

**St. Francis Episcopal Church
Potomac Parish
March 19, 2024 Vestry Meeting**

The Vestry convened online via Zoom on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 7:30 p.m., Fr. Mark presiding. Members attending: Ms. Tendall, senior warden, Mr. Feagles, junior warden, Ms. Byam, Ms. Hurdle, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Maroulis, Ms. Oleson, Mr. Ruf, Dr. Schneider, Mr. Tester, Ms. Warren, and Mr. Whitlock. Also attending: Mr. Smith.

Invocation

Fr. Mark led the invocation.

Bible Study

Mr. Maroulis led the Bible study, on Exodus 3: 11–15. Mr. Maroulis then asked two questions: 1. Has the enormity of God’s eternity ever moved you, humbled you? 2. How does the permanence of God put on display here impact your faith?

Consent Agenda

Rector’s Report

Fr. Mark asked that if the Vestry voted to endorse Aaron Dunn’s ordination to the priesthood, they should be sure to sign the attestation, “Letter of Support for Aaron Dunn’s Ordination,” which states his qualification for ordination to the priesthood and his calling by God in the life of the Church. The document will be kept in the church work room.

Other Matters

The Church’s bank accounts at PNC have been unfrozen following the lengthy process of having the church’s bank records meet full compliance standards and setting up four new accounts. Ms. Nanan has worked very hard to update the bank information for all vendors that St. Francis pays by bank transfer. The old accounts are still open until the transfer of accounts is completed by VANCO, the company that processes digital gifts for us.

Organ Renovation

Fr. Mark has requested an estimate for this latest round of work that the Whitesel Organ Company team has performed. He has also requested pricing for some additional rebuilding work to address remaining deficiencies in the pipe system – rebuilding a rank and adding new “toes” to some pipes. The amended plan for the organ renovation passed in March 2023 totaled \$241,600, and included \$22,000 in contingency for pipe organ repairs. Any repairs exceeding this amount would need to be approved by the vestry.

Georgetown Hill Elementary School (GHES)

Fr. Mark has had productive meetings with GHES officials in February and March. It was decided not to lock the playgrounds in the evenings and on weekends (as previously planned), and GHES will take responsibility for cleaning up any messes created by outside visitors. GHES will not rent the kitchen for food preparation and cooking, but they will continue to pay a small monthly fee to use the refrigerator and freezer to store pre-made food. The school officials said

they would prefer a hard covering with padding for the new flooring to cover St. Francis Hall. Fr. Mark said GHES has urged that we consider changing lighting from incandescent to LED bulbs, and we expect that they will offer to pay part of the cost. This would also save the church money and is a good sign of the continuing cooperation between St. Francis and the GHES. PEPCO provides rebates for this program.

Indians for Christ

Fr. Mark said that the Indians for Christ, a Tamil-speaking local congregation of the Church of South India that St. Francis has hosted for special services at Easter and New Years' for several years has purchased a permanent church home – a former Christian Science church building in Adelphi. They expressed thanks for our hospitality in the past.

Safe Church Compliance

The Safe Church Compliance course is a nationwide requirement for Episcopal Churches to address issues like abuse of children, the elderly, and other groups and bring these issues to the wider church. This requirement is also tied to the church's insurance coverage to prevent any possible incidents of such abuses. The requirements are covered in an on-line course for the Vestry to take. Pastor Allison is sending the course link to the Vestry members, which the church would like all vestry members to complete by Memorial Day.

Portfolio Assignments

Fr. Mark said he had given out the Vestry's portfolio assignments and thanked the Vestry for their willingness to serve.

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda

Dr. Schneider made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tendall to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Letter of Support for Aaron Dunn

Ms. Tendall said the Vestry should draft a letter of support for Aaron Dunn's ordination to the priesthood. She said that Mr. Dunn has been faithful member of the parish and shows great promise in the priesthood.

Vote to Support Aaron Dunn's Candidacy for the Priesthood

Fr. Mark asked for a show of hands (on-line) to support Mr. Dunn's candidacy. The vote was unanimous in favor.

HVAC Phase 2

Mr. Whitlock said the bidding and finalization documents were underway for Phase 2 of the HVAC project. The Church is asking RSC, the company that did the HVAC Phase 1 project, to rebid (as they are very familiar with the church's structure) and two other contractors. He said the documents explaining the scope of the work for companies interested in bidding on Phase 2 would be available at the end of April and the Request for Proposal (RFP) by the end of May.

Mr. Whitlock explained that the HVAC project's Phase 2 entailed – replacing the two boilers in St. Francis Hall and one boiler in the church (i.e., nave) and the VAV boxes in the classrooms. The new VAV boxes are digital electronic controls linked to the HVAC computer system to regulate heating and cooling, *i.e.*, heating/reheating and cooling the HVAC's coils.

Mr. Whitlock said the work would be done in the summer when heating is not needed – the boilers have an 8-10 week window for installation that will be done when the church activities are not going on. The vestry will next be asked to approve bids based on the RFP that our engineer is designing, under the direction of the Projects Committee.

Audit

Fr. Mark said he and Your Part-time Controller are working with the auditors, but he is not certain when the 2022 audit will be completed.

New Nursery Attendant

Fr. Mark said that with the increasing number of younger children in the nursery, which he noted is a very positive development, the church has hired Ms. Lisa O'Donnell to assist Ms. Harich with her duties in the nursery – there will now be two adults supervising as many as 14 children some Sundays, which is reassuring to their parents. Ms. O'Donnell has been hired as a church employee on a per hour basis. The church is also exploring adding back-up nursery staff to serve as substitutes.

Bible School

Fr. Mark said as the number of families with children has been growing, the church will be able to hold a Vacation Bible School this summer in August.

Finance Report

Mr. Maroulis, Treasurer, said the church is no longer in a deficit situation. There has been a “catch-up” with pledges as the year moves forward, resulting in a \$900 surplus in February. He said that several of the new families at St. Francis were pledging. The church has received \$25,000 from several gifts that are counted as “non-pledged funds.” The March Financial Report shows these monies as “reported income.”

Mr. Maroulis said the church is planning to move to an “accrual system” from the previous “modified cash basis” accounting system. He said the “accrual system” reflects better timing of expenses – it gives a clearer picture of expenses and removes the lag time for expenditures. There will be a re-issue of the 2023 Financial Report done on the “accrual basis,” which the auditors have requested. Mr. Ruf said the Finance Committee was studying the expenses tied to the HVAC project, organ renovation, and related expenditures and how these will impact the church reserve funds.

Vote to Switch to Accrual Accounting

Mr. Maroulis recommended that the vestry vote on the proposed switch of accounting systems, which was also endorsed by the Finance Committee. Mr. Ruf moved that the church switch to the accrual system, and Mr. Feagles seconded the motion. It was approved.

Garage Tutorial

Mr. Schneider said the car maintenance tutorial for adults will be held on Sunday, April 7th, at 12 noon at his home.

Youth Group and Happenings

In December, the St. Francis Youth Group along with adults from three congregations went caroling at three nursing homes; laid wreaths on graves for “Wreaths Across America,” and had a Christmas Party with a white elephant gift exchange. In January, the group gave thanks for the large number of confirmands (adults and teens) during Bishop Budde’s pastoral visit. In March the Youth Group hosted a trivia game at Hunter’s Inn, and attended “Fiddler on the Roof” at Har Shalom Synagogue. The Youth Group has a spring flier announcing their upcoming events.

Motion to Adjourn the Vestry Meeting

Dr. Schneider made a motion, seconded by Ms. Oleson, to adjourn the Vestry Meeting. The motion carried.

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.

Respectfully submitted,

Les Smith
Clerk