

## **2024 Annual Meeting Minutes**

*Bill Welsh for Susan Vodrey, Clerk*

The meeting was convened on Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 11:28 a.m. by Rev. Jeanne Leinbach, who offered an opening prayer.

### **I. Hymn #232**

Those attending sang Hymn #232, "By all your saints still striving."

### **II. Minutes of the January 2023 Annual Meeting**

Sam Hartwell asked for a motion to approve the 2023 meeting minutes. David O'Halloran moved and it was seconded. The meetings were unanimously approved as presented.

### **III. Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lloyd Bell reviewed the 2023 financial results and previewed the 2024 budget.

Overall, the finances are in good shape, but it is transitory. Bell noted that St. Paul's has been blessed for generations. In anticipation of a decline of pledge income as several generous members age, vestry and staff set aside funds for when the church would have deficits. The church has a balanced budget fund of more than \$1 million, which will serve as a buffer until the church can run surpluses again.

Compared to 2023, the church anticipates that annual fund receipts in 2024 will decline by 10% to \$1.38 million. Annual fund receipts have declined 14% since 2021, due in part to reduced church attendance since the pandemic.

The church had a successful capital campaign. \$5 million to the total raised will go into the endowment. The endowment spending rule is 4% of the 3-year average, measured using the 6 previous semi-annual data points (June and December month-ends). The capital campaign will therefore not fully impact the spending rule until 2028 or beyond.

In 2024, the church expects to use \$147,000 from the balance budget fund, to be drawn from \$1 million set aside.

On the expense side, the church is planning a 7% increase in overall expenses, excluding the capital reserve and balanced budget fund. The bulk of expenses are in personnel and the cost to maintain old buildings.

There were no questions.

### **IV. Report of Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee included Andrea Turner (chair), Jenny Kaffen, Rev. Jeanne Leinbach, Bill Powel, Jim Ptacek, and Tres Roeder.

The slate of candidates includes Karen Carter, Barbara Driscoll (1-year term), Bob Quartell, Susan Quill, and Timothy Wutrick.

### **V. Election of Vestry**

The vestry nominees were approved by unanimous consent.

## **VI. Commissioning of Vestry**

In addition to new members, the vestry will include Jenny Azouri, Jason Chance, Bob Fox, Brian Murphy, Andrea Turner, and Amia Wheatley. Sam Hartwell will be senior warden; Susan Quill, junior warden; Nancy Vitale, clerk; Lloyd Bell, treasurer; and Teagan Banyard and Celia Doherty, youth delegates. Michele Smolin, chancellor. Rev. Leinbach commissioned the vestry members.

## **VII. Thank You to Outgoing Vestry Members**

Sam Hartwell thanked the outgoing vestry members Dave Banyard, Avery Bandy-Zalatoris (youth delegate), Jim Ptacek, Joan Sancho, Mark Souther, and Susan Vodrey.

## **VIII. Rector's Report**

Rev. Leinbach reminded the audience that our faith prioritizes relationships and recounted the five pillars of our covenantal life together: worshipping, trusting, forgiving, sharing, loving. 2023 provided many examples of this covenantal life.

Worship ministries include altar guild, ushers, acolytes, lectors, intercessors, chalice ministers, and interpretive services. Average in-person Sunday attendance in 2023 was about 250; including those watching on-line, it continues to be about 425. Guest preachers included The Very Rev. Andrew McGowan, Dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale; The Rev. Paul Daniels, Rector of St. Mary in Palms in Los Angeles; and The Rev. Molly James, Deputy Executive Officer of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Rev. Leinbach thanked Rev. Brandon Ashcraft for crafting many special services this year, including the Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Pride, Remembrance, and Longest Night services.

Music ministries include children and youth choirs, senior choir, handbell choir and the carillon. The carillon was completed in 2023 and the church held a concert in September to dedicate the expanded carillon with celebrated guest carillonist, Tiffany Ng. The parish has also been pleased to see the handbell choir on the ground floor of the nave as well as in the balcony. Youth choirs, led by Kelsey Ferguson, participated in TrebleFest in February, sang at Trinity Cathedral in April and November, and participated in the St. Thomas 5th Avenue Girl Chorister Program in July. They will participate in a regional Treble Festival in Chicago in February.

Rev. Leinbach welcomed Dan Colaner to the music staff. Colaner will be with St. Paul's until he leaves for college fall 2024. The parish also celebrated Karel Paukert in November and continues to hold him in its prayers as he battles esophageal cancer. The senior choir continues to lead the parish in hymn-singing and is looking forward to its trip to Salisbury Cathedral in summer 2025. Rev. Leinbach asked Kevin Jones, Director of Music, to share more information about the trip to Salisbury.

Formation ministries include church school for children and youth, Rite 13, confirmation, youth groups, CAST (youth drama group), mission trips and pilgrimages, Sunday Adult Forum, Thursday lectionary bible study, Wednesday evening book series, Education for Ministry (EfM), contemplative prayer, Men's Spirituality and Women's Spirituality. A new small group series started in fall 2023 entitled Centered.

The Sunday Forum series theme last program year was the Sacraments. This program year the theme is Created, Called, Connected. Guest speakers this past year included Andrew Kolp, retired Professor of Religion at Baldwin Wallace; the Very Rev. Tracey Lind, retired Dean of Trinity Cathedral; and Dr. Justin Wilson, Postdoctoral Fellow in Art History Leadership at the Cleveland Museum of Art and Case Western. Keisha Krumm, Executive Director of Greater Cleveland Congregations, will preach on February 4, 2024.

Youth highlights this past year were the spring show, *The 25th Annual Putnam Spelling Bee*; a revived youth group on Sunday evenings; the talent show in December; and the Christmas pageant. Rev. Leinbach thanked Lauren Dockery, Director of Children's Ministries, for her leadership around neuro-divergent learning. The youth will also have a week-long retreat this summer in the Adirondack Mountains.

Rev. Leinbach welcomed Susan Armstrong to the staff as Assistant to Children and Youth Ministries and thanked Julie Micheletti, who had volunteered her time in this capacity in fall 2023.

Pastoral care ministries include clergy visits, lay Eucharistic visits, meals, rides, and the knitting circle.

Outreach ministries include Loaves and Fishes, tutoring, Lenten Acts of Love, Reading Camp, EDWINS, Habitat for Humanity, St. Luke's, Fairhill Partners, Fostering Hope, Greater Cleveland Congregations, Act II, Global Mission, and Open Doors Academy. Rev. Leinbach invited Tom Wise to speak about the refugee ministry, which was launched after a year-long process of research and discernment.

Fellowship ministries include the Fellowship Committee, Newcomer Council, SAGES, Young Adults, The Village, Foyer Groups, Men's Council, the Eliza Backus Guild, and the Nicholson B. White Gallery.

Buildings and Grounds ministries include the House Committee and the Lay Weeders. Rev. Leinbach thanked Arlene Mann, who is retiring as chair of the Lay Weeders after 10 years. Special building projects this past year included refurbishing the former Brides Room, now the Reception Room; renegotiating contracts with Verizon and T-Mobile; analysis and planning for a new security system and for a new sound system, both of which will be installed in the next few months; and replacing the pews with chairs in St. Martin's chapel.

Administration ministries include Vestry, Archives Committee, Investment Committee, Finance Committee, Audit Committee, Planned Giving, Stewardship, and Communications.

With a goal of \$6 million, the capital campaign reached \$8 million in pledges. More than 225 families participated in the campaign. Rev. Leinbach thanked all donors and the capital campaign committee members, including co-chairs Liz Patterson and Chris Smythe, honorary co-chairs Cathy Lewis and Bill Conway, and members Dave Fulton, Sam Hartwell, Brian Murphy, Bill Mulligan, Tom Nobbe, Laurie and Pete Scriven, and Bill Welsh.

Rev. Leinbach also thanked reception hosts Susan and Tim Armstrong, Diane and Dave Banyard, Barbara Driscoll, Jim Gray and Julie Micheletti, Sam Hartwell, Dottie and Don Kuhn, Carolyn and Steven Mawhorter, Hattie and Bill Mulligan, and Liz and Brendan Patterson.

Rev. Leinbach offered special thanks to Pam O'Halloran, whose organization and analytical skills were invaluable. She and Nathaniel Powell added capital campaign responsibilities on top of their regular workloads.

The church established a Campaign Organ Committee, including several organists and representation from Vestry, to review recently received proposals for work on the organ. A Campaign Outreach Committee, with representation from the Outreach Committee and Vestry, will consider how the church disburses the more than \$500,000 raised for outreach through the campaign.

The church said goodbye to two clergy, Rev. John Kennedy and Rev. Jessie Dodson, and welcomed two others, Rev. Patricia Rose and Rev. Gabriel Lawrence. Rev. Lawrence is currently a deacon and will be ordained to the priesthood in April.

Additional staff members that joined St. Paul's in 2023 are Amber Patton, Administrative Assistant, and Sly Person, Sexton.

Rev. Leinbach thanked clergy and staff, namely:

Clergy: Brandon, Patricia, and Gabriel

Music staff: Kevin, Kelsey, Daniel, Lois, David, and Karel

Director of Children's and Youth Ministries: Lauren

Assistant to Children's and Youth Ministries: Susan

Director of Operations: Pam

Director of Communications: Nathaniel

Controller: Brenda

Administrative Coordinator: Jenni

Administrative Assistant: Amber

Sextons: Steve, Paul, Ethan, and Sly

Deaf Interpreters: Patti, Katie and Mark

## **IX. Questions and Answers**

Nancy Sherwin asked about the elevator, whose heavy door is difficult to open. Rev. Leinbach responded that the elevator improvement is part of the campaign. Vestry is working on timing for various campaign-funded projects.

Sherwin also asked that volunteers at St. Luke's be recognized. Rev. Leinbach said that St. Luke's is part of St. Paul's Giving Beyond Our Walls and that Rev. Ashcraft would be preaching there soon.

Sherwin noted that, while she is thankful to have Kevin Jones on staff, she prefers hymns for processions and recessions that are easier for the congregation to sing.

Lael Carter asked if there would be a pledge campaign for those who worship with St. Paul's online. Rev. Leinbach said she would work with Nathaniel Powell about how to know those worshipping online and invite them into the church.

Chuck Williams noted that the grass is too high in the summer and gets wet, making it difficult for parishioners to attend services. Williams also noted some parishioners have difficulty opening the church doors.

William Vodrey asked about the status of the Harlan ministry. Rev. Leinbach responded that she would have Lauren Dockery write an article explaining it.

David Sloan asked about the vestry's decision to move from an annual audit to an audit every five years. Lloyd Bell responded that St. Paul's has historically had few adjustments in its annual audits. The diocese laid out new Agreed Upon Procedures for financial management, which the church will follow. Bill Powel added that the church will save money by not doing audits as frequently.

Bill Buss added that the new carillon bells would be worthless without someone to play them and introduced David Osburn, Carillonneur.

#### **X. Adjournment with Closing Prayer**

There was a motion to adjourn, which was seconded. Rev. Leinbach adjourned the meeting with a closing prayer at 12:38 p.m.