

**Calvary Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2025, 7:00pm**

Present: The Rev. Robert Harvey, Nancy Bolton, Emily Sityar, Janet Metcalfe, Laurie Kaiser, Howard Craig, Bryan Gorney, Larry Bernhard, Guy Whalen, Dennis McCoy

Virtual: Janet Newall, Melinda Mets (Clerk), Lynn Niendorf (guest), Dick & Sandy Thompson (guests), George Faeth

Excused: Ted Andrews

7:01 Welcome and Call to order

Fr. Robert Harvey

Father Robert called the meeting to order and offered the opening prayer. The February regular meeting minutes had been approved via email.

7:03 Stewardship Committee report

Dennis McCoy

As we are all Stewards of Time & Talent, the Stewardship Committee will be inviting the committees representing the four pillars to provide a brief presentation during the Saturday and Sunday services. It is proposed that Outreach (Helping Others) will present in May and Music will present in June.

The four pillars are:

- Worship
- Children & Youth
- Music
- Helping Others

Stewardship would also like to spearhead the creation of videos highlighting Calvary members talking about their experience at Calvary – why they are here & why they do what they do for the parish. We can use the completed videos in numerous ways – the Fall Stewardship campaign kickoff, on the website/social media and for other communication opportunities as they arise.

The members of the Stewardship Committee are:

Dennis McCoy

Janet Metcalfe

Mark Bunting

Janis and Michael Bommer

Carlos and Marcy Diaz

Dale Harten

Dal and Carol Giuliani

A contingent of people went to 28 Milton during coffee hour. The home is currently unoccupied.

Impressions:

- Overall consensus was that the home is in much better shape than expected; Vestry members were pleasantly surprised.
- Yes, the basement needs work, but it didn't smell musty, and the overall "bones" of the house appear solid.
- It needs a new stove (oven doesn't work)
- If we were to rent it, it would need a new kitchen floor
- The basement is huge and has a lot of potential, once the water issues and drywall are fixed.
- The hardwood floors are in great shape
- There's no sump pump, the heater is relatively new, and it's capable of central air but currently not wired for that
- Calvary was lucky with the refugee family that just moved out; they were wonderful tenants. If Jewish Family Service funds another refugee family to live there, we should seriously consider doing this again.
- Before deciding whether to rent, offer to refugees or sell, we first need to address some fundamental financial decisions. The house is a significant asset, and its future should not be determined on an ad hoc basis
- A suggestion was made to invite Jim Greno to give input; he knows the house inside & out
- If we sell the home, we get cash to spend on Calvary's multiple needs, but that cash is finite and will eventually run out. Rental income, though more variable, would be ongoing.
- Any step we take will require agreement from the Diocese.
- If we rent the home, we'll need to find people who can do repairs and maintain it

There is \$31,500 in the Outreach Reserve funds, part of which could be used for renovations if and only if we rent the house to a refugee family since that could be justified as an Outreach ministry.

Bryan recommended forming a subcommittee to hash out the details and get the ball rolling by scheduling an inspection, reaching out to Frank's to get waterproofing costs, and getting the real estate agent to come over and walk through it again, now that the house isn't occupied

Members of this small committee will be Janet Newall, Larry Bernhard and Howard Craig, utilizing Jim Greno as a resource.

The Future of the (joint) Diocese

(Topic of the 9:00am Lenten study)

A topic being discussed among the Clergy within the (joint) Diocese is the growing support for congregationalism. (Editor's note: **congregationalism**: a system of organization among Christian churches whereby individual local churches are largely self-governing.) Many think we're doing okay without a bishop so perhaps we don't need one. We could bring in a bishop as needed for rites such as Confirmation, which was done recently. Plans are in the works to schedule a meeting at the diocesan house for all parishes to discuss if the two diocese (WNY and NE (Erie) PA) should stay together or go back to being separate entities.

Father Robert noted when the two joined, the plan was for half of the meetings/events to be held in the Erie, PA area and half to be held in the Buffalo area, but most things have been held in Erie. There's also a bit of discrepancy between the parishes that are financially self sufficient, and those that rely on funds from the Diocese.

A "listening session" has been scheduled for lay people on March 27; Father Robert hopes many from Calvary will participate.

Vestry Retreat

The annual Vestry Retreat will be held here at Calvary on April 4 & 5. The facilitator is the Rev. Cathy Dempsey-Sims.

The Vestry person-in-charge for the next 4 weeks will be:

3/23 – Laurie Kaiser

3/30 – Emily Sityar

4/6 – Dennis McCoy

4/13 – Palm Sunday – Larry Bernhard

4/20 - Easter Sunday – Howard Craig

Co-Chairs for Committees

Some of Calvary's committees need to be renovated and/or revitalized. Right now, Fr. Robert is chairing too many committees and that's clearly not ideal. To this end, Emily has been proactively reaching out and asking people to take on the lead role in various functions.

- Christian & Youth Ministry: Ted & Vanessa Andrews have agreed to head this up
- Planned Giving: Needs to be brought back to life
- Fundraising: There's definitely a lot to the area of fundraising and as such, it needs to be broken down into more manageable pieces. For now, Pat Zebrowski has volunteered to head up the August garage sale, but Calvary needs more ambitious fundraising projects that would yield a higher profit.
- Newcomers: This committee is vital for welcoming newcomers. It includes welcoming newcomers to the chairperson's home for a casual get-together.

- **Committee to Dismantle Racism**

On Saturday March 15, Emily attended a regional conversation presented by the Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination. She read for the Vestry excerpts from the *Land Acknowledgement of Indigenous People*. Bryan Gorney noted that it could be the basis for a future Common Ground session. People who'd like more information should contact Emily.

8:15 Two Year Warden's Report

Bryan Gorney

Brad Archdeacon has joined the Property Committee. The committee still needs a chairperson. We also need a few people to help out with the gardening; at the moment Pat Zebrowski does it all herself.

Zacher Electric is coming to replace light bulbs/lighten up Hughson Hall & the main hallway

Bryan is getting estimates to replace the roof on the rectory

As a first step in replacing the chairs in Hughson Hall, a sample chair has been ordered for people to test drive (test sit.)

The results of the capital campaign survey indicate most people are in favor of a 3-year formal Campaign

Adopt-a-project: a new initiative to identify little projects that can be completed quickly and simply. A chairperson is needed.

8:26 New Business

Fr. Robert

Our Ash Wednesday outreach ministry continues to be very popular and there seems to be a real need for this in our community. People responded positively to the day – including the theme & the wristband. This year Calvary (including 30 parishioners) blessed 1,111 people from our community as they drove through to receive ashes. In addition to being very appreciative, the visitors were very generous, donating \$3,000 which will be sent to California to assist those affected by the recent wild fires.

A suggestion was made that we create a flyer to give to the people who receive ashes. It could include a picture of the sanctuary and information about the 10am livestream.

8:43 Blessing & Dismissal

Vestry members were encouraged to attend parish events, especially the services during Holy Week and the Good Friday Concert.

Next Meeting: April 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Vestry Retreat: April 4-5 with Rev. Cathy Dempsey-Sims

Respectfully submitted: Melinda Metz
Vestry Clerk

Date: April 6, 2025