



**Minutes of Trinity Cathedral Vestry Meeting
May 20, 2025 – 5:30 p.m.**

Present:

Vestry Members: Jeff Spiess, Sr. Warden; John Chapman; Marie Curry; Martin Hermes; Diane Hexter; Audrey Hudak; Cynthia Ries; Marilyn Valencia; Antoinette Ponzo

Staff: Cheryl Williams, Director of Development and Community Programming

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

Absent: Beth Billings, Jr. Warden; Mark Biddlestone; Kim DeNero-Ackroyd; The Very Rev. Bernard Owens, Dean; The Rev. Canon Adrienne Koch, Canon for Mission and Transformation

- The Vestry meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m.
- Toni Ponzo led Vestry in the opening devotional.

Formation

- Senior Warden's Report
 - Staffing Update – Jeff Spiess updated the Vestry regarding receptionist staffing. Fill-in volunteers will be sought. Ginger Bitikofer, Associate for Membership and Congregational Life, is the contact person for volunteers.

Fiduciary Work

- Adoption of Consent Agenda
 - April Meeting Minutes – **Jeff Spiess 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 report. Income is lower than budgeted by about \$15,000, with congregational support lower than expected. Speculation over timing or the impact of economic concerns was made as an attempt to ascertain the root cause. She detailed line items for income. Operating expenses are lower than budgeted, by \$54,000. The cash flow statement was also included in the Vestry Dropbox.

Cathedral Commons income is \$15,000 better than budgeted, primarily due to outside events. Expenses are favorable by \$13,000. No actions by Vestry were needed for the finances of Trinity Cathedral and Cathedral Commons.

- Cathedral Ministries Committee

Kim DeNero-Ackroyd was to review the Mission Team Retreat, held on May 18, 2025, but was unable to attend the Vestry meeting. Members of Vestry that attended the retreat provided their reflections on the event. Work centered around review of goals and planning for the upcoming program year. A request to highlight the Circles webpage was made, because it is hard to navigate to through the “Education” page. There was

encouragement with new faces in leadership positions in attendance at the retreat. Work continues to proceed on forming the Hospitality Guild.

- Property & Sustainability – Martin Hermes and Diane Hexter

Martin Hermes provided a report from the Property and Sustainability Committee. He highlighted planning with the stained-glass restoration. The report on the cathedral crack has been favorable. Continued monitoring will occur to see if weather is affecting the crack. The committee is still searching for the best contractor to restore the cathedral garden doors in Cathedral Hall and the Euclid Avenue narthex wood doors.

Diane Hexter updated Vestry on the former CSU Veterans space. Cleveland State University has vacated the space and notified Trinity Cathedral. Commercial real estate agents are being consulted to help address leasing the space. Questions were asked about the possible mixed use of the space for commercial use and congregational use. Additional clarifying questions were asked.

- Nominating Committee

Jeff Spiess, Senior Warden, reviewed his invitation for Vestry members to volunteer for the two Vestry seats on the Nominating Committee. Kim DeNero-Ackroyd and Martin Hermes both put their names forward.

- Stewardship Update

Cheryl Williams, Director of Development and Community Programming, provided a Stewardship update in the Vestry Dropbox. The Stewardship Committee is scheduled to meet on May 29, 2025, to continue their planning for the 2025 Stewardship Campaign. The campaign is scheduled for September 28 – October 25, 2025.

The Legacy Circle continues to be promoted in a “soft” way, along with Free Will. Targeted promotions for both will occur. There are Trinity Cathedral members that have offered to provide information and guidance to interested individuals that show interest in the Legacy Circle and/or Free Will. There have also been testimonials submitted by individuals about why they have contributed to Trinity Cathedral.

Cheryl also reviewed the process of goal setting for stewardship campaigns. The Stewardship Committee is recommending a 2025 campaign goal of \$430,000. Discussion occurred. **Martin Hermes moved, “to set a goal of \$430,000 for the 2025 stewardship campaign.” Cynthia Ries seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention.**

Generative Work

- Vestry Check-in Calls

Audrey Hudak presented on the Vestry goal of contacting each member of Trinity Cathedral, as was done last year, with the intent of checking in on how people are doing and building relationships. She shared the instructions for making calls and emails as well as a spreadsheet assigning Vestry members to contact individuals. A two-month timeline was presented. A check-in is planned for the June 2025 Vestry meeting. Clarifying questions and discussion took place.

Strategic Work

- Major Gifts Campaign

Cynthia Ries and Cheryl Williams presented information to Vestry regarding the Major Gifts Campaign. The goal of the committee is to have as much discerned as possible before Dean Owens returns from sabbatical.



- Cathedral Hall Renovation – The Vestry approved Marous Brothers to draft plans for the renovation at a special meeting on April 13, 2025. Since that time, work with Marous Brothers produced a Value Proposition that will lead the process. Marous Brothers also has an architectural historian that is researching Cathedral Hall through time. Two focus groups are planned, June 22, 2025, and August 17, 2025. Discussion occurred.
- Vestry & Congregation Communication – Discussion regarding the communication channels that need to be in place for communication between sub-committees, Vestry, and the congregation occurred. Cheryl reminded Vestry that the work needs to be the vision for the future, not the realities of the present.
- Cathedral Commons Water Fountain

Audrey Hudak forwarded a request she received for a water fountain upgrade in Cathedral Commons. The desire is to have a bottle filler integrated with the water fountain.

Closing Prayer

Toni Ponzo led Vestry in a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Next Vestry Meeting: June 17, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Darrell Lausche, Clerk of Vestry

