

VESTRY MEETING May 13, 2025

Present: Rev. Cn Melinda Artman, Alice Bennett, Margaret Cole, Doreen Marshall, Mitzi Mohn, Linda Murrelle, Diane Siebecker

Absent: Bruce Carpenter, Glenn Murrelle

Lectio Devina: Luke 24:44-53

Agenda: Motion to accept the agenda made by Linda, seconded by Margaret. Motion carries.

Minutes: Motion to accept the April 8, 2025 minutes made by Linda, seconded by Mitzi. Motion carries.

Treasurer's Report: Motion to accept the April treasurer's report made by Margaret, seconded by Alice. Motion carries. Any questions please ask Bruce.

Senior Warden's Report:

- Margaret reported on the Parish Park Faire scheduled for Saturday, June 7, 2025. There are 15 vendors scheduled to participate. The tee shirt order is being placed.
- There are 5 mowing teams. *Margaret requests a battery-operated weed wacker and leaf blower be purchased from the maintenance budget. Diane made a motion that we proceed with these purchases, seconded by Alice. Motion carries.*

Junior Warden's/Building & Grounds Chair Report:

- A light in the parish hall ladies' room is flickering and needs to be changed.
- Alice requests we purchase new coffee carafes (dispenser with pump) from Community Supper funds. This would be at minimal cost. All in agreement.
- The dishwasher and trash compactor will be removed. However, we will need to purchase floor remnants for these areas. This will be a minimal cost.
- Sherry Gabauer and Nina Seebeck will assist Alice with Community Suppers. Fran Bentley will step down and was thanked for assisting with this endeavor. Fran was given a gift and card by Linda.
- We need to look at the grounds to see if plants/bushes could be planted in the bare spots. Suggested plantings are Holly Bushes or Butterfly Bushes. Need people to volunteer their expertise.

Rector's Report:

Pastoral Calls: I have provided pastoral visits to those in need. I did not make calls to those who are unable to attend church. Others, such as Glenda Hinsman, do a good job at keeping in touch with those who belong, but cannot come to worship. Our live streaming I hope fills in the gap. Last week we had three households call for grocery assistance. I was able to help one household with \$150 in Aldi gift cards. I have since purchased \$300 in Aldi gift cards to have

on hand.

Christian Formation: Weekly Youth Group meetings occurred all during Lent to prepare two youths for Baptism and to begin Confirmation formation. The youth particularly enjoy our lunches (provided by parishioners), the games Margaret devised, and making crafts. They learned the Apostle's Creed.

The Lenten Bible Study was well attended. The book and video were very much enjoyed. We concluded on April 24th and will pick up with some other parables in the fall.

I met with Pastor Paula Kraus (Sayre Christian Church) and Pastor Sharon Knoell (Valley United Presbyterian Church) to review various Vacation Bible School programs. Keeping in mind the abundant resources that SJLC and Church of the Redeemer have in terms of crafts and former VBS programs, we chose a program entitled "Waves of Wonder" from Shine Press, a Mennonite/Brethren publishing company. This particular program is not the typical "just add water" to the published program. It lacks premade decorations, large posters and other supplies although it does have a Pinterest page demonstrating how to make them. The age group focus is pre-K through Grade 5. Blessedly they provide the music. The entire program is digital and costs just under \$300. The theological focus is on the Goodness of Creation and was appealing to the Pastors. Through this partnership among four parishes, we have the opportunity for more volunteers and a few more kids. We also have an opportunity to provide Christian support to a child (and her small family) who speaks Spanish. The Pastors each have many gifts, to include being fairly dramatic. We are working out an idea for a "pulpit swap" over three weeks surrounding the VBS dates of mid-July. VBS will be held at SJLC this year. Part of my hope in choosing this program is that we build community across denominations and within our neighborhood. All of us will have to function in different ways from what we are used to – so we have a growth opportunity to make something wonderful happen for area children, each of us utilizing the strengths we bring to the program. I am aware that this will create a certain level of discomfort and anxiety, at the same time I am confident in the gifts that all my people bring to the table.

The Pastors and I also were attracted to an intergenerational program that focuses on Stewardship – it provides 12 weeks of programming. We are thinking of trying this program for Lent 2026, using 5 of the lesson plans provided. It looks like a difficult subject is explored in a creative and fun way for all generations.

Finally, I need to put out a call to those who might be interested in Confirmation or Reception, taking advantage of the Bishop's official visitation on August 17.

Holy Week: Holy Week's attendance, for the most part, was gratifying. A year over year comparison shows that we had less people during the Triduum attending services here than last year. Maundy Thursday, for example, had only 26 people

from both parishes – last year St. John had over 30. A core group from both parishes attended the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. Those who attended Good Friday at St. John seemed to enjoy the service. The Easter Vigil had 38 people attending, primarily because of the Baptism (last year St. John had 25 faithful attend the Vigil service). Easter had a count of 80 plus, up from 65 last year. Attendance at weekly Wednesday noon services at Redeemer averages 6 people.

Events: Upcoming events include:

- Convocation meetings (May 24 in Convocation 2 & 3)
Convocation 1 is being held just prior to our Vestry meeting in our Parish Hall.
- Clergy Conference May 19-21
- Synod Assembly May 30-31
- SJLC Rummage Sale May 31
- Parish Park Faire June 7
- Andrew, Axle and Violet Lewis will be baptized on June 8 (Pentecost service).

Fundraising: I have spoken to Linda about having a presence during the Friday Farmer's Market with our books for sale. She is working on a plan to do so.

Miscellaneous: My internal image of myself is an “Energizer Bunny” and because of that mental image I overextended myself during Lent. My workload has increased because of the reunification of two dioceses beginning January 1, 2026. Additionally, I was thrilled to have two teenagers insist on being baptized. This meant making sure I had a program of preparation that could serve a dual purpose: education for both baptism and confirmation.

I wanted to accommodate folks who enjoy Bible Study and consequently had two sessions with the same program. I was able to attract at least two members of SJLC who wouldn't otherwise come to Bible Study, and they were great participants in the group. Additionally, Holy Week is intense with extra services and extra bulletins. What I didn't do was visit our homebound. This is something I think I ought to do. Those who are homebound deserve to have the Priest's attention especially at significant events in the life of the Church, like Christmas and Easter.

Looking ahead towards the future it is apparent there is much work to be done. In a few weeks, there is a Lutheran deaconess about to graduate from Princeton Seminary. She has a passion for creation care and all things agricultural. She wants to live in the northeast. She's originally from Central New York (Herkimer area). She'd be willing to work part time for the church and part time in a sustainable agriculture job. She is willing to explore working with us. Is this something you'd be willing to pursue? Bruce thinks we can make this work. An even larger vision would be for the two parishes to fund a position that takes into account creation care from a Lutheran/Episcopal perspective. Her job responsibilities would include:

- Lead worship and preach 6 to 8 times per year
- Review bulletins and power points
- Create content for the e Blast/Facebook page/Webpage
- Provide longer term pastoral care
- Coordinate and direct how we (and Redeemer) live missionally, as reflected in our respective mission statements
- Assist with Christian Formation/Youth

Also looking ahead, I am aware that a clergy person should leave a congregation around year six or seven for the sake of the parish, unless the clergy person can reinvent themselves. April first began year nine with you. I justify remaining in place because I believe that the work for the diocese constitutes that reinvention. As of right now, I plan to retire between September 2027 and June of 2028. Please pray about how we might proceed together.

Old Business:

- Community Supper proceeds – we had discussed previously donating to local food pantries as the need is great. ***Diane made a motion to donate \$250 each to Feed My Sheep and the Valley Food Pantry. The motion seconded by Linda. Motion carries.***
- Sentry Alarms is set to begin working on our system June 2nd.
- The Sunday School quilt to be hung in the Atrium.
- No date set for the Parking Lot to be done.
- Joint Worship begins June 15th at SJLC and continues at SJLC through July 20th. From July 27th through August 31st joint worship will be at Redeemer. All Sunday services will be at 10:00 am. Diane noted that the local newspaper has incorrect information in the Church Directory and needs to be corrected.

New Business:

- Our church pews need to be refinished. Diane would like the possibility of having pew cushions placed. Cn. Melinda will look into this. This issue tabled.
- Vacation Bible School is scheduled for the week of July 13th at SJLC.
- We are in need of a new copier. Quotes have been received from Fuller Office, Swift Office Equipment, and Topp Business Solutions. ***Cn Melinda made a motion to allow Jerry and Bruce to make the decision whether to purchase or lease a new copier and from what company. Motion seconded by Linda. Motion carries.***
- Book Sale during Friday Farmer's Market – will be coordinated by Linda with help from Doreen. Will be held once a month starting June 10 from 10 am – 2 pm. Proceeds will be designated for painting the parish hall. It is noted that books we have are for sale purposes only.

We adjourned with saying of the Lord's Prayer – 8:26 pm

Our next meeting is Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Siebecker

Clerk of Vestry