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 Chip Butler, Steve Camp-Landis, Cheyenne DeMulder, Mark Duckett, Clark Groome, John Kimberly, George McNeely, Kristen Poole, Louise Thompson, and Hugh Williamson. Music Guild co-chairperson Wendy Munyon was the Vestry’s guest.

Tabitha Oman joined a portion of the meeting by phone.

Tim Albert, Lisa Budd, and Steve Pearson were absent.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 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 December 14, 2019 Vestry meeting were approved with Kristen Poole abstaining.

IV. Albert gave his Interim Rector’s report:

- He noted the parish’s loss of Len Hacking and Jake and Betsy Roak. He said that an Outreach Committee meeting it was proposed that the first party in the renovated Parish Hall be an outreach celebration in the Roaks’ memory. $3,400 has already been received in their memory.

- The Roak family has given some of Jake and Betsy’s furniture to the rectory. John Faggotti and Charlie Head have also contributed some of the furniture from the sale of their house. The Interim and the Vestry expressed their gratitude for these generous gifts.
• Annual Giving is now at $577,000 from 148 pledges. Many of the donors increased their pledges over last year. He thanked the Stewardship Committee and its chairman, George McNeely, for their hard and effective efforts to make this campaign so positive.

• Albert thanked the “anonymous” donor for the $2 million gift to cover the repair work on the parish’s Aeolian-Skinner organ. The contract for the work has just been received. Since action on this is needed as soon as possible there will be a special Vestry meeting on Sunday, February 2 at noon in the education wing’s conference room.

• Dan Kline and Albert are working on a confirmation program that will start on Shrove Tuesday (February 25).

• A Youth and Family Council is being set up to plan events, process feedback from our programs (church school, Parents’ Exchange, youth ministry, etc.), and to help foster communications among the various groups and programs.

• The parish is buying Dan a cassock in celebration of his recent ordination.

• The Chestnut Hill Music Academy lease has been signed. They will move to the second floor of Dixon House February 1. The parish offices are moving into the Rectory.

• Mike Latini is chairing a group to help plan future use of our space. They’ve met and done an initial tour of our facilities.

• St. Paul’s Day was a success. The service was a mixture of elements from the 9 a.m. and the 10:30 a.m. services. It was proposed that next year maybe only one event be planned for St. Paul’s Day rather than having the morning service and an evensong. There was grateful applause and many bravas for the fine job Cheyenne DeMulder did organizing the St. Paul’s Day lunch.

   It was agreed that former assistant Ruth Lawson Beresford gave a wonderful sermon.

• St. Paul’s current policy forbids having weddings in December. Albert wants that policy revoked. After some discussion about the busy Decembers at St. Paul’s and the desire not to cause conflicts with outside groups like the Mendelssohn Club and Vox Amadeus that use our facilities, it was moved “That the calendar
permitting we allow weddings to be held at St. Paul’s in December.” The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Albert noted that in these days not all weddings are held on Saturdays which might make the scheduling less difficult if a couple wanted to have their ceremony on a Friday or Sunday.

•We need to improve communications between the Vestry and the Music Guild. Wendy Munyon’s presence at this meeting was a good first step.

•From February 6 to 21 Albert will be taking the vacation he had originally planned before he became our interim. While he’s away Dan will preach one Sunday and our consultant, Barbara Abbott, will preach the other.

V. Stewardship Chairman George McNeely said that work is still underway to clean up the unpaid 2019 pledges. We need to help parishioners who don’t pledge become more involved. One way to do that is the neighborhood gettogethers Albert has been suggesting for quite a while.

George also noted that the parish database is in need of better organization. Currently there are many separate mailing lists. These should all be combined into one master list that is coded so that mailings for specific groups or for the entire congregation would be easy to do.

He noted that one-third of the stewardship calls he wanted to make couldn’t be completed because the church didn’t have accurate contact information. Recognizing that keeping address lists up to date is difficult at best, there needs to be a major push to get it as accurate as possible. Rector’s Warden Ruth Desiderio noted that this is particularly important as we get ready to send out the parish survey that will be the basis of the profile that will be used to inform potential rector candidates about who we are. The bottom line, he said, is we need to do a major overhaul and update of our mailing lists.

George also talked about the draft of the Suggested Policies on Fund Raising and Account Management that was sent to the Vestry. We need to do a better job of keeping track of money coming in. The draft is still a work in progress. Mark Duckett said that this should have wider distribution within the parish. George agreed that there’s still a lot to be coordinated going forward. It is hoped that final policies will be ready by the Annual Meeting in May.

(At this point, Tabitha Oman left the meeting.)
VI. Counselor Anne Klinger, for 18 years housed at St. Paul’s, is moving to 8618 Germantown Avenue February 1. Her offices on the first floor of the Parish House will be affected by the upcoming construction and her needs and the parish’s are best served by this move. It was agreed that her presence with us has always been an asset.

VII. Accounting Warden Steve Camp-Landis reported that figures for 2019 show a budget deficit, much of it due to one-time expenses, of $200,000. The finance committee recommends that the Vestry authorize a one-time extraordinary withdrawal of that amount from the endowment. Steve reported that because the fund grew at about 12% last year this action would not invade the endowment’s principal. It was also decided that this would not be repaid. It was moved that “We make a one-time $200,000 transfer from the endowment to the checking account without the intention to repay it and use it to cover the $200,000 2019 deficit.” Duly seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

There was some discussion that the 2020 budget the vestry approved provisionally would likely have a deficit, the amount which, while substantially less that this past year’s, is a serious concern. Further discussion about this will be needed to see what possibilities there are to bring it closer to a balanced budget.

Steve presented the following motion to move $400,000 for the capital campaign and the $2 million for the organ repair from the checking account into interest-bearing accounts at Glemede in order to eliminate the comingling of funds:

Resolution concerning investment of capital gift funds by St. Paul’s Church, Chestnut Hill, PA, 19118 (“the Parish”)

The Parish has an operating account at Univest Bank (“the operating account”). As of the 24th January 2020 the operating account had a balance of or about $2,500,000 which includes funds in excess of $400,000 given towards a Capital Fund raised for necessary repairs and general deferred maintenance and $2,000,000 given towards a major renovation of the Parish’s Aeolian-Skinner organ.

Recognizing that it is imprudent at any time to commingle funds given for designated purposes with general operating funds, this Vestry hereby resolves that the following transfers be made, with immediate effect:

A. $400,000 (four hundred thousand dollars) to Glenmede Trust Company for credit to St. Paul’s Chestnut Hill Capital Campaign Portfolio – 252100.11
B. $2,000,000 (two million dollars) to a fund to be established at Glenmede Trust Company with an investment profile similar to that of St. Paul’s Chestnut Hill Capital Campaign Portfolio – 252100.11 to be named St. Paul’s Chestnut Hill Organ Renewal Portfolio.

Acceptance of the resolution was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

VIII. John Kimberly said that we need to take a serious look at our budget so we can avoid deficits in the future. Steve said that we are now at the beginning of that process.

IX. Albert said that he feels that the draft budget for 2020 “is still very flawed. I’m asking for figures that are to be shared with this Vestry immediately.

“Our financial backbone – the Finance Committee; its connection with investments; and the Stookey Fund, too, because it’s outside the budget – all of that needs realignment. That backbone gives us the strength to do all the things we need to do. We are immobilized now,” he said.

X. Ruth’s Rector’s Warden Report touched on the following:

• Thanks to the work of Shana Stites, John Kimberly, Louise Thompson, Dick Kolb, and Chairman John Rollins, the parish survey Is ready to be sent to the parish – and will be on February 9. Parishioners without e-mail or with the need for assistance with the survey will be accommodated. Ruth asked Vestry members to sign up to help on Sunday mornings.

• There will be a search update in Happenings every week.

• The search townhall with John Rollns and Barbara Abbott went well. Others are planned, including one in place of the sermon at the 9 a.m. service on February 9.

• A meet and greet for newcomers and the Vestry will be held in the rectory on February 24 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. before that evening’s regular 7 p.m. Vestry meeting.

XI. There was a brief discussion about the recent Christmas Pageant. Concerns have been expressed about the confusion in the congregation surrounding the inclusion of the Eucharist as part of the pageant rather than as a separate event as it was in years past. These concerns will be addressed by pageant leadership before next year’s pageant.
XII. There will be a special meeting of the Vestry at noon on Sunday, February 2, 2020, in the education wing’s conference center. Its subject will be the proposed organ repair contract.

XIII. The next regular meeting of the Vestry will be at 7 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2020 in the Rectory.

XIV. Following Albert’s closing prayer, the meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clark Groome
Secretary