

**St. Francis Episcopal Church
March 18, 2025 Vestry Meeting**

The Vestry convened on-line on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 7:30 p.m., Fr. Mark presiding. Members attending: Ms. Tendall, senior warden, Mr. Feagles, junior warden, Ms. Byam, Ms. Davis, Ms. Hurdle, Ms. Oleson, Mr. Ruf, Dr. Schneider, Mr. Tester, and Ms. Warren. Also attending: Mr. Smith.

Invocation

Fr. Mark led the invocation.

Bible Study

Ms. Hurdle led the Bible Study on Psalm 2. She spoke about the peace that Jesus brings us in the midst of the current times, which are causing a high level of anxiety for many people. Vestry members talked about troubled times in which their faith gave them peace and how they found strength in their trust in Jesus.

Rector's Report

Consent Agenda

Approval of the February 18, 2025 Vestry Meeting Minutes.

Zion Church

Zion Church held its first Sunday worship service, Sunday School, and luncheon at St. Francis. Fr. Mark said that everything went well. Fr. Mark, Ms. Tendall, and Ms. Hurdle will meet regularly each month with Zion Church officials during the six month trial period.

Chiller

Mr. Ruf provided an update on the HVAC chiller on the St. Francis Hall roof. The chiller was not properly winterized, i.e., water was not drained and glycol added to prevent freezing, resulting in a crack in the outside pump casing of the iron framework, and possibly other parts of the chiller were also damaged due to the cold weather. The two contracting companies are each disputing responsibility for this.

Mr. Ruf said that a replacement housing for the pump has been ordered, but on Dr. Schneider's recommendation, they are also exploring sending the damaged part to Wisconsin for repairs. The Vestry discussed cooling alternatives, e.g., window unit air conditioners, for the Georgetown Hill classrooms and the offices if the repairs do not prove feasible. The Church and St. Francis Hall are not affected by these issues with the chiller.

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda

Ms. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruf, to approve the items in the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Revised Gifts and Bequests Policy

Mr. Feagles explained that his proposed revisions to the “Policy Regarding Gifts and Bequests to the Church,” intended to clarify certain provisions of the original policy from 2018 that had been identified as raising potential questions in connection with last year’s audit.

He noted that the Legacy Fund established under the 2018 guidelines, which was funded with a significant gift from Fred and Sandy Meloan in March 2018, would be governed by the terms of the letter accompanying the gift. The audit determined that Mr. Meloan’s letter likely created an endowment under the terms of Maryland law, which does not envisaged by the original Gifts and Bequests Policy nor the minutes of the Vestry meeting in February 2018 adopting that Policy.

In the Vestry minutes adopting the original policy in February 2018, Kathy Cuddapah, who was treasurer at time and part of the group developing that policy, stated that “the policy provides a clear avenue for people to give and be assured that their money will be used over the long term, while not putting too many restraints on the church.” Mr. Feagles explained that the goals of the revised Policy were to adhere to that stated intent from February 2018 – both to provide a clear avenue for people to give and be assured that their money will be used over the long term, while not putting too many restraints on the Parish in the time of an urgent need and when there are not reasonably available alternative sources for funds readily available to the Parish. Any future gifts designated for the Legacy Fund, or being placed in the Legacy Fund under the terms of the revised Policy, would be held as part of Legacy Fund 2025 and be governed by the revised Policy, together with the stated wishes of any such donors.

Mr. Feagles suggested that a letter could be sent to parishioners reminding them of the existence of the Legacy Fund 2025, perhaps on an annual basis, to encourage gifts of this kind.

Motion to Approve the Revised Gifts and Bequests Policy

Dr. Schneider made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruf, to approve the revised policy on gifts and bequests. The motion was carried unanimously.

Designation of the Zion Church Rental Income

The Vestry discussed a recommendation that the Zion Church rental income be reserved and restricted for the church’s property maintenance needs.

Motion to Designate the Zion Church Rental Income for Property Maintenance Reserve Fund

Ms. Warren made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruf, to place the Zion Church rental income in the Property Maintenance Reserve Fund for future capital and maintenance needs. The motion was carried unanimously.

Dutton Report Update

Fr. Mark and the Vestry deferred discussion of the updated Dutton Report until the April Vestry Meeting.

Flagstone Work

Fr. Mark said the necessary repair work to the brick stairs at the breezeway was proceeding and would be complete before the stairs were used on Palm Sunday.

Financial Report

Mr. Tester said March was another good month for giving with a \$39,000 surplus, expenses similar to 2024, although there was a slight increase in the water bill, which was related to a mistake in billing. St. Francis has received the last Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) payment.

Motion to Approve the Financial Report

Dr. Schneider made a motion, seconded by Ms. Warren, to approve the financial report. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion to Adjourn

Ms. Tendall made a motion, seconded by Mr. Feagles, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Fr. Mark said the next Vestry Meeting is on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, and that it will be held in person in the Library following the 7:30 Holy Tuesday Eucharist, unless we are unable to obtain a quorum by meeting in person.

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