



**Minutes of Trinity Cathedral Vestry Meeting
March 18, 2025 – 5:30 p.m.**

Present:

Vestry Members: Beth Billings, Jr. Warden; Mark Biddlestone; John Chapman; Marie Curry; Kim DeNero-Ackroyd; Martin Hermes; Diane Hexter; Audrey Hudak; Cynthia Ries; Marilyn Valencia; Antoinette Ponzo

Staff: The Very Rev. Bernard Owens, Dean; The Rev. Canon Adrienne Koch, Canon for Mission and Transformation; Ginger Bitikofer, Associate for Membership and Congregational Life

Appointed Officers: Melody Hart, Treasurer; Darrell Lausche, Clerk of Vestry

Absent: Jeff Spiess, Sr. Warden

- The Vestry meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.
- Dean Owens led Vestry in the opening devotional.

Formation

- Mission Team Report: Invite/Welcome/Connect

Ginger Bitikofer provided a report from the Invite/Welcome/Connect Mission Team. She shared the anticipation in rotation of leadership. In mid-2024, the team met with Brett Boardwine, Communications Manager, regarding updating website, visitor, and communications materials. It is hoped that other mission teams will be able to take the materials to help reach others out in the community. A new process for handling newcomer packets and visitor cards is in the works.

One idea the mission team has generated includes a “Bring a Friend to Church Day.” About 25 handmade prayer shawls were shared at a table on March 2, 2025. April 27, 2025, will include a Newcomers Brunch. She also reminded Vestry that it is the responsibility of all Trinity members to invite, welcome, and connect new people to the life of Trinity Cathedral.

- Dean’s Report
 - Sabbatical – Dean Owens touched on his upcoming sabbatical and items that need to be addressed before he leaves. He also stressed that this is the time to plan for his return.
 - Priest Associate Update – One in-person visit has already occurred. Another is scheduled in the coming weeks. Dean Owens did not discuss specifics about candidates. Applications are still being accepted
 - Vestry Retreat – Dean Owens thanked the Vestry for their work during the Vestry retreat. He felt energized and hopeful at the conclusion of the retreat. He highlighted the challenging work that was addressed. He also discussed the gifts that Trinity Cathedral offers to our congregation and new attendees.

Fiduciary Work

- Adoption of Consent Agenda
 - February Meeting Minutes
 - Music and Art at Trinity – Adding Kira McGirr as a member of the Board
 - Cleveland Chamber Choir request for a year extension of residency

Toni Ponzo moved, “to adopt the consent agenda.” Martin Hermes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- Treasurer's Report

Melody Hart, Treasurer, provided the monthly financial reports. Trinity Cathedral revenue and expenses are favorable. Corporate and friends contributions are favorable, too. A capital campaign gift has been received. Utilities were higher, due to the winter weather.

Trinity Commons revenue is right on budget. The expenses are lower. The open Steward position had helped to keep expenses lower. Utilities were also higher, due to the winter weather.

- Cathedral Ministries Committee – Kim DeNero-Ackroyd

Mission Team Retreat – May 18, 2025, in the Gallery. A meeting of the planning committee is scheduled for March 20, 2025. It is anticipated to finalize the agenda. Canon Koch will be sharing a list of names for possible mission team leadership positions with the members of Vestry.

- Property & Sustainability

Mark Biddlestone updated the Vestry on the stained-glass window project. The two remaining windows out for restoration will be reinstalled by March 21, 2025. Whitney Stained Glass was waiting for the weather to warm up. There has been discussion about the window behind the Flentrop organ and if it needs to be addressed immediately. Other windows have been reprioritized based on further inspection. Clarifying questions were asked.

Masonry repairs will commence now that the weather conditions are more favorable. The cathedral crack investigation has been identified as appropriate for a building of its age. None of the interior cracks are running through the building. There is also no evidence that there are foundation cracks. It is recommended that cracks continue to be monitored.

The Cathedral Hall marble floor has cracks developing. The cause of the cracks is under investigation. Door refinishing is moving along with the identification of a vendor that has the experience in restoring historic doors. An estimate is being generated for submission.

Geothermal heat pumps have resulted in two being replaced already. There is another one that needs to be replaced. The mechanical systems assessment will need more discussion on scope and timeline.

- Wise, Warmeling, Way Approval

Dean Owens reviewed the purpose of the scholarship. The committee reviewed six applications (five medical applicants and one current clergy applicant). The committee recommended an equal amount be awarded to the medical students and an appropriate amount for the clergy applicant. The committee prepared its recommendations and shared them with the Vestry via the Dropbox. **Marie Curry moved, "to approve the recommendations of the Wise, Warmeling, Way committee to award a total of \$29,000 for the 2025-2026 academic year to six recipients."** Kim DeNero-Ackroyd seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.** Discussion also occurred on how to tell the story of this funding.

- CSU Veterans Office Space

Dean Owens shared that the CSU Veterans Office has made the decision to move onto the campus and out of the storefront in Trinity Commons in December 2025. He explained that he will be meeting with diocesan staff over the future use of the space. There was open discussion by Vestry members about past use and hopes for the future. The Property and Sustainability Committee will do research about possibilities for the space.



Generative Work

- Cathedral Hall – Cynthia Ries & Dean Owens
 - Engaging Architects – The Capital Campaign Committee continues to meet. They have decided to schedule meetings with two different architectural firms. The committee has provided a wish list to the firms. It is anticipated that the meetings will take place prior to Dean Owens's sabbatical. Discussion took place about the vision and needs for the space. Dean Owens outlined the anticipated timeline.
- Choir Stipends

Beth Billings updated Vestry on investigation into other congregations that have paid singers. Kira McGirr evaluated the number of calls and rates of pay at the focus congregations. Trinity Cathedral is on the lower end of the compensation spectrum. 963 calls are budgeted in the current year's budget. An incremental increase in the pay would result in a \$2,700 increase, including diocesan assessment. Beth summarized that Trinity Cathedral's demands are higher than other congregations, but the compensation is the lowest.

Strategic Work

- Major Gifts Campaign

A review of the timeline presented at the Vestry retreat occurred. Dean Owens shared his desire not to extend the campaign past 2026. He discussed possible products and priorities. He entertained questions from Vestry members. Discussion of the gift acceptance policy also happened. **Cynthia Ries moved, "to accept the Trinity Cathedral Gift Acceptance Policy." Beth Billings seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Closing Prayer

Dean Owens led Vestry in a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Next Vestry Meeting: April 22, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Darrell Lausche, Clerk of Vestry

