

**Saint Mark's Episcopal Church**  
**Vestry Meeting Minutes**  
**October 15, 2024, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom**

**Members Present:** Fr. Chris Jubinski, Diane Stewart, Tom Horan, Steve DeCaro, Diane Feil, Tom Hadlock, Marj Kulesa, Barbara Pettus, Steve Turner, Sandy Wyman, Tom Simson, Carol Fitton

Fr. Chris called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. He offered a prayer for the Poor and Neglected from the Book of Common Prayer.

**Consent Agenda:** A motion was made by Barbara, seconded by Tom Horan, to approve the Consent Agenda, which includes the minutes from the September 17, 2024 Vestry meeting.

**Finance Report:** Tom mentioned that this month's reports are very basic due to the recent software conversion from Church Windows to Aplos, but he hopes to have YTD comparison reporting next month.

**Bright Beginnings:** YTD September Tuition receipts, which comprise the bulk of Bright Beginning's Income, were \$600.7K, up 16.1% compared to \$517.4K YTD September 2023, while YTD September Income increased 33.6% to \$745.1K vs \$557.5K YTD September 2023. YTD September expenses were \$618.8K compared to \$619.3K YTD September 2023, a drop of 0.01%. Tom noted that salaries comprise most of the expenses and these were down 2.6% from \$530.4K in 2023 to \$516.4K in 2024. YTD September 2024 Net Income is \$126.2K vs -\$61.8K in 2023, a definitive turnaround. Tom noted that the \$65K loan from SMC has now been fully repaid.

**SMC:** Tom S reported YTD September 2024 Church Donations of \$129.6K vs \$179.9K a year ago, a drop of 27.9%. He mentioned that there was a major gift (approximately \$50K) in early 2023 that favorably impacted last year's Donations. Other Revenue increased to \$107.3K from \$16.9K in 2023, due mainly to rent from the Beinecke Building. For YTD September 2024, Salaries and Benefits Expenses were \$254.9K vs \$237.5K YTD September 2023, an increase of 7.3%.

Tom reminded us that while we have started receiving \$10K/month rental income for the Beinecke Building, the real estate commission (paid upfront) is being expensed over 12 months at \$8K/month, which means we will start receiving the income benefit of the full \$10K/month rent beginning next month. Until then, we will essentially have net rent from the Beinecke Building of \$2K/month.

**Investment Committee:** Barbara reported that since the balance is less than \$1mm (actual balance today is \$756,256), the funds have been moved into a money market fund (essentially a cash position), to avoid taking any negative market risk. The 7-day yield is currently 4.75% as a point of reference. The account remains at Fidelity, which continues to facilitate gifts of securities to SMC. With the move to a money market fund, Pam Sheiffer is stepping down as co-chair of the committee.

**Stewardship 2025:** Fr. Chris said the 2025 campaign theme is "Walk in Love". His letter introducing the campaign was emailed out today. Di and Tom Horan will be co-chairs of the campaign. Their letter will be going out at the end of the week. The campaign will run from October 20<sup>th</sup> through the Ingathering on November 24<sup>th</sup>, which auspiciously is also the date of the annual Parish Thanksgiving dinner. Diane asked the members of the Vestry to thoughtfully consider their pledges and to have them in by November 1, so an announcement can be made to the Parish that its Vestry has made their pledges.

**United Thank Offering (UTO):** Marj reviewed plans for our parish involvement in this year's effort, which brings back an outreach that SMC was last involved with seven years ago. UTO is an international effort started in the late 1800s to raise funds to support innovative mission and ministry in The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion that church budgets could not cover. Funds collected support grants by deserving entities. This year's theme is

“Gratitude”, which can be acted on by specifically identifying the blessing(s) in your day and expressing gratitude by putting a donation in your UTO envelope (formerly little boxes). We are also encouraged to write down the blessing(s). The ingathering for each parish’s UTO offering occurs at the Diocesan Convention, this year November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. We are getting a late start this year, so hope to start next year’s effort in the spring.

**Strategic Planning:** Fr. Chris said he has now been here for 3.5 years! and much of that time has been spent working on facilities and infrastructure issues, which were necessary, but are hopefully now complete. This gives us an opportunity to begin to think about what we at SMC are called to do over the next year, 3 years, 5 years and longer, by developing a strategic plan. Fr. Chris asked Vestry members to think about the direction in which they want SMC to go and to think about possibilities for outreach, which will be discussed in detail in January.

**Announcements / Upcoming Events:**

Fr. Chris mentioned the following upcoming events:

- The Parish Hall will be using as an Early Voting location from October 26 through November 3
- SMC will be hosting a watch party for our neighboring Episcopal churches on November 2 to share in the Investiture of the new Presiding Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe. The program begins with the Introduction of the Diocese at 9:30, followed by the Installation service at 11 a.m.
- Fr. Chris will hold an evening service on November 4, the eve of Election Day.

**Question and Answer Time:**

- Is there a new date for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration? Not yet as the Bishop’s schedule is not yet available, but likely to take place in early 2025.
- Status of organ construction? Cabinetry is the biggest job and it is coming along well. There is a solid small group that is working well together.
- Status of carillon? Originally the factory was scheduled to complete the work on November 1, but it now looks like they will be shipping it around October 25, which gives it a good chance of being installed in time for Christmas.

**Closing Prayer and Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m. with the reciting of the Lord’s Prayer.

**Next Vestry Meeting:** Vestry meetings are normally held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The upcoming meetings are scheduled for: November 19, December 17 at the Rectory, January 21, February 18, March 18, and April 15. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Fitton, Clerk