



SAINT MARK'S
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

Vestry Meeting
August 27, 2024 6:00 PM

Via Zoom

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

Vestry Members Present

Tina Blondino, Diocesan Member; Christopher Breunig; Martha Craig; Wayne Duncan; Phil Haas, Junior Warden for Finance; Greg Hamm, Senior Warden; Scott Hulet; Becky Kacel, Diocesan Member; Kristen Kelly; Julia Logan, Junior Warden for Facilities; Justin Mills; Canon Valerie Reinke, Bishop's Representative; The Very Rev. Steve Thomason, Dean; Alexandra Thompson; Doug Thorpe; The Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member

Vestry Members Absent

Peter Snyder, Junior Warden for Stewardship

Officers Present

Lynne Cobb, Treasurer; Re Knack, Chancellor

Officers Absent

Barbara Erickson, Clerk

Staff Members Present

Erik Donner, Cathedral Administrator

Dean Steve opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with prayer. Barbara Erickson is away, and Kristen Kelly has volunteered to take the meeting minutes.

Approval of June Vestry Meeting Minutes

Julia offered the following amendment: the last sentence of facilities report, last 5-6 words should be changed to "help with the celebration of Steve's ordination."

A motion was made and adopted to approve the June 25, 2024 minutes as amended.

OLD BUSINESS

Strategic Plan Focus

Carryover from June's meeting, and no updates. Plan for review again once a quarter, dive into one of the six areas and see how we are living into that as a vestry.

Affordable Housing Update

Laying groundwork for community engagement, especially with community organizations who represent communities most harmed. Soft conversations with developers continue. Because of “perfect storm” of economic factors, we have lengthened the project timeline by 2-3 years. Committee will meet again next week. John Hoerster and Dean Steve met with consultant again recently.

Capital Campaign

Letters for feasibility study are being prepared and will go out in next week. First 50 households will be invited to meet with consultant in September to complete feasibility survey. 2nd wave of letters to another 80 households who will be invited to complete written questionnaire. Late September will open it up to anyone in the cathedral community to complete the questionnaire. Focus on evaluating feasibility of capital campaign in 2025 that focuses on Carbon reduction with gas boiler reduction, music, and worship experience improvements in nave and narthex. Most of the vestry will be contacted in the next few weeks, look for letter in the mail.

Window Replacement in Cathedral House (including Bloedel Hall)

Vestry authorized remainder of \$250,000 gift and \$109,000 in savings to replace the windows in Bloedel and Cathedral House. Hoping to get the windows in before winter sets in (easier to heat, staff has the benefit). Windows have been ordered. Asbestos in the glazing of the current windows that requires some abatement (problematic if you ingest the dust/fragments.) Added \$20,000 to cost of window demolition. Wardens and Dean agreed that did not warrant special vestry meeting but reporting out and opening it up to any conversation. Requesting vestry to comment on whether they concur.

A motion was made and adopted to increase the budget for the window replacement in order to abate the asbestos.

Diocesan House Closure

D-House will be closed for at least another two months. Dean Steve suggested Zoom again in September and October given difficulties with finding an accessible meeting space.

Stewardship Plans for Fall

“One Body, Many Gifts” is the theme. All-parish gratitude dinner Saturday, September 28 at which consultant Timothy Dombek will speak. Launch of campaign September 29 and Timothy will preach. Short gratitude reflections in the weekly newsletter have begun. “Stewardship as spiritual practice” will be in *The Rubric* in September. Staff is working on “way off-Broadway” performance as part of the dinner program.

Nominating Committee Appointments

Five people were appointed at June’s meeting, and two more members are needed. Liz Shea and Beatrix Hamm have been suggested.

A motion was made and adopted to appoint Liz Shea and Beatrix Hamm to the Nominating Committee.

Committee co-chair Scott Hulet intentionally identified individuals who attend 9am service to serve on the committee in hopes of recruiting more from that service to serve on vestry. Scott

sent an email to current vestry members asking to comment on current vestry experience; needs to have the members reply as this will help inform the decisions of new candidates.

Tree Removal and Replacement Plans

Four diseased trees are scheduled to be removed from front lawn (bus stop, facing 10th Avenue on the south side of lawn, and two adjacent to exit drive) with the vestry's approval in June. City of Seattle requires replacement with trees of similar size/canopy. City has approved the removal and replacement of these trees. Cathedral is in the queue for this work and should happen in next several weeks. Will cost approximately \$40,000.

Emergency Women's Shelter—Operation Nightwatch

Operation Nightwatch will move forward with utilizing a portion of the St. Nicholas Building for emergency shelter for women. Will occupy two rooms on the first floor, west wing of the former Gage Academy of Art space. Will have sleep room, showers, laundry, RN. Hookups for laundry already exist and they will place showers where plumbing already exists. The women will have lockers where they can leave their belongings during the day. Timing unknown but likely in next several weeks. Operation Nightwatch also has a men's shelter in Madrona Community Church in the basement parish hall + run very small women's shelter in the old St. Mary's Catholic Church just east of international district. The church was closed a couple of years ago. Currently 8 women, 5 nights per week, but they would like to have more capacity. Emergency Shelter has been cut as city has put more resources into getting individuals off the streets. Many organizations previously running emergency shelters are doing more case management/wrap-around services, creating a paucity of emergency shelters. Some will always need such shelter (e.g., mental health or other reasons prevent them from being in permanent supportive housing.) Operation Nightwatch is one of the only organizations still focusing on emergency shelters in the city.

- Question: are we doing neighborhood outreach about the shelter? Answer: not yet as nothing formally signed, but Dean Steve indicates that information will be sent out when the opening approaches.
- Question came up re: Broadway ministry (Molly Bosch, RN works on street with unhoused individuals) → inviting St. Mark's members to learn about the street outreach ministry (understand where they can get services, meal, etc.) Focus on companionship, building up relationships and trust and then hopefully help individuals feel more comfortable accessing services. Heighten awareness.
- Question re: other potential renters for Gage space: none yet, difficult because the space is not accessible (no elevator). Considering for-profit entities; hoping that would be an organization that aligns with our mission and goals if we do go with a non-profit organization.

Property Manager Update

Windermere Property Management (DBA Lori Gill & Associates) has been the property management firm for the St. Nicholas Building. Property manager Chase Silver left Windermere in May. Windermere sold its commercial property management business. Chase now works for ORION Commercial Partners, and he will be returning as the St. Nicholas Building's property manager. Re Knack is guiding the contract negotiation with ORION.

NEW BUSINESS

Candidacy Letters of Support—Kelly Moody & Lynne Markova

Kelly Moody and Lynne Markova are in their third and final year of seminary. St. Mark's needs to provide letters of support. Dean Steve asked for support for both Kelly and Lynne.

The Vestry Letter for Support for Ordination to the Diaconate (for those called to the Priesthood) for Kelly Moody was approved.

The Vestry Letter for Support for Ordination to the Diaconate (for those called to the Priesthood) for Lynne Markova was approved.

At least 2/3 of the vestry need to sign the Letter of Support for each of them; this will be done via DocuSign.

Homecoming Sunday/Ministry Fair

Sunday, September 8. Blessing and commissioning of ministers at both services, tables around perimeter of the nave after both services. Make sure ministries have registered to have a table. Parish picnic after the 11am service (for first time in a decade).

Majorie Hemphill Estate Gift

Marjorie Hemphill, who was active in the 1980s and '90s at St. Mark's, left payout of life insurance policy of \$160,000 to St. Mark's and the funds are unrestricted.

The Gifts Acceptance Committee recommends adding the Hemphill estate gift of \$161,806.87 to the upcoming capital campaign fund. The vestry concurred.

A question arose regarding whether she would be recognized as donor to the capital campaign; Dean Steve said that she would be recognized. There will be opportunities for naming as part of the campaign.

2025 Cost of Living Adjustment

The diocese has recommended that clergy receive a 3.8% COLA for 2025 (Dean Thomason is included in this adjustment). The Vestry's practice has been to adopt the same COLA for lay staff so there is parity. Salaried and hourly staff would both receive the same COLA.

A motion was made and adopted to provide lay staff with a 3.8% cost of living adjustment for 2025.

"All Saints" Pedestrian Pathway

If entering campus from the south, the most expedient way to enter the campus is to walk along the vehicle exit, and this is not safe. A plan is being made to create a gravel pathway, and will be paid for from the Virginia Patty Garden Fund and the Memorial Fund. The plan is to name the path "in loving memory of all the saints who have come onto this campus" – honoring the memory of all who have passed through even if their names are unknown.

- Comment made that the plans are lovely and that this will create a safe and accessible entry into the campus.
- Question came up about plans for gravel – does this create a barrier for those who are using wheelchair or assistive device? It should be packed gravel like what's used in the Washington Park Arboretum. Pavers left over from the labyrinth will be placed under the picnic table to prevent mud accumulation and will be connected to the pathway as well. Two of the trees will also be removed as per previous business. Vestry agreed with this plan.

Dean Steve asked for vestry concurrence. The vestry concurred with creating the “All Saints” Pedestrian Pathway.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Senior Warden

- Greg Hamm received a note of thanks to the vestry from Emily Meeks
- Greg went on Ireland pilgrimage; his first pilgrimage like this. Wants to encourage others to join if they have the opportunity in the future. Described it as a mysterious process. The journey was filled with history but also with glimpses of the future. However, the focus was primarily in the present. In the vestry, we are also on a journey or pilgrimage. We reflect on the past – where have we been and who are we as a people – and we reflect on where we are going. However, we are also a group together. Greg is grateful for the group working together to serve the needs of the parish. One of the core aspects of the pilgrimage was that we started as strangers, but we ended as friends. The same can be said of the vestry. “Let us continue the pilgrimage.”

Dean

- Dropbox files of note:
 - o Thank you note from Low Income Housing Institute for the tiny house that was constructed on the lot in June
 - o WWII murals/graffiti in the crypt – trying to figure out how to restore and preserve this. Grant proposal was written but did not receive it. One company (Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates) has offered to de-scale the calcium on the murals as pro-bono (community service). This same company has done work for St. Mark’s in the past.
 - o American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem: thank you note from this organization is in the Dropbox. Individuals gave pass-through gifts and the cathedral donated from Dean’s discretionary fund.
- Evensong and gratitude for Bishop Skelton on September 1
- Remember Your Baptism on September 7
- Phil LaBelle consecration on September 14 + Choral Evensong seating of the bishop on September 15
- Bishop LaBelle will be teaching on September 25
- Parish gratitude dinner on September 28
- Stewardship launch on September 29
- Dean Steve reflected on the Ireland pilgrimage. Grateful for the time away and also grateful to the clergy and staff who maintained the goings on of the Cathedral in his absence.
- Reflected on Sacred Spaces that occurred over the summer.
- Earthball: 25-foot earth as it would be seen from outer space, backlit from the inside. It is a traveling exhibition; might be able to get them to come here to Seattle. Very dramatic rendering and would be particularly appropriate in the nave. Speaking/concerts/other ways to engage as a sacred experience.

- Center for Spirituality and Action: 14 people in the inaugural intentional community; opening retreat coming up in September. More intentional communities hopefully to form in the near future.
- Dean Steve's daughter and daughter-in-law have taken in a 4-year-old foster child. Dean Steve is filled with love for this new member of their family, whether temporary or permanent.

MINISTRY/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Worship and Prayer

- Michael Seewer doing a lot of additional work for special upcoming services + preparing for sabbatical in Europe (will be visiting cathedrals and vergers).

Finance

- Projected to be above budget on income side. Below budget on expense side. St. Nicholas finances above projected as Gage left in July rather than June. Balance sheet – watching residual from Living Stones campaign (in Banner Bank) and hoping to pay off loan in the 4th quarter.
- Auditors/audits: waiting to get a number from current auditor at the end of August. Hoping to get additional bids so can get sense of whether we are spending money wisely with current auditors. We are committed to getting audit every three years.
- Dean Steve sent out letters mid-year asking if anyone would be interested in donating additional gift; received approximately \$25,000 after this appeal and this helped decrease the budget deficit.

Creation Care

- Creation Care potluck in Bloedel Hall.
- Climate conversation in August will focus on the Season of Creation – the theme is “Hope and Act”.
- Making connections with other churches in the diocese.

Intergenerational Council

- Remember Your Baptism on Sat Sept 7th. Registration is requested. Come as you wish 1:30-4:30, make sure to be there at 3pm as renewal of vows will occur at that time.
- Ministry fair Sept 8th. Wendy Barrie requested assistance with picnic preparations from anyone who is interested.

Restorative Justice Council

- With expanded timeline on the affordable housing on campus, the council will be focusing on housing. Coordinating a book study with Wendy Barrie to engage the parish. *Evicted* and *Poverty by America* are the focus. The council received a \$2200 grant to support the book study.
- Voter registration drive will continue.
- Ongoing work with the Duwamish; St. Mark's sends a check annually to Real Rent Duwamish.

- The Episcopal Bishop's Committee for Justice & Peace in the Holy Land will be hosting individual from West Bank to discuss conditions there on the morning of Monday Sept 16th at 10am.

Communications

- Will be presenting the Communications Toolkit at the forum on Sunday Sept 22nd. Will introduce how lay leaders can further connections between each other to live out "sharing our stories". Will also feature lay leaders who are already using these strategies.

Cathedral Yoga

- Group of volunteers supports the weekly yoga (Mondays 6:30-7:30pm; monthly sound bath, organ performances). 130-150 people fill the nave on Monday evenings, 4 different yoga teachers. Most are not regular St. Mark's attendees; we serve as safe space for city of Seattle, place of gathering and reflection. Question arose regarding plan to lock the doors at 6:30pm. This is done for safety as well as to help create a sense of calm/cannot come in late as this is very disruptive. The participants are very grateful for the opportunity to be present in the cathedral space.

Facilities

- Upcoming Evensong for seating of new bishop; will be hosting a reception and the committee needs help. The reception will be in the nave. Needs people to bring food and to set up/break down. Steve, Wayne, Greg, Kristen; Christopher can bring food; Scott might be able to assist.
- Julia recognized the work of Marc Aubertin, Chris Brown, and Erik Donner.

CHECK OUT & CLOSING PRAYER

Checkouts were given, and the closing prayer was offered by Scott Hulet. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Kelly
Vestry Member

Erik Donner
Cathedral Administrator

Dates/Events of note

9/1 Evensong in gratitude for Bishop Skelton's Ministry
 9/7 Baptism Pilgrimage
 9/8 Homecoming Sunday, Ministry Fair, Parish Picnic
 9/14 Consecration of Bishop Phil LaBelle
 9/15 Seating of the Bishop at Saint Mark's Cathedral
 9/25 Bishop LaBelle teaches at Cathedral Commons
 9/28 Parish Gratitude Dinner (for Stewardship Launch)
 9/29 Stewardship Launch, Timothy Dombek guest preacher at 9am and 11am