St. Brendan the Navigator
Minutes of the Vestry Meeting
April 20, 2020

Present by ZOOM video conferencing: Lis Ingoldsby, Josephine Jacob, Bill Scaife, Miriam Antich, Meg Graham, Barbara Kourajian, Tom van Buren, and Fr. Edward Dufresne.

Attending for part of the meeting: Pete Dane and Ann van Buren

Senior Warden Lis Ingoldsby called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. Fr. Dufresne offered an opening prayer.

Review and Acceptance of March 30th Meeting Minutes

Meg moved to accept the Minutes of the March 30th meeting; Bill seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved.

Update on Nominating Committee: Formation and Follow-Up

Miriam reported that Mickey Jacoba, Woody Osborne, and Judy Miller have agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee. Fr. Dufresne agreed to be a consultant to the Committee; he is not a participating member of the Committee. Barbara moved we approve the proposed slate of members for the Nominating Committee. Jo seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Jo and Miriam are going off the Vestry and Lis and Barbara are ending their three-year terms as officers. Miriam will email the Vestry members eligible to serve another term regarding their willingness to continue to serve on Vestry.

Finance Ministry

- Review of March financials

Bill reported there are no red flags; there is nothing serious to question. An income comparison from year to date will be forthcoming. The expectation is that our plate offerings will show a big difference. We currently have a surplus of $14,291; Pete Dane reminded us that this is a distorted figure because of the prepayment of pledges. Bill stated we received $27,000 in pledge payments in January – this is a quarter of the year's budget, a normal phenomenon for St. Brendan's.

Barbara asked if the thermostats in the church have been adjusted to lower heating costs. Meg questioned the use of so much propane and why the cost was so high. Jo will pursue these questions with Percy Brown Plumbing and Heating.

- Recommendations regarding electronic options for pledge payments

The Finance Committee met to discuss this and reviewed nearly a dozen Methods for payment. Some were eliminated because of security concerns. The Finance Committee is waiting to hear back from Bar Harbor Bank and Trust on what

they offer that would be easy, inexpensive, and not an added burden for Carolyn Mor. What seems most viable now are 1) mailing in a check, 2) having the member's bank send a check to St. Brendan's, and 3) having the member's bank make an electronic transfer to St. Brendan's checking account. The third option would require a release of St. Brendan's routing number and account number. Currently, we are not set up for Electronic Transfer of Funds (ETF). The fourth option of a "Donate" button on our website was also mentioned.

It was decided Bill would write something for the newsletter saying the two easiest options for keeping up with pledge payments are 1) having your bank send a check directly to St. Brendan and 2) using snail mail to get a check to us. These are options we can do right now – no need to contact Bar Harbor. Bill will also mention we are exploring other options for payment.

Fr. Dufresne commented that we are looking at our future -- a major dislocation at which electronics will be almost as important as physical presence. We are used to thinking that giving to the church requires being present at the church. This is not always going to be available or possible. He suggested it is really important to offer as many viable options as possible and build enthusiasm for these options by asking parishioners to talk to members of the Finance Committee with their ideas and preferences.

Miriam suggested a survey to ascertain preferences and she will work on this. She also mentioned you can put an Amazon smile on the giving page (.5% of anything a parishioner orders on Amazon goes to the church).

- <u>Maine Community Foundation Funds</u>

Pete thanked Meg for the clarification on the balance of the Maine Community Foundation funds in March 2019 and on March 11, 2020 when the funds were released. The remaining 10% of our funds in the Maine Community Foundation were liquidated on April 15. Due to the timing of these withdrawals, we did not take a very big hit.

Ministry Reviews

Buildings & Grounds: Ron Dahlen asked about getting some shrubs for the front of the church and he is willing to check availability. It was suggested he run his landscaping ideas by Meg Graham and Ann Tarlton. Fr. Dufresne commented that what we are doing is so important for a ministry of hospitality. Our building has a lot of visibility -- whatever we can do to make it look more inviting is good.

Meg asked if we can do any repair work on the church – specifically, getting the roof issue pinned down. Lis stated we are still under the stay-at-home order and suggested waiting.

Our cleaning crew continues to be on hold. We are paying them through this crisis.

Outreach: Ann van Buren talked about the difficulty in knowing how to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and thought Outreach might be a way to communicate information. She has had several conversations with individuals and organizations and has realized there are not enough specifics about 501(c)(3) organizations we can donate to that are addressing the COVID-19 crisis. Ann would like to find ways of helping beyond just shopping for others. She would like to create a place on the website's Outreach page where we feature specific local efforts to address this crisis. Currently, there is not a clearinghouse on the island for such information and Ann wonders if St. Brendan's could be helpful by providing specific local opportunities for giving. She is suggesting a weekly article with a featured organization. Anna Edgerly-Moore is very enthusiastic about helping and putting it on the Outreach page. There would be links from our newsletter to these articles. Miriam suggested having a special page on the website for COVID-19.

Tom reported that at Outreach's meeting on April 9th, it was agreed to give $500 to the Deer Isle schools to support meals during the spring break. At the next Outreach meeting on May 7th, the Ministry will consider what else they should monetarily support.

Worship & Music: Barbara reported the Ministry continues to meet almost weekly to plan the Sunday service. Pastor Elaine has been present as consulting priest. Barbara expressed the Ministry's thanks to our parishioners for their willingness to take part in these online services. Lis said the Vestry proposes great thanks and gratitude for all the work the Ministry is doing to make these services so meaningful.

Pastoral Care: The phone tree is working and continues to check on parishioners.

Other Business

- COVID-19 Update: Lis receives more information weekly through the Bishop's Town Hall meetings. She said the Diocese is putting together an Asset Map as to what parishes are doing during the COVID-19 crisis. "What if" scenarios are being discussed as well as "What is the contingency plan?"

  Fr. Dufresne mentioned a "flight to health" when you are just too tired of leading a monk-like existence. He cautioned that human lives are far more important than general financial well-being. We have a responsibility in the things we can control not to jump to health and then have something far worse happen on our watch. Lis added she is on the conservative side and emphasized we have to be extra careful not to put the vulnerable in harm's way.

- Our commercial kitchen is up for renewal and a water test needs to be done. Lis will take care of this.

- Edward Billings inquired about having his mother's memorial service in our space. Lis will keep this on her radar. Fr. Dufresne suggested that Mr. Billings contact Pastor Elaine if this comes to pass.

- Jo asked about the possibility of a virtual coffee hour with our Sunday morning service. Barbara mentioned that to break into smaller groups requires more technical experience with Zoom than we have right now. Bill mentioned his church's virtual potluck supper every Thursday with Compline afterward.

Our next Vestry meeting will be Tuesday, May 19th at 1 p.m.

We closed the meeting by reciting the Prayer of St. Brendan together. The meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

Barbara Kourajian,
Clerk