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

There were present Ruth Desiderio, Rector’s Warden, presiding; also Interim Rector Albert J. Ogle, Assistant Rector Daniel J. Kline, and Vestry members Tim Albert, Lisa Budd, Chip Butler, Steve Camp-Landis, Cheyenne DeMulder, Mark Duckett, Clark Groome, John Kimberly, George McNeely, Tabitha Oman, Steve Pearson, Kristen Poole, Louise Thompson, and Hugh Williamson. Director of Music Andy Kotylo and Music Guild Chairperson Wendy Munyon were the Vestry’s guests.

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

I. Assistant Rector Dan Kline opened the meeting with a prayer.

II. The Listening Hearts Guidelines were read.

III. The minutes of the March 16, 2020 Vestry meeting were approved as submitted.

IV. Music Director Andy Kotylo brought the Vestry up-to-date on the music program and some of his plans for the future.

He thanked the Vestry for its willingness to continue to pay the staff singers through Trinity Sunday. It was pointed out that the parish has applied for the Paycheck Protection Program passed by the congress and that requires that all employees remain on the rolls. This, coupled with the Vestry’s desire to live up to our agreement with the paid singers, ensures that they will continue to be compensated at least through Trinity Sunday.

He also said that he will attempt to recruit singers for the choristers and the adult choir as the spring goes on, noting that is more difficult now because of the COVID-19 pandemic. He hopes to increase the number of singers in the adult choir from the current 38 (including 10 staff singers) to 42 or 43 (including eight paid singers).
He wants to increase the number of Choristers from its present 13 to, ideally, 20.

He announced that the farewell concert for the organ will take place on Friday, June 5, three days prior to its being removed for renovations and repair.

V. Andy also encouraged the Vestry to move the 10:30 a.m. service to 11 a.m. This is an issue that the Vestry has been pondering for several months and decided to act on at this meeting.

Andy’s position is that moving the service would allow the music program to play a larger role in the 9 a.m. service, something not possible now because he and the choir begin rehearsal at 9:30 a.m.

Moving the 10:30 a.m. service would also allow those attending the 9 a.m. service to attend the Adult Forum, which would begin at 9:45 a.m. It would also allow those who teach Sunday School classes to attend the service at 11 a.m., something they can’t do with the service at 10:30 a.m.

Everyone on the Vestry expressed enthusiastic support for the proposed new Sunday schedule.

While many of the details of how all of this would be coordinated will be left to a representative committee of affected parish programs (the Adult Forum, Parents Exchange, and hospitality among them), it was moved that “At the beginning of the new season in September, the 10:30 a.m. service will be moved to 11 a.m.” Duly seconded, the motion was passed unanimously.

VI. Accounting Warden Steve Camp-Landis presented the monthly financial report for March. Highlights include:

- The first draw from the endowment, figured at 4%, was $44,297.
- Personnel expenses were as expected.
- Total revenues for March were $105,478; expenses were $87,430.
- Year to date: revenues were $263,359 (27.3% of the budget); expenses were $280,327 (27.3% of the budget).
Steve reported that he expects we will have a modest deficit this year. “We’re not happy about that but I don’t think it’s realistic to go from where we were last year (with a $200,000 overspend) to zero in one year.”

It was decided that the Vestry will have a special Zoom meeting devoted to the budget on Monday, May 11, 2020 at 7 p.m. This will be prior to the annual meeting and should address any potential changes to the draft budget adopted in December, 2019.

VII. Steve reported that the value of the endowment fund as of Friday, March 17 was $3.7 million, down from $4.6 million at the end of 2019. $200,000 of that drop was withdrawn with the Vestry’s approval to pay off the 2019 deficit. The rest of the drop was due to the country’s financial difficulties resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Sixty-five per cent of our endowment is invested in the stock market.

VIII. Steve suggested that going forward all bequests not earmarked for a specific purpose be deposited in the endowment.

IX. At Steve’s request the following two motions were made:

    A. That the four officers be designated as the signatories on the Univest account.

    B. That the four officers be designated as the signatories on the Glenmede Trust accounts.

Duly seconded, both passed without dissent.

X. Property Committee Chairman Mark Duckett said the committee recommends that Vertical Access be engaged to examine the fleche. It will cost $22,000. Vertical Access will make a forensic examination and work with our structural engineers in designing any repairs that may be necessary. The Property Committee’s proposal was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

XI. Stewardship Chairman George McNeely reported that the updating of our parishioners’ contact information is a two-step process.

The parish first needs to get the current information from all members and then, second, get that data into the system. George thanked Rector’s Warden Ruth Desiderio for her help facilitating this.
XII. Interim Rector Albert Ogle said that people seem to be pleased with how we’ve handled the COVID-19 crisis and the closing of the church buildings. Sunday services have been well received. The Zoom coffee hours have been very positive.

Albert also mentioned that former parishioner Karl Spaeth and long-term member Ethel “Babbie” Benson Nalle Wetherill had died. Their services will be held after the pandemic has calmed down.

There was some conversation about upgrading the equipment used to record the Sunday services. There was also some thought that after we resume Sunday worship in the church that the services should continue to be available online.

Every day this week Dan Kline will lead morning prayer virtually from his home.

XIII. Dan reported that he has continued to be in touch with the church school teachers. Resources have been supplied for the younger children but with all that parents and kids are facing right now “we’re moving slowly.”

Dan said that there was a lot of positive feedback about having the confirmation class members read the Passion on Palm Sunday.

Hugh Williamson said that the choristers had a virtual rehearsal and that it went well.

XIV. The 2019 St. Paul’s Parochial Report that is required by the diocese was approved unanimously.

XV. Rector’s Warden Ruth Desiderio reported that the profile is being developed and that survey information is being analyzed.

XVI. John Kimberly said that the financial education report for the parish is just about finished. It will be distributed both in digital and hard copy formats in coordination with feedback and discussion of the survey results.

XVII. As part of the letter of agreement with Albert Ogle, a mutual ministry review will soon be undertaken. It will be facilitated by The Rev. Bud Holland.
XVIII. The parish’s annual meeting is scheduled for May 17. Because of the current health crisis the vestry unanimously approved the motion to hold the annual meeting virtually if necessary.

XIX. The secretary announced that the nominating committee has filed its report:

- Steve Camp-Landis has been nominated to complete Anibal Aponte-Boyd’s term, which ends in 2024.

- George McNeely has been nominated to complete Chuck Lower’s term, which ends in 2021 and to serve a full three-year term thereafter.

- Charlie Affel has been nominated for a three-year term as a delegate to diocesan convention.

XX. Ruth proposed that the Vestry schedule a vision and planning retreat in the summer. This will be discussed further.

XXI. Ruth reminded the Vestry about the need for confidentiality. “It’s critical now and important as we move through the search process that we respect full confidentiality. There are a lot of things we talk about that we must make sure stay confidential.

“Please be mindful,” she said, “that the Vestry demonstrates transparency by publishing and posting approved minutes and the attachment of any relevant documents to those minutes. No sharing of documents should occur outside of that process unless it is understood by the Vestry that will be the case.”

XXII. The Vestry went into Executive Session at 9:35 p.m. returning to regular session at 10:12 p.m.

XXIII. The next meeting of the Vestry will be on Monday, May 11, 2020, at 7 p.m.

XXIV. Following Albert’s closing prayer, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Clark Groome
Secretary