There was a meeting of the Vestry of Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church, Chestnut Hill, on the above date at 7 p.m. in Dixon House.

There were present Ruth Desiderio, Rector’s Warden, presiding; also Interim Rector the Rev. Canon Albert J. Ogle, and Tim Albert, Lisa Budd, Chip Butler, Steve Camp-Landis, Mark Duckett, Clark Groome, John Kimberly, George McNeely, Steve Pearson, Louise Thompson, and Hugh Williamson. St. Paul’s Director of Music Andy Kotylo was the Vestry’s guest.

Cheyenne DeMulder, Tabitha Oman, and Kristen Poole were absent.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

I. Interim Rector Albert Ogle opened the meeting with a prayer.

II. The Listening Hearts Guidelines were read.

III. The minutes of the October 21, 2019 Vestry meeting were approved without dissent.

IV. On Rector’s Warden Ruth Desiderio’s recommendation, George McNeely was nominated to fill Chuck Lower’s unexpired term, which ends in 2021. Duly seconded, the nomination was approved unanimously. (An updated Vestry contact sheet is attached to these minutes.)

V. At the October 21 Vestry meeting, the vestry approved purchasing all our electricity from renewable sources. At the time it was thought that the cost to the parish would be slightly more than $1,000 per year. Since that meeting it has been learned that the additional costs will be about $105 per year. Good news!

VI. Music Director Andy Kotylo reported that two proposals had been received for repairing the organ. The one that he and the Music Guild support is from Stephen Russell for about $1.8 million.

In executive session the vestry discussed timing, priorities, and funding.
After the meeting returned to its regular session, Hugh Williamson moved that the Vestry accept the Music Guild’s recommendation to move forward with Stephen Russell. Duly seconded, the recommendation was passed unanimously with the understanding that there is still a lot to be studied and decided.

VII. John Kimberly, noting the parish’s financial problems and the small attendance at the 10:30 a.m. services, requested that these issues be discussed at the Vestry’s December 14 retreat.

VIII. Accounting Warden Steve Camp-Landis reported that the Finance Committee met last Friday and spent most of its meeting talking about the 2020 budget on which Nicole Tullo is taking the lead. They hope to get a proposed balanced budget to the Vestry before our December meeting.

He said that the committee is still trying to decide the best way to pay for the 2019 deficit, the exact amount of which is still unknown because the final giving dollar figure is not yet clear.

For 2020 we have already received 41 pledges totaling $201,000. Many of those pledges have increased from last year.

Interim Rector Albert Ogle noted that there will be testimonials on December 1 and in January and hopes to have the campaign wrapped up by St. Paul’s Day.

IX. Albert gave a detailed report touching on the following:

• On St. Paul’s Day there will be one service at 10 a.m. at which former St. Paul’s assistant Ruth Lawson Kirk Beresford will preach. This will be followed by a luncheon.

• The reaction to the area in the back of the church that allows for quiet prayer and houses the scroll and votive stand has been positive, Albert reports.

• Steve Camp-Landis and Karen Richter will be leading prayers on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings during Advent.

• Albert said that for the Advent and Christmas seasons the portable altar will be moved to the space on the communion rail where the gate is. This will open up space for the choir and for the acolytes and eucharistic ministers. He will announce these plans to the congregation before the change is made.
• He is setting up a small group to determine how people are added to or removed from the parish prayer list.

• Families will be lighting the candles on the Advent wreath.

• The Christmas Pageant, directed by George McNeely and Louise Thompson, is going to end with a eucharist. Albert explained that the pageant will serve as the ministry of the word and the sermon and that it will be followed by what he describes as a “tight” eucharist. To facilitate this there will be several communion stations in the front and back of the church.

• Dan Kline is doing a very good job staying in touch with the parish’s families. He has worked on the bingo, pumpkin carving, and Halloween programs. He will also be meeting regularly with the Sunday School teachers.

• We’re working on building a confirmation class for 2020.

• Albert will meet with the Parents Exchange on Sunday. He also noted that he has met with Cathy Davis and Joe Fafara who want to turn over some of their planning responsibilities to Dan.

• The Vestry and standing committees (finance, property, stewardship d) will be meeting for a retreat on Saturday, December 14 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with the afternoon part of the day being the December Vestry meeting. The location and the facilitator have not yet been selected. Stay tuned.

• On December 16, Albert and Mile will host a Christmas party for the staff, the vestry, and their significant others.

• Albert thanked Amanda Scates-Preisinger, who is moving to Denver and has resigned from the Vestry, for her service to St. Paul’s.

• There will be a fundraising phonathon from 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, December 3.

• The capital campaign leadership givers reception on November 6 was well attended and well received. He wants to hold a similar event for the entire congregation on Wednesday, January 29 from 6 to 8 p.m.
• St. Paul’s hosted three IHN families in the rectory for three weeks. It went very well.

• Jake and Betsy Roak have been untiring in their very successful work on the turkey and Thanksgiving Drive.

X. Bob Smith’s deaconate process has been declined and deferred by the diocese much to the surprise and disappointment of his discernment committee, the interim rector, and the Vestry, all of whom had endorsed him enthusiastically. Albert notes that discussions are ongoing with the diocese.

XI. Some concern was expressed about parish security now that the church is open most of every day. Albert said that we need to be vigilant and that having our sexton, Jim Everts, living on campus was a blessing.

XII. Rector’s Warden Ruth Desiderio said that one of her primary concerns is communications. She’s working on putting together a small group to evaluate and oversee parish communications.

XIII. Ruth also reported that Self Study Chairman John Rollins is working with Shana Stites on the content of the questionnaire needed prior to writing the parish profile. When the first draft of this has been finished it will be shared with a group of diverse parishioners to determine if it covers all the areas that need to be explored. After that it will be sent to the parish with the results becoming the basis for the profile.

XIV. Ruth reminded the Vestry members to complete the safe church training.

XV. The next meeting of the Vestry will be on Saturday, December 14 after lunch at the Vestry Retreat.

XVI. Following Albert’s closing prayer, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clark Groome
Secretary
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2019-2020

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