

## VESTRY MEETING May 14, 2024

**Present:** Rev. Cn Melinda Artman, Alice Bennett, Bruce Carpenter, Margaret Cole, Rev. Scott Harvey, Mitzi Mohn, Glenn Murrelle, Betsy Schumacher, Diane Siebecker, Jeff Watson

**Absent:** none

**Treasurer:** Bruce Carpenter

**Chairperson:** Rev. Cn Melinda Artman

**Lectio Divina:** Jesus and Zacchaeus

**Agenda:** Motion to accept the draft agenda made by Alice, seconded by Bruce. Add to New Business: Need representative for Diocesan Convention, Sound System, and schedule outdoor clean up. Motion carries with additions.

**Minutes:** Motion to accept the April 9, 2024 minutes made by Bruce, seconded by Jeff. Motion carries.

**Treasurer's Report:** Motion to accept the April Treasurer's Report made by Alice, seconded by Jeff. Motion carries.

### **Highlights:**

- We showed a net operating surplus for the month yet continue to show a small net operating loss for the year.
- Regarding Payroll: Unfortunately it is necessary that we pay the NYS Tax of \$9.00/month.
- Regarding the Conklin DIT Fund: Bruce suggests taking a distribution for a couple months depending on the amount we would receive. The draw would occur at the end of June. Reason being to meet our obligation for the new boiler/AC system.
- We have paid Jeff Paul Plumbing & Heating \$22,000 as a deposit for the Boiler/AC project.

### **Senior Warden's Report:**

- The Food Pantry item for May is Spaghetti Sauce. All contributions are much appreciated.

### **Junior Warden's Report:**

- The contract to replace our existing HVAC system has been signed. Jeff Paul Plumbing & Heating is our chosen contractor. Vestry affirmed our email vote for this contractor. Bruce made the motion and Jeff seconded the motion. Motion carries. Our materials were ordered on 4/26/24. We expect the project to begin as

soon as the materials arrive. The air conditioning for the lower Parish Hall is to be installed first.

- The existing boilers have been shut down. During shutdown Jeff noticed that #2 boiler showed a minor leak and #3 boiler showed a very heavy leak. No need to investigate as they will no longer be used.
- Everything from the boiler room has been removed in anticipation of the project start. The sign for the street fair remains.
- Jeff Paul has stated that the copper that he removes is ours to sell for scrap. The price of new copper is slated to rise 56% effective 6/1/24, so our scrap value may be significant.
- The plug for the sacristy drain has FINALLY been removed. It was discovered that the dry well is either full of debris or has caved in. The sacristy sink bypasses the sewer system, unlike an ordinary sink, but instead goes straight into the earth. *This sink is made to preserve the dignity of sacred things which can no longer be used. The sacred vessels are rinsed there so that no particle of the consecrated Host or no drop of the Precious Blood will end up in the sewer. Jeff recommends using water (especially the hot water) sparingly & expect the sink to drain slowly.*
- Vestry agreed to discard the pulpit shell (take to the dump). This was an enunciator for the sound system & is no longer used.

### **Rector's Report:**

#### **Pastoral Care:**

- An update was provided

#### **Christian Education:**

- St. John will join us on offering a VBS program. This is scheduled for the week of July 8, 2024 for four evenings. Additionally, Sayre Christian Church is offering to assist with funding and providing volunteers. Details being worked out.
- By the time of our Vestry meeting, Sunday School will have had its annual Mother's Day brunch. The entire parish is invited to attend.
- Youth Group more or less wrapped up with a Rogation Sunday event. We potted flowers and hope to give them out at the Parish Park Fair. We hope some of our youth will help us with this event.

#### **Outreach:**

- Linda Murrelle coordinated a very lovely, well attended concert performed by the Tribute Quartet. The free will offering raised approximately \$1100, which will help defray their cost of \$4000. The concert was held in celebration of the conclusion of our Stained Glass Windows Capital Campaign. Our open house was well attended by our parishioners and less so by the general public; however, it was a positive experience. The reception, coordinated by Alice Bennett and Linda was a feast. I appreciate all the hard work that went into this event! **Note: The Tribute Quartet will be performing a concert on Friday, September 13, 2024 at the Valley United Presbyterian Church.**

- Thanks to the Tribute Quartet Concert, an attendee invited me to offer a prayer for government officials at the National Day of Prayer event for Bradford County on 5/2/24. It was held on the courthouse steps in Towanda. I was the only mainline protestant minister present. I doubt that I will accept such an invitation in the future, not because they spelled my name wrong, not because they failed to identify both my churches, but because the event had definite partisan overtones. The event challenged me because I knew my sermon was about bridging divides and my bridge proved too short.
- Last year we and SJLC had raised beds at the Guthrie Community Garden. We donated the produce to the various community suppers around the valley, and to the Feed My Sheep Food Pantry as well as the Valley Food Pantry. Guthrie has amended the soil in all the beds so a work bee is not needed. We are signed up for double the amount of beds, as last year we could have used more room. I am hopeful that one of our parishioners will head up this summertime project so we can do this again!
- Parish Park Fair planning is well underway. Members of Vestry are asked to bring \$10 worth of Lottery Tickets to our Vestry meeting for a gift basket raffle.
- Our neighbor, Cliff Hall, will be informed of upcoming church events and construction.
- Narcan Training is scheduled to occur on Saturday, May 18, 2024 in our parish hall. This is a joint effort between our church and SJLC.

### **St. Mary's Guild:**

- The spring rummage sale was a success with gross receipts over \$1,000. Initial idea for the use of the funds is 10% to a valley charity with the remainder going to the parish for operating expenses.
  - Only Rose Carpenter and Linda Murrelle were available to staff the rummage sale on Saturday ("bag day"). As I understand it, the demands of bag day require more than two people to operate tolerably well. This suggests to me:
    - This circumstance is an anomaly and probably won't occur in the future (I don't think this is a realistic assumption).
    - St. Mary's Guild might consider opening up its membership to the women of SJLC and give those women a meaningful opportunity to participate in this organization – with "profits" split between the two churches.
    - Consider a different type of fund raiser and discontinue the rummage sale.
- The May program was also a success – although only ten women participated, with one of those women from St. John.

### **Summer Months:**

- Given the information regarding construction we have now, we'll worship seven weeks at each church starting on June 2, 2024.
  - Worship time recommended being 10:00 am with a brunch bunch for fellowship afterwards. All are welcome.

- June 2 through July 14 at SJLC
- July 21 through September 1 at Redeemer
- Normal schedule resumes on September 8
- We will continue Food Pantry collections through the joint services
- What type of programming, if any, would you like to see over the summer? Listed are some ideas:
  - “Mass on the Grass” event – outdoor worship followed by a fellowship event like a picnic. Some type of forum event after worship, such as:
    - A look at the King David monarchy
    - What to do if there is an active shooter (run, hide, fight)
    - Social Service agency talk – such as from The Bridge, Food Pantry
  - Easy going book group/bible study
  - Parish outing event: Seeing the rumble ponies, Glimmerglass Festival, Balloon Festival in Wellsville...
  - For any of these to happen, I would need help coordinating

### **Buildings and Grounds:**

Just a shout out to our grounds maintenance teams. The lawn mowing teams make our grass look fantastic. Glenn Murrelle has been trimming our bushes – we are putting our best face out into the world. Maria found evidence of a yellow jacket nest somewhere on the grounds near the church itself. Be on the lookout!

### **Compliance with Safe Church:**

Thank you to all of you who took me seriously with regard to Safe Church and background checks. As of this writing, I am concerned that I may have to ask part of the Sunday School/Girl Scout team to turn in their keys (Emily & Kristen). I have had (through Jerry) no response from them as to whether they are trying to comply with church requirements.

### **Miscellaneous:**

- God willing, I am attending my nephews’ baptism on May 19<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul’s in Owego. Pastor Scott will be in Horseheads on that date. Despite trying 3 dioceses for a supply pastor, I found no one. Consequently, worship that weekend will only be offered on Saturday at 5:15 pm in the church. Trinity Athens offers worship at 10 a.m. or come worship with Mother Trula Hollywood in Owego at 10:00 a.m. and see my nephews baptized!
- Pastor Scott and I are away at a clergy conference on May 20-22.
- Our insurance company suggests that we review our coverage and see if it needs updating. This has been delegated to Bruce. However, we may want to get a small team together to review the coverage and see if it needs updating.
- On our radar, we should be planning our audit.
- We have been approached by “Simple Gifts” to perform a concert during the summer months for a cost between \$500 - \$700. Information on this group provided to Vestry members. Do we want to pursue? St. John is planning a concert with this group in celebration of their roof being completed – date to be

determined. Therefore, we will decline having “Simple Gifts” perform at our church at this time.

**In my other job:**

- Gather 24 was well attended by parishes across the diocese, especially from the northern part of the Diocese. By all accounts, it was a worthwhile offering – worth giving up a Saturday. Besides me, no one from Redeemer attended.
- I have been working with my Lutheran counterpart to set up the first cluster “in the north” of 6-2-6-1 (Six parishes, two clergy, six lay worship leaders, one deacon) in the Scranton area. This cluster would include Lutheran AND Episcopal parishes.
- We are beginning discussions about a 6-2-6-1 cluster even further north - including us in Bradford County. It may be that we could work with the Horseheads folks (Our Savior Lutheran, where Pastor Scott serves as interim and St. Mathew’s Episcopal) and form a cluster in the Twin Tiers. It’s never too late (or too early) to plan for the future.

**Assistant Rector’s Report:**

- Attended the clergy meeting at the hospital where Rev. Paula Kraus offered to help both financially and with volunteers with VBS.
- Attended Soul Shop training on May 4<sup>th</sup> on “Ministering to Suicidal Desperation”. I brought some resources for the parish and placed them in the pamphlet rack.
- Attended my 5<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Care zoom class on May 9<sup>th</sup> “Friends or Foe? Exploring the Bio-Psych-Spiritual Impact of Technology and Social Media”. One more class in July.
- I am planning on attending the “Stronger Together: Partnership for Service & Safety” on May 16<sup>th</sup>.
- I created a Facebook event for the Street Fair.
- Attended a meeting with Lutheran Synod staff and Canon Melinda discussing working closer together with the Lutheran 6-2-6-1 model of 6 congregations sharing 2 pastors, 6 lay leaders, and 1 Deacon across denominations.
- With the shortage of volunteers with the Bridge, more people are reaching out directly to Redeemer for help. We believe people are coming here when they cannot reach a person on the telephone at the Bridge and they are anxious to receive help.

**Other Reports:**

**Christian Formation:**

- VBS is scheduled to occur at Redeemer July 8-11 with parishioners from SJLC and Sayre Christian Church participating.
- The Sunday School concludes this year’s program 5/19.

Parish Park Fair update provided by Margaret. Vendors, games, entertainment, raffle, items for sale, food and beverage. All is coming together for a great event.

**Old Business:**

- The “Tribute Quartet” Concert on April 14<sup>th</sup> was a resounding success
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization did not have their Twin Tiers Bowling Fundraiser

**New Business:**

- As above, St. John is planning a concert to celebrate their new roof. Construction has begun.
- Looking for fellowship opportunities. Ideas welcome
- The Diocesan Convention is October 18-19<sup>th</sup> this year. Margaret has agreed to be our representative.
- Glenn requests an outdoor clean up – picking up the parking lot, picking up limbs and leaves on the grounds. All helpers appreciated. Will be Saturday, June 8 from 10 am – noon.
- Bruce requests we look at a new sound system in the church. It is noted that voices are of poor quality and the on line worship cannot be heard. Bruce will look into this. What would a system cost? Would we need new speakers? Would St. Mary’s Guild be able to help fund? Do we need to consult an engineer and get a quote?

**Compline**

**Adjourn:** Motion made by Glenn, seconded by Diane – 8:37 PM

Next meeting is Tuesday, June 11, 2024 @ 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Diane Siebecker  
Clerk of Vestry



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