

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
JANUARY 21, 2024

Rector Katie Wright called the Annual Meeting of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church to order at 9:05 am on January 21, 2024. The meeting was held in person in Huffman Hall and 116 members of the congregation were present. Mother Katie opened the meeting with prayer and reviewed the church's mission and core values.

ELECTIONS

Mother Katie began the business portion of the meeting with elections of members to serve on the Vestry, Committees, and those to serve as representatives of St. Matthew's at Diocesan Council. She also shared names of those who have expressed interest in serving on the board of St. Matthew's Day School. She announced she would review the eligibility requirements, names of the current candidates, and then open the floor for any additional nominations.

Vestry – Five positions were open and Pat Naeve, Debra Erck, Jim Fryer, Larry Simons, and Rogene Tesar were the current nominees.

Endowment Committee – Three positions were open and Dana Young, Susan Alles and Mark Erck were the current nominees.

Memorial Garden Committee – Two positions were open and Emily Hansen and Linda Fryer were the current nominees.

Diocesan Council Representatives – Two positions were open and Joyce Statz and Susan Robertson were the current nominees.

Katie explained that Day School Board members are actually elected at a different time of year, but that the church asks those who are interested in serving to step forward at this time. Thus far, Babs Clendenin, Ann Hart, and Emily Slaughter have expressed interest. Katie asked that anyone else who might be interested to let her know.

Katie announced that nominations from the floor were now open. The members present offered no additional nominations. A motion was made to accept the current slate of nominations by acclamation was made and seconded. The members present **approved the motion.**

Katie informed the members that Russell Hur would join Chris Wilson as one of the portfolio managers for St. Matthew's. He replaces Nora Foster, who has moved of state, and she thanked Nora for her service.

REPORT OF SENIOR WARDEN

Katie recognized Joyce Statz who served as Senior Warden during 2023. Joyce reviewed the many 2023 parish activities. Among the highlights were the implementation of the Strategic Plan, continued outreach activities including the Good Faith fund, assistance to students at Wooldridge Elementary and the Westover Pantry, interfaith activities and assistance to Congregation Beth Israel, restart of Children & Youth activities, education on church safety and the initiation of a Safety Council for our campus. Joyce pointed out the increased expenses the church incurred during the year. She also thanked all the members and Day School parents who helped with campus following last year's ice storm.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Jenny Watson presented the parish Financial Report for 2023. St. Matthew's continues to be in a good financial position, with no outstanding debt. The parish operates essentially on a cash basis and although the 2023 budget projected a small shortfall it turned out to be larger than expected due to increased expenses. Jenny presented the 2024 budget which again reflects a small shortfall, but also reflects cost-saving items such as no raises for clergy and reduced hours for some personnel. Jenny closed by urging any members who had questions to contact her or Chris Schumacher.

DAY SCHOOL UPDATE

Page Race, head of St. Matthew's Day School, presented her annual report. She mentioned that the school was founded in 1979 as a ministry of the church and this wonderful collaboration continues. She expressed great appreciation for the church administration, the support of parishioners and the interest of the vestry. The school currently has 173 students enrolled and is guided by 35 staff members. She outlined shared safety measures the school and church have implemented and closed by inviting anyone interested to come to the joyous chapel services the school has each day at 9:05 am in the sanctuary.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VETERANS UPDATE

Reverend Christine Brunson reviewed the activities for Children, Youth, and Veterans in 2023. Children now start worship with their families in the Sanctuary and then proceed to Children's Chapel in room B-21, usually lead by Kathy Dugat or Pat Brajnikoff. Families with children have been very appreciative of this approach and other parishioners have been delighted to see children again. Jimmy Wright continues a Godly Play class in B-17 during the formation hour which has also been well received. Christine is in the process of re-creating a Youth Group with resource assistance from the Diocese and in partnership with other parishes. She reported the Veteran's ministry is led by lay members of the parish and assisted by clergy and they are looking forward to more activities in 2024.

ADULT FORMATION UPDATE

Reverend Andrew Benko discussed classes the parish offered adults during 2023.

These included classes dealing with prophets of the Old Testament, a Christian perspective on death and dying, the liturgy in the Episcopal Church, the Book of Common Prayer, the sacraments, finding spirituality in music, and science fiction, fantasy and faith among others. Current classes include Perspectives on Palestine and Israel and a “Walk in Love” Discovery class will begin in February. Andrew asked members to come to him with ideas for classes on other topics.

NEW MEMBERS, INVITE/WELCOME/CONNECT, YOUNG ADULTS

Reverend Allen Junek reported that he reviewed 59 connection cards completed by church visitors and followed up as requested. This action has resulted in St. Matthew’s getting 20 new members. Allen continues to work with the Invite/Welcome/Connect Committee to explore ideas to serve potential and existing members. The committee offered newcomer lunches in 2023 as a way to “meet and greet” new members and will have additional gatherings in 2024. Finally, Allen explained he is exploring different ways (coffee, meeting, or gathering) of ministering to young adults. Any input would be welcomed.

RECTOR’S COMMENTS

Mother Katie thanked members for attending the Annual Meeting and for their work throughout the year in support of St. Matthew’s. She thanked the current clergy who do so much to spread God’s word and thanked the entire staff for their efforts. She recognized outgoing vestry members, Armando Ruiz, Blythe Wilson, Jason Bagshaw, Ann O’Connell and Joyce Statz and presented each a gift of gratitude for their service. Mother Katie said she is so pleased and excited that attendance at worship services continues to increase. She mentioned Allen Junek’s upcoming ordination on February 17 and that Lent is just around the corner. She asked members to mark their calendars for the Diocesan-wide retreat May 3-5 at Camp Allen.

Mother Katie recessed the meeting at 10:19 for the 10:30 worship service. She reconvened the Annual Meeting at 11:45, as members enjoyed a slideshow of photos from events throughout 2023 and ate the wonderful parish lunch prepared by Chef Robert and team. Katie highlighted the Calendar of Events in the coming year, directed folks looking for a printed Directory or 2023 Annual Report to email or call the office, and thanked the St. Matthew’s Clergy and wonderful Staff for their hard work. She then closed the meeting with prayer and declared the meeting adjourned at 11:53.

Minutes prepared by Gary McNeil, Acting Clerk