

*St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Vestry Meeting  
2024 - monthly meeting # 11  
Date: December 17, 2024*

Present (virtually by Zoom):

Rev. Dr. Nina Pooley, Rector (z)  
Josephine Ellis, (Senior) Co-Warden  
John Garinther, (Junior) Co-Warden  
Suzanne White, Treasurer (z)  
William O'Neill, Assistant Treasurer (z)  
Dr. J. Christopher Perry, Clerk  
James Alden (z)  
Caleb Harmon (z)  
David Nevin  
Christopher Plankey  
Wendy Webster Coakley

Regrets: none

Meeting began at 7:06 P.M. in person (and by Zoom)

**I. Opening scripture and Prayer offered by Rev. Pooley**

Opening Scripture and Prayer  
from *Sojourners Voice and Verse*, November 27, 2024

Scripture: *Ecclesiastes 4:9-10*

Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other, but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.

Prayer:

Communal God, help us to rely on one another, knowing that together we are stronger in every great endeavor. *Amen.*

**Old Business**

**II. Clerk Report: Minutes from previous meeting**

August 24, 2024

a. corrections

1. None

- b. Minutes approved (as corrected).  
Motion by: Josie Ellis  
Seconded by: David Nevin  
Approval: 10  
abstained 1 (missed the minutes).

**Action Items from this Meeting:**

- \* 1. VPOD next few weeks needs to discuss sending in pledge cards
- 2. VPOD will hear from Nina when information on Dan's upcoming medical leave is to be disseminated.
- 3. Rector's housing allowance to be discussed next month
- 4. John Garinther will bring back to the Vestry a motion to offset the increased costs for Rev. Nina Pooley to change her health insurance thereby reducing our budget.
- 5. Vestry are required to do safe church, on line. John Garinther will put information about Safe church Training: teachers, Lems, Levs, volunteers in the Church Bulletin. Church covers the cost.
- \* 6. Dec 15: Josie will give a budget Basics (discussion) after church, for those interested.

\* completed

**IV. Committee Reports and New Business**

**Financial report** (Suzanne White. Bill O'Neill)

The budget numbers from Realm are not yet available. The Finance Committee worked on the Proposed 2025 Budget. December numbers will be available by the time we review the proposed budget ahead of the January 28, 2024 meeting.

The Organ console "forgiveness" of the organ console loan. In early 2000's a \$75,000 refurbishment of the organ, took money out of the *Centennial Endowment Fund*, with plan to repay \$5,000 annually from the Beattie Fund, which was restricted to be used only for musical instruments. We have paid back \$55,000/\$75,000.

Some years ago Erin Sullivan and the late Ginger Smith went through the legal process to remove the restrictions, so The Beattie Fund can be used for anything. Our auditor noted that paying back the money (loan) is not an operating expense.

Currently the Beattie Fund is still growing, and disburses about 12,000 per year.

Suzanne White noted that current 2024 income from Beattie Fund is \$15,638

After discussion, the group agreed that the remaining \$20,000 owed would be better directed to other expenses, as the Beattie Fund is doing well without it.

**Motion by:** Josie Ellis

**Motion #1:** that we stop paying back the Centennial Fund from the Beattie Fund \$5000 per year. Note we have already paid \$55,000 out of the original \$75,000

Seconded: David Nevin  
In Favor: unanimous  
Opposed: none  
Abstained: none

**The motion is passed.**

**Motion #2:**

Housing Allowance Resolution 2025

The following language should be used by the vestry to stipulate the portion of total cash compensation that is to be designated as housing allowance:

The following resolution was duly adopted by the vestry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at a regularly scheduled meeting held on (December 17, 2024), a quorum being present:

Whereas, section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the Gospel to exclude from gross income a church-designated allowance paid as part of compensation, to the extent the allowance represents compensation for ministerial services; is used to pay housing-related expenses such as utilities, repairs, and furnishings; and does not exceed the fair rental value of the housing (furnished, plus utilities) and

Whereas, The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley is employed as a minister of the Gospel by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church which does not provide a residence for The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley, the vestry resolves that of the total compensation to be paid to The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley during 2025, that \$40,000 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further

Resolved, that the designation of \$40,000 as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2025 and all future years unless otherwise provided.

**Property Committee** (John Garinther, Chris Plankey)

Chris Plankey. The condensate tank is failing, which requires someone to attend to it every 48 hours during the heating season. Replacing this will allow our current system to operate as it is supposed to. This is a replacement not an upgrade of the system. Laureyns United quoted us: Duplex Condensate Receiver Tank: \$36,723.

**Motion #2:**

**Motion by:** John Garinther

**Motion:** that we accept the Laureyns proposal to replace the duplex condensate tank

Seconded: Jim Alden

In Favor: unanimous

Opposed: none

Abstained: none

**The motion is passed.**

**Stewardship** (Wendy Webster Coakley)

To date, we have received pledges for \$175,440 from 61 donors. This compares favorably to the same point in 2023, when we'd received \$160,325 from 64 donors. On-line donors are not included in the above, as most don't fill in a pledge card, a fact that we need to tweak to ensure getting one.

We need to keep track of first time donors, as these represent additions to our pool of pledgers.

There was a discussion about the discontinuation of choir honoraria and its effect on some pledges.

The Office is closed after this week until Jan 2. The letters acknowledging and thanking pledgers will go out in early January.

Wendy thanked everyone for additions to Stewardship-Straight Talk.

**Wardens' Report** (Josie Ellis, John Garinther),

John G: Safe Church Training is full. January is full.

John Garinther noted that several who were approached to consider joining the Vestry noted that they were uncomfortable with public speaking, e.g. VPOD announcements. After discussion there was a sense of the meeting that we could consider such individuals - substituting another Vestry person for weekly announcements - as long as they were comfortable with the duties of greeting and talking with parishioners.

Vestry position commitments to-date:

David Nevin: Co-Warden

Bill O'Neill: Treasurer

Chris Perry: Asst Treasurer

Chris Plankey: Clerk  
Christine Reynolds: Vestry Member  
Leah Luczyinski: Vestry Member  
Bill Morey: Vestry Member  
*TBD: Vestry Member*

The wardens have others whom they will ask for the remaining Vestry position.

John Garinther and Josie Ellis spoke with a returning parishioner, who has been a regular attendee for these past weeks. John asked her if she wanted to get more involved. She wants to work slowly into being more involved. Gave her name to Sarah and Nina. She grew up in this church. Josie thought she felt honored to be asked.

Rev. Nina Pooley queried whether at the annual meeting, we should offer or describe ministries that people could be part of. Sometimes it is just a matter of asking people. How do we get these people whom we see a lot to join in something.

#### **Rector's Report** (Rev. Nina Pooley)

Regarding the meeting with Campus Clergy:

There was no traction on a joint Thanksgiving service from other clergy  
Other joint service or event plans were discussed, like Lent and Easter vigil.  
We will be the lead on Easter Vigil this year.  
Each joint event will have a lead church.

Rev. Joel at Zion Lutheran Church noted that Zion will be out of commission for some work by contractors. Zion will join us for 3 Sundays in January.

Ken is looking into broadcasting our service on PCTV. Ken noted that compared to other churches, our production value is better.

Francie Hills' funeral went very well.

Upcoming Schedule:

Dec 1 - Dec 24: Advent

Dec 20: Wedding for JD Hebert and Melissa Morin

Dec 24, Christmas Eve services: 5pm and 8pm

Dec. 20 - Jan 1: Office closed.

Dec 29, Christmas I: Eucharist and Carols service, Zion will be joining us.

Jan 5: will transfer Epiphany to this Sunday

Jan 5 - Mar 2: Season of Epiphany

Jan 19, Jan 26, Feb 2: Zion joining us while their sanctuary is under some construction

Feb 9: Annual Meeting

Mar 5: Ash Wednesday with Ashes to Go.

Mar 9: Lent I, and daylight savings time begin

Discussion of the Rector's Housing Allowance as part of her total compensation.

**Motion #3:**

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"Resolved, that the designation of \$40,000 as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2025 and all future years unless otherwise provided."

**Motion by** Josie Ellis:

**Motion:** to approve the above 2025 housing allowance resolution for the Rev. Nina Pooley

**Second:** David Nevin

**Approved:** unanimous

**Opposed:** none

**Abstained:** none

LEM's. Jim **Alden** has been a Lay Eucharistic Minister (LEM) at prior churches elsewhere for 30 years. We need to address having Jim licensed as a LEM in our diocese.

**Motion by:** Rev. Nina Pooley:

**Motion:** I move to approve Jim Alden's application to be a LEM in our Diocese.

**Second:** Caleb Harmon

**Approve:** unanimous.

**Opposed:** none

**Abstained:** none

**Action Items from this Meeting:**

1. Rev. Nina Pooley will figure out the insurance reimbursement issue for the Finance Committee to propose how to handle it next month.
2. Next time we will have a mini meeting to pick directors for the 501(c)3.

**Next Meeting scheduled:** January 28 (zoom or in-person)

**V. Closing Prayer offered by Rev. Nina Pooley**

Closing Prayer: Ephesians 3:20,21

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**VI. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent: 8:34 PM.