

**St. Francis Episcopal Church  
Potomac Parish  
November 21, 2023 Vestry Meeting**

The Vestry convened online via Zoom on Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at 7:30 p.m., Fr. Mark presiding. Members attending: Ms. Tendall, senior warden, Ms. Bahar, junior warden, Ms. Byam, Mr. Feagles, Mr. Hunter, Ms. Hurdle, Mr. Jannotta, Mr. Maroulis, Ms. Oleson, Mr. Ruf, Dr. Schneider, and Mr. Whitlock. Also attending: Pastor Allison and Mr. Smith.

**Invocation.**

Fr. Mark gave the invocation.

**Bible Study**

Mr. Feagles led the Bible Study. The theme of his Bible Study, from Proverbs 3:5-6, “Wisdom Bestows Well-Being.” Mr. Feagles ask the Vestry to read Verses 5-8 and 13-24. We should trust in God and seek his guidance in facing our problems. We want to be in control in the world, but where do we turn when we don’t have control and can’t solve our problems. Where can we look for hope? People often become angry and withdrawn when they find their problems overwhelming them. Putting your trust in the Lord helps you to seek his guidance and to trust him to help you with your problems.

**Consent Agenda** (*previously circulated electronically*)

Minutes of October Vestry Meeting

The October Vestry Meeting Minutes were approved with no changes.

**Rector’s Report** (attached)

The palladium style window replacement cost exceeds \$5,000, which requires the Vestry’s approval. The replacement window is an Anderson Company window with greater efficiency.

Draft Budget for 2024

Fr. Mark and Ms. Krajcik, in consultation with the staff, the wardens, and the Finance Committee, have drafted the proposed budget for 2024. A slight decrease in pledge income is currently expected, but this may change by the December Finance Committee meeting. There is significant additional income from expansion of the space leased to Georgetown Hill. The clergy and lay salary amounts are based on diocesan guidelines. There is a decrease in medical insurance due to the rector choosing a cheaper insurance policy for his family. Mr. Widmann will be with us the full year, and the increase in his salary over that budgeted for the interim in 2023 is expected. Cost of living adjustments are also suggested for continuing staff, Ms. Hermann, Ms. Nanan, and Ms. Harich who staffs the Cribbery. The total personnel costs would rise by \$70,947. There are various adjustments in other portions of the budget to reflect projected actuals or recommendations from staff members. It was noted that Ms. Harich is donating her time to provide child care during the Wednesday Bible study.

#### Pastor Allison's Duties

Pastor Allison has been working full-time at St. Francis for some time, but has only been paid as a 2/3rds time employee. She is in charge of the youth program, has been overseeing the communications work (including revamping *Sounds*), has expanded our evangelistic outreach programs and work with newcomers and their children. She directly oversees the work of Ms. Hurdle and Ms. Madison Herrman on communications projects. Based on discussions during her performance review, a increase of her salary and benefits to reflect full-time work is recommended, and is included in the draft budget. She was present at the meeting to answer questions about the scope and nature of her work at present. Fr. Mark participates in the Episcopal Church's pension plan. Pastor Allison participates in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's pension plan.

#### Contract Accountant

We are working with Your Part-Time Controller to develop a plan to decrease costs for contract accounting work. These will probably involve having St. Francis staff (principally Father Mark) assume some additional duties, and to use a staff bookkeeper for some more menial tasks, with Ms. Krajcik, who is a CPA, in a supervisory role.

#### Chorister Program

Mr. Widmann would like to start a high school youth chorister program to train four youth choristers.

#### Church Audit

Fr. Mark said that the church's audit is proceeding as planned.

#### Church Website

Treebranch Communications continues to support the church's website. Sean Smith is working on digital contact management.

#### Fire Prevention

Dr. Schneider expressed his concerns about the church fire prevention plan, fire extinguishers, and other fire prevention measures are checked routinely to ensure they function properly.

#### Insect Eradication

There is a significant increase in Building Contract Services because Georgetown Hill has asked for more intensive insect eradication this year. They pay  $\frac{3}{4}$  of this expense, as they do other utilities.

#### Baptisms and Funerals

There have been 12 baptisms and 12 funerals at St. Francis this year.

#### Executive Session

The Vestry went into executive session to discuss personnel matters.

#### Grounds Committee Report

Ms. Tendall said the Grounds Committee has gotten an estimate from the Francis Lawn Service for grounds maintenance of \$14,900 for the church property, and \$3,730 for the rectory. This estimate is an increase of 8% for the church grounds, and 29% for the rectory yard work. The church has a two-year contract for this work that includes mulch, fertilizer, mowing, etc. Ms. Byam said that Mr. Francis currently charges \$45/week to mow the grounds, and his new price will be \$60/week. There are also increases in the costs for mulch and seeding. The Vestry asked that the church get a second bid for this work to compare bids.

#### Stewardship Committee Report

Mr. Feagles said that the church has experienced a loss of members who were significant titers due to deaths and parishioners moving away. St. Francis needs to attract more members to increase the church's revenues. Fr. Mark said that getting people more involved in the church tends to increase their willingness to increase their tithing.

#### HVAC System

Mr. Whitlock said the new HVAC air conditioning system is under warranty, which has reduced the budgeting for repairs in 2024. He expects three bids for the work on the mechanical equipment. The boiler replacement will probably be completed by late January 2025.

#### Financial Report

Mr. Maroulis said the church has a \$49,000 operating loss due to higher than expected expenses than were estimated in the 2023 budget. A end-of-year operating surplus is still likely. The church received a \$10,000 bequest in November – this will be reflected in the December Financial Report.

#### Motion to Approve the Window Replacement t

Dr. Schneider made a motion, seconded by Mr. Feagles, to approve the window replacement project. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Vestry's December is December 19, 2023.

#### Motion to Adjourn

Dr. Schneider made motion, seconded by Ms. Byam, to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### Adjournment

Fr. Mark led the Vestry in the closing prayer:

*Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake. Amen.*

Les Smith  
Clerk