require repair.

Stewardship (Bob): Stewardship is moving along. There are 27 pledges that are outstanding but anticipated. There will be follow-up at the start of the new year.

Assistant Priest Report (Sabeth):

The assistant priest report was previously distributed over email (Attachment 2). Sabeth was unable to attend the meeting.

Important Dates:

Parish Meeting for Rector Election: January 8

Next Vestry Meeting: January 18

Executive Meeting: January 9

Annual Meeting: January 29

Vestry Retreat: February 4

Save-the-Date: February 9, dependent on January 8 vote, Kate's installment as Rector

Acknowledgements:

Priest-in-Charge Discernment Committee; Finance Committee; Cathy Burns and Kathy Hodges for work on the Safe Church Policy

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Antonevich, Clerk

[Attachment 1, with changes noted above]

2012 Housing Resolution

The Rev. Elisabeth S. Fitzgibbons

The following resolution was duly adopted by the vestry of Church of Our Redeemer Episcopal church at a regularly scheduled meeting held on 21~~2~~ December 2011 a quorum being present:

Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the Gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of her compensation to the extent used by her for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

Whereas, the Rev. Elisabeth S. Fitzgibbons is compensated by Church of Our Redeemer exclusively for services as a minister of the Gospel; and,

Whereas, Church of Our Redeemer does not provide the Rev. Elisabeth S. Fitzgibbons with a rectory; therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that \$36,000 of the total cash compensation paid to the Rev. Elisabeth S. Fitzgibbons for the calendar year of 2012 is hereby designated as a housing allowance. This housing allowance remains in effect until superseded by a subsequent resolution of the vestry.

2012 Housing Resolution

The Rev. Katherine B. Ekrem

The following resolution was duly adopted by the vestry of Church of Our Redeemer Episcopal church at a regularly scheduled meeting held on 21~~2~~ December 2011 a quorum being present:

Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the Gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of her compensation to the extent used by her for actual expenses in maintaining and furnishing a home; and

Whereas, the Rev. Katherine B. Ekrem is compensated by Church of Our Redeemer exclusively for services as a minister of the Gospel; and,

Whereas, Church of Our Redeemer although providing a residence for her does not provide the full cost of maintaining and furnishing such a residence; therefore, it is hereby ~~which~~

Resolved, that \$20,000 of the total cash compensation paid to the Rev. Katherine B. Ekrem for the calendar year of 2012 is hereby designated as a housing allowance. This housing allowance remains in effect until superseded by a subsequent resolution of the vestry.

[Attachment 2]:

Vestry Report, Sabeth Fitzgibbons, Assistant Priest
19 December 2011
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Adult Christian Formation

- November programs: Stewardship panel, Planned Giving presentation, Mission Partner El Hogar, and all-ages Wreath-Making (on Advent 1)
- Advent series

A thrill of HOPE – using beautiful contemporary artwork by John August Swanson to interact with scriptures that follow the Nativity story
Has been well attended (so far) and good conversations
Has 6 sessions, so will extend until 1/22

Youth Christian Formation

- Journey to Adulthood program
- All groups (Rite-13, J2A, and YAC) seem to be going okay, with Rite-13 the strongest

Youth Group

- Taking primary leadership on the Crèche Service

Children's Christian Formation

- Beginning to consider shift to a similar program, which requires less leader training – in the hopes of broadening leadership

- Conversation just beginning with Catechesis leaders, probably with parents and entire congregation in spring

Nursery

- Nothing new to report

Soft Space

- Evaluation received by Worship Committee on 12/4, with follow-up discussed for spring in form of adult Christian formation programs/discussions
- Overall, evaluation positive

Liturgical and Community Responsibilities

- Since my last report at the October vestry meeting, I presided at 10 Sunday Eucharists and the Youth Group's All Hallows Eve service, and I have preached 5 times (including the Blue Christmas service).
- I participated in the Lexington Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. I participated in Diocesan Convention
- I have prepared two families for baptisms in January, and provided two pastoral counseling sessions

Personal

- My holiday vacation plans have changed. I had planned to be away from 12/25 until 1/2/2012, and now will be here and providing pastoral coverage for both Redeemer and St Paul's Bedford during that time. Instead, I will be away from 1/5-1/16/2012