

Vestry Meeting Minutes
Trinity Cathedral Parish
Called Meeting: July 30, 2024

Attendance: Melonese Clarke, Richard Moore, Grant Wallace, Jack Harvey, Greg Albert, Kelly Wassell, Susan Allen, Josie Felton, Lara Schock, Christoph Keller, Eliza Borne' **Staff:** Amy Meaux, Thomas Alexander, Kristine Barbaree

Melonese Clarke, Senior Warden, opened the meeting at 5:35 p.m. She shared that Emma Mitchell sent a note to the vestry thanking us for action taken at our last meeting in regard to her salary.

Dean Meaux then offered an opening prayer with special intentions for the unhoused and all who are being impacted by the extreme temperatures we are experiencing.

SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS

Check Signers

Melonese and Amy presented an updated recommendation from the Executive Committee that all lay positions on the Executive Committee be designated as check signers for the parish. This would give us five (5) check signers and would include: the Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clerk, Treasurer, and Member-At-Large. Such designation would not give these officers authority to make other transactions or decisions around finances or spending.

Kristine Barbaree noted that checks over \$5,000 need two signatures. Amy added that we are currently working to hone policies and procedures around finances beyond check signing, and she hopes to bring those to our next scheduled meeting in August.

MOTION / VOTE: Grant Wallace moved that all lay positions on the Executive Committee, to include the Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clerk, Treasurer, and Member-at-large, be designated as check signers for the parish.

Josie Felton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bank Change

The Executive Committee recommended that the vestry move Trinity's primary banking activities, currently housed at Simmons Bank, to Centennial Bank.

Grant explained that this recommendation comes in light of the concerns brought to the table around Bank OZK's potential legal issues and because after their initial meeting with Centennial, their representative came back to us with a revised and more attractive offer including paying 2% interest on our checking accounts each month.

MOTION / VOTE: Christoph Keller moved that Trinity transfer its primary banking activities to Centennial Bank. Greg Albert seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Application for DDP Loan from the Diocese

Dean Meaux presented a third recommendation from the Executive Committee that Trinity apply for a loan from the Diocese through the Diocesan Development Program (DDP) to replace the mortgage currently held on the Spring Street properties.

The Diocesan Development Program offers loans to assist parishes in times of need so that they might accomplish financial goals they would otherwise be unable to achieve.

This would not be a mortgage. It would be a loan of approximately \$362,000. While the diocese has never approved a loan of this size, making a request for this type of support from the diocese would help others in the diocese better understand Trinity's financial position.

Kelly Wassel asked how many more years we have left on the mortgage. It was originally for fifteen years, so there are five years left.

MOTION / VOTE: Greg Albert moved that the Vestry submit an application to the Diocese of Arkansas for a DDP loan in the amount remaining on the mortgage associated with the Spring Street properties. Kelly Wassell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Venmo

Dean Meaux presented a recommendation from the Executive Committee that we add Venmo as an option for people to use to make payments to Trinity.

MOTION / VOTE: Christoph Keller made a motion that Trinity add Venmo as a method of payment. Josie Felton seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

News from the Dean

Finally, Dean Meaux announced that she is among four (4) candidates on the slate to be elected as the next Bishop for the Diocese of West Missouri. Amy explained that a very close friend, whom she has known for over 25 years, is on the search committee and reached out to ask her to consider this opportunity. While she is **very** happy at the Cathedral, she also does feel a calling into the ministry of a bishop.

Amy said this is a VERY strong slate of faithful, good, well-equipped clergy -- the cream of the crop in the Episcopal Church. Amy acknowledged that this type of discernment is new for our parish, and this process is going to be happening **while we continue to work in ministry together.**

While unexpected, the vestry received this news with gratitude and grace offering comments including: "Congratulations" "How can we support you?" "We'll see what God has in store."

The election is set to take place on November 9 - three days after our national election. Amy will preach that Sunday no matter the outcome. She is confident that if she is called to the episcopacy at this time, it is because it is God's plan and it means He is already working in the life of the person next in line to become dean and rector at Trinity.

Amy requested that the vestry pray and be engaged in the process. "The Cathedral is going to get a lot of attention from the National Church, and they are going to love us!"

Initial Timeline Highlights: Amy will be taking her father to England near the end of August. When she gets back, "Meet and Greets" will be held in Missouri, September 15 - 20, and she intends to be back in Little Rock for Rev. Thomas Alexander's ordination.

The vestry will discuss a strategy for hiring a third, full-time priest at its August meeting.

Meanwhile, Rev. Peggy Cromwell, who served at the Cathedral in the past, will be coming on board quarter time to assist with pastoral care.

Amy reiterated that this call has been a true surprise, and support for our congregation is top of mind right now.

Rev. Thomas Alexander offered a closing prayer.

Before we adjourned, Kelly Wassell shared one last thought regarding a letter she found from the vestry sent following the death of her father and acknowledging his service to Trinity. Kelly suggested this might be something we consider doing more often, and Amy suggested we incorporate this type of communication for other sacramental moments as well.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Y. Allen
Clerk